

**Minutes of the focal points meeting on social safety net programmes**

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Chairperson : Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam, Secretary (C&R), Cabinet Division  
Date & Time : 09 August 2015, 11:00 am  
Place : Room No.-122, Building No.-02, Cabinet Division, Bangladesh Secretariat.  
Attendance : **Annexure-A**

The Chairperson, with a warm note of welcome, started the business. at the very outset he touched upon the relevancy and the critical role of the Coordination and Reform unit toward moving this nationally important program efficiently in a time bound manner for achieving the set goals.

2. In the same vein, he highlighted the pivotal role of the focal persons to steer this giant and ambitious program, having an outlay of more than 12% of the national budget, and about 02% on the GDP. He furthered that having an optimum outcome greatly depends on the informed engagement from the part of the focal persons, who need to keep themselves always updated with the emerging changes in and challenges associated with the implementation of SSN strategies. In this regard, he referred to the recent decision of the Cabinet adopting a National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), shifting the paradigm from traditional Social Safety Net (SSN) to a broad based omnibus "Social Security" concept, which will be the basis of policy guidance for the next decade.

3. In the same note, the Chairperson regretted some ministries inability to sending representative in that meeting, while expressing intension to convene another meeting with the focal points of non representing ministries. Setting that background, the Chairman called upon the representative of the General Economic Division (GED), Planning Commission to make a presentation on the salient features of the NSSS.

4. The representative of the GED told that the NSSS had been prepared by the GED having extensive consultation with the relevant ministries, while the formulation of the strategy paper was supervised by a subcommittee, under the Central Monitoring Committee (CMC), headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Along with many salient features, he particularly pointed to the universal coverage, new life cycle approach scoping from pre-natal stage to the last day of life and the age and need bases intervention strategy.

5. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) apprised that UNDP would like to closely work with the Cabinet Division and the GED for a successful NSSS outcome. She also opined that ministry /division based action plans would be more helpful and effective for implementation while the Cabinet Division could look into the policy coherence, synergy and provide overall guidance. In this regard she suggested to consider a common template of action plan and M&E framework. She also assured of

providing support for organizing capacity strengthening workshops for the CMC, in suitable places including locations outside capital (which is well appreciated by the participants).

6. Some representatives, particularly the representatives from the Ministry of Hill Tracts Affairs and the Ministry of Youth and sports, pointed out that their ministries were not included in any cluster of the SSN program. However, the GED representative reported that the exclusion was done on the basis of consultation with the stakeholders.

7. Joint Secretary, Cabinet Division shared his experience of some recent Upazila visit as part of field inspection. He told that the Upazila Social Safety Net Implementation Committees didn't meet regularly though they were instrumental and could have been further catalytic in implementing NSSS at the grassroots level. The Chair noted the point and emphasized the need for further activation of the Upazila Social Safety Net Implementation Committees and their monitoring by the District SSN Monitoring Committee. Turning to the transparency issue he suggested to publish the beneficiary list and benefit detail on the website.

8. The Chairperson also observed that a result/performance-based management system is an essential precondition as well as a non-separable instrument for implementation of action plans and M&E frameworks. In this regard, he suggested that the recently introduced Annual Performance Agreement which provides a M&E framework against the set goals, may be a good reference point for preparation of action plan and M&E framework for this program. He also proposed a customized Grievance Redress Mechanism, in line with the Cabinet Division's web based Grievance Redress System (GRS), and a clearly defined Citizen Charter for this program with a view to ensuring accountability and delivering better services.

9. The committee decided to organize another meeting with the focal persons, preferably by the end of this month, to further discuss the necessary next steps. A technical workshop will be organized to figure out the template on action plans and M&E framework.

10. After detail discussion the meeting decided to recommend the following:

- a) Deputy Commissioners be asked by the Cabinet Division for taking measures to further gear up the activity of the SSN committees at District and Upazila level;
- b) SSN implementing ministries be called upon to boost up the monitoring activities and publish the activities including list of beneficiaries and benefit detail on web; and
- c) Customized GRS and Citizen Charter be prepared by implementing ministry/division or agency with a view to enhancing services delivery and ensuring transparency.

The meeting concluded with the vote of thanks from the Chair.



(Md. Nazrul Islam)

Secretary (Coordination and Reforms)  
Cabinet Division