



PMU Newsletter

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Issue-22 (January - March 2020)

In this Issue

- 9th Meeting of the TA Committee
- 9th Meeting of the DLI Monitoring Committee
- Technical Mission of the World Bank for Urban HNP Project
- Appraisal Mission of the World Bank and Negotiation for HGSP
- Moving towards Universal Health Coverage and SDGs beyond 4th HPNSP
- National Stakeholder Workshop on Progress of Health SDGs
- Consultation Workshop on MPIR 2020
- Mid-term Review (MTR) of 4th HPNSP
- Task Group Meetings
- COVID-19: Early Response and Pandemic Preparedness in the Context of PW, HSD



Team Management



Equity & Equality



Work-life Balance

This e-newsletter covers the third quarter of FY 2019-20, i.e., January-March 2020. Since the beginning of this period the World is undergoing an unprecedented outbreak of a new viral disease- Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The first case identified in Bangladesh was on 8 March and on 11 March, the WHO declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic disease. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB), by issuing a gazette notification on 23 March, included COVID-19 into the list of communicable disease. Every day the World Leaders need to take rapid decisions to fight against the new pandemic. Economic and development activities have gradually slowed down due to lockdown of the cities around the World.

The GOB also declared Public Holidays from 26 March. The Government also declared stimulus packages to address the economic crisis. The Health Services Division (HSD) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), in collaboration with the development partners (DPs), started to take preventive measures since January 2020. Along with taking crucial steps to address the COVID-19 situation, some other important events/activities of the Planning Wing (PW), HSD of this quarter are highlighted below:

9th Meeting of the TA Committee

The 9th meeting of the TA Committee (TAC) was held on 14 January 2020 under the chairmanship of Joint Chief, PW, HSD. The Acting Project Director of 'Better Health in Bangladesh (BHB): Interim TA to 4th HPNSP' project updated the TAC members about overall progress of the TAs. It was mentioned that a total of 23 TAs was approved, of which seven had been completed and 16 were under implementation, and one more TA was under procurement process.



9th meeting of the TA Committee, presided over by Joint Chief, HSD, MOHFW

9th Meeting of the DLI Monitoring Committee

The 9th meeting of the DLI Monitoring Committee (DLI-MC) was held on 14 January 2020 under the chairmanship of Joint Chief, PW, HSD. The meeting discussed progress of achievement of disbursement-linked results (DLRs) till December 2019 and provided directions to the LDs who had not been able to achieve the targets within the stipulated time.



DLI Monitoring Committee holds in the conference room of PMMU, MOHFW

Technical Mission of the World Bank for Urban HNP Project

A Technical Mission of the World Bank (WB) for the proposed Urban HNP project took place from 19 to 31 January 2020. The main objective of the mission was to extensively discuss with the GOB and key stakeholders the focus and technical details of the proposed Urban HNP Project. The mission met with the relevant officials of HSD and ME&FWD, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MOLGRDC), Economic Relations Division (ERD), Local Government Institutions, DPs as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Appraisal Mission of the World Bank and Negotiation for HGSP

Due to the influx of FDMNs in Cox's Bazar District since August 2017, the local population has had an increased exposure to infectious diseases, and has increased poverty levels undermining nutritional status and access to services. In view of this, the WB agreed to provide US\$ 150 million on grant terms through a new project of the Bank, named 'Health and Gender Support Project (HGSP)', to strengthen the service system and provide HNP services to the host communities of Cox's Bazar district and also to the FDMNs where gap exists. To discuss various aspects of the project, an Appraisal Mission of the WB was fielded in January 2020. A wrap-up meeting was held at the HSD on 22 January under the chairmanship of Secretary, HSD where Secretary, ME&FWD remained present as the Co-chair. It was agreed that a separate OP would be developed to channel the financing. Negotiation for the HGSP was held on 9 March 2020 at the WB Office.

Moving towards Universal Health Coverage and SDGs beyond 4th HPNSP

In late-2019, the PW started to plan on how to move forward after completion of the current Sector Program - 4th Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program (4th HPNSP). The Honorable Minister for MOHFW led the initiative and as the first move, invited relevant H.E. Ambassadors/High Commissioners along with Heads of various Missions to a dinner program on 17 February to discuss their present collaborations and future prospects. Secretary, HSD delivered a presentation covering the present scenario of the health sector and future needs.

Following the speech of Secretary, ME&FWD, the H.E. Ambassadors/High Commissioners and the Head of Missions present in the event briefed about their future prospects of collaborations. The program ended with remarks from the Honorable Minister for MOHFW.



The Dinner program with the H.E Ambassadors/High Commissioners and Head of Mission, ended with remarks from the Honorable Minister of MOHFW

National Stakeholder Workshop on Progress of Health SDGs

A national stakeholder workshop was held on 17 February 2020 to review progress of Health-SDGs under the chairmanship of Secretary, HSD where Secretary, ME&FWD remained present as the Co-chair. Honorable Minister, MOHFW graced the workshop as the Chief Guest, where the Principal Coordinator for SDGs (Senior Secretary) of the Prime Minister's Office was present as the Special Guest.

Relevant GOB officials including the HSD, ME&FWD, ERD, MOLGRDC, Prime Minister's Office, Finance Division and DP representatives along with other key stakeholders participated in the workshop and shared their thoughts.



Mr. Zahid Maleque MP, Honorable Minister, MOHFW graced the workshop as the Chief Guest

Consultation Workshop on MPIR 2020

A consultation workshop on draft Mid-term Program Implementation Report (MPIR) was held on 23 February 2020 under the chairmanship of Secretary, HSD where Secretary, Medical Education and Family Welfare Division (ME&FWD) was present as the Co-chair. Relevant GOB officials including the Director General of DGHS, Line Directors (LDs)/their representatives of different Operational Plans (OPs), DPs, consultants of PMMU, and the consultants recruited to conduct the mid-term review of the 4th HPNSP participated in the workshop. The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of PMMU responded to the questions raised by the audience. The report was accepted with some modifications proposed in the workshop.



Consultation Workshop on MPIR, presided over by Secretary, HSD, MOHFW

Mid-term Review (MTR) of 4th HPNSP

In the last quarter of 2019, the Annual Program Review-Steering Committee (APR-SC) recommended 13 thematic areas for review under MTR 2020. The thematic areas under the 'Strengthening Governance and Stewardship' component of 4th HPNSP included: (i) Sector Management, Stewardship and Regulation; (ii) Drug Quality and Regulation; and (iii) Health Financing and Equity. The 'Health Systems Strengthening' component included: (i) Human Resource Management and Institutional Arrangements; (ii) Medical Education and its regulations; (iii) Financial Management and Audit; (iv) Procurement and Supply Chain Management; and (v) Information Management and Data quality. The thematic areas falling under the 'Provision of Quality Health Services' component were: (i) Health Care Provision (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary); (ii) MNCAH and FP (including Reproductive Health); (iii) NCD and Mental Health; (iv) Communicable & Emerging Diseases and Environmental Health including Waste Management; and (v) Nutrition.

During January-March 2020, four meetings of the APR-SC were held to finalize the TORs of the thematic areas including the MTR and the Team Leader (TL); select the TL, Deputy TL and thematic area-based consultants to constitute the Independent Review Team (IRT); and finalize the MTR schedule. Four international (including the TL) and 12 national consultants were selected by the APR-SC to form the IRT for conducting the MTR. The IRT was on board from 17 February and had preliminary meetings with the APR-SC, Secretaries of HSD and ME&FWD including Task Group (TG) Chairs.

An MTR Launching Workshop was held on 26 February 2020 under the chairmanship of Secretary, HSD where Secretary, ME&FWD was present as the Co-chair. Two presentations, one on Overview of MTR 2020 and the other on Progress and Challenges of 4th HPNSP were presented by the Deputy Chief and Joint Chief of PW, HSD respectively. Relevant GOB officials, DPs, NGOs and other organizations' representatives participated in the workshop.



MTR Launching Workshop, chaired by Secretary, HSD, where Secretary, ME&FWD was present as the Co-chair

As a part of MTR, the BRAC James P. Grant School of Public Health was awarded the task of conducting a Stakeholder Consultation including beneficiaries' feedback. On 15 March 2020, a central-level workshop was held where a draft report was shared for discussion. A revised report was then shared with MOHFW for comments.

During 8-12 March, the IRT conducted field visit to Cox's Bazar, Jhenaidah, and Barisal districts. The team observed health provision at each of the tiers of the health system, including community level, and met with the district health leadership. The Cox's Bazar team also visited the FDMN Camps and the Government health facilities that also serve the FDMN population.

The IRT reviewed key documents like the Program Implementation Plan of 4th HPNSP, 29 OPs, Annual/Mid-term Program Implementation Reports (APIRs/MPIR) of MOHFW, available survey data; joined workshops with the Thematic TGs; had meetings with relevant GOB officials, DPs, and other key informants (including the NGO community, civil society and the research community).

Thematic area-based findings and recommendations of the IRT were to be presented at TG meetings in late March, however, due to the COVID-19 situation, the thematic reports were shared electronically with the TG members and key stakeholders for comments.

The main findings and recommendations of the IRT were to have been presented at a Policy Dialogue scheduled to be held on 01 April under the chairmanship of the Honorable Minister, MOHFW. However, this was postponed due to the COVID-19 situation. The final report was thus scheduled to be shared electronically within 7 April 2020.

Task Group Meetings

As a part of the major activities under MTR, a round of TG meetings were held during 1-5 March 2020 covering all the thematic areas of MTR 2020. The TGs discussed the progresses (financial, physical, OP-level indicator, RFW indicator, Priority Action Plan of APR 2018, etc.) of relevant OPs from January 2017 till 31 December 2019 (MTR coverage period) as well as challenges of the relevant thematic areas. The meetings were held under the chairmanship of the relevant TG Chairs. The relevant IRT member(s) took part in the discussions for further clarification on different issues of the thematic area(s).



A Task Group Meeting, presided over by Secretary, HSD, MOHFW

COVID-19: Early Response and Pandemic Preparedness in the Context of PW, HSD

In January 2020, when COVID-19 started to spread all over the World, the PW of HSD requested various DPs including the WB, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Islamic Trade and Finance Corporation (ITFC) through ERD to provide support for emergency response to COVID-19 in Bangladesh.

A technical Mission of the WB took place on 8-13 March 2020 to identify the areas of possible support. The process took a shape on 31 March when negotiation between the GOB and the WB took place regarding IDA credit support of US\$ 100 million for emergency response and pandemic preparedness against COVID-19. Simultaneously, the ADB continued dialogue with the PW, HSD and committed to provide US\$ 100 million for the same purpose.

Initiatives to reprogram/modify the existing agreements with the UN agencies regarding providing HNP services to the forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals (FDMNs) living in Cox's Bazar, were also taken to provide healthcare services to the FDMNs if there is any outbreak in the camps.



Negotiation meeting on IDA credit support of US\$ 100 million, takes place in the World Bank office.