



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
Local Government Division
Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO-II)

3rd PIC Meeting

Chair : Dr. Md. Monirul Islam, Joint Secretary, Local Government Division & National Project Director, SWAPNO II

Venue : SWAPNO-II Meeting Room, DPHE Bhaban, 8th Floor, Shahid Mansur Ali Sarani, Kakrail, Dhaka

Date & Time : 20 March 2025, Thursday; 11:00 AM

Participants : Annex-A

Meeting Opening & presentation from NPM of SWAPNO-II:

Dr. Md. Monirul Islam, Joint Secretary of the Local Government Division and National Project Director (NPD) of SWAPNO-II, welcomed all participants from various ministries, attended both in person and via Zoom platform. He expressed his gratitude and invited participants to provide their self-introductions. He, then requested Ashish Kumar Bakshi, National Project Manager (NMP) of SWAPNO-II to start the presentation. With the kind consent from the Chairperson, the NMP thanked the participants and delivered a brief overview of SWAPNO-II, aligned with the following agenda:

1. Project Updates
2. No-cost Extension
3. AoB (Any Other Business)

1. Project Updates:

The National Project Manager stated that, SWAPNO-II focuses income and employment opportunities of the women beneficiaries by enhancing their skills, opportunities and ability in various ways of livelihoods options. The project has disbursed BDT 56.52 crore wage (till 8 February, 2025) to 10,188 women beneficiaries through Mobile Financial Services & reduced unexpected errors and increased transparency. A total of 540 meetings were organized with 16,200 UDMC members on DRR, CCA, plastic waste management, public asset maintenance work monitoring, and gender-responsive disaster management. ToT on Grievance and Complaint Redress Mechanism received by 44 PNGO staff and then training was provided for 283 Union Workers (UWs) and 10,188 beneficiaries. A total of 6,539 beneficiaries have been selected through categorization by Gram Unnayan Karma(GUK) for the livelihood skill development training; the ToT of the livelihood skill development training is already been started. After completing the ToT, the Union Level respective GoB line department facilitators (Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers, Sub-Assistant Livestock Officers, and others) will facilitate the trainings for the beneficiaries. The project has initiated Micro Health Insurance for 10,188 beneficiaries, 283 UWs, and 100 LoGIC beneficiaries supported by the Pragati Life Insurance. Grievance & Complaint Redress Mechanism is established for 283 UWs and 10,188 beneficiaries and the complaints from the beneficiaries are being recorded. ToT on gender-responsive DRR & CCA is conducted for 44 PNGO staff and subsequently training is provided to 8,490 UDMC members. ToT on 7 modules of life skills training is conducted for 327 PNGO staff and then 10,188 beneficiaries from 32 Upazilas of 12 districts received the training. The project also conducted Health and Nutrition training and Women Volunteerism orientation for 10,188 beneficiaries. Furthermore, a scoping study is conducted by DM Watch and the study identified district-wise thriving sectors for women's entrepreneurship and local job creation. In addition, SWAPNO-II baseline survey and impact study of Phase-I is completed.

Financial Progress: The NPM shared the followings financial progress which has also been added into the working papers including details activity-wise expenditure.

Progress of DPP estimated cost: (Jul-23 to Feb-25) Amount in BDT Crore

Estimated cost of the project (BDT)		Cost (BDT)	Financial Progress	Physical Progress
GoB	71.61	56.52	79%	79%
PA	76.79	27.29	36%	36%
Total	148.40	83.81	56%	56%

Progress of ADP/RADP (Jul-23 to Feb-25) Amount in BDT Crore

Financial Year	ADP/RADP Allocation			Progress of ADP
	Total (BDT)	GoB (BDT)	PA (BDT)	Total (BDT)
2023-2024	37.49	23.23	14.26	20.82
2024-2025	94.56	60.38	34.18	62.99
Total	132.05	83.61	48.44	83.81

Upcoming Major Activities: The National Project Manager shared outcome wise key upcoming activities of SWAPN-II project for the PIC participants as below:

Outcome-1:

- **Wages for public Assets maintenance up to 9th of May, 2025:** Wage Employment through Mobile Financial Services will be continued up-to 9th May, 2025 for 10,188 vulnerable women beneficiaries
- **Capacity development of UDMC:** Total 849 meetings will be conducted to enhance the capacity of 283 Union Disaster Management Committees (UDMCs) for strengthening disaster response and resilience
- **Coconut Tree Plantation:** 8716 coconut trees will be planted in 283 UPs under 32 Upazilas of 12 districts

Outcome-2:

- **Livelihoods Skill Development Training:** Livelihoods skill development training to the 6,539 women beneficiaries based on the choices of the beneficiaries is identified through categorization process
- **Apprenticeship training:** Local market-demand driven apprenticeship training will be provided for 1,122 beneficiaries to create their employment opportunities
- **Skill Development & Formal sector employment:** 2208 women (aged 18-30) is targeted for the formal sector employment and placement training
- **Entrepreneurship Development:** 312 women-led enterprises will be developed by 2025

Outcome-3:

- **Campaign on Malnutrition and Micronutrient Deficiency:** Awareness campaign on malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies will be conducted in 283 unions

- **Partnership with Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and the Livestock Department:** Collaboration with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and the Livestock Department will be established to scale-up the successful adaptive livelihood technologies
 - **Integration with LoGIC Project:** Integration with LoGIC Project of UNDP will be continued to exchange best practices & ideas and to promote climate adaptive appropriate livelihoods options considering local context
2. **No-cost Extension:** NPM has shared the importance, necessity and key reasons for the no-cost extension. He mentioned that it has been discussed with Embassy of Sweden and got verbal consent to move for a 'no-cost extension' with justifications. The NPM mentioned that, the no-cost extension until December 2026 is necessary to complete planned activities, ensure sustainability and to have long-term impact. The key justifications of no-cost extension shared as below:
- **Delayed Initiation:** The project has started 6 months later of its target, that leads to a requirement of additional time to complete planned activities.
 - **Political Unrest:** Political unrest has created significant barriers, disrupted project interventions across all target areas. This has resulted in the need for additional time to ensure proper implementation by the Union Parishads.
 - There are other reasons, like delayed collaboration with project stakeholders, additional time requirements for sustainable exit, ensuring gathering of evidences of project results and designing of new programme as well.
3. **Any other Business (AOB): Updates on last 2 PIC meeting decisions:** The NPM highlighted the following progress of last two PIC meeting decisions:

SL#	Decisions	Progress
1	Ensure the maximum possible expenditure of the GoB allocation of the project in the financial year 2022-2023 and surrendering the unspent fund -- necessary actions will be taken.	The total expenditure of GoB allocation is BDT: 56.52 crore
2	A component-wise cost statement of the project will be added in the next PIC meeting	The component wise cost statement was shared in the meeting. Financial progress from July 2023 to Feb 2025. BDT: 8,381 Lakh (GoB: BDT 5,652 lakh and PA: BDT 2,729 lakh)
3	bKash (Mobile Financial Service Institutions) will be engaged for mobile banking for the disbursement of wages to the project beneficiaries	Total 10,188 beneficiaries receiving wages for public asset maintenance /repair work through bKash
4	Revisit the beneficiary selection process to confirm whether the 10,188 women beneficiaries were selected correctly and without bias	Revisited beneficiary selection process by using standard checklist/tools
5	The enterprise training modules should be shared with the NPD by February 2025	The Terms of Reference preparation work is ongoing to hire the firm responsible for developing the module and delivering the training

Open Discussion: The Honourable National Project Director (NPD) thanked the National Project Manager (NPM) for delivering a detailed and comprehensive presentation on the SWAPNO-II project initiatives and the progress achieved to date. Following the presentation, participants were invited to an 'open discussion session' to seek

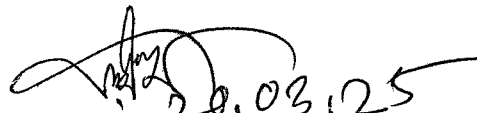


clarifications based on the project overview provided. Below are the key questions raised by participants and the corresponding clarifications given by the NPM:

- **What is the procedure of micro-health insurance services:** The NPM explained that **Pragati Life Insurance Company**, has been engaged to deliver high-quality health insurance services to SWAPNO-II beneficiaries and their families. Payments for treatment costs, including medicines and other expenses, will be processed digitally through selected local pharmacies. The insurance package includes healthcare services, death benefits for the beneficiaries, etc. The annual premium is set at BDT 860, with the project subsidizing 40% of the cost, while beneficiaries are responsible for the remaining 60%.
- **Was the coconut tree plantation initiative coordinated with the UNOs:** In response to the NPD's inquiry, the NPM stated that the activity will be implemented by SWAPNO-II Partner NGOs, who will coordinate with the respective UNOs. Technical assistance will be sought from the Department of Agricultural Extension. This initiative aims to foster a climate-resilient environment while enhancing the income of beneficiary households.
- **Is there any overlap between SWAPNO-II and LoGIC Project:** The NPM clarified that SWAPNO-II, and the LoGIC project have established strong integration through extensive consultations. Exposure and knowledge sharing between these two projects has initiated to exchange best practices for replication. The two projects have decided to complement and supplement each other without any duplications or overlapping. The NPM highlighted that the LoGIC project has adopted SWAPNO-II's health insurance services, while SWAPNO-II has incorporated climate-adaptive strategies from the LoGIC project.
- **Why are donor fund expenditures lower than GoB funds:** Addressing this query, the NPM explained that the difference arises due to the significant allocation of GoB funds toward wage payments for beneficiaries, which constitutes a large portion of the project's expenditure.

As no further questions or agenda were left to discuss, the meeting was concluded by the Chairperson extending appreciation to representatives from various ministries and the UNDP Bangladesh for their active participation and valuable contributions.




 20.03.25
 Dr. Md. Monirul Islam
 Joint Secretary
 Local Government Division
 &
 National Project Director
 SWAPNO-II Project

Annexure A: Participant List

1. Mostafijur Rahman, Deputy Secretary, Planning-2, Local Government Division
2. Md. Nura Alam, Deputy Secretary, Union Parishad branch-2, Local Government Division
3. Md Mamun, Deputy Secretary, Field Administration Coordination Branch, Cabinet Division.
4. ATM Farhad Chowdhury, Deputy Director, (Senior Assistant Director) IMED-Sector-3
5. Samsun Nahar, Senior Assistant Chief, Socio-Economic Wing, Programming Division, Planning Commission
6. Farah Gul Nijum, Deputy Chief, Socio-Economic Infrastructure Division, Planning Commission
7. Papia Sultana, Senior Assistant Secretary, Planning-1, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
8. Tanvir Mahmud, Senior Governance Specialist, DG Cluster, UNDP Bangladesh Country Office, Dhaka
9. Asish Kumar Bakshi, National Project Manager, UNDP SWAPNO-II Project Dhaka
10. Mohammad Mahmudul Haque, District Manager, SWAPNO-II (Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari & Gaibandha)
11. Md. Mahmood Hossain, District Manager, SWAPNO-II (Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, & Gopalganj)
12. Mir Amir Ali, District Manager, SWAPNO-II (Jamalpur & Sherpur)
13. Mohammad Masum Miah, SWAPNO-II (Cumilla & Chandpur)