

Record Notes
Meeting of the Labour and Livelihood Cluster
Social Security Branch
Cabinet Division

Chairperson: Mr. Shamsul Arefin, Secretary, Coordination & Reforms
Special Guest: Mr. Rahat Anwar, Additional Secretary, Coordination, Cabinet Division.
Discussant: Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Joint Secretary, Civil Registration and Social Security Branch, Cabinet Division
Time and Date: 28 June 2022, 11.30 am – 1:00 pm
Venue: SSPS Conference Room, Cabinet Division, Transport Pool Building, Dhaka.

Participants: Annexure 1

The Chair Mr. Shamsul Arefin, 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 social security can help people in finding work, especially in the lean season. Creating job or assisting people in finding employment is also a part of broader livelihoods interventions. Sustainable graduation of the poor people is the vital objective of this type of social protection. People are supported to utilize their inherent resources for graduation from poverty. Thus, employment generation is the main target of this thematic cluster. In Bangladesh, Labour and Livelihood Intervention programmes were introduced in the wake of social allowance and food security programmes.

The special guest 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 that the main objectives of the cluster are to consolidate workfare programmes, to facilitate social security recipients' engagement with the labour market and to ensure congenial working environment for all, including women, and to strengthen graduation programmes. The main challenge for this cluster is to tackle high levels of under-employment as around 2 million youth enter the labour market in search of jobs every year. Poor people face barriers that make it difficult for them to find productive and gainful employment. Some poor people need funds and training to involve themselves in income generating activities and graduate from poverty sustainably.

Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hassan, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Division then briefly presented on the Labour and Livelihood Cluster and role various ministries. He said that in Bangladesh, Labour and Livelihood Intervention programmes were introduced in the wake of social allowance and food security programmes. This belongs to promotive functional category of social protection. These workfare programmes were in the form of food for work which are being into cash as compensation for people's temporary employment. Employment generation activities, graduation schemes, and capacity building etc. are also included in this cluster. Labour and livelihood Intervention cluster is coordinated by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. He added that the main challenge for this cluster is to tackle high levels of under-employment as around 2 million youth enter the labour market in search of jobs every year. Poor people face barriers that make it difficult for them to find productive and gainful employment. Some poor people need funds and training to involve themselves in income generating activities and graduate from poverty sustainably.

Open Discussion

Deputy Secretary Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief

Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief shared that Bangladesh government is providing Disaster Resilience Houses to the vulnerable landless, homeless people with minimum ownership of land at different locations and disaster victims at different locations. The programme implemented by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, mostly includes disaster-prone areas. The programme has 2.65 lakh beneficiaries with BDT 1258.50 crore budget in 2020-21 fiscal year for this programme. The programme belongs to Food Security and Disaster Response Cluster and Covariate Risks in life cycle approach and is being implemented both in rural and urban areas.

Joint Secretary Local Government Division

Joint Secretary, Local Government Division said that the National Social Security Strategy envisages that the Local Government Division will assume responsibilities related to supporting targeting the beneficiaries of social security programmes, following a community participation approach, providing support in resolving grievances and disputes related to implementation of social security programmes and assisting monitoring and evaluation of programmes. To consolidate workfare programmes is another important task. One of the challenges of the Division is to consolidate its workfare programmes in collaboration with other ministries, especially the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. Other important issues include improvement of the targeting process and establishment of a grievance redress mechanism at the grassroots level.

Joint Secretary Rural Development and Cooperatives Division

Joint Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division stated that the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division undertakes different programmes for rural development by a range of activities including rural employment generation, skill development, research and formulation of relevant rules and policies. Formulation of rural development policy and laws, rules and policy relating to cooperatives. Initiate human resource development programmes for member of the cooperatives, provide education, training, and conduct research programmes on rural development and cooperatives. Innovate new model/strategy on rural development through action research, Assist in the socio-economic development and empowerment of rural women through formation of formal and informal groups under cooperative programmes.

Additional Secretary Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs said that MCBP is the combination and improved version of the existing maternity allowance programme and lactating mother allowance programme. This programme is designed to improve the nutritional status and cognitive development of children from 0 to 4 years of age by introducing a number of reforms instructed under the NSSS. Under this programme, beneficiary enrolment system kept open for the first time in any social protection programme implemented in Bangladesh. Any eligible pregnant woman can apply free to the Union Digital Centre (UDC) for collecting the required information. The application system relates to the central database for social protection programmes management information

system (MIS) following which, beneficiaries can withdraw the allowance from her preferred mobile or bank account.

Decision:

1. Cluster members of the Labour and Livelihood Cluster will design their new programmes considering to the indicators and objective of the NSSS action plan 2nd phase;
2. A day workshop may be organized on the issues of NSIS, disability and occupational safety in Economic Zones for policy recommendations.

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.

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