

Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) for ERD UN Wing Project

Minutes of the Project Executive Board – Second Meeting

- Chairperson** : Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Senior Secretary, Economic Relations Division
Meeting date : 02 October (Sunday) 2016
Time : 3.00 pm.
Venue : NEC-2 Conference Room
- Agenda** :
1. Brief Overview of the Project:
2. Approval of minutes of the 1st Project Executive Board meeting
3. Review of progress of project implementation
4. Approval of revised Annual Work Plan (AWP)
5. Miscellaneous

The second meeting of the Project Executive Board of the ‘Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) for ERD UN Wing’ project was held on 02 October 2016 (Sunday) at the NEC-2 Conference Room. The meeting was chaired by Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Senior Secretary, Economic Relations Division. List of officials attending the meeting is attached, Annex – A.

Introductory Remarks and Opening Discussions:

Welcoming all Board members in the meeting, the Chair requested the National Project Director to initiate the discussion as per agenda.

National Project Director and Additional Secretary (UN) of ERD Ms. Shamima Nargis informed the meeting that the first meeting of Project Executive Board was held on 19 January, 2016 where the Annual Work Plan (AWP) of its first year was endorsed. Following that, the project entered into implementation stage activity-wise. Among others, the implementation progress of the AWP will be shared in the meeting through a presentation.

Agenda-wise Discussion:

Agenda 1. Brief Overview of the Project:

Project Manager made a presentation giving a brief overview of the project and also gave updates on the implementation status of the decisions of the first meeting of Project Executive Board held in January this year.

Agenda 2: Approval of minutes of the 1st Project Executive Board meeting

The minutes of the first meeting of the Project Executive Board, held on 19 January 2016, was sent to all concerned in due time. No comments/views have been received till date. The meeting may endorse the minutes.

Agenda 3: Review of progress of project implementation

Project Manager informed the meeting that allocation in the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for the project in the FY 2015-16 was BDT 69.00 Lakh (\$88,038) out of which project assistance was BDT 55.00 Lakh (\$70,175) and GoB allocation was 14.00 Lakh (\$17,862). The project could implement BDT 45.54 Lakh (\$58,104) which is 66% of the total allocation. During the calendar year 2016, UNDP allocation was \$258,000 out of which the project could spend approximately \$72,000 so far which is around 30%. Though the expenditure of the project assistance shows low at the moment but some procurement items are in pipeline. Like the matter of hiring one IT firm, another three consultants in the area of South-South Cooperation, Resource Mobilization and Communication, several hardware (Rack Server, Rack, Scanner, Desktop computer etc. in connection with establishing Information Repository at ERD) are in progress which is expected to contribute significantly to enhance the expenditure against targeted activities.

(a) **Training activities:** While updating the initiatives taken under the project with further details, the meeting was informed that a national seminar on South-South and Triangular Cooperation was organized in August 2016. A number of trainings were organized and around 273 officials from ERD and other Ministries/Divisions and UN Agencies participated in those trainings. In this connection, Ms. Shahnun Nessa from Statistics and Informatics Division wanted to know about the contents of the training courses organized under the project and the selection process of the participants of those trainings. National Project Director responded by saying that in line with the objective of the project, the seminar/ workshops/ trainings were organized with a view to share/ disseminate knowledge on emerging development concepts like South-South Cooperation and other important issues like procurement, GOB's Financial system, Operational procedure of UN Agencies and so on. The participants of the trainings are mostly from ERD's different Wings when relates to updating them on some project management/ implementation issues and also from some other relevant Ministries and Divisions on current development issues.

(b) **Formation of Eminent Persons Group :** With a view to establishing knowledge partnership with the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), a ToR has been developed describing the structure of the Group as well as modalities of organizing regular thematic sessions and relevant other issues. Joint Chief of General Economic Division (GED) Mr. Md. Mafidul Islam observed that the

project is in its right track. However, he requested for sharing the draft ToR for EPG with the Project Board Members.

Joint Secretary of Development Effectiveness Wing Mr. Aftab Ahmad expressed his high hope about the formation of Eminent Persons Group which might facilitate intensive consultation among experts and policy makers. In this connection, he referred to the twenty one 'Task Teams' formed by the Government during the period of early 1990s to discuss national and policy issues. Those Teams could organize thoughtful consultations on different national issues and could produce valuable policy documents which provided valuable inputs in the process of formulating subsequent Five Year Plans. He expressed his expectation that the proposed EPG might facilitate similar thoughtful consultations and produce policy recommendations for future planning. While expressing optimism in this regard, the Chair underscored the need for careful formulation of the ToR for EPG which is of crucial importance to engage the eminent persons in an effective and meaningful way.

- (c) **Establishing Information Repository:** The project has also undertaken initiative for developing an online information repository, a **document** management software, where ERD's most important reference documents will be uploaded with easy search and download facilities.
- (d) **Review of NEX:** While discussing on one targeted activity under the project which is review of NEX manual, the National Project Director and Additional Secretary (UN) informed the meeting that this activity has not been undertaken yet as ERD received a document titled 'National Implementation by the Government of UNDP Supported Projects: Guidelines and Procedures'(NIM) lately from UNDP with a formal letter which states that this will replace all locally developed NEX/NIM as the single reference source for guidance and procedures to be followed by UNDP and national counterparts. She further notes that the document shows that it has been developed around the timeline of 2011 whereas it has been shared with GOB in 2016 and no prior consultation was done with the government counterparts. It is important to review this newly developed NIM to identify the changes made from the earlier version of NEX, and it also needs to be discussed with implementing Ministries and Divisions as they need to abide by this new guideline. But while doing so, it is important to know whether the matter is open to accommodate the views and suggestions of the Government.

At this point, the Senior Secretary requested UNDP counterpart to clarify the status of NIM with a query whether NIM is replacing NEX. Mr. Nick Beresford, UNDP Country Director, a.i. responded by saying that the NIM had been prepared as a corporate guideline for UNDP operation all over the world. It would provide guidance on the accountabilities and processes within national implementation, as well as country office support to national implementation. The

Manual contains policies, procedures and resources to guide UNDP country offices to work with Government institutions that act as implementing partners of UNDP-supported programmes and projects. Assistant Country Director of UNDP Ms. Shaila Khan supplemented that NIM is not a major deviation from NEX and almost similar policies and procedures have been incorporated in NIM. The newly developed NIM can be formalized with ERD through joint discussion, consultation and mutual understanding so that it complies with most of the relevant laws of the land. Joint Secretary Mr. Aftab Ahmad from the Development Effectiveness Wing observed at this point if necessary, initiative can be undertaken to review NIM by engaging a short-termed consultancy, if required.

Senior Secretary suggested that ERD and UNDP need to sit together first to discuss both the documents and identify the differences with a view to decide on the next possible steps in this regard.

- (e) **Utilization of PA amount:** In response to a query from Mr. Aftab Ahmad, Joint Secretary, Development Effectiveness Wing whether the project management would be able to utilize the remaining 70% of the DPA within the three months of this calendar year, the meeting was informed by the National Project Director that as a number of activities including some procurement are in progress, there would be significant increase in the PA utilization. Furthermore, the planned study tours under the current AWP would also add to the resource utilization. At this point, the NPD requested for UNDP's active support in organizing the exposure visits in a timely manner which was agreed upon by UNDP.

Agenda 4: Approval of revised Annual Work Plan (AWP)

The meeting was informed that because of some implementation needs, some revision in the current AWP was required. The chair wanted to know what revisions were made and why. The meeting was informed about the following:

- Hiring of international consultants both in South-South Cooperation and Resource Mobilization was dropped; instead the decision was only to go for National consultants. Saving from this required to be adjusted.
- Provision of organizing theme-based international conference in Bangladesh needed to be dropped and this will be planned next year. Saving from this required to be adjusted.
- Estimated Budget in the AWP for developing the Information Repository was not enough. Based on the revised estimate, allocation against this activity required to be increased from US\$ 30,000 to 57,000.

- Provision of a Communication Officer was incorporated in the revised AWP as the project needs to develop a good number of documentation and publications.
- There were some increase in the training budget as the project objective relates to creating broader stake in capacity building for leveraging effective knowledge in development management.

The meeting observed that the proposed revision can be endorsed.

Agenda 5: Miscellaneous:

Assistant Country Director of UNDP Ms. Shaila Khan pointed out that the project has an output on developing partnership with the Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) which was not included in this year's Annual Work Plan. This is an area where Bangladesh has huge potentials to explore. Many Bangladeshi expatriates have expertise in their respective area of work and they are contributing immensely in the country where they are residing now. These Bangladeshi experts can help the Government of Bangladesh too by providing their prudent guidance and valuable suggestions in formulation of appropriate policies and programmes as well as provide new ideas for reforms and innovation which might be valuable for furthering national development. If agreed upon, the project may initiate activities next year for exploring any such partnership with the NRBs in the areas relevant to country context. The Chair in principle agreed to the idea which can be firmed up after reviewing the potential areas for NRBs engagement.

Decisions

The following were the decisions of the meeting:

- (i) The minutes of the First Project Executive Board was endorsed.
- (ii) Draft TOR of Eminent Persons Group will be shared with all members of the Project Executive Board.
- (iii) The process of reviewing draft NIM in connection with the existing NEX Manual would be initiated by ERD engaging UNDP in the process as well and K4DM will provide the necessary support in this regard.
- (iv) The meeting endorsed the revised Annual Work Plan (AWP) of 2016 along with the proposed activities, services and budget amounting \$246,000.
- (v) The project will initiate exploring how to engage the Non Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) in the areas relevant to country context.

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


 (Mohammad Mejbahuddin)
 Senior Secretary



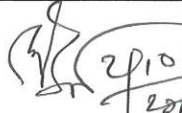


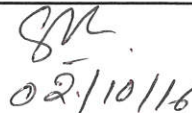
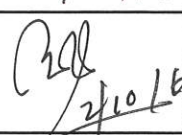
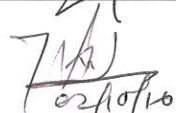
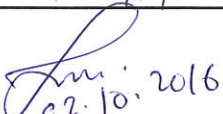
Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) for ERD UN Wing Project, Economic Relations Division (ERD)

Second Meeting of the Project Executive Board of the 'Knowledge for Development Management (K4DM) for ERD UN Wing' Project

Date : 2 October 2016, Time : 3.00 PM

Venue : NEC Committee Room-2, Planning Commission

Attendance

SL #	Name and Designation	Ministry/Division/ Organization	Phone & E-mail	Signature
01	Mr. Mohammad Meybaudlin, Secretary Secretary, ERD.	ERD.		
02	NICK BERESFORD COUNTRY DIRECTOR (a/c)	UNDP	nick.beresford@undp.org 01730020780	
03	Mohammed Shamsul Alam Joint secretary	ERD	msalam4070@yahoo.com	 2/10/2016
04	Md. Mafidul Islam Joint Chief	GED	mafid_erd@yahoo.com	 2/10/2016
05	APTAR AHMUDA JOINT SECRETARY	SEN, ERD	aptar2860@gmail.com	 2/10/16
06	Mohammad Nazim Uddin AS, UN(S) & SP2	ERD	01711-178274 as-nuz@erd.gov.bd.	 02/10/16
07	SHAILO KHAN ACD & Advisor	UNDP	01730317130	 02/10/16
08	Shahmon Nissa AS	SID	8181310	 2/10/16
09	Mohd. Jftekhar Hossain Deputy Secretary	ERD	01715042700 jftekhar2025@gmail.com	 02/10/16
10	Ms. Shamima Nargis Addl Sec. UN Wing NPP-K4DM	ERD	0173-7686901	 02.10.2016
11	Abu Shahim M. Ashaduzzaman National Project Manager	K4DM, UNDP	01720572856 abu.ashaduzzaman@undp.org	