

Record Notes

Meeting on the Research Scopes of Social Protection
Civil Registration and Social Security Branch
Cabinet Division

Chair : Mr. Md. Kamal Hossain
Secretary, Coordination & Reforms
Time and Date : 13 Dec 2021, 4.00pm - 5:00 pm
Venue : 1005, Conference Room, Cabinet Division

Participants: Annexure 1

The chair Mr. Md Rahat Anwar, Additional Secretary, Cabinet Division, inaugurated the workshop with a note of heartiest welcome to the participants followed by a brief speech. He briefly explained the relationship among the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) Action Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with special reference to social security programmes and role of the ministries and division and Cabinet Division as coordinative body. He said that it was dream of our father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to ensure equal social security for all citizen, which is now being implemented by the government under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The government is emphasizing on social security to build the country free of hunger and poverty and to be a developed and happy nation.

The Chief Guest Mr. Kamal Hossain, Secretary (Coordination and Reforms) then briefly discussed on the main objective of workshop and importance of the formulation of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) action plan and role of focal point of different ministries in social security programme. He said that under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, we are trying to build the Sonar Bangla as envisioned by our father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The government has been trying to develop the rural life through creating opportunities in the villages and decentralization of the development focuses. Social security was introduced as the key instrument for poverty alleviation and social empowerment of the woman by our Prime Minister in 1996 for the very first time in Bangladesh.

Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hassan, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Division then briefly presented the background and rationales of formulating the 2nd phase of the National Social Security Action plan in his presentation. He said that the government is working relentlessly to be a developed country by 2041 as envisaged by the Prime Minister which is strongly grounded with social security. Bangladesh has glorious achievements in most of the socio-economic sectors and ahead of most of south Asian countries in social security. The present programmes of social security contributed a lot in poverty reduction. it could have resulted still more benefits if it were more comprehensive and well surrounding every lifecycle of the citizens. Therefore, the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) action plan has been formulated to provide a framework of lifecycle based social security. Now we are approaching to develop NSSS action plan phase 2 will be formulated to accelerate the process of social transformation. He then briefly shared each draft action plan of respective ministries/divisions accordingly.

Reflections from the participants:

Deputy Secretary Local Government Division

Focal point from the Local Government Division, Deputy Secretary said that consolidation of smaller programmes is a challenging task, and it is under progress in many ministries and divisions. Our ministry is coordinating within our inter-ministerial agencies so that all the possible programmes can be delivered in a consolidated way. He also added that widow allowance and stipends for the students are very insignificant in terms of amount which should be increased horizontally and vertically. In many areas, it is found that many of vulnerable women cannot access to their deserving social security programmes. We need a strong and practical household database to include eligible people in social security programmes.

Key Actions

1. Coordinate with MoDMR to explore possibility of merging programmes
2. Support measures to tackle the challenge of Urban Social Security
3. Introduce the SWAPNO project in 200 Upazilas
4. Support publishing beneficiary lists for all programmes
5. Instruct the UDCs to receive grievances and forward to UNO office
6. Maintain a register for grievances received and forwarded
7. Provide relevant data on social security programmes regularly

Additional Secretary Ministry of Food

The Additional Secretary and representative of the Ministry of Food said that Open Market Sales (OMS) is one of the biggest programmes of our ministry which is available in all upazilas in urban areas. Our ministry sincerely working to convert food-based workfare programmes to cash. It was decided that some of the programmes will be kept as food based as these are linked with food stock management and procurement of crops from farmers. He recommended that a digital database is very important to identify actual beneficiaries of the social protection. If we had a central MIS we could easily provide social security supports to our farmer, labour, women and other deserving people directly through G2P.

Key Actions

1. Strengthening Open Market Sales (OMS) programme for the poor and extend it to rural areas
2. Extend Food Friendly Programme (FFP) in terms of duration and number of beneficiaries
3. Strengthening Nutrition sensitive Social Protection for Vulnerable People including food fortification
4. Periodically review feasibility of converting food-based programme to cash.
5. Ensure Congenial Food Stock Policy and Fair Price Policy through continuous monitoring and review

**Deputy Secretary
Ministry of Social Welfare**

Representative of the Ministry of Social Welfare said that the NSSS has emphasized to develop a Law/Policy for the abandoned children, so the policy development process needs to be speeded up on the rights and protection of the abandoned children. Lack of consolidation in social security programme often creates a negative impression on our capacity so, social security programme consolidation should be high priority tasks in the NSSS action plan phase 2. As we all know that demographic dividend lasts for a certain period normally for 20 to 30 years. So, we need to put more importance on life cycle approach especially for the youth group for the best use of the demographic dividend.

Key Actions

1. Strengthen old age allowance programme mainly by expansion of coverage and introduce special allowance for people above age of 90.
2. Scale up disability benefit for children and working age through preparing guidelines for disability identification.
3. Consolidate interventions for vulnerable women and introduce and integrated vulnerable women benefit (BWB) programme.
4. Improve programmes for orphans and maintain quality of services and increase coverage.
5. Strengthen programmes for marginalized and socially excluded people like tea garden workers, transgender and disadvantaged communities.

Then, the Chair of the workshop responded to the questions and observations of the participants on their respective projects. Afterwards, there being no other issues for discussion, the chair concluded the meeting with thanks to the participants.

Decisions:

1. Ministry/Divisions will send their feedback/comments or opinion to cabinet division if there any correction/changes or additional remarks is needed;
2. Finalized draft Action Plan phase 2 for the National Social Security strategy (NSSS) will be submitted to the 16th CMC meeting for approval;
3. After approval Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme will support to print the final Action Plan phase 2.

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