

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka
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Subject: Minutes of the 1st Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting of “Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling up of Sustainable Land Management” Project.

Chaired by: Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary, MoEF&CC

Date and Time: 06 November 2018, 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Venue: Conference room, MoEF&CC

List of participants: Attached as annex-1

The chairperson started the meeting by welcoming all the participants. Then he requested for a self-introduction. After that with permission of the Chair, Dr. Md. Sohrab Ali, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) of the project and Director, Dhaka Metropolitan Office, Department of Environment (DoE), gave a brief overview on the status of the project and describe the importance of the project. He mentioned that it is a global project and is being implemented in fifteen countries around the globe. Initially the project duration was three years (April 2015 to March 2018) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) informed that project duration has been extended (no cost extension) up to April 2019 by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). He also said that it is unfortunate that we were not able to start the activities of this project on time due to various reasons. He explained that the project took longer time to take all participating countries on board since each country has its own approval process. Further, FAO took longer time (nearly one year) to deploy a Project Manager to carry forward the project. In 2015, an initial work plan was prepared for Bangladesh through discussion with Mr. Stefan Schlingloff (presently he is the global Project Manager) but after that no communication happened, he added. He described that the main three activities of this project were- to develop a land degradation map, documentation of SLM practices and demonstration of SLM practices in field. However, due to time constraints, now it will not be possible to go for demonstration in field. He also cited that in the stakeholders meeting Dr Sultan Ahmed, Director General, DoE suggested to recruit more personnel to cover the targeted activities of the project within the limited time. So, we need to revise our work plan and the budget as well accordingly with the permission of the PSC.

2.0 At this point Dr. S.M. Munjurul Hannan Khan, Additional Secretary, MoEF&CC asked FAO to explain the reasons of delay start of this project and why we did not initiate our activities at the beginning of the extended period. Mr. Kristofer Johnson, acting CTA, FAOBD, replied that due to some communication gap this delay happened but we are confident that we can conduct the major activities of this project within the remaining time and it will produce quality output that can contribute in our sustainable land management sector.

After that a presentation was given by the FAO consultants, Md. Fazlay Arafat on project objectives, methodological approach, proposed work plan, proposed revised budget, proposed responsibilities of implementing agencies and identification of next steps of project activities.

3.0 Discussions:

3.1 Mr. Mir Nurul Alam, Director, Planning, Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), stated that DAE can help in demonstration work but due to time constraint the project is not going to implement demonstration work. The PSC members than suggests if it is possible to demonstrate some of the activities in field DAE should submit plan for demonstration and later PSC will recommend whether we will go for demonstration work or not.

3.2 Dr. S.M. Munjurul Hannan Khan, Additional Secretary, MoEF&CC itemized the importance of training need assessment before arranging ToT in the field. Dr. Anil Kumar Das, National Consultant (program), FAOBD replied that in last Stakeholders meeting, it was agreed that this capacity need assessment will be done through key informant's interview from related departments.

3.3 Md. Mahbulul Hoque Patwary, Deputy Chief, Ministry of Agriculture said that they have efficient workers at grass root level even. If they were involved in this project from earlier, they could help more. However, now if they get available resources, then they can do the proposed work mentioned in the work plan.

3.4 Mr. Bidhan Kumar Bhandar, Director, Soil Research Development Institute (SRDI), said that SRDI can help to address land degradation in this project. They already identified some land degradation (LD) hotspot that they can share. SRDI have some secondary database from where they can provide a map of land degradation and from other areas if they get soil sample SRDI can enrich the LD map. He stated that SRDI can do their part within the timeline.

3.5 Mr. Md. Abdur Roshid, Executive Director, Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA), mentioned that there are some degraded water bodies in Barind area and it will be good if we can address this through DS-SLM project and bring them under sustainable management.

3.6 Mr. Shamshur Rahman Khan, Deputy Secretary, MoEF&CC detailed that ministry is not well informed about this project. Even then this ministry is not aware about the no cost extension. He mentioned that more discussions are required between implementing agencies and the ministry to finalize the revised work plan and budget. Further he said that it must be re-examined to ensure how many national consultants are required in this project. He also opined that there are no need of an international consultant and an advisor at this stage of the project. He proposed a technical committee in this project to ensure quality deliverables of the project. He also mentioned that in the ToR's of proposed recruitments, the consultants will report to Matieu Henry who is an another consultant of FAO. He suggested that all consultants should be liable and report to the NPC. He categorically mentioned that DoE or MoEF&CC should be the custodian of all properties and deliverables the project and FAO can use any product with written permission from the MOEFCC. He also mentioned that FAO should take prior approval of all recruitments and the NPC will be part and parcel of the whole process.

3.7 The NPC, Dr. Sohrab Ali, Director, Dhaka Metropolitan Office of DoE drew kind attention of the PSC to the following matters:

- After required correction/adjustment in the agreement (including proposed work plan and the budget as well) DoE will send to the MoEF&CC for approval and re-signing by ERD.
- He requested for one technical committee including members from MoEF&CC to ensure quality of documents produced by this project. After getting approval from the technical committee the project will go for publication. One budget line should be created to support this technical committee.
- He further stressed the need to mention in the agreement that all properties and deliverables of the project will remain properties of MOEFCC/DOE.
- The ToR's of all consultants should be developed in consult with DoE.

3.8 Dr. Nurul Quadir, Additional secretary, MoEF&CC, said that we may not require such number of consultants in this project. Because, to conduct the mentioned activities in the work plan the officials of DoE, DAE, SRDI and BMDA are good enough. On that ground we do not need international consultant and advisor.

3.9 Mr. Mohammad Nazim Uddin, Joint secretary, ERD stated that it need to take permission from ERD to bring any changes in the signed document. He urged to strengthen the coordination with all entities of the project. He also mentioned that ERD will extend its all out cooperation whenever necessary.

3.10Md. ToufiqulAlam, Additional secretary, Ministry of land mentioned that they are also doing some projects for SLM like 'Guccho Gram' project. He said that we have national land use policy and agriculture policy where there are mentioned of about SLM. He thinks that this DS-SLM project is very important for our national aspect and it should be implemented in the field.

4.0 Decisions: After detail discussion following decisions were taken-

Sl. No	Decisions
4.1	FAO in consultation with the DOE/NPC will revise the agreement (including activity plan and budget) and send the final version to MoEF&CC with in one week for approval and MoEF&CC will send it to ERD for re-signing;
4.2	DoE will send a proposal for forming a technical committee (including ToR) to MoEF&CC for approval and notification. One budget line should be created to support the committee;
4.3	All consultants and staffs of the project will be liable for their activities and report to the DOE/NPC for approval.
4.4	At least one demonstration on SLM should be implemented in the Field.
4.5	At this final stage of implementation of the project, there is no need to deploy a international consultant or an advisor.
4.6	DoE's approval is necessary for deployment of consultants and NPC will be involved throughout the entire process.
4.7	MoEF&CC/DOE should be the custodian of all properties and deliverables the project and FAO can use any product with written permission from the MOEF &CC. This should be reflected in the revised agreement.
4.8	Training need should be assessed before arranging ToT in the field.
4.9	For national consultation DOE/NPC will finalize the date after discussion with the MoEF&CC.
4.10	The next PSC meeting should be in January 2019.

5.0 Conclusion: Finally, the chair concludes the meeting by thanking all the participants.

(Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury)
Secretary