

MINUTES OF THE 7th MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORKING PROGRAMME (SDNP) HELD ON APRIL 09, 2003.

A meeting of the Steering Committee for the Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) was held on April 09, 2003. Prof. Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Chairperson, SDNP Steering Committee presided.

The following members of the Steering Committee were present:

1. Mr. S.M. Al-Hussainy, Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
2. Mr. SASM Taifur, PD, SISF
(Representative of Secretary, Planning Division,
Member, SDNP Steering Committee)
3. Dr. M. Asaduzzaman, PD, SDNP
Member-Secretary, SDNP Steering Committee
4. Dr. M. Aminul Islam, SDA, UNDP
(Representative of UNDP),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
5. Mr. Ershad Chowdhury, Secretary General, ISP Association
(Representative of ISP Forum),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee.

In addition, Mr. Saleh Khan, UNDP attended as an observer.

The Chairperson welcomed the members to the meeting. The discussions and recommendations by the Steering Committee are described below:

7.1 Approval of Minutes of the 6th Meeting of the Steering Committee

The minutes of the 6th meeting of the SDNP Steering Committee were approved after inclusion of the following as

6.3.2.3 In addition to the 3 pilot projects and the e-Forms pilot mentioned in 6.3.2, details on 2 more pilots may be initiated.

6.3.2.3(1) Interlinking Upazilla Resource Centres (URCs) and the National Academy of Primary Education (NAPE) under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education: To improve training and supervision of primary school teachers and enriching URCs by making available to them wider knowledge, information and methods.

6.3.2.3(2) Establishing a network of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry with its selected member bodies (there are about 300 Chambers and Trade Associations spread all over the country as FBCCI's member bodies - a selected bodies may be interlinked to start with):- Make available necessary domestic and international information and knowledge useful for promoting trade and investment.

7.2 Follow-up of the decisions of the 6th Meeting

The PD, SDNP presented a report (see attachment A) on the follow-up of the minutes of the 6th meeting.

- 7.2.1 Revision of the PIP:- The Request For Advance (RFA) for the second quarter of 2003 has been sent to PMU including the additional fund. The revised PIP along with integrated complete revised budget will be submitted soon.
- 7.2.2 Inauguration of Central node and other sub-nodes:- These will be inaugurated as soon as possible upon approval of ISP code from BTTB.
- 7.2.3 Training of SDNP and BIDS Staff:- Estimates have been requested from reputed training houses.
- 7.2.4 Main server's connectivity to Internet through VSAT:- An integrated requisition of equipment will be submitted to NPD after the approval of the pilot projects, one of which (Pilot-2) has this activity as an integral part.
- 7.2.5 Sustainability and Business Plan:- A consultant (sustainability and business plan) will be engaged as per the recommendations of the Steering Committee based on the approval of the exit strategy.
- 7.2.6 Visit to successful SDNP:- The PD and PC may visit during the third quarter of the year to oversee one or two successful SDNPs.
- 7.2.7 More connectivity for Press Clubs: Barisal, Panchagar, Cox's Bazar Press Clubs will be connected within April and May 2003 in consultation with the Jatiyo Press Club.
- 7.2.8 Collaboration with the Red Crescent: A MOU will be prepared as per the approved action plan of Pilot-2.
- 7.2.9 Engagement of support staff for Virtual Library Information System: A support staff will be recruited at an early date as per provision of the BIDS.
- 7.2.10 Support staff to Mymensingh Regional Node:- Official nomination has been requested from BAU.
- 7.2.11 Extension of the Mymensingh link to reach local community service centres:- Initial informal consultation has begun with BRRI, BSMRAU and others to find out suitable local organizations.

7.3 Approval of the UNDP HQ Mission Report

The report has been accepted in principle and the PIP may be revised accordingly.

7.4 Approval of the pipeline pilot projects

Three pilot project proposals approved in principle in the 6th meeting have been approved with slight modifications. The meeting agreed to sub-contract the commissioning and installation part of the pilots to any third party as per provision of the implementing agency.

- 7.4.1 Observations for Pilot-1:- The project may further focus on ICT for Development and translate the information into Bangla; Statistical information on poverty alleviation may be introduced; archival of relevant information; detail out the staffing pattern; elaborate on the situation analysis; include some development cost towards engagement of a consultant; and add a work plan.

- 7.4.2 Observations for Pilot-2:- The project may be jointly managed by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and the Ministry of Disaster Management; should interface with the School Programme; make further collaboration among news agencies; include some GIS based information; MOU with BDRCS should include the exit strategy; Sandip, Hatia, and Dublarchar may be explored to bring under the project's intervention; solar panel may be introduced, where applicable; and the remote stations should act as multi-purpose ICT service providers for the local community.
- 7.4.3 Observations for Pilot-3:- The BanglaDesh Internet eXchange (BDIX), initially may connect 20 ISPs who are in lack of resources to connect to the central server; should provide intra ISP connectivity; act as a intercountry communication channel; and should support the UNICODE in Bangla.
- 7.4.4 A Manager may be employed at an early date to oversee the establishment and operation of the pilots. A MBA with IT background may be given preference.

7.5 Framework of the Exit Strategy

The PC, SDNP presented the framework. It was decided that a team comprising two independent consultants (one with development expertise and the other one a lawyer) may be engaged to formulate the exit strategy, sustainability plan and the business plan. The Chair suggested that he will assist the project with some relevant documents.

7.6 Other Decisions Taken

The following other decisions were taken in the 7th meeting in addition to the above issues:

- 7.6.1 Interim staff to assist for VLIS:- A temporary support staff may be recruited to expedite the entry of catalogue data from BIDS and other publications, journals and books in the library.
- 7.6.2 Interaction with SIAs:- The members suggested intensification of the interaction with the SIAs.
- 7.6.3 Interaction with PMU and UNDP:- It is advised to send all relevant documents to concerned desks of PMU and UNDP for better dissemination of updated activities of SDNBD.

As there were no other issues, the Chairperson thanked every body present and concluded the meeting.

Prof. Jamilur Reza Choudhury
Chairperson
SDNP Steering Committee.