

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Planning Commission
General Economics Division
Social Security Policy Support Programme

Memo No.

Date:

Minutes of the first meeting of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) of Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme

Chairperson : Prof. Dr. Shamsul Alam, Member (Senior Secretary)
General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission

Date & Time : 01 March 2017, 2:30 pm

Place : GED Conference Room (Room-10, Block-14)

Attendance : **Annexure-A**

The Chairperson commenced the session with a warm note of welcome to all the participants followed by a brief round of self-identification. At the very outset, he touched upon the importance and the critical role of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) in supporting the SSPS programme to ensure that its entire agenda are successfully implemented. He appreciated the role of National Project Director (NPD) for convening the meeting after reconciling conveniences of both the implementing authorities—the Cabinet Division and the GED. However, he exhorted that the meetings of the PIC should be convened more frequently in the coming months.

2. The Chair then requested the National Project Director (NPD) to brief the participants on the background and main activities of the SSPS Programme. The NPD informed that the project is being implemented jointly by the Cabinet Division and the GED. It has the objective of enhancing the overall governance of the social protection programmes and supporting the process of strengthening the delivery system. He also told that the project is funded by the UNDP and the DFID.

3. The Chairperson complemented the NPD by elucidating the initial contexts which lead to undertaking the SSPS Programme. He mentioned that the challenges he faced in formulating the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) were very critical task involving multi-stakeholders. He added that after the NSSS was approved and launched he had recommended for taking up a project for supporting the NSSS implementation. Thus, the project *SSPS programme* was initiated. The participants appreciated the role of the Chair both in the formulation of the NSSS and taking up the project. Both the NPD and NPM opined that CMC-SSPS partnership is instrumental in successful rolling out of NSSS. They offered their pledge to support the CMC from the SSPS in the form of secretarial assistance and apprising the CMC on various development in social security front.

4. The NPD pointed out that so far the project has been engaged in a number of tasks which include a) supports in reforms and operationalizing the Central Management Committee (CMC) and five Thematic Clusters; b) assistance in reforming the CMC; c) knowledge sharing tour to India; d) MoU with NILG for training of the UP chairmen and members, as well as process of engaging BPATC; e) Diagnostic studies; f) NSSS research needs and M&E framework concept papers; g) training and orientation for Members of Parliament, including DCs and ADCs, CMC members and focal points including government officials of five thematic clusters, Department of Social Services, the Cabinet Division, and the General Economics Division; and h) formulation of draft action plan for NSSS implementation. The NPD also apprised the PIC about the progress made in the year 2016 in line with the Annual Work Plan. He also presented the detailed future course of action delineated in Annual Work Plan 2017 of the project.

5. The chair emphasized on the urgent need for publication of the background papers since national and international renowned social protection specialists were involved in writing these papers. He inquired about the updated status of publication, and NPD informed that due to inconsistencies in footnotes and

bibliography the printing process has been delayed, but very soon the whole dummy print copy will be available. The chair urged that this should be published as soon as possible. He apprehended that if these are not brought out as printed documents these may be lost without leaving any trace of the project achievement. Similarly, he stressed upon producing annual progress reports. The NPD added that further research need along with the theme of the NSSS might be included in the upcoming PIC agenda for the PIC members to ascertain their requisite.

6. The Chair mentioned that preparing national database (National Household Database) by the BBS is one of the vital agenda of the NSSS. He added that the database will be prepared by the proxy means test (PMT) method. Based on the score of the PMT, beneficiaries will be selected for different SS programmes. It was suggested that a representative from the Statistics and Informatics Division can be invited to the next meeting to apprise the meeting on the progress of the national database. The NPD supplemented the Chair by stating that other reforms of similar nature in line with the NSSS are also happening in different ministries/divisions/agencies—the Single Registry MIS and National Social Insurance Scheme and Private Voluntary Pension Fund by the Finance Division, G2P payment system of the SWAPNO project by the LGD; GRS by the Cabinet Division etc. Progress regarding these issues might also be important for the PIC to be apprised of. The NPM suggested their representation in the upcoming PIC.

7. The Chair elucidated that if any person is aggrieved for being excluded from the beneficiary list he/she can appeal through a well-designed Grievance Redress System (GRS). The chair wanted to know the progress of GRS. The NPD apprised that the Cabinet Division has been working to prepare a second version of the GRS software. The SSPS programme has provided technical support in mapping the existing GRS and designing the architecture of the second generation of GRS.

8. The Project Manager informed that the Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has been working for rolling out GRS at the field level. It was also informed that MJF is also doing a study in this regard. The meeting agreed that a representative may be invited to the next PIC meeting to brief on the progress of rolling out GRS in the field level. The NPM also suggested that SSPS Programme will place the progress of studies undertaken in various social security issues (Gender; Urban; Communication; Research Needs; Monitoring and evaluation framework etc.) to relevant stakeholder along with the PIC members in workshop modality. PIC might decide whether the study findings should be included in CMC agenda.

9. Then the meeting discussed the progress of creating MIS for social protection programmes. It was apprised that the Finance Division has been working to prepare an MIS for six ministries. It was mentioned that the Local Government Division has piloting an MIS called *Jatna* at Bhurungamari in Kurigram District. The Chair requested the representatives of Finance Division and the Local Government Division to brief on the progress of their MIS in the next PIC meeting. Modalities should be explored to make these MISs interoperable and integrated with each other.

10. The Chair expressed his satisfaction that the project could successfully organize study tour to India. However, he pointed out that the objective of such study tours should be learning lessons and explore possibilities to implement these in national perspective. He expressed concern that the tour report is not prepared yet. He urged that it should be prepared and the lessons publicized through a meeting soon. He also commanded that the report had to be presented in the next PIC meeting.


11. The ERD representative raised the issue of the project duration saying that the project is going to be concluded in this December though a lot of activities are yet to be completed. She urged that the project might be extended for at least one year as this was approved one year later than the stipulated time. The UNDP representative assured that the UNDP will consider an extension of the project if requested by the project authority with justification. The UNDP may also consider exploring funds for the extended period. The chair urged that the project can be extended one-year subject to strong grounds for extension.

12. The UNDP representative opined that any policy reform issue is critical and time consuming. Especially the issues of any reform in social protection is very complex as it involves numerous ministries/agencies and stakeholders. To make any reform happen in this regard strong push from top policy level is required.

- 11 After deliberate discussions, the meeting decided to recommend the following:
- a) SSPS Programme will continue necessary secretarial role and technical supports for successfully organising the CMC meetings, while the project keeps collect and collate the information of government reforms on social protection and share with PIC on a regular basis and gets approval to inform Central Management Committee (CMC) for National Social Safety Net Programmes.
 - b) SSPS Programme will place the progress of studies undertaken so far on: NSSS inclusion of – Gender; Urban; Communication; Research Needs; Monitoring and evaluation framework; and others by inviting key participants / stakeholders under workshop modality. PIC members will also be invited to provide valuable comments. PIC is also eager to understand and provide inputs on different strategies, research works implemented by other partners under DFID funded Strengthen Government Social Protection (SGSP) Programme. In this case, for GRS Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) may be invited to present their findings. Similarly, other agencies may give their respective presentations. PIC will determine whether study finding will be an agenda to inform CMC in its regular meeting.
 - c) The PIC will determine further research need along with the theme of the NSSS. The possible areas are: (i) targeting and selection of beneficiaries; (ii) increased allocation in the budgets; (iii) avoiding duplicity in disbursement; (iv) coordination and implementation; (v) value for money and consolidation of small schemes under a macro-impact study; (vi) capacity needs assessment of NSSS implementing ministries and strengthen NSSS programming for implementing ministries; (vii) capacity needs assessment of the district and upazila for implementing NSSS and strengthen NSSS programming for sub-national level; (viii) moving forward for preparing NSSS Gender Policy / Strategy, Urban Strategy, Communication Strategy, Adaptive Social Protection Strategy. The PIC will take the decision of commissioning such research projects.
 - d) The PIC is interested to understand and discuss progress of reform made on the creation of the single registry MIS with the Finance Division; the progress of creation of national household database by the SID; the experimentation on the G2P payment system of the SWAPNO project of the LGD; the creation of a grievance redress system to be done by the Cabinet Division; and the creation of the National Social Insurance Scheme and Private Voluntary Pension Fund by the Finance Division. Representatives of these Ministries/Divisions will present their own progress in the upcoming PIC meetings.
 - e) SSPS will take necessary actions to publish the background papers of the NSSS shortly.
 - f) The UNDP will be requested to take measures for extension of the project for one more year, i.e. from January 2018 to December 2018.
 - g) The PIC approves the Annual Work Plan 2017 of the project along with the progress made in implementing the tasks set in AWP 2016.
 - h) The meeting of the PIC may be organized more frequently, preferably tri-monthly basis.

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

(M)



(Dr. Shamsul Alam)

Member (Senior Secretary)
General Economics Division
Planning Commission

List of the Participants attended in the 1st Project Implementation Committee (PIC) Meeting of SSPS Programme (Not According to the seniority)

1. Dr Shamsul Alam, Member (Senior Secretary), General Economics Division, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
2. A K Mohiuddin Ahmed, Additional Secretary, Cabinet Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
3. Prashanta Kumar Chakraborty, Joint Chief, Programming Division, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
4. Faizul Islam, Deputy Chief and National Project Director, SSPS Programme.
5. Md. Mokhlesur Rahman, Deputy Chief, Socio-Economic Infrastructure Division, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
6. Mohd. Monirul Islam, Deputy Chief, General Economics Division, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
7. Md. Mahbulul Alam Siddiquee, Senior Assistant Chief, General Economics Division, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
8. Saleha Binte Siraj, Sr. Assistant Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
9. Babulal Robidas, Assistant Director, Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Ministry of Planning, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.
10. Khondaker Muddasir Bin Ali, Assistant Chief, Local Government Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
11. Khurshid Alam, Assistant Country Director, United Nations Development Programme.
12. Aminul Arifeen, Project Manager, SSPS Programme, United Nations Development Programme.
13. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Social Protection Specialist (Deputy Secretary), SSPS Programme, United Nations Development Programme.

(W)