

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Planning Commission

General Economics Division

**Subject: Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Consultative Working Group on Poverty (LCG Poverty)**

Meeting Date : 28 January 2019  
Meeting Time : 2.00-3.00 PM  
Meeting Place : Conference Room of the Planning Division, Planning Commission, Dhaka.  
Chairperson : Dr. Shamsul Alam, Member (Senior Secretary), General Economics Division (GED), Bangladesh Planning Commission, Dhaka.  
Participants : Appendix - A

### **Presentations and Discussions**

The chairperson inaugurated the meeting with his warm greetings to the presence followed by a round of short self-introduction of the participants. The chair stated that the major objective of the LCG was to share the updates of the programmes, interventions and development initiatives and plans on poverty alleviation, employment creation, and the promotion of the social protection for the people of the country. He also commented that it was a platform where all development partners and development wings of the government shared their efforts on the poverty reduction and enhance cooperation. He acclaimed that the LCG had been making contributions to the progress of the country through involvement in the implementation of national strategies, policies, programmes towards a developed Bangladesh free from poverty. Before the beginning of the agenda, the Chair inquired the presence whether it had any recommendations, observations, comments on the minutes of the previous meeting of LCG. As there was no comment or observation, the meeting minutes was well approved and endorsed by the presence and the chair as well.

2. The Chair then looked back to review the decisions taken in the last LCG meeting and inquired about the progress of the respective decisions. He inquired about the decision 3.1 of the last meeting minutes - 'All development partners would send their respective write-ups to the GED regarding their efforts in implementation and reforms of social protection in Bangladesh'. He inquired about the number of write-ups received by GED. Mr. Faizul Islam, Joint Chief, GED and National Project Director, Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) programme stated that GED had received no specific write-ups but the meeting that day was supposed to discuss it. In connection with the matter, Mr. Ashekur Rahman, Programme Analyst, UNDP Bangladesh explained that during the national conference on the social security programmes organized by Cabinet Division and GED, many development partners channeled through the respective line ministries and a number of ministries and divisions had shared their progress and reports on social protection, so to some extent that was the sharing of the social protection write-ups. The Chair, however, expressed his urge to keep the commitments made by the LCG members.

3. The Chair of the meeting then asked about the decision 3.2 (Terms of Reference of the Local consultative working group on poverty will be reviewed further. The development partners would send their respective comments to the GED within one month of the issuance of the minutes). During this discussion, Ms. Simone Field from DFID and Ms. Shashwatee Biplob from DFAT recommended to circulate kindly the ToR again and then development partners would submit the reviewed ToR to GED within one month. After an interactive discussion, the participants reached a consensus that the ToR will be reviewed by each development partners within one month and the DFID would volunteer for collecting the comments and observations form all and finalize the document and submit to GED. The Chair of the meeting endorsed that decision and he stated that all development partners would review the TOR and submit the reviewed documents to DFID to be finalized.

4. The Chair asked about the implementation status of decision 3.3, which was about holding the LCG meeting quarterly. The presence explained that due to the national election and busy schedules (including convergence issues) of the chair and co-chair, the meeting was not held in time. The participants also assured that as all development partners had shared responsibilities and ownership of the LCG, the meeting would be held in due time in later days. Ms. Angella Naumun commented that as an organization they must consider and shoulder the commitments to the meeting. She also added that they should follow up on the decisions and points made and agreed on. It was also discussed whether the meeting should be held quarterly or biannually, but the participants apprised that the quarterly meeting was quite rational and it should have been continued. However, the group will monitor this in the next two meetings and revisit any need to adjust to perhaps a more practical practice i.e. meeting every six months.

5. According to the Agenda (A), Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Deputy Secretary and Social Protection Specialist of Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme made a brief presentation on the learning and experiences from the study visit to India, Indonesia, Kenya, and Thailand. During the presentation he made a brief highlighted description of the learning of the Indonesia study visit as it was more relevant and closely matched with the social protection system of Bangladesh. He provided a short description of the ministries, institutions, organizations, and respective authorities and their functions related to social protection in Indonesia that came across during their visit. It was shared in the presentation the way Indonesia had consolidated their social protection programmes from 61 fragmented interventions to 16 major ones. He emphasized that Bangladesh needed a central council to coordinate and manage all social protection programmes, especially for implementing a social insurance system like Indonesia. This type of organization could play a vital role in implementing social protection programmes effectively and meaningfully in the country. It was also pointed out in the presentation that as per the NSSS mandate Bangladesh is supposed to have a Central MIS and Indonesia has a Central MIS named Unified Database that is excellent and well-organized central MIS like many developed countries. Some good experience from Kenya, India, and Thailand were also shared in the presentations by Mr. Hasan.

6. The Chair inquired to the presenter that what type of the Central MIS would serve the purpose of the NSSS according to the learning and experiences of four visited countries. He also reminded that different ministries and divisions need different types of data and information to serve multi-dimensional functions and need-based operations and purposes. Mr. Hasan informed that every ministry will have

their own MIS and another central platform will be integrated among all the MISs of all ministries and divisions. Ms. Shashwatee added with him that a feasibility study is under progress that may also provide a detailed design of what type of Single Registry MIS is suitable for our social protection system.

7. The Chair, then, shared that recommendation of NSSS seemed quite international and sometimes ministries and divisions feel hesitation about decisions making, for example, Cash-based Programmes or Food Support what is suitable for Bangladesh. It would be good if the SSPS team shares their international experiences to the ministries and divisions to avoid this ambiguity. Ms. Angela Naumann added with him to develop a report and to share with the Central Management Committee (CMC). Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan assured that a consolidated report will be developed and shared in the next meeting of the CMC. Then the chair went to the agenda (B).

8. As per the agenda (B) the chair inquired about “Developing common narrative for development partners to influence Social Protection policies using the NSSS framework”. Mr. Anowarul Haque from DFID commented that it’s a point for discussion, whether should we develop a new common narrative or the NSSS action plan may serve the purpose. Mr. Aminul Arifeen, the national project manager of the SSPS programme informed that regarding the agenda (B) and (C), the SSPS project is conducting several studies and researches which are under progress. Ms. Meriem from European Union added with him that we need to have a thorough working map or result frameworks by what we’ll be able to track who has been working on what components of this sector along the line of NSSS because now we have an action plan divided by different clusters. She added, it is important for us to understand who is doing what and in which time frame. This could help find out a way forward and ideally if we have developed a joint working framework that would make us accountable for our actions.

9. Mr. Ashekur Rahman from UNDP commented that we are talking about a common narrative for the development partners because the NSSS is a national narrative which is a roadmap already we have. So, we need to develop a narrative for the development partners so that they can align with the NSSS as sometimes we find ambiguity at the operational level. He added many development partners are working on the NSSS and we need a common narrative or conceptual framework so that we can know what basically we are trying to hit. He suggested a small team to work for developing a common narrative for the development partners. Hasina Begum of UNICEF stated that we really need a conceptual framework and many development partners are working on the NSSS and on different segments of the Social Protection through either policy support, project, study or research and many ways but they really need a common narrative. She added we also can think about a Theory of Change (ToC) of the NSSS.

10. Finally, The Chair asked the presence for their suggestions, comments, and opinions on the Eighth Five Year Plan regarding what type of actions need to be taken regarding poverty reduction, employment creation, reduction of inequalities etc. He also requested share their studies, situation analysis, and research reports what they are conducting on regional disparities, employment creation, reduction of inequalities also share with GED that will help to incorporate in the next five-year plan of the country. Ms. Simone Filed added that DFID could share some templates to track the existing and prospective/future development programmes/interventions/activities.

## Decisions

**11.** The meeting was revived with spontaneous conversations and positive feedbacks on the agenda. Participants of the meeting provided valuable guidance that led to making some significant decisions towards sketching the next pathway of the LCG. The decisions were as follows:

**11.1** Terms of Reference of the Local Consultative Working Group (LCG) on Poverty will be reviewed by all development partners (DPs) within one month. They will submit the reviewed copy along with comments and observations to DFID. DFID will compile the comments and observations to submit the final proposal to GED.

**11.2** Upon observing the next two meetings the frequency of LCG Poverty meeting (quarterly or biannually) will be decided.

**11.3** The lessons learned, and experiences gathered from the 04-learning visits in India, Indonesia, Kenya, and Thailand will be shared with the Central Management Committees (CMC) through a consolidated report by SSPS team.

**11.4** All development partners will develop a common narrative to influence the Social Protection policies considering the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS).

**11.5** All development partners will submit their own expectations and suggestions on the upcoming Eighth Five Year Plan (8FYP) to GED before October of 2019.

**11.6** All Development partners will share their strategies, action plans, development plans with GED on what they are working on/carry on.

**11.7** DFID will circulate some template to track the existing and prospective/future development programmes/interventions/activities.



(Dr. Shamsul Alam)

Chair of the LCG Poverty and  
Member (Senior Secretary)  
General Economics Divisions (GED)  
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Appendix "A"

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