



NEWS

Bulletin

Rural Employment Opportunities for Public Assets (REOPA)



November 2007

Volume 1, Issue 3

Preparatory Work for the Three Different Components of REOPA

To initiate the implementation of the Project in full swing, preparations for the Road Maintenance Component (RMC) have been initiated by the circulation of the formal Call for Proposal among the eligible NGOs and the last date for submission of the applications is 4th December 2007, after which the screening and selection will take place. The recent cyclone which hit Bangladesh on 15 November has created havoc in two of the Project's participating districts – Borguna and Satkhira. Efforts are underway to repair some of the damage done as part of the Block Grant Component of the Project. Two pilot interventions in the form of repair of roads in collaboration with Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and DANIDA in Patharghata and Amtoli are being prepared for implementation at the earliest. A proposal for providing technical assistance under the Services Delivery Component of the REOPA Project for improving the technical skill of the weavers of Sirajganj district who have been affected by this year's floods in August –September is being processed for providing technical expertise to increase their productivity and income with two master weaver trainers from Nadia district, West Bengal.

Upcoming Events:

● A Working Roundtable on “Micro & Small Entrepreneurship Development for Rural Women and Youth”, 8 December 2007 at REOPA-CST Project Office: House 16, Road 71, Gulshan 2, Dhaka.

● In an effort to incorporate the opinions of different stakeholders of REOPA on the expected results and indicators of the Project a day-long “LFA Finalization Workshop”, will be held on 12 December, 2007 at REOPA-CST

Consultative Meeting with LGIs Representatives and Community Members on Project Results and Indicators

To plug into what the major stakeholders are expecting as results from the implementation of the different activities of REOPA Project, and also field-test some of the indicators with the Project's individual beneficiaries, a round of consultative meetings with communities and LGIs officials /representatives was conducted from 30 October through 5 November 2007 in two of the Project's participating districts:



Consultative meeting with Union Parishad and community members at Kwaikhali, Shvamnagar, Satkhira

Barguna and Satkhira. A total 41 Upazila Officials, 39 Union Parishad officials and representatives, 33 community members of Barguna and Satkhira districts participated in the consultative process. Another round of consultation meetings will be held on 2 and 6 December 2007 in Narsingdi and Hobigonj districts respectively.

The primary objective of the consultative meetings was to obtain from the different stakeholders their perspective of the Project regarding its expected Results and Indicators. This would provide the Project staff with an avenue to fine-tune and integrate them into the REOPA Project's Logical Framework Analysis (LFA). This would also serve as a benchmark to subsequently evaluate the achievements of the Project and the impact of its different components on the different identified target groups.

In order to ensure the major issues raised during of the consultative meetings pertaining to the LFA have been encapsulated, a one-day workshop is being planned to be organized at the Project's Office premises on 12th December at 10:00 a.m. with the participation of key stakeholders of REOPA Project.

Induction Session on RMG and ATLAS

An induction session on Results Management Guideline (RMG) and ATLAS was held at REOPA-CST Project Office on 07 November 2007. All the staff of REOPA-CST participated in the induction session. The induction session was organized to familiarize the REOPA staff on the programme and project management policies of the UNDPs' RMG and make them aware of the significance of each phase in the comprehensive results obtained at the end of projects/programmes. The different dimensions of this complex topic were lucidly presented by Mr. Ali Ashraf, Assistant Country Director, RRM. In addition, an outline of the functioning of the ATLAS system was provided



by Mr. Ali Ashraf and Mr. Osman Ghani, Programme Officer, RRM.

Networking & Partnership Development

During the month of November 2007, the chain of efforts to continue with the development of linkages among the different stakeholders engaged in rural development, a number of meetings were organized with Waste Concern, (a firm focusing on an integrated approach towards environment management), Gonoshasthaya Kendra (a national NGO dedicated to the promotion of disadvantaged women with emphasis on maternal and infant mortality) and Asian Development Bank (the section focusing on rural development especially rural infrastructure).. In this connection, meetings were held with Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury, Projects Coordinator, Gonoshasthaya Kendra and Dr. Kadir Ahmed, Director, Health Programme, Gonoshasthaya Kendra to discuss the scope for providing vocational training in non-traditional sectors for women as well as primary health care training for REOPA beneficiaries. Meetings were also held with Mr. A.H.Md. Maqsood Sinha, Executive Director and Mr. Iftekhar Enayetullah, Director, Waste Concern to discuss some small-scale projects on developing an integrated approach towards waste management that would result in promoting a holistic improvement of the rural communities. The discussion with Mr. Arun Kumar Saha, Project Implementation Officer (Agriculture), Bangladesh Resident Mission, ADB explored the scope of establishing a joint strategy for the implementation of the Capacity Strengthening component between ADB's future rural development programme and REOPA Project. .



Visit to Gonoshasthaya Kendra Hospital at Savar, Dhaka

The Capacity Strengthening Team of REOPA Project met Ms. Khadija Afzal, Board of Governance of Presidency University & member of Women Entrepreneurs Association (WEA)-Bangladesh and exchanged their views on the development of rural women's and youth entrepreneurship and forging a strategic alliance between WEA and REOPA Project. As a follow-up to this meeting, a working round-table has been organized for the 8th of December when organizations such as Govt. Agencies, NGOs and other institutions committed to this issue will share their experiences and learn about some of the best practices implemented by them.

Current Development Policy Issues

Government working for strong local government and transparency

Chief Advisor asks Secretaries to focus more on output, outcome

The Government of Bangladesh is working to strengthen the local government so that it can take its services to people's doorsteps and bring transparency and accountability in all sectors. The Regulatory Reforms Commission has already started its work to amend century-old administration rules and regulations and suggest time-befitting ones, Chief Advisor said the meeting. He asked the secretaries of different ministries and departments to focus more on output and outcome while implementing government programmes so that people get the best from all inputs in the socio-economic sectors.

"Our main focus should be on the output of all work. The government has initiated a number of reforms which aim to meet people's expectations and ensure good governance," the chief adviser said. He emphasized the need for dissemination of government actions, decisions and achievements through mass media so that people can take advantage of these.

The Chief Adviser said strengthening of the local government and decentralization of power implies delegating powers of the central government. "With decentralization comes accountability," he noted, hoping that the institutional reforms will continue in future too. (Source: *The Daily Star*, 7 November 2007)

"This document has been produced with the financial assistance of European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union"