

**Subject: Minutes of the ninth meeting of the Central Monitoring Committee on Social safety net programs.**

Chairperson: Mr. M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan

Meeting date: 18 August 015

Time: 3.00 pm

Venue: Cabinet Room, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.

List of officials present at the meeting: **Appendix A.**

1 The chairperson commenced the meeting by welcoming all who were present in the meeting. He informed that the, the Cabinet has already approved the national social security strategy. Moreover, the Honourable Prime Minister has reviewed the text of the strategy paper. He urged that all concerned need to take proper initiatives for implementing the strategy; though, he also mentioned that the NSSS is a policy guideline having no legal binding for implementation. Therefore, all the recommended plans and activities must comply with the existing rules and procedures during their implementation. He mentioned that the implementation priority of the proposed activities will largely depend on availability of necessary resources. He expressed the idea that a sub-committee may be formulated with a view to determine the responsibilities of the ministries/divisions for implementation of the strategy. Then the chair invited Mr. Hamsul Alam, Member, General Economics Division to make his presentation on 'Identification of the responsibilities of Ministries/Division for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy' as per agenda item 1 of the meeting.

**Agenda 1: Identification of the responsibilities of Ministries/Division for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy**

2. Member of the General Economics Division informed that the National Social Security Strategy has been formulated by the General Economics Division under close supervision of a sub-committee of the Central Monitoring Committee on Social Safety Net Programmes. The strategy was approved by the Cabinet on 1 June 2015. He mentioned that it is a living document having scopes for amendment if required. The vision of the NSSS is '*Build an inclusive Social Security System for all deserving Bangladeshis that effectively tackles and prevents poverty and inequality and contributes to broader human development, employment and economic growth*'. He also mentioned that that the NSSS envisages that integrated social security programmes to be

formulated based on the life-cycle approach and the existing social safety net programmes be reformed for providing better services in this sector.

3. The ministries/divisions implementing social safety net programmes will be organized into five clusters as per recommendation of the strategy document. A ministry or division having closest relationship with the selected theme will be given the responsibility of coordinating that cluster. The implementing ministries/divisions will effectively design and execute their respective programmes. The thematic clusters are social allowances, food security and disaster assistance, social insurance, labor/livelihood interventions, and human development and social empowerment. Then he highlighted the probable tasks of each ministry/division for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy.

4. The meeting was of the view that for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy the Department of Social Service may be further strengthened and a grade-one post be created for this department if required. It was mentioned by several members that some of the ministries/divisions are not included in any of the proposed five clusters despite the fact that they are involved in implementation of social safety net programs. Therefore, it was urged that the General Economics Division would review the matter and take measures to incorporate these ministries/divisions in the appropriate clusters.

5. The target of the country has been set to become a middle income country by 2021 and a high income country by 2041. In view of that the Senior Secretary, Finance Division expressed optimism that there may not require such a huge amount of budget allocation as now in consideration of the changed economic context. However, in refutation of his comment it was pointed out that developed countries of the world like France and Sweden lay out above 18% of national budget in social security. In consideration of that Bangladesh may need to further increase rather than decrease budget allocation in social security sector even when Bangladesh is promoted to a high income country.

6. It was agreed in the meeting that with a view to implementing the National Social Security strategy more efficiently, a unique civil registration system needs to be introduced by establishing an integrated MIS (Management Information System). In this regard the Senior Secretary, Finance Division informed that a process is underway in his ministry for creating an MIS to preserve data of the beneficiaries of such programmes. The data centre may play effective role in eliminating duplication in beneficiary selection. It was viewed in the meeting that the A2I programme of the Prime Minister's Office may be requested to extend necessary cooperation for coordinating the programmes of the Finance Division and establishing an MIS with facilities for mutual exchange of data among ministries/divisions.

7. It was pointed out in the meeting that the authorities and departments other than ministries/divisions as incorporated in some of the clusters for implementation of social security programmes may be advisably excluded from these clusters. In such case the mention of the ministries or division will be sufficient. It was also discussed that the NSSS provides responsibility of National Pension to the Bank and Financial Institution Divisions. But the matter

of pension of public servants being a responsibility of the Finance Division, it should be left with that Division. Besides, the responsibility of social insurance programmes may be handed to the Bank and Financial Institution in place of the Finance Division. It was also suggested that the lead ministries of each cluster may convene meetings with the ministries/divisions of relevant clusters within next three weeks to coordinate the responsibilities assigned upon each cluster.

**Agenda - II Concept note on comprehensive poverty alleviation through coordination among the ministries related with social security for creating ‘a Bangladesh free from poverty and hunger’**

8. The secretary, Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, who is the Ex-Secretary of Social Welfare Ministry, presented a concept note on comprehensive poverty alleviation through coordination among the ministries related with social security for creating ‘a Bangladesh free from poverty and hunger’. She mentioned that the substance of her proposals is to integrate all the micro-credit programmes in a particular village and thereby to convert each of the villages as self-reliant, free from poverty, hunger and beggars. The main objective of the concept is to roll out the model to every village of the country by 2021. She argued that all the villages of the country can be established as completely free from poverty, hunger and beggars by 2025 through her proposed integrated micro-credit programmes.

9. A total of eight ministries and divisions have been operating different programmes of micro-credit. Therefore, it was viewed in the meeting that the feasibility of undertaking programmes as per proposed concept note without changing the existing projects or programmes will require to be verified. The Senior Secretary, Finance Division informed that Honourable Minister for Finance gave direction to bring all the micro-credit programmes under one umbrella. In view of that, the proposed concept of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is very important. He further informed that there is no data about the amount of credit money rolling out in the field. Detailed information is necessary in this regard. The chairperson suggested that a committee may be formed with representatives of all the related ministries to undertake comprehensive programmes in this area. The Finance Division was to lead the committee while the Ministry of Social Welfare will take responsibility of member secretary of the committee. Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Industries, and Bank and Financial Institution Division may be incorporated as members of the committee.

**10. The decisions:**

(1) A sub-committee of the Central Monitoring Committee will be formed to follow up the issue of preparing ministry/division-wise action plans for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy. The sub-committee will be formed after completion of the first round of meetings of the clusters;

(ii) The lead ministries of the five clusters as proposed in the National Social Security Strategy will organize coordination meetings for each cluster and send the record notes of

the meetings to the Cabinet Division, General Economics Division and other ministries/divisions concerned;

(3) The General Economics Division will take necessary measures to incorporate in any appropriate cluster those ministries/divisions related with social security programmes, which have not been included in any of the clusters;

(4) The names of any department or authorities, if any, will be removed from the clusters and the relevant ministries/divisions will be incorporated instead. The Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs will be included in the Social Allowance Cluster; the Finance Division will be included in the Food Security And Disaster Assistance Cluster; and the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Ministry of Labor and Employment, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports will be included in Human Development And Social Empowerment Cluster;

(5) The government pension will be included as the responsibility of the Finance Division while the activities relating to the private pension will remain in the purview of the functions of Bank and Financial Institution Division;

(6) A sub-committee of the Central Monitoring Committee will be formulated as follows to review the concept note presented by the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs on comprehensive poverty alleviation through coordination among the ministries/divisions related with social security for creating a Bangladesh free from poverty and hunger:

a) Senior Secretary, Finance Division	- president
b) Secretary, Ministry of Industries	- Member
c) Secretary, Banking and Financial Institutions Division	- Member
d) Secretary, Prime Minister's Office	- Member
e) Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sports	- Member
f) Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division	- Member
g) Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock	- Member
h) Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	- Member
i) Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare Secretary	- Member

11. Finally, the chairperson concluded the meeting by thanking all present.

(Signed)

(M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan)  
Cabinet Secretary