Report on National Social Security Strategy Review and Monitoring Data

Social Protection Policy Support (SPPS) Programme

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Acronyms

a2i	Aspire to Innovate
API	Application Programming Interface
CMC	Central Management Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPO	Disabled Persons' Organisation
DSS	Department of Social Services
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
G2P	Government-to-Person
GED	General Economics Division
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GRS	Grievance Redress System
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KEQ	Key Evaluation Question
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
NHD	National Household Database
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
RBAC	Role-Based Access Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SSPS	Social Security Policy Support
ToR	Terms of Reference
UI	User Interface
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

0 Executive Summary

This report sets out a comprehensive plan to oversee the final implementation review of Bangladesh's National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and to operationalise the NSSS Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Dashboard hosted by the Cabinet Division. These two streams of work are essential to assessing current reform performance and institutionalising a more coordinated, data-driven, and inclusive social protection system for the future.

Part I: NSSS Implementation Review Oversight Plan

The NSSS, adopted in 2015 and supported by Action Plan II (2021–2026), outlines the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) strategic vision for a lifecycle-based social protection system. With the end of the NSSS Action Plan II approaching, a government-led review will be conducted to assess progress, identify implementation challenges, and inform the design of the next phase of reforms. This report provides an oversight plan to ensure the credibility, quality, and policy relevance of that review.

The oversight framework includes alignment with 11 Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs), mapping these against the five thematic clusters of the NSSS Action Plan II and relevant system reform domains. It defines the roles of the Cabinet Division, General Economics Division (GED), line ministries, and development partners across the review cycle, from inception and implementation to validation and dissemination. The plan includes structured stakeholder engagement, a quality assurance system for review deliverables, and a strategy for translating findings into policy and institutional uptake.

Part II: NSSS Dashboard Operationalisation Plan

The NSSS M&E Dashboard is a web-based platform designed to track the NSSS Action Plan II implementation across 39 ministries. While the dashboard represents a major innovation, it remains underutilised due to incomplete data, limited interoperability, and weak institutional ownership. This plan proposes a practical roadmap to transform the dashboard into a functional, sustainable, and policy-relevant tool.

Key components include: strengthening the dashboard's data architecture; integrating with line ministry systems through application programming interfaces (APIs) and standardised data protocols; instituting validation and quality assurance mechanisms; and clarifying account roles and permission structures. The plan also prioritises improvements in user interface, mobile responsiveness, and custom reporting features, ensuring the system is accessible to both policymakers and field-level officials. Institutional sustainability is addressed through governance arrangements, phased rollout plans, and resource and risk management strategies.

Oversight Plan for the Final Review of the NSSS and Action Plan II (2021–2026)

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose

The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh, approved by Government of Bangladesh (GoB) in 2015, marked a significant turning point in the country's approach to social protection. It was developed to address persistent challenges in poverty, vulnerability, and exclusion by reorienting a fragmented set of social safety net programmes toward a coherent, lifecycle-based social security system. Anchored in the Constitution and aligned with Vision 2021, the 7th and 8th Five Year Plans, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the NSSS proposed a shift from discretionary, ad hoc programme delivery to a nationally coordinated and rights-based approach to social protection.

Over the past decade, Bangladesh has made commendable progress in strengthening social protection governance and expanding programme reach. Action Plan I (2016–2021) operationalised the NSSS with time-bound reforms across ministries. Building on that foundation, Action Plan II (2021–2026) introduced a more structured, system-wide reform framework covering 39 ministries and agencies. The second action plan prioritises programme consolidation along lifecycle categories, integration of Management Information Systems (MIS), expansion of Government-to-Person (G2P) digital payments, enhanced grievance redress systems (GRS), and results-based monitoring and evaluation. It also introduced five thematic clusters for improved policy and implementation coherence: Social Allowance; Food Security and Disaster Assistance; Social Insurance; Labour and Livelihoods; and Human Development and Social Empowerment.

As Bangladesh prepares to transition to a second-generation social protection strategy beyond 2026, it is essential to assess the results, constraints, and lessons from the current NSSS and Action Plan II. This will inform decisions about institutional reforms, fiscal strategy, policy coherence, and system readiness to expand coverage, deepen inclusion, and respond to new risks, including urbanisation, demographic shifts, and climate-induced shocks.

In this context, the GoB, through the Cabinet Division and with support from the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme implemented by UNDP and funded by DFAT Australia, has commissioned an independent review of the NSSS and Action Plan II. The review is being undertaken by a national consulting firm, and is expected to generate evidence and recommendations to inform the design of the next generation of social protection reforms, including the development of a new strategy to be launched in 2026.

The purpose of this oversight plan is to ensure the quality, relevance, and integrity of that review. While the firm is responsible for implementing the evaluation, including the methodology, data collection, and report drafting, the oversight team, led by UNDP in close coordination with the Cabinet Division and GED, will play a critical role in guiding and assessing each stage of the process. This includes ensuring alignment with the Terms of Reference (ToR), reviewing draft outputs for

methodological rigour and inclusion, validating findings with stakeholders, and ensuring that the final review addresses the Government's strategic needs.

The oversight function is not a separate evaluation. Rather, it is a structured mechanism for technical assurance, coordination, and learning. It is designed to ensure that the evaluation is credible, meets international quality standards, incorporates the perspectives of a diverse range of stakeholders, and ultimately contributes to more effective social protection reforms in Bangladesh.

1.2 Objectives of the Review Oversight Plan

The NSSS implementation review commissioned by the GoB is expected to serve as a foundational input for the next cycle of policy reform and strategy development in social protection. Given the critical importance of this review for policy planning, institutional reform, and resource mobilisation, both domestic and external, it is essential that the evaluation process is methodologically sound, inclusive, and analytically strong. The review must also be anchored in the GoB's strategic priorities and reflect a realistic understanding of institutional and political dynamics within the social protection landscape.

This oversight plan has been developed to ensure that the final review of the NSSS and Action Plan II meets these expectations. It provides a structured and systematic approach to supporting, guiding, and assessing the quality of the review process as undertaken by the contracted firm. It does not duplicate or replace the work of the review team, but instead establishes a set of oversight functions that strengthen the credibility, utility, and accountability of the evaluation.

The primary objective of this oversight plan is to provide assurance to the Cabinet Division, General Economics Division (GED), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), UNICEF, and other stakeholders that the NSSS review will deliver credible and actionable results. It aims to do so by applying a technical quality lens across each stage of the evaluation lifecycle, from the review of the inception report to the validation of findings in the final report. In addition, it seeks to ensure that the evaluation remains closely aligned with the Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs), integrates cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality and disability inclusion, and adequately reflects stakeholder feedback.

More specifically, the objectives of the oversight plan are to:

1. **Ensure strategic and technical alignment** between the review process and the expectations articulated in the approved ToR, including full coverage of the 11 Key Evaluation Questions and appropriate attention to Action Plan II's five thematic clusters.
2. **Provide methodological assurance**, through structured review of the contractor's evaluation design, sampling strategy, data sources, analytical techniques, and treatment of governance, political economy, and institutional arrangements.
3. **Promote inclusive and participatory processes**, by ensuring that the perspectives of a diverse range of stakeholders, including implementing ministries, local authorities, civil society, and excluded or marginalised groups, are meaningfully integrated into the review process and findings.

4. **Ensure consistency with international standards**, particularly UNDP's 2021 Evaluation Guidelines and DFAT's evaluation quality criteria, with respect to credibility, impartiality, utility, and human rights-based approaches.
5. **Facilitate structured feedback and iterative learning**, by defining a system of checkpoints and review mechanisms that enable timely course corrections, enhance responsiveness to Government priorities, and promote uptake of recommendations.
6. **Strengthen accountability and transparency**, through the documentation and communication of oversight findings, including reasons for acceptance or rejection of specific methodological or analytical approaches used by the contractor.

1.3 Scope of the Oversight Assignment

The scope of this oversight assignment is defined by its role in safeguarding the quality and strategic relevance of the final review of the NSSS and Action Plan II, without interfering with the operational autonomy of the contracted evaluation team. The oversight mechanism operates in parallel with, but not in duplication of, the implementation review. It provides structured engagement, technical scrutiny, and feedback at key points throughout the review process. This ensures the final deliverables are fit for purpose, methodologically sound, and aligned with the priorities of the Government of Bangladesh and its development partners.

The oversight assignment encompasses the following core areas:

1. Review and validation of deliverables. The oversight team will assess all key outputs of the review, including the inception report, draft evaluation report, and final report, against the agreed ToR. This includes verifying alignment with the 11 KEQs, the degree to which the Action Plan II clusters have been meaningfully assessed, and the robustness of evidence and logic underpinning the findings and recommendations.

2. Technical quality assurance. The oversight function will appraise the methodological frameworks proposed by the evaluation team, including their approaches to sampling, data triangulation, institutional analysis, and political economy dimensions. The team will also assess whether cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality, disability inclusion, child sensitivity, and urban vulnerability, are sufficiently integrated into both the design and analysis stages of the evaluation.

3. Stakeholder engagement and process integrity. The oversight team will monitor how the evaluation team engages with key actors in government, development partners, civil society, and vulnerable communities. This includes reviewing the design and facilitation of consultations, workshops, and interviews, and advising on necessary adjustments to ensure inclusivity, representation, and procedural fairness.

4. Timeliness and milestone tracking. The oversight mechanism will monitor the progress of the evaluation team against the deliverables and deadlines stipulated in the contract, flagging delays or implementation risks, and advising the SPPS Programme and Cabinet Division on corrective actions as needed.

5. Feedback integration and adaptive learning. At each reporting stage, the oversight team will issue written feedback to the contractor, highlighting strengths, inconsistencies, and areas requiring revision. It will also ensure that feedback from stakeholders, including the Cabinet Division, GED, UNDP, DFAT, and UNICEF, is accurately integrated and that reasons for inclusion or exclusion of specific inputs are clearly documented.

Importantly, the scope of this oversight does not extend to conducting new fieldwork, interviews, or primary data analysis. It does not assume a verification role in the classical audit sense, nor does it seek to rewrite the contractor's findings. Rather, it provides a quality lens and a governance mechanism to ensure that the contractor's work reflects the GoB's reform ambitions, international evaluation standards, and stakeholder expectations. In this way, the oversight mechanism contributes to a credible, transparent, and policy-relevant review of the NSSS, which in turn will shape the direction of social protection in Bangladesh beyond 2026.

2 Alignment with Policy and Strategic Frameworks

2.1 Overview of NSSS and Action Plan II

The NSSS was adopted by the GoB in 2015 as a response to longstanding fragmentation, inefficiency, and inequity within the country's social protection system. Prior to the NSSS, social safety net programmes operated largely in silos, with limited coordination, inconsistent targeting, and weak monitoring systems. The NSSS sought to transform this landscape by introducing a unified framework rooted in lifecycle-based protection, institutional reform, and a commitment to inclusive development.

Structured around the principle of leaving no one behind, the NSSS articulates a long-term vision for a universal, equitable, and efficient social protection system. It defines a set of core lifecycle-based schemes, proposes consolidation of overlapping programmes, and outlines steps toward building institutional systems for beneficiary identification, digital payments, grievance redress, and monitoring and evaluation. The NSSS also recognises that social protection is not only a poverty-reduction tool but also a platform for enhancing resilience, promoting economic inclusion, and ensuring social cohesion.

To implement this vision, the Government first launched Action Plan I (2016–2021), which initiated foundational reforms including programme mapping, pilot efforts to digitise payments, development of MISs in select ministries, and the establishment of the Cabinet Division's coordination role. While significant progress was achieved, several systemic challenges remained, particularly in harmonising implementation across ministries, ensuring data integration, and embedding inclusive design across programme categories.

These challenges were explicitly addressed in the formulation of Action Plan II (2021–2026), approved by the Cabinet Division in August 2021. This second action plan is more structured and ambitious. It sets out a comprehensive reform roadmap for 39 ministries and implementing agencies, with clear targets, responsibilities, and timelines. Action Plan II introduces five cross-cutting thematic clusters, each intended to align existing programmes and guide institutional transformation:

1. **Social Allowances**: covering old-age benefits, disability support, widows and vulnerable women, and other direct income transfers.
2. **Food Security and Disaster Assistance**: consolidating in-kind and cash-based relief mechanisms under disaster preparedness and response.
3. **Social Insurance**: focusing on contributory mechanisms for formal and informal sector workers, including health and employment injury insurance.
4. **Labour and Livelihoods**: supporting income-generation, employment promotion, and skills development interventions for working-age adults.
5. **Human Development and Social Empowerment**: integrating child benefits, education support, and interventions targeting social inclusion and empowerment.

Action Plan II also institutionalises key system-building pillars including:

- The scaling of G2P digital payments, with full biometric authentication through the Government's ID-linked financial platforms.
- The creation of a national single registry, integrating beneficiary data across sectors and enabling interoperability with the National Household Database (NHD).
- The formalisation of the GRS and the establishment of oversight mechanisms to ensure accountability and recourse.
- A web-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) dashboard developed by the Cabinet Division to facilitate progress tracking across ministries.
- The development and endorsement of a gender strategy, ensuring that gender, disability, and social inclusion are systematically embedded in programme design and delivery.

Taken together, the NSSS and Action Plan II represent an evolving but coherent effort to build a more integrated, responsive, and inclusive social protection system. They also position Bangladesh to move beyond a fragmented safety net approach toward a universal social protection system, as envisioned under SDG 1.3.

The final review of the NSSS and Action Plan II must therefore be situated within this strategic trajectory. It must not only assess what has been implemented, but also how institutions have changed, which reforms have taken root, and what gaps remain. This oversight plan ensures that the review is aligned with this evolving reform architecture and is positioned to provide the evidence needed to inform a more ambitious, coordinated, and inclusive NSSS 2026+.

2.2 Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs)

The NSSS and Action Plan II implementation review is guided by eleven KEQs, as articulated in the ToR. These questions serve as the analytical spine of the review, providing a comprehensive structure for assessing progress, identifying systemic gaps, and generating forward-looking recommendations. They span four broad domains of inquiry: (i) effectiveness and results, (ii) governance and coordination, (iii) inclusion and equity; and (iv) strategic relevance and sustainability.

To ensure alignment between the review and the priorities of Action Plan II, it is important that each KEQ is mapped against the five thematic clusters and institutional reform priorities defined in the strategy. This allows the oversight team to monitor whether the evaluation gives balanced attention

across sectors, levels of governance, and reform components, including G2P digitisation, MIS integration, and grievance redress.

The table below presents a mapping of the KEQs across the review domains and Action Plan II clusters. This is not a rigid matrix but rather a tool to guide review focus and ensure that sectoral and systemic aspects are both addressed.

Table 1: Mapping of KEQs to Review Domains and Action Plan II Clusters

Sl	Evaluation Question	Domain	Relevant Action Plan II Clusters
1	To what extent has the GoB achieved the objectives outlined in the NSSS and Action Plan II to date?	Effectiveness	All five clusters
2	To what extent has the NSSS built support for social protection within Bangladesh?	Strategic Relevance	All clusters (especially Human Development and Labour & Livelihoods)
3	What are the major barriers and enablers affecting the effective implementation of the NSSS across different ministries?	Governance	All clusters; focus on institutional reform, coordination
4	How well is the current coordination between line ministries and other key stakeholders functioning to deliver on NSSS objectives?	Governance	Cross-cutting across all clusters
5	How effective are the governance arrangements for overseeing NSSS implementation (e.g., CMC and sub-committees)?	Governance	Systemic; institutional oversight mechanisms
6	What are the existing gaps in the NSSS in promoting an inclusive social protection system for all?	Inclusion and Equity	All clusters, with emphasis on Social Allowances and Human Development
7	To what extent have gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion advanced due to the NSSS and Action Plan II?	Inclusion and Equity	Cross-cutting, with focus on GESI strategy and targeted programmes
8	What lessons from NSSS implementation can inform future social protection initiatives in Bangladesh?	Learning and Adaptation	All clusters; horizontal review of reform experience
9	How well have technical assistance and policy support mechanisms contributed to bridging knowledge gaps and supporting implementation?	Effectiveness	Especially MIS development, M&E, and GRS systems
10	Is the NSSS still the most appropriate and effective strategy to meet Bangladesh's current social protection needs?	Strategic Relevance	Cross-cutting; linked to future NSSS design
11	Which aspects of the NSSS should be continued, strengthened, or discontinued in a future NSSS 2026+?	Strategic Relevance and Learning	All clusters; focus on scalability and institutionalisation

This mapping provides a useful tool for the oversight team to track the comprehensiveness of the review as it unfolds. It will also support structured feedback to the contractor at key stages, particularly during the inception report and draft report review phases, ensuring that no evaluation

domain is disproportionately emphasised or overlooked. Importantly, it allows for the synthesis of findings not only by thematic area, but also by system-building pillar (such as digital payments, data integration, and grievance redress), which are central to Bangladesh's reform trajectory.

In applying the KEQs, the oversight team will assess the adequacy of data sources, the methodological consistency across questions, and the degree to which stakeholder insights, particularly from marginalised groups and service delivery actors, are reflected in the responses. The ultimate aim is to ensure that the review does more than assess outputs; it must surface the systemic factors that enable or constrain reform, and generate insights that can meaningfully shape the future of social protection in Bangladesh.

2.3 UNDP Evaluation Quality Standards and DFAT Requirements

The oversight of the NSSS implementation review must be grounded in internationally recognised evaluation principles to ensure the credibility, utility, and accountability of the process. Two primary standards underpin this oversight: the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) and the DFAT Evaluation Criteria and Quality Standards. These frameworks offer complementary guidance on evaluation design, implementation, and use, with shared emphasis on rigour, inclusion, learning, and results-based assessment.

UNDP Evaluation Quality Standards

UNDP's evaluation standards are designed to promote high-quality, independent, and participatory evaluations that support organisational learning and decision-making. Key quality principles include:

- **Credibility**: Evaluations must be grounded in reliable data and sound methodology. They should include transparent documentation of data sources, analytic techniques, and limitations.
- **Utility**: Evaluations must be useful to decision-makers, clearly presenting findings and recommendations that are actionable and relevant to future programming and policy development.
- **Impartiality and independence**: The evaluation process must be free from undue influence, with clear boundaries between programme management and the evaluation team.
- **Participation and stakeholder engagement**: Evaluations must engage a wide range of stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries and implementing actors, to ensure findings are grounded in experience and reflect multiple perspectives.
- **Gender and human rights-based approaches**: Evaluations must incorporate gender-responsive and inclusive methodologies, with attention to the differential impacts of programmes on women, men, persons with disabilities, and excluded populations.
- **Transparency and accountability**: Evaluation findings must be publicly accessible, with clearly documented rationale for conclusions and use of evidence.

The 2021 UNDP Guidelines also emphasise evaluability assessments, the role of inception reports, and structured feedback mechanisms, each of which are incorporated into this oversight plan. Additionally, UNDP requires the preparation of a formal management response to final evaluation reports, further reinforcing the expectation of use and accountability.

DFAT Evaluation Criteria and Quality Standards

DFAT applies the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, while also stressing ethical standards, participation, and transparency. Specific expectations relevant to this oversight plan include:

- **Relevance**: The review must assess whether the NSSS remains fit for purpose in Bangladesh's evolving social, economic, and political context.
- **Effectiveness**: It must examine the extent to which intended results (outputs and outcomes) have been achieved and identify reasons for success or shortfall.
- **Efficiency**: Although not a primary focus in this review, efficiency considerations are relevant for systemic reforms such as digital payments and MIS development.
- **Impact**: The review must explore the broader effects of NSSS reforms, both intended and unintended, on poverty reduction, inclusion, and institutional development.
- **Sustainability**: The review must assess the extent to which reforms are embedded in institutions, supported by policy frameworks, and financially viable over the long term.

DFAT also applies a six-point quality rating scale for evaluations, ranging from "very poor" to "very high quality," based on criteria such as analytical depth, stakeholder engagement, clarity of findings, and evidence-based recommendations. The oversight team will use these criteria informally to appraise the quality of deliverables and offer structured feedback to the contractor.

Alignment and Oversight Application

Together, the UNDP and DFAT standards provide a well-informed benchmark for oversight. This plan incorporates those standards in three principal ways:

1. **In assessing deliverables** (e.g., inception report, draft findings), the oversight team will apply a consistent quality assurance lens based on the criteria above.
2. **In shaping feedback loops**, the standards will guide structured and constructive feedback, enabling the contractor to revise and improve outputs while maintaining autonomy over methods and conclusions.
3. **In guiding stakeholder validation**, these standards reinforce the importance of inclusivity, transparency, and ownership, ensuring the review reflects both technical evidence and the lived experience of stakeholders across levels.

By applying these standards rigorously and transparently, the oversight team contributes not only to the quality of the NSSS review, but also to broader commitments by the Government and its partners to evidence-based policymaking, social inclusion, and public accountability.

3 Roles, Responsibilities, and Coordination

3.1 Institutional Architecture of the Review

The implementation review of the NSSS and Action Plan II is situated within a multi-layered institutional framework that reflects the GoB's leadership in social protection policy, while also engaging a broad set of actors responsible for delivery, oversight, and reform. The structure of the review process reflects this complexity. It is designed to ensure that strategic direction remains with

the GoB, technical support is provided by development partners, and operational execution is led by an independent evaluation firm. The oversight team, led by UNDP, functions as an intermediary body to ensure coherence, quality, and responsiveness across these layers.

At the apex of the institutional architecture is the Cabinet Division, which holds the formal mandate for coordinating and overseeing NSSS implementation. The Cabinet Division chairs the Central Management Committee (CMC) of the NSSS, which brings together senior representatives from relevant ministries and serves as the primary inter-ministerial body for reviewing implementation progress and advising on strategic reforms. The Cabinet Division also chairs the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee, a technical forum that reviews monitoring data, identifies implementation bottlenecks, and advises on evaluation activities.

Supporting the Cabinet Division is the GED of the Planning Commission, which ensures that the NSSS remains aligned with national development priorities, including the Five-Year Plans and SDG implementation frameworks. The GED also provides critical technical expertise on fiscal sustainability, institutional reform, and policy coherence.

SSPS provides ongoing technical assistance, policy advisory support, and systems development expertise to the GoB. Within the context of this review, the SSPS Programme plays three roles: it is a facilitator of coordination between the contractor and government actors; a provider of technical support for review design and validation; and the convener of the oversight team.

The evaluation contractor, selected through a competitive process, is responsible for executing the full scope of the NSSS review as outlined in the ToR. This includes conducting secondary research, field data collection, key informant interviews, stakeholder consultations, and preparation of the inception, draft, and final reports.

Finally, the oversight team, comprising designated staff from UNDP and supporting consultants, functions as the quality assurance mechanism for the review. It is not involved in conducting primary data collection or drafting the evaluation report. Rather, it provides structured, independent technical review of each deliverable; facilitates alignment with stakeholder expectations; and ensures adherence to methodological standards. The oversight team engages closely with the Cabinet Division and GED to ensure that the review outputs remain aligned with national priorities and institutional realities.

The table below summarises the institutional architecture and lines of coordination:

Table 2: Institutional Roles in the NSSS Review Process

Actor	Role in NSSS Implementation Review
Cabinet Division	Policy leadership and institutional coordination; chairs CMC and M&E Sub-Committee; formal approval of review deliverables
GED	Strategic alignment with Five-Year Plans and SDGs; technical inputs on policy and reform coherence
CMC and Sub-Committees	Provide formal review and policy oversight during review validation stages

UNDP (via SSPS Programme)	Manages contractor; leads oversight team; provides technical guidance and donor coordination
DFAT and UNICEF	Development partner reviewers; provide quality assurance and feedback on deliverables
Evaluation Contractor	Executes review design, data collection, analysis, and reporting as per ToR
Oversight Team	Reviews and validates contractor deliverables; facilitates stakeholder inputs; ensures methodological and policy alignment

This architecture ensures that the NSSS review is not only technically sound but also politically anchored and widely owned. The roles are clearly delineated to prevent conflict of interest, preserve the independence of the evaluation, and ensure that recommendations emerging from the review are both credible and actionable.

3.2 Role of the Contractor vs. Oversight Team

The successful execution of the NSSS and Action Plan II implementation review depends on a clear and complementary delineation of responsibilities between the evaluation contractor and the oversight team. These two entities occupy distinct but interrelated roles in the review process, each contributing to the rigour, credibility, and usefulness of the final product. This separation of functions is essential to maintaining the independence of the evaluation, while also ensuring that the review remains strategically aligned with Government priorities and meets international quality standards.

Role of the Contractor

The evaluation contractor, a national consulting firm competitively procured under a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, is responsible for the technical and operational execution of the implementation review. The contractor's mandate is clearly defined in the ToR and includes the following responsibilities:

- Designing the evaluation framework, including the approach to responding to the 11 KEQs, the selection of methodologies, and the design of tools for primary and secondary data collection.
- Conducting fieldwork and consultations, including key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and stakeholder workshops with representatives from ministries, implementing agencies, development partners, civil society, and, where feasible, beneficiary groups.
- Synthesising findings and analysing results, including assessing performance across the five thematic clusters of Action Plan II, as well as institutional reforms in governance, coordination, G2P systems, MIS integration, and grievance redress.
- Producing three core deliverables: an inception report, a draft implementation review report, and a final report.

Role of the Oversight Team

The oversight team, led by UNDP through the SSPS Programme, acts as a structured quality assurance and coordination mechanism. Its role is not to co-author or rewrite the review, but to ensure that the

process and outputs of the contractor meet the technical, strategic, and stakeholder requirements articulated in the ToR and aligned with GoB expectations. The oversight team's functions include:

- **Reviewing deliverables at each stage:** inception, draft, and final reports against defined quality criteria. This includes assessing methodological rigour, clarity and logic of findings, treatment of inclusion and gender issues, and alignment with national policy goals.
- **Facilitating structured feedback:** from key actors, including the Cabinet Division, GED, DFAT, and UNICEF. The oversight team will synthesise comments, highlight critical gaps, and advise on revisions, without compromising the independence of the contractor's findings.
- **Monitoring progress against milestones:** identifying risks or delays, and advising SPPS on adaptive actions, if necessary, to ensure that the review remains on track and fit for purpose.
- **Ensuring coherence across institutional layers:** by maintaining regular communication with the Cabinet Division, CMC, and sub-committees, and ensuring that the review process is transparent, participatory, and institutionally embedded.
- **Supporting stakeholder validation:** including the organisation and documentation of stakeholder workshops and committee briefings where findings are presented, critiqued, and refined.

3.3 Coordination with the Cabinet Division, GED, UNDP, and DFAT

Effective coordination among government institutions and development partners is central to the successful delivery of the NSSS implementation review. As the review unfolds across multiple ministries, sectors, and oversight bodies, the ability to ensure coherence, timely decision-making, and shared understanding will be key to maintaining the strategic relevance and technical credibility of the exercise. This section outlines the planned coordination modalities between the oversight team and four principal actors: the Cabinet Division, the GED, UNDP, and DFAT.

Cabinet Division: Strategic Lead and Oversight Authority

The Cabinet Division serves as the institutional lead for the NSSS and is the formal owner of the implementation review. It chairs the CMC and the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee, both of which play pivotal roles in validating review deliverables and ensuring inter-ministerial ownership. The Cabinet Division will:

- Review and approve key deliverables (inception report, draft report, final report).
- Chair national stakeholder workshops convened for review validation and dissemination.
- Advise on the selection of government participants for key informant interviews and workshops.
- Facilitate formal communications between the contractor, line ministries, and oversight mechanisms.
- Provide strategic guidance on the framing of recommendations, especially those related to institutional reforms and next-generation NSSS design.

The oversight team will maintain regular communication with designated Cabinet Division focal points and will ensure that all major process updates and feedback loops are channelled through the Division.

GED: Technical and Policy Coherence Advisor

The GED ensures that NSSS implementation remains aligned with Bangladesh's broader development vision, including the Five Year Plans and SDG implementation framework. GED also brings analytical expertise and institutional memory from its role in coordinating national planning and public expenditure reform. Within the review process, GED will:

- Provide technical input to the inception report and review framework.
- Participate in validation sessions and workshops, particularly in assessing the fiscal and institutional feasibility of reform recommendations.
- Advise on linkages between social protection and macroeconomic policy, public investment priorities, and social sector planning.

The oversight team will coordinate directly with GED on matters related to the coherence of findings with policy priorities and cross-sectoral planning frameworks.

UNDP: Oversight Facilitator and Coordination Anchor

Through the SSPS Programme, UNDP plays a dual role as both the convener of the oversight team and the day-to-day coordinator of the contractor's engagement. UNDP is responsible for ensuring that the review is managed according to the agreed timeline, meets quality expectations, and remains aligned with the broader objectives of the social protection reform programme. UNDP will:

- Convene regular coordination meetings with the contractor and oversight team (biweekly).
- Consolidate and transmit feedback on all major deliverables, synthesising inputs from GoB and development partners.
- Organise and facilitate stakeholder workshops, validation sessions, and briefing meetings with GoB counterparts.
- Provide technical guidance and oversight in line with UNDP's evaluation quality standards and implementation support mandate.

UNDP will also maintain the documentation trail of the review process, including review memos, meeting notes, and written responses to deliverables.

DFAT: Strategic Donor and Quality Reviewer

As a core donor to the SSPS Programme and a longstanding partner in social protection reform in Bangladesh, DFAT has a direct interest in the quality, relevance, and uptake of the NSSS implementation review. DFAT's role is advisory and quality-focused. It will:

- Review all major deliverables alongside UNDP and GoB counterparts.
- Provide feedback on the strategic and policy implications of findings and recommendations.
- Participate in validation workshops and offer guidance on the positioning of the final report for policy and donor audiences.
- Support learning dissemination through regional and global policy platforms where applicable.

DFAT's feedback will be integrated into the broader quality assurance function of the oversight team. While not directly involved in the contractor's supervision, DFAT's contributions will enhance the credibility and external legitimacy of the review.

Coordination Modality

To operationalise these roles, the following coordination practices will be followed:

- Biweekly progress meetings, convened by UNDP and attended by the contractor, oversight team, and GoB focal points, to review implementation status, resolve bottlenecks, and plan upcoming activities.
- Written feedback cycles on each deliverable, with consolidated review memos issued by the oversight team and transmitted through UNDP to the contractor.
- Joint validation events, co-chaired by the Cabinet Division and supported by UNDP, to ensure that findings are reviewed and owned by key stakeholders before finalisation.
- Pre-submission briefings with Cabinet Division and GED before the delivery of each formal report, ensuring early alignment on key messages and sensitivities.

4 Methodological Oversight

4.1 Review of Methodologies Proposed by Contractor

A core function of the oversight team is to critically assess the methodological soundness of the NSSS implementation review, as proposed and executed by the contractor. The purpose of this assessment is not to prescribe a specific evaluation design but to ensure that the chosen methodologies are rigorous, appropriate to the evaluation questions, responsive to the socio-political context of Bangladesh, and consistent with the expectations set out in the ToR.

At the inception stage, the contractor is expected to submit a comprehensive methodology section as part of their inception report. This should articulate the logic of inquiry, detail data sources and collection tools, and explain how the team intends to address each of the 11 KEQs. The oversight team will review this methodology across five critical dimensions:

1. Evaluation Design Appropriateness

The contractor's overall approach, whether it adopts a theory-based evaluation, realist approach, mixed methods, or another design, must be clearly justified in terms of its fit with the purpose of the review. The NSSS review is both summative (assessing outcomes of Action Plan II) and formative (informing future strategy development). The selected methodology should therefore enable both retrospective performance assessment and forward-looking systems analysis. Designs that permit the integration of political economy analysis, institutional diagnostics, and implementation fidelity assessment are particularly relevant.

2. Clarity and Coherence of Analytical Frameworks

The methodology must be anchored in a transparent analytical framework that links the NSSS objectives, Action Plan II clusters, and system-building pillars to expected outcomes and evaluative criteria. This includes clear definitions of what constitutes progress (e.g., in programme consolidation, digital G2P uptake, or grievance redress operationalisation), and how such progress will be measured.

The oversight team will assess whether the logic of inquiry is clearly mapped out, and whether the proposed frameworks accommodate complexity, multi-sectoral causality, and differential impacts across population groups.

3. Suitability of Data Sources and Collection Methods

The contractor is expected to triangulate multiple sources of data, including:

- **Secondary sources**: policy documents, administrative data from ministries, budgetary records, prior evaluations (e.g., the 2018 Mid-Term Review), and NSSS monitoring reports.
- **Primary qualitative data**: KIIs with government officials, development partners, implementing staff at the local level, and civil society actors.
- **Stakeholder consultations and workshops**: for validation and collective reflection.

The oversight team will assess whether data sources are sufficient to credibly respond to each KEQ, and whether proposed data collection instruments (interview protocols, workshop designs, etc.) are adequate, inclusive, and contextually adapted.

4. Inclusion and Equity Considerations

A key expectation, grounded in both the NSSS and UNDP/DFAT evaluation standards, is that the methodology must integrate gender equality, disability inclusion, and LNOB principles throughout. This means:

- Disaggregating findings where possible by sex, age, disability status, and geographic location (especially urban vs. rural).
- Including perspectives of marginalised groups, both through purposive sampling of KIIs and in workshop participation.
- Identifying structural or institutional barriers that affect the inclusiveness of implementation (e.g., digital exclusion in G2P systems, underrepresentation in grievance mechanisms).

The oversight team will specifically assess whether these cross-cutting priorities are treated as core evaluative dimensions rather than as peripheral issues.

5. Ethical and Practical Feasibility

Finally, the oversight team will review whether the proposed methodology is ethically sound and operationally feasible given the time and resources available. This includes considerations such as informed consent processes, data confidentiality, protection of vulnerable respondents, and adaptability in case of unforeseen political or logistical constraints.

Table 3: Summary of Oversight Criteria for Methodological Review

Review Dimension	Assessment Focus
Evaluation Design	Suitability to review purpose; summative and formative capacity
Analytical Framework	Clarity of logic model; mapping of KEQs to outcomes and indicators
Data Sources and Tools	Triangulation of secondary and primary sources; robustness of instruments

Inclusion and Equity Integration	LNOB, gender, and disability perspectives built into sampling and analysis
Ethical Soundness and Feasibility	Data protection, informed consent, and practical viability

4.2 Sampling Frame and Key Informant Selection Criteria

A methodologically sound sampling strategy is fundamental to the credibility and utility of the NSSS implementation review. Given the scale and multisectoral nature of Action Plan II, spanning 39 ministries, five thematic clusters, and multiple implementation tiers, a well-considered sampling design is essential to ensure the representativeness of perspectives, diversity of institutional insights, and coverage of geographic and programmatic variations.

The oversight team will assess the contractor's sampling strategy with particular attention to the following dimensions:

A. Institutional Coverage

The review must engage a broad cross-section of implementing and coordinating institutions involved in Action Plan II. This includes not only central ministries with large programme portfolios, such as the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), and Ministry of Finance (MoF), but also sector-specific ministries responsible for cluster-specific reforms.

The contractor should:

- Ensure coverage of all five thematic clusters of Action Plan II.
- Include interviews with programme focal points, cluster leads, and MIS or M&E officers within each ministry.
- Include institutional actors involved in cross-cutting systems (e.g., Cabinet Division for coordination, Finance Division for budgeting, Bangladesh Bank for payment integration).

The oversight team will verify whether ministry selection is balanced across clusters and reflective of both programme-heavy and coordination-centric roles.

B. Subnational Engagement

Social protection implementation in Bangladesh occurs not only at the central level, but also through upazila and union-level authorities responsible for beneficiary selection, grievance management, payment verification, and frontline service delivery. Without subnational engagement, the review risks reflecting policy intent without capturing implementation realities.

The sampling strategy should:

- Include a purposive sample of 3–5 districts, selected to reflect geographic, socio-economic, and administrative diversity (e.g., urban/rural, disaster-prone, lagging districts).
- In each selected district, engage local officials (e.g., Deputy Commissioners, Social Welfare Officers), Union Parishad members, and field-level programme implementers.

The oversight team may advise the contractor to adjust field locations to ensure representation of hard-to-reach or under-served areas, especially those with high concentrations of poverty, disability, or climate risk.

C. Stakeholder and Beneficiary Inclusion

The review must capture the perspectives of non-government stakeholders, including development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs), and, where feasible, beneficiaries or programme participants. While this is not a full beneficiary impact evaluation, direct feedback from service recipients enhances validity and grounds the analysis in lived experience.

Expected stakeholder categories include:

- National NGOs and networks working on disability rights, gender justice, and child protection.
- CSOs engaged in budget monitoring or grievance redress facilitation.
- Development partners supporting technical components of the NSSS (e.g., UNICEF, International Labour Organisation [ILO], World Bank).
- Beneficiary groups participating in social allowance programmes or labour market interventions.

Where possible, FGDs or structured KIIs should be used to capture these perspectives. The oversight team will assess whether the sampling frame ensures voice and inclusion, particularly of women, persons with disabilities, and minority groups.

D. Sampling Transparency and Justification

Finally, the contractor must provide a transparent sampling rationale in the inception report, detailing:

- Selection criteria for institutions and districts.
- Number and type of informants by stakeholder category.
- Sampling logic for FGDs or workshop participants.
- How the sampling approach supports response to each KEQ.

Table 4: Oversight Criteria for Sampling Strategy Assessment

Sampling Dimension	Assessment Criteria
Institutional Coverage	Balanced representation across Action Plan II clusters and systemic reform actors
Subnational Engagement	Inclusion of diverse districts and local implementation stakeholders
Stakeholder Representation	Involvement of civil society, development partners, and end users
Inclusion & LNOB	Representation of gender, disability, geography, and marginalised groups
Transparency	Sampling logic clearly stated; sample sizes and categories disaggregated

4.3 Alignment with Gender, Disability, and LNOB Considerations

In alignment with the core principles of the NSSS, the 8th Five Year Plan, and international development commitments such as the SDGs, the NSSS review must be explicitly grounded in a human rights-based

and inclusion-sensitive framework. This includes the integration of gender equality, disability inclusion, and the principle of "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB) across all stages of the evaluation. These dimensions are not only normative imperatives but also practical requirements for assessing the extent to which social protection reforms have reached and benefited the most marginalised populations.

The oversight team has a responsibility to assess whether the contractor's methodology and analysis meaningfully reflect these cross-cutting priorities, and to recommend adjustments where gaps are identified. This applies both at the design stage (in the inception report) and during data collection, analysis, and reporting phases.

A. Gender Equality

The NSSS and Action Plan II recognise the importance of addressing gender-specific risks and structural inequalities that limit women's access to and benefits from social protection. This includes not only the provision of targeted allowances for widowed and destitute women, but also reforms to improve access to maternity benefits, promote women's labour market participation, and reduce barriers in digital payments and grievance redress systems.

The oversight team will assess whether the evaluation:

- Incorporates sex-disaggregated analysis of outcomes, participation, and satisfaction across programmes.
- Examines the gender responsiveness of programme design and delivery, for example, whether registration processes, payment modalities, and grievance channels are accessible and safe for women.
- Includes the voices of women beneficiaries and implementers, particularly in rural areas and informal settlements.
- Assesses how GESI strategies endorsed under Action Plan II have been operationalised at both national and subnational levels.

B. Disability Inclusion

Bangladesh has made policy commitments to disability-inclusive development through the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act (2013) and the NSSS itself, which calls for more inclusive targeting and service delivery. However, implementation barriers persist, including inaccessible infrastructure, digital exclusion, limited programme design differentiation, and data gaps.

The oversight team will therefore assess whether the evaluation:

- Includes disability-disaggregated data where available, or identifies data gaps explicitly.
- Engages with Disabled Persons' Organisations (DPOs) and frontline service providers to understand institutional and delivery challenges.
- Analyses whether social protection systems, particularly MIS, payment, and grievance platforms, accommodate persons with disabilities.
- Identifies structural constraints (e.g., lack of accessible communication, digital ID verification systems) that may have excluded persons with disabilities from reform benefits.

- **C. Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)**

LNOB is a foundational principle of the NSSS and the broader SDG framework. In the context of social protection, it demands a systematic effort to identify and reach groups who are often left out due to geography, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, migration status, or other dimensions of marginalisation. The oversight team will assess whether the review:

- Applies an equity lens to implementation analysis, looking beyond aggregate coverage to examine who is reached and who remains excluded.
- Identifies inclusion gaps in programme reach (e.g., urban poor, informal workers, Indigenous communities, climate-affected populations).
- Examines whether digital reforms, such as G2P systems, have introduced new exclusion risks due to technological, literacy, or infrastructure barriers.
- Includes fieldwork in diverse settings, including hard-to-reach and underserved districts.

Table 5: Oversight Matrix for Gender, Disability, and LNOB Integration

Inclusion Dimension	Oversight Criteria
Gender Equality	Sex-disaggregated findings; analysis of gendered risks; women's voices and access to services
Disability Inclusion	Engagement with DPOs; disability-specific barriers analysed; platform and service accessibility assessed
LNOB	Disaggregation by geography, income, and vulnerability; assessment of exclusion risks from digital reforms

The oversight team will also ensure that inclusion is not treated as a stand-alone topic, but rather integrated throughout all KEQs. For example, assessments of coordination (KEQ 4–5) should consider whether inclusion is embedded in inter-ministerial processes; analyses of effectiveness (KEQs 1–2, 9) should reflect inclusion as a measure of success; and recommendations should address institutional or systemic gaps that inhibit inclusive design and delivery.

By foregrounding gender, disability, and LNOB considerations, the oversight mechanism ensures that the NSSS review reflects both the normative commitments of the GoB and the operational realities of inclusive system-building.

4.4 Validation of Analytical Techniques and Triangulation

The methodological credibility of the NSSS implementation review depends not only on sound data collection, but also on the analytical approaches used to interpret that data. Given the policy significance of this review, as a foundation for post-2026 social protection strategy formulation, it is imperative that findings and conclusions are underpinned by transparent, logically coherent, and evidence-based analysis. The oversight team is responsible for assessing whether the contractor's analytical techniques meet these expectations and whether multiple sources of data are appropriately triangulated to enhance reliability and mitigate bias.

Analytical Techniques

The contractor is expected to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis to respond to the 11 KEQs. The specific methods may include thematic content analysis, descriptive statistics, trend

analysis, contribution analysis, or political economy diagnostics, depending on data availability and the nature of each KEQ.

The oversight team will assess the contractor's analytical framework along the following criteria:

- **Clarity of analytical logic**: Are the steps linking raw data to evaluative judgments explicitly laid out? For example, if a finding claims improved coordination, is that conclusion substantiated through measurable indicators or stakeholder evidence?
- **Fit for purpose**: Do the selected analytical techniques align with the questions being asked? For instance, contribution analysis may be suitable for evaluating the role of technical assistance in implementation (KEQ 9), while institutional analysis may be more appropriate for governance-related KEQs (3–5).
- **Use of existing benchmarks**: Does the review compare performance against established targets, prior evaluations (e.g., Mid-Term Implementation Review 2019), or international best practices?
- **Depth vs. breadth**: Is there adequate balance between systemic-level analysis and thematic/cluster-specific findings? Do summaries capture nuance across different implementing ministries?

Where analysis is found to rely heavily on perception-based inputs (e.g., key informants), the oversight team will check whether the report clearly qualifies such inputs and avoids generalisations unsupported by evidence.

Triangulation of Sources

A credible implementation review must synthesise evidence from multiple streams to ensure that conclusions are not driven by single data points or narrow stakeholder perspectives. The oversight team will assess whether the contractor demonstrates effective triangulation across:

- **Data types**: administrative records, programme documents, KIIs, FGDs, field observations, and workshop discussions.
- **Stakeholder groups**: senior policymakers, programme managers, field-level implementers, beneficiaries, and civil society actors.
- **Levels of analysis**: national policy and system reforms, ministerial implementation experiences, and local service delivery contexts.

Triangulation should be explicitly documented in the analysis sections of the report, with illustrative examples. For instance, a finding about challenges in MIS interoperability should ideally be supported by: (i) documentary evidence (e.g., system audits or dashboards), (ii) testimony from ministry IT focal points, and (iii) confirmation from G2P providers or district-level administrators.

The oversight team will flag any instances where:

- Contradictory evidence is presented without reconciliation or explanation;
- Analysis relies heavily on unverified stakeholder accounts;
- Data limitations are not transparently acknowledged.

Interpretation and Validity

The oversight team will evaluate whether the interpretation of data is reasonable, logically consistent, and adequately qualified. The review should avoid overstatement, particularly when making causal claims about impact or policy influence. In cases where the data is insufficient to provide definitive answers, this should be transparently reported with a rationale provided.

Table 6: Oversight Checklist for Analytical Quality and Triangulation

Aspect	Assessment Criteria
Analytical Logic	Transparent linkage between evidence, findings, and conclusions
Methodological Fit	Techniques appropriate to KEQ type and available data
Triangulation Practices	Integration of diverse data types, actors, and levels of analysis
Handling of Contradictions	Differences in data sources are explained and reconciled
Transparency of Limitations	Data gaps or inferential constraints clearly stated
Interpretive Caution	Avoidance of causal overreach or unqualified generalisation

5 Quality Assurance and Reporting Mechanisms

5.1 Inception Report Oversight

The inception report is the foundational document of the NSSS implementation review. It defines the scope, design, and operational modalities of the evaluation and provides the first formal opportunity for stakeholders to assess whether the contractor's approach is aligned with the ToR, responsive to stakeholder expectations, and methodologically sound. As such, the oversight team will undertake a structured and detailed review of the inception report and will issue a formal response consolidating feedback from key actors including the Cabinet Division, GED, UNDP, DFAT, and UNICEF.

The oversight of the inception report will focus on five key components:

1. Responsiveness to the ToR and KEQs

The oversight team will assess whether the inception report demonstrates a clear and comprehensive understanding of the objectives and scope set out in the ToR. This includes:

- Full alignment with the 11 KEQs, with clear articulation of how each will be addressed.
- Appropriate coverage of the five thematic clusters of Action Plan II and the overarching NSSS reform domains (coordination, G2P, MIS, GRS, and inclusion).
- A transparent rationale for any adaptations to the review scope, with justification provided and agreed upon with the oversight team and Cabinet Division.

2. Clarity and Credibility of Methodology

The methodology will be reviewed for rigour, internal coherence, and feasibility. The inception report must explain:

- Evaluation design and logic model;
- Sampling strategy and rationale;
- Data sources and collection instruments;
- Analytical techniques and triangulation approaches;
- Inclusion of gender equality, disability, and LNOB considerations;

- Ethical safeguards, including informed consent and data protection protocols.

The oversight team will expect methodological transparency, including any limitations or assumptions, and will require revisions where analytical frameworks are vague or not well aligned with the KEQs.

3. Work Plan and Milestones
The inception report must include a clear, time-bound work plan that outlines:

- Key deliverables and expected dates (inception report, draft report, final report);
- Fieldwork and data collection schedule;
- Stakeholder consultation and validation events;
- Internal review milestones (e.g., quality checks, draft revisions).

Any divergence from the agreed review timeline must be justified, with mitigation strategies proposed. The oversight team will assess the realism of the timeline and the adequacy of sequencing, especially to avoid stakeholder fatigue or compression of validation phases.

4. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
The oversight team will assess the contractor's plan for engaging government, development partners, and non-government actors. This includes:

- Identification of stakeholders by category and relevance;
- Proposed modalities of engagement (KIIs, FGDs, workshops);
- Plans for incorporating feedback, especially from marginalised groups;
- Measures to ensure participation is meaningful and not tokenistic.

This engagement strategy will be reviewed for both breadth (representation across actor types) and depth (quality and inclusivity of interaction).

5. Inception Report Deliverables and Presentation
The contractor will be expected to:

- Submit a full written inception report;
- Present findings and proposed approach at a virtual or in-person inception workshop convened by the Cabinet Division and UNDP;
- Revise the report in response to consolidated feedback, with a matrix indicating how each comment has been addressed.

The oversight team will produce a written review memo, structured by the five components above, with clear guidance on required changes and areas of commendation. Only upon satisfactory revision and formal acceptance of the inception report will the contractor be authorised to begin data collection and fieldwork.

Table 7: Oversight Inception Report Review Template

Component	Key Review Questions	Status	Comments / Required Revisions
Responsiveness to ToR & KEQs	Are all KEQs addressed? Is scope aligned with ToR and government priorities?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Methodology	Are design, sampling, data collection, analysis, and inclusion approaches appropriate and coherent?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Work Plan	Is the schedule realistic and adequately sequenced? Are risks and mitigation actions identified?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Stakeholder Engagement	Are actors well identified? Are participation and feedback mechanisms credible and inclusive?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Presentation & Responsiveness	Has the contractor responded to initial feedback and prepared for workshop presentation?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…

5.2 Interim Report and Feedback Loops

The interim report, represented by the contractor's draft implementation review, is the most analytically substantial and strategically sensitive milestone in the NSSS review process. It is the first formal articulation of the contractor's findings, interpretations, and provisional recommendations, and thus plays a pivotal role in shaping stakeholder trust, institutional validation, and the political uptake of the review's conclusions. As such, the oversight team will engage in a structured and detailed review of the interim report, applying technical, strategic, and participatory standards to guide feedback and revision.

The purpose of this stage is twofold: first, to ensure that the draft findings are strong, balanced, and supported by adequate evidence; and second, to establish an open and transparent process for incorporating feedback from government, development partners, and other stakeholders without compromising the independence of the evaluation.

Structure and Content Assessment

The interim report is expected to be comprehensive in scope and clearly structured to align with the KEQs and the analytical framework outlined in the inception report. The oversight team will assess the draft for:

- **Coverage**: Whether all 11 KEQs are addressed and whether findings are disaggregated by Action Plan II clusters and system-level themes (e.g., G2P, MIS, GRS, coordination).
- **Analytical rigour**: Whether evidence is adequately interpreted, triangulated, and contextualised; whether conclusions follow logically from findings; and whether limitations and gaps are transparently acknowledged.
- **Inclusiveness**: Whether gender, disability, and LNOB considerations are reflected in both the analysis and the proposed recommendations.

- **Balance and tone**: Whether the narrative is appropriately nuanced, avoids politicisation or overstatement, and conveys constructive recommendations grounded in operational realities.
- **Use of visualisation**: Whether findings are effectively communicated through tables, figures, and policy briefs that enhance accessibility for policymakers.

The oversight team will provide a written response memo structured by KEQ or thematic section, clearly distinguishing between mandatory revisions (required for quality or credibility) and optional suggestions (recommended for clarity or emphasis).

Consolidated Feedback Mechanism

In line with UNDP and DFAT evaluation standards, the oversight team will coordinate a multi-actor feedback process. This includes:

- Bilateral technical reviews from Cabinet Division, GED, and key line ministries whose portfolios are addressed in the review.
- Input from development partners, particularly DFAT and UNICEF, with emphasis on relevance to donor strategy, institutional partnerships, and technical assistance implications.
- Comments from oversight reviewers, applying the quality assurance criteria set out in this plan.

All comments will be consolidated into a formal matrix, which will be shared with the contractor as a single, coherent response package. The contractor will be asked to return a comment resolution matrix, indicating how each item has been addressed *(Accepted / Not Accepted / Partially Accepted)*, with justification provided where suggestions are not taken forward.

Validation Events

In parallel with the written feedback process, the oversight team will coordinate at least one formal validation workshop, co-convened by the Cabinet Division and UNDP. This workshop will bring together:

- CMC members and M&E sub-committee representatives,
- GED and sectoral ministry officials,
- Development partners,
- Selected civil society stakeholders and expert reviewers.

The contractor will present the main findings and preliminary recommendations and engage in a moderated discussion, with a particular emphasis on contentious findings, policy implications, and areas requiring further clarification or refinement. The oversight team will document key points raised and ensure they are reflected in the final revision process.

Table 8: Draft Interim Report Feedback Process – Roles and Timeline

Stage	Lead Actor(s)	Description	Estimated Timeline

Internal technical review	Oversight Team	Full review of draft report; written feedback aligned to KEQs	Week 1 after submission
Stakeholder comments	GoB, DFAT, UNICEF	Targeted feedback from Cabinet Division, GED, ministries, and donors	Week 2
Comment consolidation	Oversight Team	Integrated feedback matrix with prioritised action points	Week 3
Validation workshop	Cabinet Division & UNDP	Presentation and structured discussion with GoB and stakeholders	Week 3–4
Response matrix and revisions	Contractor	Written response to feedback and submission of revised report	Week 5

5.3 Final Report Assessment and Closure Procedures

The final report of the NSSS and Action Plan II implementation review represents the definitive output of the contracted evaluation team. It must reflect all revisions and refinements made in response to prior feedback, demonstrate analytical maturity and internal consistency, and meet the Government of Bangladesh's expectations for policy utility, strategic insight, and institutional credibility. As such, the oversight team plays a central role in assessing the final report, facilitating structured closure, and ensuring that the product is formally endorsed for policy dissemination and use.

The final report is not merely a refined draft. It is a published, citable document that will serve as a reference point for the design of the next generation NSSS and associated action plans, as well as a benchmark for development partners, sectoral ministries, and social protection advocates. The closure process must therefore be managed with diligence, transparency, and policy foresight.

Assessment Criteria for Final Report

The oversight team will assess the final report using the same analytical, methodological, and policy alignment criteria applied to the interim report, with additional emphasis on coherence, completeness, and usability. Specific areas of review include:

- **Incorporation of feedback**: Whether the report has adequately responded to the comment matrix issued during the interim phase. The contractor must include a written summary of changes and a justification for any feedback not integrated.
- **Completeness and clarity**: Whether the report addresses all 11 KEQs in a manner that is analytically coherent, evidence-based, and accessible to both technical and non-technical audiences.
- **Policy relevance**: Whether the findings and recommendations are well-targeted, actionable, and grounded in the institutional realities of the social protection system in Bangladesh.
- **Use of data and evidence**: Whether tables, figures, case examples, and secondary sources are used effectively to support conclusions, and whether sources are cited transparently.
- **Structure and formatting**: Whether the document meets formatting requirements, including executive summary, annexes, and sectoral breakdowns; and whether language and tone are appropriate for high-level policy audiences.

A final review memo will be issued by the oversight team to the Cabinet Division and UNDP, confirming whether the report meets expectations and recommending either formal acceptance or limited final revisions.

Closure Process and Sign-Off

Upon acceptance by the oversight team and Cabinet Division, the contractor will be required to submit the following final deliverables:

- The full final report in editable (Word) and PDF format;
- A PowerPoint presentation summarising key findings, lessons, and recommendations;
- A concise policy brief (3–4 pages), structured for Cabinet-level audiences;
- A comment resolution matrix, outlining how all previous feedback has been addressed;
- Final data visualisations, annexes, and reference lists as per agreed structure.

The oversight team will organise a high-level briefing session, chaired by the Cabinet Division and attended by Secretaries, CMC members, and representatives from GED, UNDP, DFAT, and other partners. At this event, the contractor will present the final findings and recommendations, followed by a moderated discussion and a Q&A session. This marks the formal completion of the assignment. Following this event, the oversight team will confirm in writing that all deliverables have been received, reviewed, and endorsed. This sign-off will enable the contractor to receive final payment, as per the payment schedule set in the original contract.

Forward Use and Archiving

The oversight team, in coordination with UNDP, will also facilitate the submission of final documents to:

- The NSSS M&E Sub-Committee (for reference and integration into policy planning);
- The SPPS Programme archive and NSSS dashboard (where relevant sections may be visualised);
- Development partners, for use in funding decisions and technical assistance alignment.

The report will also be retained by UNDP for future independent evaluations and as a public good to support learning in Bangladesh and comparable reform settings.

Table 9: Final Report Quality Assurance and Closure Checklist

Component	Assessment Question	Status	Remarks
Response to Feedback	Has the report integrated previous comments and justified any omissions?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Analytical Coherence	Are findings well-structured, substantiated, and logically presented across all KEQs?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Policy Relevance	Are recommendations specific, actionable, and aligned with institutional roles and capacities?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…
Presentation Materials	Are the PPT, policy brief, and summary visuals clear and accurate?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…

Closure Event Preparedness	Is the contractor prepared to present and defend the report before CMC and Cabinet Division?	[✓/✗/Revise]	…

5.4 Risk Management and Dispute Resolution

Oversight of a complex, high-stakes evaluation such as the NSSS and Action Plan II implementation review requires not only proactive engagement and technical scrutiny, but also a well-defined mechanism for identifying, mitigating, and resolving risks. These risks may be methodological, institutional, or political in nature, and, if not addressed in a timely and coordinated manner, could compromise the quality, credibility, or utility of the final review.

The oversight team, in its convening and quality assurance role, will maintain a continuous risk monitoring function throughout the evaluation process. This includes early identification of challenges, clear escalation pathways, and coordinated mechanisms to resolve disputes or deadlocks that may arise between the contractor, GoB, or development partners.

Table 10: Risk Categories, Examples, and Oversight Responses

Risk Category	Examples	Oversight Response
Methodological Risks	Weak evaluation design; unsubstantiated findings; inconsistent application of KEQs	Early detection during inception review; written guidance; targeted revision requests
Timeliness and Delivery	Delays in submission of key deliverables; compressed validation timeframes	Milestone tracking; timeline adjustments through mutual agreement; prioritisation of feedback
Access and Permissions	Lack of access to government data; difficulty scheduling KIIs or workshops	Coordination via Cabinet Division; support letters; re-prioritisation of sampling sites
Stakeholder Sensitivities	Resistance to critical findings; reluctance to share information; political sensitivity	Early engagement with CMC and ministries; balanced presentation of findings; clarification of independence
Inclusion Gaps	Underrepresentation of women, persons with disabilities, or marginalised groups	Revisions to sampling frame; guidance on inclusive facilitation and accessible formats
Quality Disputes	Disagreements on interpretation of findings or adequacy of revisions	Structured comment matrix; facilitated discussion via oversight team; mediation if needed

Escalation and Dispute Resolution Pathway

Where disagreements arise, particularly between the contractor and key stakeholders (e.g., Cabinet Division, GED, UNDP), that cannot be resolved through routine feedback processes, a three-tier dispute resolution process will be activated:

1. **Bilateral Clarification**
   The oversight team will first facilitate a bilateral clarification session between the contractor and the concerned stakeholder (e.g., ministry, development partner), aiming to resolve the

issue through direct dialogue, review of evidence, and compromise on presentation or framing.

2. **Oversight Team Mediation**
   If unresolved, the oversight team (led by UNDP and supported by technical consultants) will convene a small mediation group, including a representative from the Cabinet Division and one independent reviewer, to assess the issue and propose a resolution based on evaluation quality standards and the ToR.
3. **Cabinet Division Adjudication**
   In rare cases where consensus cannot be achieved, the matter will be referred to the Cabinet Division for final determination. The Cabinet Division may accept or reject the contested content, request reframing, or seek a neutral peer review opinion.

6 Stakeholder Engagement and Learning

6.1 Validation Workshops and Consultation Forums

Validation workshops and structured consultation forums are essential elements of the NSSS review process. They serve not only to confirm the accuracy and relevance of findings, but also to foster cross-institutional ownership, enhance transparency, and strengthen the legitimacy of final recommendations. The oversight team is responsible for ensuring that these events are meaningfully designed, inclusively conducted, and properly documented, and that the insights generated are integrated into the final report.

In the context of Bangladesh's multisectoral social protection landscape, characterised by complex institutional roles, overlapping mandates, and diverse reform interests, validation is not a procedural formality. It is a strategic opportunity to deepen policy dialogue, test assumptions, and align stakeholders around a shared understanding of what has been achieved under the NSSS and where reforms must go next.

A. Purpose and Objectives

The primary purposes of validation workshops and consultation forums are to:

- Provide key government ministries, development partners, and civil society actors an opportunity to review and respond to the contractor's findings and recommendations;
- Confirm the accuracy of interpretations, especially those related to implementation bottlenecks, coordination challenges, and equity gaps;
- Identify areas of disagreement, knowledge gaps, or unaddressed concerns that require further clarification or reframing;
- Foster consensus on strategic reform priorities for the next generation NSSS and establish a foundation for follow-up policy dialogue.

The validation process also serves to strengthen institutional memory and political buy-in, particularly among implementing ministries whose cooperation will be critical in future reform phases.

B. Workshop Design and Participation

The oversight team will work closely with UNDP and the Cabinet Division to organise at least two national-level validation events:

1. **Draft Report Validation Workshop**
   Conducted after the interim report has been submitted and reviewed, this workshop focuses on discussion of the main findings, preliminary recommendations, and areas of uncertainty. It will provide structured space for technical and policy dialogue.
2. **Final Report Dissemination and Validation Workshop**
   Held upon completion of the final draft, this high-level session will aim to formalise institutional endorsement of the review, ensure alignment with Cabinet Division expectations, and position the report for uptake into future NSSS design processes.

Each workshop will be structured around:

- A presentation by the contractor (30–40 minutes), followed by a moderated discussion.
- Breakout group sessions or thematic panels (where appropriate) to allow targeted feedback by cluster or stakeholder group.
- A plenary reporting session and synthesis facilitated by the oversight team.

The participant list will include:

- Cabinet Division and GED leadership
- Representatives from all five Action Plan II thematic clusters (line ministries)
- Members of the CMC and NSSS M&E Sub-Committee
- Development partners (DFAT, UNICEF, ILO, World Bank)
- Representatives from civil society, DPOs, and gender/disability advocacy groups
- Technical experts or independent reviewers (as agreed)

The oversight team will ensure that invitations are inclusive, and that sessions are facilitated in a manner that encourages open feedback, including from junior officials, subnational implementers, and non-government voices.

Regional or Thematic Consultations (Optional)
Depending on time and resources, the oversight team may recommend the inclusion of one or two thematic or regional consultation forums focused on particular issues (e.g., digital exclusion, social insurance readiness, child-sensitive programming). These may be conducted virtually or in hybrid format, enabling broader participation, including from upazila and district-level stakeholders.
Such consultations would serve to:

- Capture underrepresented implementation experiences;
- Test recommendations that have high operational impact or political sensitivity;
- Deepen engagement with stakeholder groups not routinely involved in central policy dialogue.

D. Documentation and Follow-Up

The oversight team will:

- Develop workshop agendas, guiding questions, and facilitation plans in collaboration with the Cabinet Division and UNDP;
- Document key points raised in all sessions, including points of agreement, dissent, and new issues identified;
- Consolidate this documentation into a validation memo and share it with the contractor for reference in final revisions.

Table 11: Summary of Proposed Validation Events

Workshop Type	Purpose	Timing	Participants	Facilitated By
Draft Report Validation	Review interim findings and recommendations	Week 3–4 post-draft	CMC, ministries, donors, CSOs	Oversight team + UNDP
Final Report Dissemination	Endorse findings and prepare for policy uptake	Post-final submission	High-level GoB, Cabinet Division, GED, partners	Cabinet Division + UNDP
Thematic/Regional Consultations (optional)	Explore targeted issues or implementation bottlenecks	As needed	Subnational officials, NGOs, technical experts	Oversight team

6.2 Documentation and Integration of Stakeholder Feedback

Effective evaluation oversight requires more than convening stakeholder events, it demands a systematic process for recording, synthesising, and integrating the views expressed during those engagements. Stakeholder feedback must be treated as substantive input into the review process, not as commentary on a completed product. Accordingly, the oversight team plays a critical role in ensuring that all relevant feedback is properly documented, reviewed for consistency with evaluation objectives, and transparently considered in final reporting.

This section outlines the procedures and principles that will guide the documentation and integration of stakeholder feedback during the NSSS review process.

Principles of Stakeholder Feedback Management

Three core principles underpin the oversight team's approach:

1. **Inclusiveness:** all categories of stakeholders, central and local government officials, development partners, civil society organisations, technical experts, and underrepresented groups (including women, persons with disabilities, and rural or marginalised populations), must have the opportunity to express views on findings and recommendations. This includes feedback offered in structured validation sessions, written comments, informal exchanges, or through facilitated group discussions.
2. **Traceability:** all substantive inputs should be traceable to their source (individuals anonymised where appropriate) and recorded with sufficient specificity to enable the contractor to engage meaningfully with the content.

3. **Transparency:** the feedback process must be documented in a way that allows stakeholders to see how their views were treated, whether they were accepted, adapted, or respectfully declined, and with what justification.

Documentation Process

The oversight team will be responsible for documenting stakeholder feedback through three primary mechanisms:

1. **Workshop Notes and Thematic Summaries**

All validation workshops and consultation forums will be documented using a standardised format. Rapporteurs assigned by the oversight team will capture:

- Thematic areas discussed;
- Points of agreement and divergence;
- Specific comments on findings or recommendations;
- Suggestions for rephrasing, clarification, or elaboration.

These notes will be synthesised into concise thematic summaries and shared with the contractor.

2. **Comment Matrices**

For written comments received (e.g., from ministries, development partners, or expert reviewers), the oversight team will compile inputs into a structured comment matrix. Each comment will be tagged by KEQ, section, or theme, and categorised as:

- Factual correction;
- Methodological concern;
- Interpretive suggestion;
- Strategic recommendation.

The contractor will be asked to respond to each entry, indicating how it has been addressed in the revised report. This matrix will form part of the final documentation package.

3. **Integration Memo**

The oversight team will prepare a summary "integration memo" after each validation phase. This will highlight major issues raised, how the contractor has addressed them, and any residual tensions or unresolved recommendations. The memo will be shared with the Cabinet Division and GED as part of the final clearance process.

Table 12: Stakeholder Feedback Documentation Tools

Tool	Purpose	Managed By	Timing
Workshop Summary Notes	Capture discussions and insights from validation events	Oversight team	Within 5 days post-event
Written Comment Matrix	Organise formal feedback from stakeholders	Oversight team	At draft and final report stage
Feedback Integration Memo	Synthesis of issues raised and response status	Oversight team	Following each review phase

Integration into Final Report
The contractor will be expected to:

- Review all documented feedback;
- Respond in writing via the comment matrix;
- Clearly reflect accepted revisions in the final report;
- Justify any feedback that is not incorporated, particularly where there are policy sensitivities or divergent stakeholder views.

The oversight team will assess the adequacy of this integration and advise the Cabinet Division on whether the report reflects a fair and accurate treatment of stakeholder perspectives. In cases of unresolved issues, the oversight team may recommend explanatory footnotes or dissenting perspectives to be annexed, in the interest of transparency.

6.3 Cross-Institutional Learning and Uptake Strategy

Beyond serving as a retrospective assessment of progress, the NSSS and Action Plan II review is expected to inform the forward trajectory of social protection policy in Bangladesh. Its findings must not remain confined to a final report or a small circle of policymakers. To be effective, the review must catalyse institutional learning, support decision-making, and contribute to a shared understanding of what works, what doesn't, and what must change in the next phase of reform.

The oversight team will play a key role in facilitating cross-institutional learning and promoting uptake of the review's insights. This involves translating evaluation findings into usable formats, convening dialogues beyond the core review team, and embedding recommendations into existing government coordination and planning mechanisms.

Embedding Learning in Institutional Mechanisms
Several formal bodies provide entry points for institutional learning within government:

- The CMC will be a key venue for presenting synthesis findings, discussing reform implications, and recommending next steps.
- The NSSS M&E Sub-Committee can serve as a forum for detailed technical review, follow-up monitoring decisions, and identification of additional analytical or data gaps revealed by the evaluation.
- Line ministry technical committees and cluster-based working groups under Action Plan II offer opportunities to tailor findings to sectoral reform processes and strengthen operational relevance.

The oversight team will support the Cabinet Division in preparing presentation materials and briefings for these bodies and will encourage structured discussion of uptake and reform sequencing.

Support to Cabinet-Level and Policy Dialogue
To ensure senior-level uptake, the oversight team will work with the Cabinet Division and UNDP to:

- Prepare short policy briefs and executive summaries focused on high-level findings, written in accessible language, highlighting actionable policy options;
- Organise a policy dialogue session or high-level roundtable, involving key secretaries, GED representatives, and development partners, to translate findings into political decisions on NSSS renewal or revision;
- Recommend formal documentation of review findings in the agenda or records of the Cabinet Committee on Social Protection or related planning bodies.

Dissemination and Sectoral Uptake

The oversight team will coordinate with the SSPS Programme and UNDP communications teams to ensure wider dissemination of review findings. This includes:

- Producing simplified summaries, including infographics, dashboards, or short videos, which explain key findings to a non-specialist audience;
- Identifying sector-specific implications, such as how the review findings affect implementation in education, health, labour, or social welfare sectors;
- Sharing findings through regional workshops, knowledge platforms, or inter-ministerial learning exchanges, potentially in collaboration with the Planning Commission or academic institutions.

Uptake by Development Partners and TA Providers

The review's insights are also valuable for development partners and organisations providing technical assistance, who often work across ministries and programme areas. The oversight team will:

- Facilitate a development partner debriefing, focused on identifying areas of alignment between findings and current/planned support;
- Share the review with technical partners (e.g., UNICEF, World Bank, ILO) to encourage adaptation of tools, methods, or TA packages;
- Recommend that development partners incorporate key findings into their strategy documents, joint reviews, or funding proposals.

Table 13: Uptake Pathways and Oversight Actions

Uptake Pathway	Target Actor	Oversight Team Role	Product/Action
Government coordination bodies	Cabinet Division, CMC	Technical support and briefing preparation	Presentation decks, 2-pager summaries
Line ministry technical teams	Cluster lead ministries	Sectoral implication synthesis	Sector briefs, meeting notes
Senior policy dialogue	Cabinet-level policymakers	Policy framing and political translation	Policy roundtables, high-level briefings
Development partners and TA agencies	DFAT, UNICEF, ILO, WB, NGOs	Align findings with ongoing TA and funding priorities	Donor briefings, technical consultations
Public dissemination and learning	General public, CSOs	Simplification and accessibility of findings	Infographics, summaries, knowledge events

7 Oversight Timeline and Deliverables

7.1 Milestone Tracker and Monitoring Plan

A core function of the oversight plan is to structure and sequence the review process so that quality assurance, coordination, and stakeholder engagement are embedded across all stages. This section provides an overview of the oversight timeline and the major outputs expected from the oversight team. It also includes a roles matrix that clarifies institutional responsibilities throughout the review. The timeline is structured to mirror the contractor's deliverables and key evaluation phases. Oversight activities will be timed to provide adequate feedback, enable course correction, and facilitate uptake, without delaying the contractor's workflow or compromising independence.

Oversight Timeline

The NSSS implementation review spans approximately five months, from July to December 2025, with major milestones clustered around the inception, draft, and final report phases. The table below outlines the indicative oversight timeline:

Table 14: Oversight Timeline and Key Activities (July–December 2025)

Month	Review Phase	Contractor Deliverables	Oversight Activities
July 2025	Inception	Inception Report	Inception review; feedback memo; inception workshop
August 2025	Inception (continued)	Revised Inception Report	Final clearance of methodology and workplan
Sept–Oct 2025	Implementation	Fieldwork and Analysis	Check-ins; risk monitoring; stakeholder coordination
Late Oct 2025	Draft Report	Interim Review Report (Draft)	Full technical review; written feedback; validation workshop
November 2025	Revision and Validation	Revised Draft	Comment resolution tracking; integration memo
December 2025	Finalisation	Final Review Report + PPT + Brief	Final review memo; clearance workshop; public dissemination support

Oversight Deliverables

The oversight team will produce the following outputs at key stages:

- **Review memos**: Structured feedback documents for inception, draft, and final reports.
- **Comment matrices**: Consolidated inputs from stakeholders with oversight annotations.
- **Validation event documentation**: Workshop agendas, participant lists, summary notes.
- **Feedback integration memos**: Summary of how stakeholder input was reflected.
- **Final clearance package**: Formal endorsement of final review materials with summary of quality assessment.
- **Policy briefs and slides** (as needed): Support to the Cabinet Division and UNDP for dissemination and use.

All deliverables will be shared with UNDP, the Cabinet Division, and GED, and archived under the SPPS Programme's evaluation records.

Roles and Responsibilities Matrix

The oversight team will coordinate roles across multiple actors to ensure that responsibilities are clearly defined, and that quality assurance and decision-making are not bottlenecked. The matrix below summarises core responsibilities:

Table 15: Roles and Responsibilities Matrix for Review Oversight

Function	Lead Actor(s)	Support Actor(s)	Frequency / Timing
Inception report review and clearance	Oversight team	UNDP, Cabinet Division, GED	July–August 2025
Stakeholder coordination and validation	Oversight team, UNDP	Cabinet Division, line ministries	Continuous
Technical quality assurance	Oversight team	UNDP, DFAT, UNICEF	At each reporting milestone
Risk monitoring and adaptive management	Oversight team	SPPS Programme	Biweekly meetings
Comment consolidation and integration	Oversight team	UNDP	October–November 2025
Final report clearance and briefing	Cabinet Division	Oversight team, GED, UNDP	December 2025
Dissemination support and learning	Oversight team, UNDP	SSPS Communications Team	November–December 2025

Operationalisation Plan for the NSSS Web-Based M&E Dashboard

8 Introduction

8.1 Purpose and Scope

The web-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Dashboard of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) is a flagship innovation introduced under Action Plan II (2021–2026) to improve government oversight, coordination, and transparency across Bangladesh's extensive social protection system. Hosted by the Cabinet Division, the dashboard aims to consolidate information from 39 implementing ministries and agencies, track progress against strategic targets, and serve as a tool for accountability, learning, and policy formulation.

Despite its strategic potential, the current dashboard remains underutilised and partially developed. While it captures a subset of implementation indicators and offers a degree of visualisation, it lacks full functionality in areas such as data disaggregation, interactivity, timely updates, and integration with line ministry systems. Furthermore, limited institutional capacity, absence of automated data flows, and inadequate user feedback mechanisms have constrained its effectiveness as a real-time monitoring and policy planning tool.

This chapter outlines a structured operationalisation plan to strengthen the NSSS dashboard. Its purpose is to ensure that the platform moves from a static reporting tool to a dynamic, user-oriented system that supports results-based management, cross-sectoral coordination, and inclusive decision-making. The plan is designed to complement the findings of the NSSS implementation review and to align with broader reforms in digital governance, financial transparency, and public sector innovation. The scope of this plan covers:

- Strategic alignment of the dashboard with NSSS implementation needs and lifecycle-based programme monitoring;
- Strengthening of technical architecture, data flows, and interoperability;
- Institutional roles and responsibilities for data management, reporting, and dashboard maintenance;
- User experience improvements to enhance accessibility, usability, and uptake across government;
- A phased implementation roadmap with resource implications and risk mitigation strategies.

8.2 Existing Dashboard Landscape and Gaps

The current NSSS dashboard, available at https://mne.socialprotection.gov.bd, serves as a central portal for visualising progress on selected indicators from Action Plan II. It was developed by the Cabinet Division with support from the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme. As of mid-2025, the dashboard presents:

- Progress status of Action Plan II activities by ministry and thematic cluster;
- A summary of implementation milestones and output indicators;

- Basic information on responsible agencies and programme categories;
- Aggregated completion status by cluster.

While these features represent a significant step toward digital governance, several limitations remain:

1. **Incompleteness and static data:** Many entries are incomplete, not time-stamped, or based on outdated submissions. There is no direct linkage to real-time data or live administrative systems.
2. **Lack of disaggregation:** Data is not broken down by gender, age, disability, location, or socioeconomic group, limiting the dashboard's usefulness for tracking equity and LNOB commitments.
3. **Poor interoperability:** There is no integration with the MIS systems of implementing ministries, nor with the National Household Database (NHD), Department of Social Services (DSS) MIS, or G2P platforms.
4. **Limited user interface and functionality:** The interface is not intuitive for policy or programme staff; users cannot customise reports, download data, or generate summary briefs.
5. **Low awareness and institutional engagement:** Line ministries do not consistently update or use the dashboard; responsibility for uploading data is fragmented, and there is no formal accountability mechanism for data quality or reporting regularity.

These challenges are not unique to Bangladesh. Many countries introducing digital M&E platforms for social protection face similar bottlenecks in institutional integration, system maintenance, and real-time usability. The key is to transition from a compliance-oriented dashboard to a learning and planning-oriented tool that informs real decisions at all levels of government.

8.3 Target Users and Policy Linkages

The operationalisation plan assumes a diversified user base with differing information needs, including:

- **Cabinet Division and GED:** require high-level dashboards to monitor cross-ministerial coordination, identify reform bottlenecks, and support planning processes (e.g., for Five Year Plans and SDGs).
- **Implementing ministries:** need practical tools for tracking activity implementation, identifying delivery delays, and coordinating with other agencies.
- **Field-level administrators:** require simplified dashboards to monitor local programme delivery, grievance resolution, and outreach performance.
- **Development partners:** seek aggregate, up-to-date implementation data to inform technical assistance targeting, policy dialogue, and donor coordination.
- **Civil society and public audiences:** require accessible summaries that promote transparency and enable citizen engagement in social protection governance.

Linkages to policy processes are also critical. The dashboard should feed directly into:

- The NSSS M&E Sub-Committee and Central Management Committee (CMC) deliberations;

- GED and Planning Commission performance reviews and budget preparation;
- Periodic reporting to the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet on NSSS progress;
- Design of the next NSSS and Action Plan III (post-2026).

9 Strategic Framework for Dashboard Enhancement

9.1 Principles of LNOB, Accessibility and Usefulness

The operationalisation of the NSSS M&E Dashboard must be firmly grounded in the principles of equity, accessibility, and public value. These principles are not abstract ideals but practical design imperatives that determine whether the dashboard will serve as a credible policy instrument or remain a technical artefact with limited institutional traction.

At its core, the dashboard must reflect the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB's) commitment to leaving no one behind (LNOB). This commitment, embedded in the Constitution, the NSSS, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework, requires that monitoring systems do not merely track aggregate progress but expose who benefits, who remains excluded, and where structural inequalities persist. A dashboard that presents summary figures without disaggregation by gender, disability, age, geography, or socioeconomic group risks reinforcing the invisibility of those already marginalised. Therefore, data collection and display functions must enable users to drill down into programme reach and performance along these critical dimensions. The design must also ensure that absence of data on excluded groups is itself treated as a signal of system weakness, not as an acceptable blind spot.

Equally, the principle of accessibility must be treated expansively. It is not enough for the dashboard to be technically online. It must be functionally usable by its intended audiences, from Cabinet officials to mid-level ministry staff, and from field-level implementers to development partners and the public. This means simplifying navigation, ensuring compatibility with devices used in government offices, enabling low-bandwidth access, and incorporating content in both English and Bangla. Information must be presented in formats that align with how decisions are made, for example, using traffic light indicators, geospatial mapping, or downloadable reports that support internal ministry briefings. For frontline administrators and non-technical users, the dashboard must serve not as a compliance tool but as a decision-support system, enabling quick identification of gaps, follow-up needs, and comparative performance across districts or divisions.

Usefulness, finally, must be defined in terms of whether the dashboard contributes to real-world decisions, not whether it contains technically accurate data. The system should support evidence-based planning, resource allocation, inter-ministerial coordination, and programme correction. To achieve this, its indicators must be selected based on relevance to users' operational responsibilities and policy mandates, not solely on ease of data availability. Where key outcome indicators are unavailable in real time, proxy indicators or explanatory notes must be used to avoid misinterpretation. Automated summaries, alerts, or decision-support visuals should be considered to prompt timely action. Crucially, mechanisms must be in place to gather user feedback, track usage patterns, and iteratively adapt dashboard features to emerging needs.

In sum, LNOB, accessibility, and usefulness are not add-ons to a technical system. They are design and governance choices that determine whether the dashboard will advance or undermine the strategic goals of the NSSS. The operationalisation plan that follows takes these principles as foundational and seeks to institutionalise them through specific actions, standards, and performance benchmarks.

9.2 Integration with the NSSS Action Plan II and M&E System

For the NSSS dashboard to function as an effective monitoring and coordination tool, it must be firmly embedded within the existing architecture of the Action Plan II and its associated M&E framework. At present, the dashboard serves as a standalone visualisation platform, loosely tethered to the reform agenda it is meant to track. To move beyond this, integration must occur at both the conceptual and operational levels, aligning the dashboard's content, indicators, and update protocols with the NSSS Action Plan II's results framework, ministerial reporting cycles, and inter-ministerial coordination processes.

The Action Plan II is built around five thematic clusters and includes specific time-bound activities assigned to 39 ministries and agencies. These activities are accompanied by indicators, many of which are output- or process-level in nature, and are tracked through annual progress reports prepared by ministries for submission to the Cabinet Division. However, these reports are prepared manually, follow variable formats, and do not always correspond to a standardised indicator framework. Moreover, they are often not time-stamped, not uploaded into a central repository, and do not form the basis for cross-ministerial analysis or decision-making.

The NSSS dashboard can address these weaknesses, but only if it is fully aligned with the Action Plan II indicator matrix. Each dashboard module must be directly mapped to a specific cluster, ministry, and assigned activity. For example, reforms to expand social insurance must be linked to the relevant lead ministry's responsibilities and implementation timeline, as outlined in the action plan. Similarly, the dashboard must be able to track cross-cutting systems reforms, such as the rollout of G2P digital payments or the development of grievance redress mechanisms, which do not fall neatly within any one cluster but are central to NSSS delivery. This mapping must be made explicit within the dashboard interface and backend logic.

Equally important is alignment with the formal M&E processes established under the NSSS. The Cabinet Division chairs the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee, which is responsible for reviewing implementation progress, resolving coordination challenges, and elevating strategic decisions to the Central Management Committee (CMC). To support these processes, the dashboard must be designed to generate summary reports that match the committee's meeting cycles, quarterly, biannual, or annual. These reports should be downloadable in standard formats, auto-populated where possible, and presented in a form that aligns with Cabinet briefings. They must also flag performance issues or data gaps that require escalation.

Integration must also consider future iterations of NSSS programming. As the GoB prepares to formulate a new strategy beyond 2026, the dashboard should evolve into a platform that supports results-based planning. This requires shifting from tracking discrete activities to monitoring progress towards sectoral and system-level outcomes, such as improved coverage, inclusion, or responsiveness. The dashboard must thus be future-proofed to accommodate new results

frameworks, allow user-defined indicators, and link with other government systems that may feed into next-generation monitoring tools.

9.3 Interoperability with Line Ministry Systems

A foundational requirement for the NSSS dashboard to function as a credible and timely monitoring tool is its interoperability with the MISs of implementing ministries. Without this interoperability, the dashboard will continue to rely on manual updates, fragmented submissions, and ad hoc data collection processes that undermine its potential to support real-time analysis, cross-sectoral coordination, and evidence-based policy decisions. Achieving technical and institutional interoperability is therefore not simply a systems upgrade, it is a precondition for embedding the dashboard into the operational fabric of NSSS implementation.

Each of the 39 ministries and agencies assigned responsibilities under Action Plan II maintains its own data systems, with varying degrees of sophistication, data standards, and reporting formats. Some ministries, such as the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), or Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), operate well-established programme MISs that capture beneficiary data, payment information, and service delivery metrics. Others rely on paper-based records or Excel-based tools without centralised data structures or real-time update capacity. This heterogeneity poses a significant challenge to seamless dashboard integration.

To address this, interoperability must be approached as a two-level process. First, at the technical level, the dashboard's backend architecture must be adapted to accommodate data ingestion from external systems via standardised formats and protocols. This includes developing or updating application programming interfaces (APIs) that can allow secure, structured, and automated data transfer from ministry-level MISs into the dashboard. These APIs must be designed to accommodate both push and pull mechanisms, account for ministries' data security protocols, and allow for batch and incremental updates. The system should also allow for validation checks to flag inconsistent, incomplete, or outlier data prior to publication.

Second, at the institutional level, interoperability must be governed by formal agreements that define responsibilities, reporting frequency, and data ownership protocols. This includes establishing data sharing agreements or memoranda of understanding between the Cabinet Division and line ministries, which clarify what data must be shared, who is responsible for uploading or verifying it, and what formats or metadata standards must be followed. These agreements must also address concerns around confidentiality, use of data for performance monitoring, and escalation mechanisms in case of delays or discrepancies.

Equally important is the need for data mapping and alignment. Many ministry MISs use internal programme codes, beneficiary classifications, or indicator definitions that do not align with the NSSS cluster architecture. A one-time exercise must be undertaken to map existing data fields from each relevant MIS to the dashboard's indicator framework, ensuring semantic and structural alignment. In cases where programme-level data cannot be shared directly due to sensitivity, summary-level aggregations should be negotiated as a practical compromise.

Pilot interoperability arrangements should begin with a small set of ministries that already possess reasonably functional MISs and are engaged in system-building reforms, for example, ministries participating in G2P scale-up or those supported through the Aspire to Innovate (a2i) initiative. Lessons from these pilots should inform the broader rollout, with technical documentation and system integration manuals produced to support other ministries' onboarding.

10 Data Systems Strengthening

10.1 Data Collection Framework

A coherent and reliable data collection framework is at the heart of any results-based monitoring system. For the NSSS dashboard to serve as an effective tool for performance tracking, policy review, and inter-ministerial coordination, it must be underpinned by a data collection system that is structured, periodic, standardised, and responsive to the dashboard's indicator architecture. At present, data submission practices across ministries are inconsistent, ad hoc, and reliant on manual inputs. There is no unified protocol guiding what data should be collected, how frequently, in what format, or by whom.

The operationalisation of the dashboard therefore requires the formal establishment of a harmonised data collection framework that aligns with the structure of Action Plan II. This framework must be designed to ensure timely reporting on both activity-level progress and system-level reforms. It should accommodate variations in ministry capacities while promoting gradual movement toward automated data entry and system-to-system transfers, as outlined in the previous section on interoperability.
The data collection framework must distinguish between three primary categories of indicators:

1. **Programme-level implementation indicators**, such as the number of beneficiaries served, number of trainings conducted, or amount of transfers disbursed.
2. **System-building indicators**, such as the number of ministries using G2P systems, the existence of grievance redress mechanisms, or integration of MIS platforms.
3. **Cross-cutting inclusion indicators**, reflecting disaggregation by sex, age, disability, and location, where available.

For each indicator, the framework must define its source, frequency of collection, responsible agency, format, and reporting pathway. The oversight and data governance structure must also ensure that submissions are reviewed and validated prior to being published on the dashboard.

Table 16: Sample Structure for the NSSS Dashboard Data Collection Framework

Indicator Type	Example Indicator	Data Source	Reporting Frequency	Responsible Entity	Reporting Format
Programme Implementation	No. of social allowances disbursed (quarterly)	Ministry of Social Welfare MIS	Quarterly	Programme Focal Person (MoSW)	XML or Excel template
System Reform Progress	No. of ministries using biometric G2P payments	Cabinet Division / MoF	Biannual	Digital Finance Cell (Cabinet Div.)	Online input form

Inclusion / LNOB Metrics	% of beneficiaries with disabilities in Cluster 1 programmes	Line ministry MIS + DSS database	Annual	Cluster Focal Point + DSS	Aggregated table
Grievance Redress	No. of grievances received and resolved	GRS MIS (or manual logs)	Quarterly	Ministry-level GRS Officer	Dashboard upload
Capacity Development Activities	No. of trainings conducted under Cluster 4	Ministry of Labour and Employment	Quarterly	Programme M&E Officer	Standard input form

This framework provides the scaffolding for consistent, comparable data entry and facilitates the generation of automated summaries, trend analyses, and policy dashboards.

To operationalise the framework, each participating ministry must designate a data focal point who will be responsible for collating, reviewing, and submitting data in line with the agreed reporting schedule. Standard operating procedures (SOPs), data dictionaries, and training materials must be developed and disseminated to support this process.

To reduce the reporting burden, the dashboard's backend must be designed to accommodate pre-filled fields, validation rules, and warnings for missing or inconsistent data. Where possible, ministries with mature MISs should be permitted to submit data in structured digital formats (e.g., XML or JSON), enabling automated ingestion through APIs. Ministries without existing digital infrastructure should initially submit data via structured Excel templates, with a plan to transition over time.

10.2 Data Integration and Transfer Protocols

The effectiveness of the NSSS dashboard depends not only on the consistency of data collection, but also on the efficiency and integrity of data integration and transfer processes. At present, ministries submit data to the Cabinet Division in a decentralised and largely manual fashion, with little uniformity in formats or channels. This results in delays, inconsistent entries, and excessive reliance on human validation. To operationalise the dashboard as a timely and credible monitoring tool, a structured protocol for integrating and transferring data across systems is essential.

Data integration refers to the process by which information from diverse ministry-specific sources, each with its own structure, update frequency, and data language, is brought into the NSSS dashboard in a standardised and usable format. Transfer protocols define how that data moves from the source systems (ministry MIS or spreadsheets) to the central dashboard environment, with clear specifications for data format, frequency, validation steps, and security.

To establish useful integration and transfer protocols, the system must distinguish between two primary pathways: automated system-to-system integration and semi-automated file-based submission. The former applies to ministries with functional MISs capable of generating structured data exports; the latter applies to ministries still reliant on Excel-based tracking or paper records.

In both cases, the integration must adhere to core principles of data standardisation, traceability, and security. Every dataset submitted must be accompanied by metadata identifying the source ministry, reporting officer, reporting date, and reporting period. Submissions must undergo automated format checks (e.g., required fields, numeric vs. text entries), as well as flagging of outliers or anomalies based on historical ranges.

Transfer protocols must also establish rules for version control and data correction. For instance, if a ministry submits a revised dataset due to late reporting or error detection, the dashboard must be able to archive the previous version, update the display accordingly, and flag the data as revised with appropriate time-stamping.

The transfer protocol will also define:

- File formats and schema standards (e.g., XML, JSON, CSV) for automated transfers;
- Encryption and authentication methods for secure data exchange, especially for APIs;
- Submission pathways (e.g., through a web-based form, secure FTP, or web service call);
- Error handling procedures, including notification of rejected files, summary logs, and re-submission guidance;
- Access controls and permissions, defining which actors can upload, validate, or override data entries.

For pilot integration, selected ministries will be supported to establish direct linkages between their MISs and the dashboard, with technical assistance to develop API specifications, test data flows, and validate mapping logic. These pilots will inform the design of a standard Data Integration Toolkit, to be shared with all ministries.

Table 17: Summary of Dashboard Data Transfer Protocol Elements

Protocol Element	Specification
Data Submission Mode	Web-based form for manual entry; API or secure FTP for automated transfers
Accepted File Formats	JSON, XML, CSV (based on standardised schema provided by Cabinet Division)
Required Metadata	Reporting agency, reporting period, submission date, focal person ID
Automated Validations	Field presence, value ranges, duplicate detection, timestamp checks
Data Versioning	Retention of previous submissions with version tags and change logs
Notification Protocols	Email/portal alerts for successful upload, rejection, or validation errors
Security Standards	Two-factor authentication; encrypted data transmission (HTTPS, SSL)

Institutionalising these protocols will require more than technical specification. It demands formal endorsement from the Cabinet Division, training for ministry focal points, and support from digital governance actors such as the a2i programme and Access to Information Division. When implemented consistently, these protocols will transform the dashboard into a living system, capable of updating in near-real time and trusted as a source of accurate, actionable data for social protection governance.

10.3 Data Quality Assurance and Validation

The credibility and utility of the NSSS dashboard ultimately depend on the quality of the data it displays. Inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated information not only undermines user confidence, but can also lead to policy misjudgments and misallocation of resources. For this reason, a data quality assurance and validation system must be embedded in the dashboard's operational workflow. This system must ensure that the data displayed on the dashboard is accurate, consistent with programme realities, and fit for decision-making.

In the current setup, data quality is managed informally through manual checks by Cabinet Division staff, often relying on email follow-ups and spreadsheet comparisons. There is no formal protocol to verify entries, identify outliers, or document corrections. This leaves the system vulnerable to entry errors, delayed updates, and inconsistent interpretation of indicators across ministries.

To address these risks, the dashboard must be equipped with a structured, tiered quality assurance and validation mechanism. This mechanism should operate across three levels: (1) automated validation at the point of data submission, (2) manual review by data stewards or focal points; and (3) periodic quality audits coordinated by the Cabinet Division.

At the first level, automated validation rules must be embedded in the dashboard's backend to flag missing fields, out-of-range values, duplicate submissions, and logical inconsistencies. For example, the number of grievances resolved should not exceed the number received, and the number of beneficiaries disbursed payments should not exceed those approved. These checks should trigger error messages or hold the data for manual review prior to publication.

The second level involves designated ministry focal points, who are responsible for reviewing submitted data before it is pushed to the live dashboard. They must verify that the figures reflect the latest administrative records, which disaggregated data adds up correctly to totals, and that indicator definitions are applied consistently. The dashboard interface must allow these focal points to approve, reject, or annotate data entries, and to provide explanatory notes where anomalies exist.

At the third level, the Cabinet Division, supported by UNDP or other technical partners, should conduct quarterly data quality audits. These reviews should focus on high-priority indicators, ministries with repeated data inconsistencies, or data with significant policy implications. The audit process should include sampling of raw records, cross-checks with other government databases (such as the National Household Database or G2P records), and structured follow-ups with relevant ministries.

All quality assurance actions must be logged in a validation history, accessible to authorised users. Each data point should be time-stamped, versioned, and tagged with metadata indicating who submitted and who approved it. These features are essential for building institutional trust in the dashboard and allowing users to understand the reliability of what they see.

Table 18: Data Quality Assurance Framework for NSSS Dashboard

QA Level	Responsibility	Key Actions	Frequency
Automated Checks	Dashboard backend	Field completeness, value range limits, logical consistency checks	At every submission

Manual Review	Ministry focal point	Verification of data against records; annotation of exceptions	Per reporting cycle
Periodic Audit	Cabinet Division + Technical Team	Sampling, cross-verification, investigation of anomalies	Quarterly

To institutionalise these processes, the Cabinet Division should issue formal SOPs for data validation, develop a user guide for ministry focal points, and include data quality performance in the agenda of the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee. Ministries must be incentivised not only to report, but to report reliably, recognising that the quality of their data reflects their programme credibility and informs resource and reform decisions at the highest levels.

11 Institutional Ownership and Capacity Development

11.1 Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Plan

Institutional ownership is central to the sustainability and effectiveness of the NSSS dashboard. Without consistent engagement and clear responsibilities across the network of actors who generate, manage, and use social protection data, the dashboard risks becoming a technically capable but institutionally marginalised tool. To address this, a deliberate and inclusive stakeholder engagement plan is required, one that reflects the institutional realities of Bangladesh's social protection system and ensures that all relevant actors are appropriately mapped, mobilised, and supported.

The stakeholder ecosystem surrounding the dashboard spans multiple tiers of government, development partners, and technical service providers. At the centre is the Cabinet Division, which holds formal authority over NSSS implementation and chairs the CMC and the M&E Sub-Committee. As the system owner, the Cabinet Division must continue to lead both strategic oversight and technical coordination, supported by the SSPS Programme or its successor.

Key implementing ministries, such as the MoSW, MoWCA, MoDMR, and MoLE, play a dual role. They are both data providers and primary users of dashboard outputs for planning, coordination, and reporting. Each ministry must designate a focal point with responsibility for ensuring timely, accurate, and validated submissions, and these individuals must be fully engaged in both the operationalisation process and subsequent user feedback loops.

Other ministries with system-building mandates, such as the Finance Division, ICT Division, Bangladesh Bank, and a2i, are essential to dashboard expansion into digital payments, interoperability, and broader digital governance. They must be engaged not as peripheral actors but as co-owners of cross-cutting functions that shape dashboard functionality and data pipelines.

At the technical level, institutional engagement must include actors managing existing data platforms that the dashboard may interoperate with, such as the NHD, DSS MIS, and GRS. Their system managers and data architects must be brought into technical consultations and protocol design processes to ensure alignment of formats, APIs, and transfer schedules.

Development partners, including DFAT, UNICEF, the World Bank, ILO, and UNDP, play a strategic role as supporters of digital and data system strengthening. They are users of dashboard data in their technical assistance, programme design, and policy dialogue, and can offer lessons from global

experience in dashboard design and use. Their engagement must be structured around both strategic alignment and operational coordination, particularly where they support MIS development in sector ministries.

The engagement plan must ensure that these actors are not merely consulted once, but engaged systematically across phases. During the initial operationalisation phase, structured meetings should be held with each stakeholder group to clarify expectations, map existing data assets, and identify capacity or system constraints. As the dashboard moves toward integration and rollout, regular working sessions should be conducted, supported by technical documentation and feedback channels.

Table 19: Summary of Stakeholder Roles in Dashboard Operationalisation

Stakeholder Group	Primary Roles	Engagement Modality
Cabinet Division	System owner, convenor of coordination bodies	Oversight, technical approval, strategic leadership
Line Ministries (39 total)	Data providers and institutional users	Focal point assignment, validation, routine use
GED and Planning Commission	Policy alignment and planning integration	Results tracking, policy brief generation
Finance Division, ICT Division	Digital payments, interoperability, and infrastructure oversight	Protocol alignment, system integration
Bangladesh Bank, a2i	Technical implementation support	Data pipelines, API coordination
DSS, NHD, MIS	Data sources for integration	Format mapping, validation coordination
Development Partners	Strategic users and system support actors	Consultation, technical advice, TA alignment

This engagement plan should be supported by a formal communications strategy, led by the Cabinet Division and UNDP, which ensures clarity of purpose, consistency of messaging, and responsiveness to user feedback. As operationalisation proceeds, stakeholder trust and commitment will determine whether the dashboard becomes an embedded governance tool or remains on the institutional periphery. Ownership must be distributed, but leadership must be clear.

11.2 Capacity Building for Data Providers and Users

Strengthening the capacity of data providers and users is a prerequisite for ensuring that the NSSS dashboard functions not just as a technical tool, but as an embedded part of Bangladesh's social protection governance system. The challenge is not simply one of digital literacy or data entry skills. It is about equipping stakeholders at all levels of government with the knowledge, confidence, and incentives to use data effectively, whether to fulfil reporting responsibilities, assess programme performance, or inform planning and coordination.

Most implementing ministries vary widely in their current capacity to contribute to and benefit from the dashboard. Some possess functional MIS systems and dedicated M&E units; others rely on manual processes with limited digital infrastructure or data management expertise. In many cases, there is no designated staff responsible for dashboard engagement, or the focal person lacks formal training in

data validation, indicator interpretation, or system use. This creates a risk that the dashboard becomes a symbolic or extractive exercise, rather than a practical tool for routine decision-making.

To address these gaps, capacity development must be approached as an integrated and sustained process. One-off training workshops are insufficient. What is needed is a structured capacity-building programme, tailored to the institutional roles and technical starting points of each ministry or agency. This programme should include orientation for senior officials on the strategic value of the dashboard, practical hands-on training for focal points on data submission and quality assurance, and targeted coaching for technical personnel on interoperability, file preparation, and troubleshooting.

For data providers, training must focus on the full data lifecycle, from understanding indicator definitions and source documentation, to ensuring completeness and accuracy of submissions, to responding to error messages or audit queries. Ministries must be supported to develop internal review procedures and designate substitute focal points to ensure continuity. Data quality should be framed not as a compliance burden, but as a reflection of institutional credibility and a prerequisite for budgetary and policy discussions.

For users, particularly mid-level managers and field-level administrators, training should emphasise how the dashboard can support programme monitoring, improve performance tracking, and generate materials for internal reporting. These users must understand how to interpret dashboard visuals, filter data by location or target group, and link dashboard outputs to their own work planning cycles. For example, a district social welfare officer should be able to use the dashboard to assess whether cash transfer targets are being met, and where grievance cases remain unresolved.

Capacity building must also anticipate future system evolution. As dashboard functionalities expand, such as through the addition of custom reporting or integration with other platforms, focal points and users will need continued support. This may include refreshers on updated templates, guidance on new protocols, or user groups where peers can share challenges and solutions. Over time, the goal is to create a network of technically confident and institutionally motivated users who see the dashboard not as an obligation, but as a tool for achieving their own objectives.

To institutionalise this process, the Cabinet Division should work with UNDP and relevant partners to develop a formal capacity-building plan, complete with training curricula, user manuals, video tutorials, and helpdesk protocols. Wherever possible, this support should be embedded within existing training systems, such as the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) or ministry-specific training academies. Only by investing in capacity across institutions and over time can the dashboard become a truly sustainable and impactful instrument in Bangladesh's social protection landscape.

11.3 Governance Arrangements for Dashboard Sustainability

Long-term sustainability of the NSSS dashboard depends as much on governance as it does on technology. A well-designed platform, even with adequate training and institutional goodwill, will falter without clear mandates, structured coordination mechanisms, and predictable resource flows. Sustaining the dashboard requires more than episodic updates; it demands a governance model that

embeds the dashboard into institutional routines, secures multi-year ownership, and ensures resilience to political, administrative, and personnel changes.

The central governance anchor must remain the Cabinet Division. As the institutional lead for NSSS implementation and the convener of CMC and M&E Sub-Committee, the Cabinet Division is uniquely positioned to set expectations for reporting, validate data standards, and use the dashboard as a decision-making instrument. To operationalise this role, the Cabinet Division should formally assign a small unit or cell with responsibility for dashboard oversight. This unit should include at least one designated system administrator, one data validation officer, and one technical liaison to interface with line ministries and digital service providers. It must be empowered to issue reporting guidelines, monitor compliance, and escalate data or system issues to the appropriate authorities.

Beneath this central node, each implementing ministry must designate a dashboard focal point and, where feasible, a backup officer to ensure continuity. These roles should be formally recognised through administrative orders or internal circulars, not treated as informal or temporary assignments. Focal points must participate in periodic review meetings convened by the Cabinet Division and be included in capacity-building programmes, helpdesk loops, and user feedback sessions.

At the inter-ministerial level, the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee must be revitalised to serve as the policy and coordination body for dashboard oversight. This body should review periodic utilisation reports, examine implementation bottlenecks identified through dashboard data, and make recommendations for improvements to indicator sets, data sources, or reporting protocols. To avoid duplication, the sub-committee should be closely linked to GED's monitoring architecture and budget performance systems, enabling policy integration.

On the technical side, a governance framework must be established for system maintenance, upgrades, and third-party support. While initial development and support have been provided by the SSPS Programme and UNDP, a long-term sustainability model must be articulated. This may include government-financed maintenance contracts with local IT firms, integration of the dashboard into national digital platforms (such as under the ICT Division or a2i), or gradual handover of technical backend administration to a government digital services unit. Crucially, technical governance must be documented, with source code, data dictionaries, user protocols, and system architecture maps maintained in a central repository with role-based access.

To ensure resilience, governance arrangements must also be financially anchored. The operationalisation plan must include dedicated line items in the Cabinet Division's annual budget for system hosting, technical support, capacity-building activities, and stakeholder engagement. This should be reflected in the Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF) and subject to review by the CMC or Planning Commission. Without predictable resourcing, even well-designed systems become obsolete or underused.

Finally, governance of the dashboard must include mechanisms for accountability and transparency. This includes establishing service-level agreements with ministries on data quality and timeliness, tracking usage metrics to assess institutional uptake, and creating feedback channels where users can report technical issues or request feature enhancements. The Cabinet Division should publish periodic

summaries of dashboard usage and performance, reinforcing a culture of open government and data-driven reform.

12 Technical and Functional Improvements

12.1 User Interface and Navigation Enhancements

A technically sound dashboard cannot fulfil its monitoring and coordination functions if its user interface (UI) and navigation design do not align with the needs, expectations, and capacities of its target users. The current NSSS dashboard interface, while functional at a basic level, suffers from several usability limitations: information is difficult to locate, the layout does not support intuitive browsing or analysis, and there is limited interactivity to support policy planning or programme oversight. These limitations significantly reduce the dashboard's perceived utility, particularly among time-constrained government users who require accessible summaries, quick comparisons, and clear calls to action.

Improving the dashboard's UI is not a cosmetic exercise. It is central to institutional uptake and long-term sustainability. To that end, UI design must adhere to principles of clarity, responsiveness, multilingual accessibility, and task-oriented navigation. The platform must also support multiple user types, from central policymakers and ministry focal points to field-level administrators and development partners, each with different entry points and data needs.

First, the homepage must be redesigned to serve as a functional launchpad. Instead of listing static sections, it should present key metrics at a glance, display system alerts or data update flags, and highlight underperforming indicators through visual cues such as colour-coded badges. Users should be able to immediately access the latest data uploads, track overdue submissions, or view trend summaries without navigating through multiple pages.

Second, the overall structure must adopt a cluster- and ministry-centric navigation model. Users should be able to select a cluster (e.g., Social Insurance, Human Development) or a specific ministry, and instantly access the list of assigned Action Plan II activities, progress status, and associated indicators. Each view should support drill-down options by indicator, district, or time period. The system must also support breadcrumb navigation so users can return easily to previous views.

Third, all indicators must include hover-over tooltips with definitions, data sources, last update dates, and responsible entities. Visuals such as charts, bar graphs, and geographic maps should be interactive, allowing users to click and filter by demographic characteristics, year, or region. Visual accessibility standards must be applied, including font size adjustability, high-contrast options, and screen-reader compatibility for users with disabilities.

Fourth, the dashboard must support dual-language functionality, offering seamless toggling between Bangla and English. This is essential not only for wider accessibility within government but also to support public transparency and engagement with non-government actors.

Finally, the interface must support responsive design across device types, especially considering that many government officials may access the dashboard via laptops with limited screen resolution or

mobile devices in the field. A mobile-friendly layout should prioritise key indicators, support swiping navigation, and allow one-touch download of summary briefs or tables.

Table 20: Priority User Interface Enhancements for NSSS Dashboard

Enhancement Category	Proposed Feature	Rationale
Homepage Redesign	Dashboard summary panel with progress alerts, overdue submissions, and quick links	Enables immediate situational awareness for decision-makers
Navigation Model	Ministry- and cluster-based navigation with breadcrumb structure	Reflects Action Plan II logic and improves usability
Indicator Display Improvements	Tooltips with metadata; hover-to-explain functions; click-through for disaggregation	Enhances data transparency and comprehension
Visualisation and Interactivity	Interactive graphs, district-level maps, filter toggles (e.g., gender, age)	Supports analysis and planning at multiple levels
Language and Accessibility	Dual-language toggle (Bangla/English); high-contrast mode; screen-reader support	Promotes inclusion and wider government accessibility
Device Responsiveness	Adaptive layout for mobile and low-resolution screens	Enables use by field officers and non-central administrators

These interface improvements must be designed and tested iteratively. The Cabinet Division and UNDP should conduct short usability testing sessions with representative users before deployment, allowing refinements based on real-time feedback. Clear visual design guidelines must also be established and documented to ensure consistency across dashboard modules and to future-proof against incoherent expansion.

12.2 Account Management and Permission Structures

Effective account management and permission controls are essential to safeguarding data integrity, ensuring responsible use, and enabling differentiated access based on institutional roles. As the NSSS dashboard evolves into a more interactive and operational platform, the need for a tiered account structure becomes more pressing. Without proper user access protocols, the system risks data tampering, inconsistent reporting practices, or misuse of sensitive information. At the same time, overly restrictive access can limit utility, discourage adoption, and undermine the very purpose of the dashboard.

A well-designed account management system must strike a balance between control and usability. It should clearly define who can enter, validate, edit, or view data, and it must allow administrative oversight without centralising every action through the Cabinet Division. To achieve this, the dashboard should adopt a role-based access control (RBAC) model, wherein each user account is assigned a role that determines their functional permissions.

At the top level, Super Admins, based in the Cabinet Division, should be responsible for overall account creation, permission setting, and system configuration. They must have the ability to add or deactivate users, approve ministry-level changes, and view audit logs across all dashboard activity. Super Admins

also manage system-wide settings such as indicator definitions, report templates, and API configurations.

The second level comprises Ministry Admins, who are assigned by each implementing ministry or agency. These users are responsible for submitting and validating data related to their institution's Action Plan II responsibilities. They must be able to input values, upload data files, run validation scripts, and confirm accuracy before submission. Ministry Admins may also manage one or more Ministry Editors, who assist with data entry but cannot publish or override records without review.

The third level includes Read-Only Users, who are granted access to explore dashboard data, generate visualisations, and download reports, but cannot modify or upload content. This role is appropriate for officials in oversight bodies such as GED or Planning Commission, as well as development partners and research institutions. Some of these users may be provided with filtered or anonymised access, depending on their need and the sensitivity of the data.

Finally, there should be provision for Public Users, who access a simplified, non-editable version of the dashboard. This public interface should display aggregate indicators, institutional performance summaries, and explanatory content. However, it should exclude data that may reveal personal information, operational vulnerabilities, or sensitive programme performance details.

All users must log in via secure credentials, and two-factor authentication should be introduced for Admin-level roles. Session logs and activity tracking must be enabled, allowing system administrators to trace who made changes, when, and from which location. Password management protocols, inactive account deactivation policies, and user support features (such as password reset and helpdesk contact forms) must also be standardised.

The Cabinet Division, supported by UNDP or a designated system maintenance firm, should maintain a regularly updated account registry. Ministries must submit formal requests to add or remove users, with documented delegation authority. Permissions should be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in programme leadership, and the system must automatically revoke or flag dormant accounts.

12.3 Functional Expansion

For the NSSS dashboard to evolve into a tool that meaningfully supports planning, coordination, and decision-making, it must offer more than static data visualisation. Functional expansion is essential, allowing users to generate tailored outputs, explore trends, and translate data into insights that inform both operational adjustments and strategic dialogue. These capabilities will not only improve the relevance of the dashboard to diverse stakeholders, but also signal a shift toward data-driven governance in Bangladesh's social protection system.

One of the highest-impact functional enhancements is the integration of a policy brief generation module. This feature would allow authorised users, particularly in the Cabinet Division, GED, and lead ministries, to generate formatted briefs based on selected indicators, clusters, or time periods. For instance, a user could select a thematic cluster (e.g., Social Insurance), specify a reporting quarter, and generate a 2–3 page summary that includes charts, headline findings, and key gaps or alerts. The

template should auto-populate with validated data, include standardised headings, and allow insertion of commentary fields for user input. These briefs can then serve as inputs for CMC meetings, Planning Commission reviews, or inter-ministerial coordination events.

The second functional expansion involves a custom reporting feature. This tool would allow ministry focal points or analysts to generate reports tailored to their specific monitoring or planning needs. Users could choose from a set of parameters, such as indicator, programme, geography, or demographic filter, and export results in Excel, PDF, or visual dashboard formats. For example, a Social Welfare Officer in Rangpur might generate a report on grievance redress trends across all upazilas for the last two quarters, disaggregated by gender and age. These custom reports reduce dependence on central system administrators and encourage direct, contextualised use of dashboard data.

Third, the dashboard should support trend and comparative analysis tools. These may include side-by-side visualisations across ministries, districts, or reporting periods; heatmaps of underperforming areas; and automated change detection functions that flag significant shifts in indicator performance. These features are particularly useful for GED, UNDP, and other institutions involved in macro-level system reform tracking.

A further area of expansion involves the creation of alerts and notification functions. These would enable the system to push reminders to focal points for overdue submissions, notify ministries when their indicators fall below expected thresholds, or flag discrepancies identified in cross-source validation. Users should be able to configure alert preferences and receive updates via email or dashboard pop-ups. These functions will enhance responsiveness and promote a culture of timely reporting.

Finally, the dashboard should consider integration with document repositories and knowledge products. Users should be able to upload supporting materials, such as strategy documents, circulars, or evaluation reports, and link these to specific indicators or programme entries. This contextual layer transforms the dashboard from a narrow data tool into a broader knowledge platform, supporting continuous learning and cross-sectoral coordination.

As with previous improvements, these functional expansions must be designed iteratively. Pilot features should be tested with key user groups, technical feasibility must be assessed in light of system load capacity, and documentation should be produced to support onboarding and troubleshooting. All new features should be backward-compatible and adhere to the overall dashboard governance protocols established in earlier sections.

13 Reporting, Feedback and Learning Loops

13.1 Use of Dashboard Data in Policy and Programme Reviews

The NSSS dashboard will only achieve institutional relevance if it directly supports the Government of Bangladesh's policy review and programme management processes. At present, many social protection reviews, whether annual progress reports, midterm sectoral assessments, or planning commission submissions, are conducted through parallel reporting systems or bespoke data calls. These processes often bypass the dashboard, not because it lacks value, but because it has not yet

been positioned as an authoritative or user-friendly source of information. To change this, the dashboard must be actively integrated into the architecture of routine government reviews and embedded in the workflows of sector ministries and oversight bodies.

At the strategic level, the Cabinet Division and GED conduct annual reviews of NSSS implementation progress. These reviews inform updates to the CMC, guide coordination meetings, and feed into five-year plan tracking. The dashboard must be used as the first point of reference in these processes. This means that all Action Plan II indicators tracked on the dashboard must be report-ready, time-stamped, and clearly attributed. Pre-formatted summary outputs, whether cluster-level scorecards, ministry-level implementation reports, or system reform trackers, should be generated automatically and validated prior to each formal review cycle.

Within line ministries, dashboard outputs must become part of internal programme reviews. Ministry focal points and M&E officers should be trained to use the dashboard to prepare quarterly or biannual internal performance updates. These reviews may inform decisions on programme adjustments, targeting revisions, or coordination with local authorities. For example, if a ministry identifies from the dashboard that grievance redress cases are consistently unresolved in particular districts, it should trigger a review of implementation bottlenecks or capacity constraints in those areas. Similarly, if gender-disaggregated indicators show declining female enrolment or participation, this should inform sector-specific remedial actions.

Dashboard data must also be systematically referenced in joint government-donor reviews. Development partners, particularly those funding sectoral reforms or technical assistance, require timely and reliable data to inform progress reviews, disbursement decisions, and strategic planning. By institutionalising the use of dashboard outputs in these joint platforms, the Government can reduce duplication of reporting burdens, improve credibility, and enhance alignment with partner expectations. This may also incentivise further investment in dashboard maintenance and capacity development.

At the operational level, field administrators and district officials should use the dashboard to monitor local-level performance. Although current data granularity is limited, expansion plans must prioritise disaggregated reporting that enables district-level comparisons and trend tracking. Where possible, these insights should inform district planning, targeting adjustments, and local coordination efforts, particularly in programmes addressing the needs of the urban poor, climate-affected populations, or persons with disabilities.

To ensure systematic uptake, Cabinet Division should issue a formal directive mandating the use of dashboard-generated data in key review processes. Templates for sectoral performance reviews, progress briefs, or committee updates should incorporate dashboard extracts as standard components. UNDP and other partners can support this by providing technical assistance to ministries and developing user guides on linking dashboard insights to planning and review templates.

13.2 Feedback and Support Mechanisms for Line Ministries

To sustain active engagement with the NSSS dashboard, line ministries must have reliable channels through which they can seek support, report issues, and provide feedback on system functionality. At

present, such mechanisms are informal and inconsistent, leading to delays in troubleshooting, low user satisfaction, and limited ownership over dashboard performance.

A structured support system should be established, coordinated by the Cabinet Division, with three core components: a dedicated helpdesk (via email and phone) to handle technical and data-related queries; an online ticketing system integrated into the dashboard interface for reporting errors or requesting assistance; and a quarterly user feedback survey to gather structured input from focal points and technical staff.

Each ministry should also have a designated contact person within the Cabinet Division or its technical support unit. This liaison would serve as the first point of contact for issues related to data validation, access credentials, and indicator definitions. Responses must be time-bound, with performance standards for issue resolution.

Beyond technical assistance, ministries should be invited to submit suggestions for system improvement, such as new indicator fields, visualisation options, or reporting templates, through structured channels. These inputs should be reviewed annually and, where appropriate, incorporated into dashboard upgrades.

A well-managed support and feedback loop not only improves system performance, but also fosters institutional trust and a sense of shared ownership, reinforcing the dashboard's role as a national tool for coordinated reform monitoring.

13.3 Regular Dashboard Utilisation Reports

To maintain institutional accountability and encourage sustained engagement with the NSSS dashboard, the Cabinet Division must regularly assess and report on how the dashboard is being used. These utilisation reports serve multiple purposes: they provide visibility into which ministries are actively contributing and using the platform; highlight areas of underperformance or neglect; and help identify where additional support or incentives may be needed to promote uptake.

Utilisation reports should be generated quarterly and shared with key stakeholders, including the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee, CMC, and relevant development partners. The reports should focus not only on data submission compliance but also on how the dashboard is being accessed and applied, for instance, whether it is used in policy briefs, review meetings, or performance assessments.

Key metrics to be included in each report should cover data completeness, timeliness, validation status, user activity, and system responsiveness. Over time, trend analysis should be introduced to track improvement or decline in performance by ministry or cluster. This evidence base can be used to target training, refine protocols, and flag systemic challenges.

Table 21: Key Indicators for NSSS Dashboard Utilisation Reporting

Indicator	Description	Reporting Frequency
Data Submission Rate	Percentage of assigned indicators submitted by each ministry	Quarterly

On-Time Submission Rate	Share of submissions made within the defined reporting window	Quarterly
Validation Status	Number and percentage of submissions approved, pending, or rejected	Quarterly
User Login Frequency	Number of unique logins by ministry and user role	Monthly
Report Downloads and Visualisation Use	Number of reports generated or visualisations accessed by users	Monthly
Issue Resolution Rate	Percentage of submitted support tickets resolved within target timeframe	Quarterly
Integration Progress (selected ministries)	Status of system-to-system data integration or automated transfer pipelines	Biannual

To operationalise this reporting, the dashboard's backend must include analytics capabilities that can log user activity, track submission patterns, and generate real-time summaries. These reports should be automated as much as possible, with validation steps by the Cabinet Division before dissemination.

Importantly, utilisation reports should be used not as punitive tools, but as a means to recognise active contributors and identify where reinforcement is needed. A summary of high-performing ministries could be presented during M&E Sub-Committee meetings, while those lagging behind may receive targeted support or follow-up from Cabinet Division leadership.

14 Implementation Roadmap

14.1 Phased Rollout Plan

To ensure a manageable, coordinated, and institutionally owned transition from a partially functional platform to a fully operational NSSS dashboard, implementation must proceed in clearly defined phases. Each phase should build on the outcomes of the previous one, beginning with system strengthening and user readiness, followed by pilot integration with selected ministries, and culminating in full national rollout with embedded support structures. This phased approach allows for iterative testing, stakeholder feedback, and risk mitigation, while also aligning with government calendar cycles and reform milestones.

Table 22: NSSS Dashboard Phased Rollout Plan (Indicative)

Phase	Timeframe	Key Activities	Lead Responsibility
Phase 1: System Strengthening & Preparation	Months 1–3 (Q3 2025)	Refine dashboard architecture, develop data protocols, finalise indicator mapping, train focal points	Cabinet Division + UNDP
Phase 2: Pilot Integration with Selected Ministries	Months 4–6 (Q4 2025)	Connect MIS of 4–5 ministries, test data flow and validation, adjust protocols based on pilot feedback	Cabinet Division + Line Ministries
Phase 3: Full Ministerial Onboarding	Months 7–12 (Q1–Q2 2026)	Roll out to all 39 ministries, provide targeted TA, begin quarterly data submissions and validation	Cabinet Division + Focal Points

Phase 4: Functional Expansion & Policy Use	Months 13–18 (Q3 2026+)	Introduce custom reporting, policy brief tools, integrate dashboard into review and planning cycles	Cabinet Division + GED + Planning Commission

14.2 Resource and Risk Management

Operationalising the NSSS dashboard at scale requires not only technical planning but also a deliberate strategy for resourcing and risk mitigation. Without predictable financial support, dedicated personnel, and well-managed contingencies, the dashboard is unlikely to transition from pilot phase to sustainable national system. As such, resource mobilisation and risk management must be institutionalised from the outset, with oversight from the Cabinet Division and support from UNDP and development partners.

Table 23: NSSS Dashboard Resource and Risk Management Framework

Area	Requirement / Risk	Proposed Mitigation / Provision
Financial Resources	Insufficient budget for hosting, updates, training, and helpdesk operations	Include dashboard line items in Cabinet Division MTBF; seek co-financing from development partners
Human Resources	Limited dedicated staff for dashboard administration and technical support	Assign full-time system administrator, validation officer, and ministry focal points with TORs
Technical Support	Loss of institutional memory post-project; vendor dependency	Document system architecture, build internal capacity, and contract local firms for maintenance
Change Management	Resistance to new reporting formats or protocols from ministries	Issue formal directives, provide early training, and demonstrate value through quick wins
Data Inconsistencies	Irregular submissions, inconsistent definitions, or delayed updates	Establish automated validation checks, SOPs, and enforcement of submission timelines
Cybersecurity and Access	Risks of data breach or unauthorised access	Enforce password protocols, two-factor authentication, and tiered permission system
Sustainability Post-2026	Uncertainty around long-term financing and ownership after SSPS ends	Transition ownership to Cabinet Division, integrate into national digital governance framework

14.3 Monitoring and Continuous Improvement Framework

To ensure that the NSSS dashboard remains relevant, functional, and responsive over time, a structured framework for monitoring and continuous improvement must be established. This framework should treat the dashboard not as a static product, but as a living system, evolving in response to user needs, policy priorities, and technological developments. Continuous improvement requires institutionalised mechanisms to track system performance, gather user feedback, and prioritise enhancements on a regular cycle.

Performance monitoring should focus on both technical and operational indicators. These include system uptime, data submission rates, validation success, user activity levels, and helpdesk response

times. Regular review of these metrics will allow the Cabinet Division to assess whether the dashboard is meeting core expectations and identify bottlenecks in data flow, usability, or institutional uptake.

User feedback mechanisms, such as periodic surveys, focus group discussions, and structured interviews, should be conducted at least twice annually. These inputs can reveal emerging challenges not captured in usage logs, such as difficulty navigating certain features, unclear indicator definitions, or insufficient support materials. Feedback should be documented, reviewed by a designated technical committee, and used to inform a rolling update schedule.

All improvements must be tracked through a formal change log and communicated transparently to users. A lightweight “version control” system should be introduced, documenting each change made to dashboard functionality, interface, or data structures, along with its rationale and implementation date. This enhances user trust and reduces confusion during training or onboarding.

Finally, dashboard performance and improvement actions should be reported to the NSSS M&E Sub-Committee on a semi-annual basis. These reports should include utilisation summaries, feedback highlights, a status update on ongoing technical upgrades, and recommendations for future enhancements. Institutionalising this monitoring function ensures the dashboard remains a core part of NSSS governance, not a temporary project output.

15 Annexes

15.1 NSSS Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) and Action Plan II Cluster Mapping

This annex provides a reference matrix mapping the eleven Key Evaluation Questions (KEQs) from the NSSS Implementation Review to the five thematic clusters of Action Plan II (2021–2026) and the system reform priorities identified in the NSSS and successive Cabinet Division guidance. It is intended to support structured data collection, analysis, and reporting during the evaluation.

The matrix also indicates which KEQs are most relevant to cross-cutting reform themes, such as G2P digital payments, Management Information Systems (MIS), grievance redress systems (GRS), coordination and institutional capacity, and inclusion (gender, disability, LNOB).

Table 24: KEQ–Cluster–System Theme Mapping Matrix

Key Evaluation Question (KEQ)	Relevant AP2 Clusters	Relevant System Reform Themes
KEQ1: To what extent has implementation of Action Plan II progressed as planned?	All clusters (1–5)	All systems (G2P, MIS, GRS, Coordination, Inclusion)
KEQ2: What are the main enablers and barriers to implementation at the sectoral and system level?	All clusters	Coordination, MIS, Policy alignment
KEQ3: How effective are the current institutional and coordination arrangements?	Cluster 5	Coordination, Capacity, M&E
KEQ4: How well are social protection programmes targeting and reaching intended populations?	Clusters 1, 2, 3	Inclusion, LNOB, Gender, Disability
KEQ5: To what extent are delivery systems improving (e.g.,G2P, grievance, MIS)?	Cluster 4	G2P, MIS, GRS, Interoperability
KEQ6: What progress has been made on financial governance and budgeting for social protection?	Cluster 3, 5	Financing, Transparency, Budget alignment
KEQ7: How are cross-cutting issues (gender, disability, urban poverty) being addressed?	Clusters 2, 4	Inclusion, LNOB
KEQ8: How effectively is the NSSS supporting shock-responsiveness and resilience?	Cluster 1, 3, 4	Shock-responsive design, Risk pooling
KEQ9: What contributions have development partners and TA made to NSSS implementation?	Cluster 5	Coordination, Capacity Development
KEQ10: How are learnings from implementation being captured and used for system strengthening?	Cluster 5	M&E, Learning loops, Policy feedback
KEQ11: What priorities and adjustments are needed to inform the next NSSS and action plan cycle?	All clusters	Strategic planning, Institutional learning, System design

Notes:

- All KEQs are designed to be answered both at the overall system level and disaggregated by cluster.
- System reform themes are cross-cutting and may not fall under one ministry's responsibility; inter-ministerial analysis is critical.
- Mapping will be used to align KIIs, document review, dashboard indicator selection, and findings chapters in the final review report.

15.2 Oversight Inception and Review Tools

This annex presents sample tools developed to support structured quality assurance and coordination during key phases of the NSSS Implementation Review. These tools will be used by the oversight team to assess contractor deliverables, consolidate stakeholder inputs, and guide transparent revision and validation processes. The annex includes templates for inception report review, draft report comment matrices, and validation workshop documentation.

Inception Report Review Template

The inception report sets the foundation for the entire review. Oversight team members will assess the report based on the following structured criteria.

Table 25: Inception Report Review Template

Review Dimension	Assessment Focus	Rating (1–4)*	Comments / Required Revisions
Alignment with KEQs and Action Plan II structure	Are the KEQs fully addressed with a coherent framework and cluster mapping?		
Methodology	Are data collection methods appropriate, feasible, and inclusive?		
Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Is there a clear plan for engaging ministries, development partners, CSOs?		
Gender and LNOB Integration	Are gender, disability, and inclusion dimensions adequately embedded?		
Risk Management Plan	Are potential risks identified with credible mitigation strategies?		
Deliverables and Timeline	Are milestones, responsibilities, and delivery dates clearly defined?		
Oversight Responsiveness	Are oversight roles and coordination mechanisms clearly reflected?		

*Rating Scale: 1 = Major concerns; 2 = Some concerns; 3 = Satisfactory; 4 = Strong

Draft Report Comment Consolidation Matrix

This matrix is used by the oversight team to consolidate feedback on the contractor's interim report from government, development partners, and technical reviewers. The matrix provides a structured way for the contractor to respond to each point raised.

Table 26: Draft Report Comment Matrix

Section / KEQ	Commenting Agency / Actor	Summary of Comment	Oversight Priority (High / Medium / Low)	Contractor Response	Action Taken (Yes / No / Partially)	Remarks
KEQ 4	MoWCA	Data disaggregation by gender is missing in findings	High			

KEQ 5	DFAT	G2P findings need triangulation with MIS rollout data	Medium			
KEQ 2	Cabinet Division	Too much emphasis on donor TA, less on GoB-led reforms	High			

Validation Workshop Documentation Template

The oversight team will use this template to document discussions and feedback received during validation events.

Table 27: Validation Workshop Summary Template

Session Topic / KEQ Cluster	Key Points of Agreement	Key Areas of Disagreement / Clarification Sought	Suggestions for Revision or Follow-Up
Cluster 1 (Social Insurance)	Strong support for coverage findings	Concerns on definition of "formalisation progress"	Revise recommendation wording for MLF/NSIS alignment
Cluster 4 (Delivery Systems)	Consensus on GRS progress being slow	Request for district-level data visibility	Explore visualisation upgrade options in dashboard plan
System Reforms	G2P, MIS integration prioritised	Need clearer attribution of reform leadership	Include Cabinet Division role more explicitly in findings

15.3 Stakeholder Engagement Map

This annex outlines the key institutional stakeholders involved in the NSSS Implementation Review and Dashboard Operationalisation processes. It presents a structured mapping of their core roles, functional interests, and proposed engagement modalities. This map is intended to guide inclusive consultation, effective coordination, and clarity in oversight and reporting.

Institutional Stakeholder Matrix

Table 28: NSSS Review and Dashboard Stakeholder Map

Stakeholder Institution	Role in NSSS / Dashboard	Engagement Focus	Engagement Modality
Cabinet Division	Lead coordination agency for NSSS; host of dashboard	Strategic oversight; system ownership; validation	Bilateral briefings; workshops; clearance sessions
General Economics Division (GED)	Planning and results tracking; 5YP alignment	Policy integration; dashboard uptake in national M&E	Technical consultations; joint review inputs
Ministry of Finance (Finance Division)	Social protection budgeting and fiduciary oversight	Budget alignment; dashboard's use in fiscal tracking	TA coordination; data harmonisation discussions
Line Ministries (39 total)	Programme implementation and data provision	Dashboard reporting; KEQ response; validation feedback	KIIs; training; data submission protocols
Department of Social Services (DSS)	Programme administration and MIS custodian for key schemes	Data integration; dashboard alignment with DSS MIS	Technical consultations; interoperability pilot
a2i / ICT Division	National digital governance and G2P system development	Technical integration; innovation pilots	Joint system reviews; dashboard feature design
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)	Official statistics provider; source of poverty, demographic, and LNOB data	Indicator disaggregation; baseline references	Data alignment workshops; disaggregation protocols
Bangladesh Bank	Oversight of G2P architecture, agent networks, and digital finance policy	G2P data feed; system-level financial tracking	Policy roundtables; data governance alignment
Development Partners (e.g., DFAT, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, WB)	Funders, technical assistance providers, reform advocates	TA coordination; system reform coherence	Partner dialogues; dashboard usage feedback loops

Civil Society / DPOs	Representation of marginalised voices and rights-based accountability	LNOB priorities; equity checks; ground-level validation	Thematic consultations; stakeholder briefings
CMC and NSSS M&E Sub-Committee	Governance and decision-making bodies	Strategic oversight of both review and dashboard	Formal presentation; policy uptake facilitation

Engagement Plan Overview
Stakeholder engagement will occur across three tiers:

- **Core oversight and ownership (Tier 1)**: Cabinet Division, GED, Ministry of Finance, engaged throughout the lifecycle.
- **Primary implementing partners (Tier 2)**: Line ministries, DSS, Bangladesh Bank, a2i, engaged during data collection, validation, and dashboard integration.
- **Strategic users and contributors (Tier 3)**: Development partners, CSOs, and technical experts, engaged during workshops, validation sessions, and in providing system feedback.

All engagement activities will be documented by the oversight team, and stakeholders will be invited to participate in post-review learning events to ensure sustained momentum beyond the review period.

15.4 NSSS Dashboard Indicator Framework

This annex presents a sample structure for the NSSS dashboard's indicator framework, aligned with Action Plan II. It is intended to illustrate how indicators can be categorised, disaggregated, and operationalised for dashboard display and policy use. Final indicator selection will depend on ministry validation, data availability, and integration capacity.

Each indicator is grouped under one of the five thematic clusters from Action Plan II or cross-cutting system reforms. Fields include definitions, frequency, proposed disaggregation, and source ministry or system.

Table 29: Sample NSSS Dashboard Indicators by Cluster and System Reform Theme

Cluster / Theme	Indicator Name	Definition / Unit	Reporting Frequency	Disaggregation	Primary Data Source
Cluster 1: Social Insurance	Number of contributory scheme beneficiaries	Total individuals enrolled in formal contributory social insurance	Quarterly	Sex, age, division	Ministry of Labour and Employment MIS
Cluster 2: Child Sensitive SP	Coverage of nutrition-linked cash for children under 5	% of eligible households receiving cash + nutrition intervention	Quarterly	District, sex of child	MoWCA MIS
Cluster 3: Labour Market Programmes	% of employment schemes with digital attendance tracking	Share of public employment schemes using biometric or app-based logs	Biannual	Programme type, geography	Ministry of LGRD / MoLE reports
Cluster 4: Delivery Systems	% of programmes using G2P transfers via digital ID verification	Share of NSSS-aligned programmes paying beneficiaries via G2P	Quarterly	Gender, rural/urban, payment provider	Cabinet Division G2P Cell / BB
Cluster 5: Institutional Capacity	# of ministries submitting dashboard data on time	Count of ministries submitting full datasets within reporting window	Quarterly	Ministry name	Dashboard usage logs
System Reform: MIS Integration	# of MIS connected to dashboard via API	Total number of line ministry systems linked for auto data transfer	Biannual	Ministry	Cabinet Division technical logs

System Reform: Grievance Redress	% of grievances resolved within 30 days	Proportion of submitted complaints addressed within target period	Quarterly	Gender, division	MoSW / MoWCA / Central GRS portal
Inclusion / LNOB	% of beneficiaries with disabilities	Share of reported beneficiaries who self-identify as having a disability	Annual	Age, sex, division	DSS MIS / NHD / survey integration

Notes:

- Indicators will be colour-coded on the dashboard based on status (e.g., green = on track, yellow = pending, red = off track).
- Ministries must validate definitions and confirm availability of disaggregated data.
- Proxy indicators may be used where real-time data is unavailable but periodic updates (e.g., from BBS or survey sources) exist.
- Disaggregation dimensions will expand over time as interoperability and data pipelines improve.

This framework will inform the dashboard's data architecture and should be reviewed annually for relevance and alignment with NSSS policy cycles.

15.5 Sample Dashboard Data Protocols

This annex provides illustrative examples of the data protocols that will govern information exchange between line ministries and the NSSS dashboard. These protocols ensure consistency in data submission, traceability of updates, and interoperability between systems. They form the foundation for standard operating procedures (SOPs) to be issued by the Cabinet Division.

Protocols cover formats, metadata requirements, submission channels, validation rules, and version control standards. These examples assume phased digital integration but allow for hybrid submissions (manual and automated) during early implementation stages.

Data Submission Template (Simplified Structure)

All ministries will submit indicator data using a structured format, either through a web-based entry form or a pre-formatted Excel/CSV file.

Table 30: Sample Data Submission Format

Field Name	Description	Data Type	Required?
Ministry Name	Name of reporting ministry or agency	Text	Yes
Indicator Code	Unique dashboard-assigned code (e.g., C1-01, SR-03)	Text	Yes
Indicator Name	Human-readable label of the indicator	Text	Yes
Reporting Period	Time period covered by the data (e.g., Q2 2025)	Date (Quarter)	Yes
Value	Reported figure (e.g., number, % completion)	Numeric	Yes
Disaggregation Dimension	Sub-category (e.g., female, rural)	Text	Conditional
Disaggregated Value	Value for sub-category (e.g., 7,850 beneficiaries)	Numeric	Conditional
Data Source	System or administrative source (e.g., MoLE MIS)	Text	Yes
Data Collector Name / ID	Person submitting the data	Text	Yes
Submission Date	Date of entry or upload	Date	Yes
Comments / Notes	Explanation for anomalies or data gaps	Text	Optional

Metadata and File Naming Convention

Submitted files or automated batches must include a metadata sheet or header and follow a standard naming convention for version control and traceability:

- **File Name Format**: MoWCA_C2-02_Q2-2025_v1.xlsx
- **Metadata Header Fields**: Ministry, Focal Person, Contact Info, Submission Date, Dashboard Indicator Codes, Reporting Period, Notes

Validation and Error Flagging Protocol

Upon submission, the dashboard will run automated validation checks, including:

- Presence of all required fields

- Value range and logic checks (e.g., resolved cases ≤ received cases)
- Duplicate detection (based on indicator code + period)
- Disaggregation total ≈ reported total (with ±2% tolerance)

Errors will trigger automated notifications to the submitting officer, with guidance for resubmission. Rejected entries will not be published to the live dashboard.

Version Control and Revision History

Each submitted dataset will be time-stamped and assigned a version number. When a ministry resubmits corrected data:

- The previous version is archived with a timestamp
- A note explaining the revision is logged
- The dashboard interface will indicate “Updated” status for revised entries
- Only the latest validated version is publicly visible

15.6 Account Role Definitions and Permissions

This annex outlines the proposed structure for account types, user roles, and permission levels within the NSSS dashboard system. A clear and tiered role-based access control (RBAC) model is critical for protecting data integrity, facilitating accountability, and ensuring that users can access the functionality they require without unnecessary risk of data manipulation or exposure.

All users will access the dashboard through secure login credentials, and higher-level roles will include multi-factor authentication. Role permissions will be centrally managed by the Cabinet Division's system administrator, with ministry-level administrators delegated account management authority within defined limits.

Role-Based Access Control Matrix

Table 31: NSSS Dashboard Account Roles and Functional Permissions

Role	User Type / Institution	Core Permissions	Notes
Super Admin	Cabinet Division system administrator	Create/modify all accounts, manage data dictionaries, approve indicator revisions, manage access logs	Full backend access; 2FA required
Ministry Admin	Designated dashboard focal person	Upload, validate, and publish data for assigned indicators; manage Ministry Editor accounts	May flag data for revision or dispute resolution
Ministry Editor	Technical staff within line ministries	Draft and save indicator values; upload supporting files; cannot publish without Admin approval	Enables division of labour under supervision
Validator / Auditor	Dashboard QA support (Cabinet Div./UNDP)	View all entries; review data flags; generate validation reports; cannot edit data directly	Supports data integrity and oversight
Read-Only User	GED, Planning Commission, DPs	View and download data visualisations and reports; cannot edit or upload	Some access may be filtered by cluster or indicator sensitivity
Public User	General public / CSOs / journalists	Access simplified visual summaries, selected indicators, and progress dashboards	No login required; no access to ministry-level or raw data

Account Management Protocol

- Account Request and Creation: Ministries must request new accounts through formal letters or authorised email, specifying names, positions, and roles.
- User Deactivation: Accounts must be deactivated immediately upon staff reassignment, resignation, or inactivity exceeding 90 days.
- Audit Trail: All account actions, logins, uploads, edits, approvals, will be recorded in the system's audit log, viewable by Super Admins.
- Password Policy: Passwords must be updated every 90 days and follow a minimum complexity standard; 2FA is mandatory for Admin roles.

15.7 Risk Register and Mitigation Framework

Table 32: NSSS Dashboard Risk Register and Mitigation Plan

Possible Risk	Cause of Risk	Likelihood (1–5)	Consequence (1–5)	Risk Rating	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Entity	Status / Notes
Ministries fail to submit data on time	Lack of incentives, unclear reporting protocols	Likely (4)	Moderate (3)	High	Issue Cabinet directive; link to performance reviews; provide automated reminders	Cabinet Division	SOP under development
Data submitted is incomplete or inconsistent	Capacity gaps, unclear definitions, limited data systems	Likely (4)	High (4)	Very High	Train focal points; use validation checks; provide real-time error feedback	Line Ministries + Cabinet	Pilot testing in progress
G2P, MIS, or dashboard systems fail to interconnect	Absence of API or common data standards; legacy system limitations	Possible (3)	High (4)	High	Develop integration toolkit; initiate pilots with 4–5 ministries; document interface specs	Cabinet Division + a2i	Integration roadmap underway
System downtime or technical failure	Insufficient hosting capacity or IT support	Unlikely (2)	High (4)	Moderate	Secure stable hosting contract; assign dedicated IT firm; monitor uptime performance	UNDP + IT Partner	Hosting terms under review
Dashboard is not used in policy decisions	Low visibility, lack of relevance to actual planning processes	Possible (3)	High (4)	High	Embed dashboard in M&E Sub-Committee workflows; generate automatic policy briefs	GED + Cabinet Division	To be piloted Q1 2026
Personnel turnover leads to knowledge loss	Transfer or retirement of trained focal points	Likely (4)	Moderate (3)	High	Create backup focal lists; institutionalise onboarding materials; maintain user registry	Line Ministries	Training refreshers planned
Long-term sustainability is unfunded post-2026	No line item in GoB budget; reliance on donor support	Possible (3)	High (4)	High	Include dashboard in MTBF; advocate through CMC and Planning Commission	Cabinet Division + GED	Budget line proposal pending
Data privacy breach or unauthorised access	Weak password policy, outdated access credentials	Unlikely (2)	Very High (5)	High	Enforce 2FA; conduct annual access audit; define user roles with least privilege principle	Cabinet Division IT team	Audit protocol to be finalised
Low usage by field-level officials	Poor awareness, lack of localisation or access constraints	Likely (4)	Moderate (3)	High	Simplify mobile interface; conduct regional trainings; create Bangla user materials	Cabinet + UNDP	Regional rollout under design
Resistance to performance-linked reporting	Perceived political or reputational risk	Possible (3)	High (4)	High	Frame dashboard as learning tool; highlight progress stories; protect against punitive interpretation	Cabinet Division	Communications plan under review

Notes:

- Risk scores (Likelihood × Consequence) follow a 1–5 scale; ratings use standard thresholds:
  - Low (1–4), Moderate (5–8), High (9–15), Very High (16–25)
- The register should be reviewed quarterly and updated based on real-time challenges and lessons learned.
- A “Status / Notes” column allows tracking of ongoing mitigation implementation.

15.8 NSSS Action Plan II Progress Assessment and Status Verification Framework

This annex presents a structured tool for assessing the implementation status of all ministry/division-level action plans under the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) Action Plan Phase II (2021–2026). The core of this annex is a consolidated status table, built upon the previous official progress udpates. The table for each line ministry should be drawn directly from the existing action plan matrix.

To support the final NSSS implementation review, two critical enhancements have been introduced:

1. **Source Column / Means of Verification Column**: two additional columns have been added to verify implementation progress. These column allows for assessor to mark whether each status update has been validated through documentation, interviews, monitoring reports, or triangulation across data sources.
2. **Review Commentary**: commentary column enables evaluators to add insights into *what worked*, *what did not*, *barriers faced*, or *emerging good practices* that arose in implementation (or other notes). This supports more interpretive analysis and links back to the broader lessons learned section of the main report.

To populate the columns, reviewers may draw upon:

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with focal points from ministries
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) or consultation workshops
- Independent validation from field visits, reports, or MIS systems
- Line ministry reports and/or other records
- Grievance redress or audit records

Where documentary or empirical verification is unavailable, entries may be marked “not verified” or “partially verified,” with the reasons noted in the commentary section.

Table 33: NSSS Action Plan Update Table

SI	Ministry	Objective	Activities	Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Status (2024)	Status (2025)	Source	Means of Verification	Review Commentary
1	Ministry of Social Welfare	Strengthen Old Age Allowance Programme	Make the programme universal for eligible people	At least 250 Upazilas	July, 2022	In-progress	TBD	TBD (e.g., MoSW MIS, MoF MIS)	MoSW / MoF MIS Report	e.g., Coverage expanded to X Upazilas, however, challenges remain in urban targeting
2	Line Ministry		All NSSS Action Plan II activities across all line ministries							