

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme  
Cabinet Division  
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**Minutes of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) Meeting of Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme**

<b>Chair</b>	Md. Kamal Hossain, Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division
<b>Co-chair</b>	Dr. Md. Kawser Ahmed, Member (Secretary), General Economics Division (GED)
<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	23 January 2022, 03.00 pm in Zoom Platform.
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Annexure-A</b>

The Chair commenced the meeting with a warm note of welcome to all the participants followed by a brief round of self-introduction. At the very outset, he highlighted the importance of organizing regular meetings of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) for the effective implementation of the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme agenda. The chair categorically mentioned that the SSPS Programme is one of the flagship projects of the Government of Bangladesh in rolling out reforms of the social security system of Bangladesh as stipulated in the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS). Then the Chair requested Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Joint Secretary (Civil Registration and Social Security) of Cabinet Division to brief the meeting on the background and main activities of the SSPS Programme in place of the National Project Director (NPD).

2. Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Joint Secretary (CR and Social Security) of Cabinet Division then shared a PowerPoint presentation on the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme. He said that the project, implemented jointly by the Cabinet Division and the GED of Planning Commission, commenced in 2014 and continued up to June 2020 (in 1st phase) with technical assistance from FCDO, DFAT, and UNDP. The project was then revised and extended for the period from July 2020 to June 2023 with funding from DFAT.

3. It was pointed out that the goal of the project is to build an inclusive social security system for all deserving Bangladeshis to strengthen the social contract, enhance stability, and build resilience. The expected outcome of the project is that poor people will be less vulnerable to external shocks through greater access to financial and insurance services and social security with clear graduation strategies. It was mentioned that the first component of the project is related to better governance of social protection by strengthened coordination, M&E and reporting

mechanisms, while the second component focuses on modern social protection infrastructure development.

4. Mr. Hasan explained that the first revision of the project has been designed on the basis of the lessons learnt from the first phase of the project from 2017 to 2020 and findings of the mid-term review of the NSSS. The revision has also considered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, inputs from relevant officials including the former Member of GED, Dr. Shamsul Alam, (who is currently serving as honourable State Minister for Planning). The revised project also took into consideration the lessons learned from study tours in Turkey, Indonesia, India and Thailand; and recommendations from Bangladesh Social Security Conferences held in 2018 and 2019.

5. He also added that the revision is significantly informed also by the 8th Five-Year Plan (2020-2025), the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), UN SDGs, and the Development Partner's (UN Agencies, EU, ADB, WB, DFAT, FCDO, others) Common Narrative on Bangladesh Social Protection Reform. He then mentioned that the project already achieved a number of milestones such as piloting on G2P, GRS on social protection, capacity building of the government personnel, policy dialogues, and different research and publications on social security.

6. On the agenda of formulation of the NSSS Action Plan, the meeting was apprised that the Central Management Committee (CMC) assigned the responsibility of formulating the NSSS Action Plan, Phase-II (2021-2026) upon the Action Plan Sub Committee led by the Secretary, Coordination and Reforms of the Cabinet Division. The TOR of the sub-committee stipulates that SSPS Programme would provide technical support in formulation of the Action Plan. Accordingly, the SSPS Programme provided supports to the sub-committee mostly in the form of organizing a series of consultative dialogues, meetings, and workshops with the concerned stakeholders generating initial drafts of the NSSS Action Plan.

7. While apprising the meeting of the formulation process of the Action Plan, Mr. Hasan mentioned that ministries finalized the relevant parts of their own action plans revising the initial drafts prepared during consultation meetings and workshops. The action plans of the ministries were compiled and placed before the 15th meeting of CMC on 27 June 2021. As per the decision, the combined draft was sent to the concerned ministries/divisions for further review and feedback. The draft of the NSSS Action Plan was then finalized reflecting the feedbacks of the ministries/divisions. In the 16th meeting held on December 23, 2021, the CMC finally approved the NSSS Action Plan, Phase – II (2021-26). The Action Plan has been sent to the Honourable Prime Minister for her kind information. The action plan will soon be published and launched officially.

8. Mr. Aminul Arifeen, Project Manager, SSPS Programme mentioned that the formulation of the Action plan involved a lot of activities facing a number of challenges, particularly induced by Covid-19 fallout. He said that the project management is very hopeful to deliver all the activities in time. He complimented the statement of the chair that the SSPS Programme will organize PIC meetings regularly and also support organizing other regular meetings and dialogues with stakeholders including the relevant working group of Local Consultative Group (LCG).

9. Ms. Khadiza Nazneen, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare said that the Ministry of Social Welfare is currently implementing seventeen social protection programmes, such as old-age allowances, widow allowances, allowances for persons with disabilities, grants, and aid to acid-burnt victims. She mentioned that the ministry has plans for launching multidimensional and intensive programmes for the welfare of the marginalized and disadvantaged segment of population,.

10. Ms. Kate Sangster, First Secretary - Development Cooperation, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian High Commission, Bangladesh said that they are strongly committed to this project and recognized the challenges faced by the project in the pandemic situation. She added that we need to pay specific attention particularly to elderly people and persons with disabilities as they are a great part of the broader community who suffered a lot from the pandemic. She also assured that DFAT's partnership with SSPS Programme stems from its commitment for supporting the implementation of a better governed social protection system in Bangladesh.

11. The Secretary, Coordination and Reforms and chair of the meeting further opined that the project needs to organize the PIC meeting more frequently so that we can hear and share our experiences among the implementing ministries/divisions, development partners and other stakeholders. He commented that we have 38 ministries and divisions who are responsible for implementing the Action Plan of the NSSS and we need frequent meetings and consultations among us so that we can track our progress to achieve the ultimate goal of the NSSS. He also emphasized the research, publications, and dissemination of other visibility materials to highlight the achievements, success stories, and initiatives of the government on social protection.

12. Dr. Kaswer Ahmed, Member (Secretary), General Economics Division (GED) expressed his satisfaction that the SSPS project has made impressive progress with excellent achievements amid the vast challenges induced by the pandemic. He then explained that the Integrated Single Registry MIS is very crucial for our social protection system and appreciated the huge endeavour of the SSPS project in this regard. He added that we need to wait for the upcoming HIES data, expected to be available by February 2023, for the commissioning the Single Registry Integrated MIS.

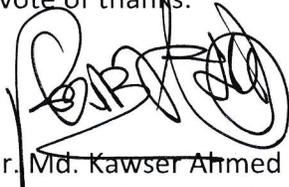
**Decisions:**

13. After elaborate discussion the meeting decided to recommend the following:

- a) The meeting of the Project Implementing Committee (PIC) should be organized regularly as stipulated in the ToR of the Committee.
- b) The project will regularly organize meetings, workshops, dialogues, and consultations to track the implementation progress of the NSSS Action Plan and to share the experience of NSSS implementation within ministries and divisions.

- c) The SSPS programme should produce more research, publications and visibility materials highlighting the achievements, success stories, and initiatives of the government on social protection.
- d) The SSPS Programme will organize study tours and visits both at home and abroad for relevant officials when the pandemic situation subsides to enhance knowledge and experiences in different aspects of social protection.

13. There being no more agenda items for discussion, the Chair and the co-Chair concluded the meeting with vote of thanks.



Dr. Md. Kawser Ahmed  
Member (Secretary),  
General Economics Division (GED)



Md. Kamal Hossain  
Secretary, Coordination and Reforms  
Cabinet Division

**Dr. Md. Kawser Ahmed**  
Member  
General Economics Division  
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