

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE)  
International Organizations (IO)-2  
[www.mole.gov.bd](http://www.mole.gov.bd)

Subject: Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting for the “Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garment Sector (RMGP-II)” Project..

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) on “Improving Working Conditions in the Ready-Made Garments Sector-RMGP (Phase II)” was held on 13 Feb 2022 at 3:30 pm. virtually using zoom. Mr. Md. Ehsan-E-Elahi, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) chaired the meeting. A list of participants attended in the meeting is attached (Annex A).

1. After welcome note, the Chair requested Mr. Md. Humayun Kabir, Joint Secretary (IO) of MoLE to start the meeting. Mr. Kabir read out the meeting agenda as follows:
  - a) Confirmation of the last meeting minutes.
  - b) Implementation status of last PSC meeting's decisions.
  - c) Implementation progress (Physical and Financial) of the project.
  - d) Future activities.

Thereafter, he proposed for adoption of the minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> PSC meeting if no modifications were required. After unanimous adoption of the last meeting minutes, the Chief Technical Adviser of RMGP-II, Mr. George Faller presented the progress of the programme including physical and financial progress and future activities (Annexure 2). He also shared the update of actions on the decisions made in the last PSC meeting.

2. Following the presentation by the CTA, the Chair queried on the remaining contribution of the Development Partners. The CTA informed that the remaining fund is USD 3.22 million. Since DFID has stopped funding to RMGP-II in 2020 due to the changes in their development support following COVID-19, the programme will not get around USD 2 million of the remaining fund from DFID. The Chair asked, how this impact on RMGP activities? Mr. Faller informed that the programme had to adjust some activities in consultation with donors, in a way that would minimise the impact on project outcomes.
3. Mr. Farooq Ahmed, General Secretary of Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) mentioned that C190 ratification was not included in the main design of the programme. Activities on C190 came up several times in the presentation. He asked, why C190 is getting such importance? Then he also suggested for a detail and separate discussion on Industrial Safety Unit (ISU). This ISU should be linked with other relevant bodies to include sectors beyond ready-made garments. The CTA agreed that a separate detailed discussion about ISU was necessary, and that ILO had been advocating that for some time.

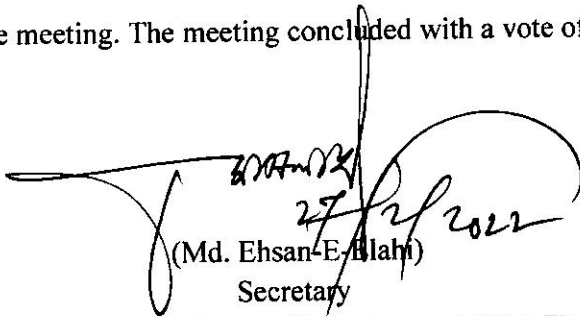
The capacity developed in the RMG sector should be extended to other industrial sectors. On C190, the CTA informed that the main project document included activities on gender mainstreaming. The programme undertook a gender study in 2020 on gender-based violence and harassment in the RMG sector, and in which the consultant recommended that C190 be used to address the issue more comprehensively. The programme has translated C190 into Bengali and been working on advocacy materials. Mr. Md. Humayun Kabir mentioned that the inclusion of new activity beyond agreed TPP needs review from PSC.

4. Mr. Asiq ul Alom of NCCWE asked about the role of trade unions in Better Work Bangladesh. The CTA told that RMGP has recently started activities in collaboration with BGMEA/BKMEA aimed at building the capacity of trade union members and safety committee members to support OSH management, risk identification and corrections. Mr Abu Yusuf, National Operation Manager of BWB informed that BWB has been working with 19 factories that have trade unions. BWB is also working on the need assessment of capacity building of trade union members in those factories. The programme will provide the training both to male and female leaders through the learning hub.
5. Mr Md. Nasir Uddin Ahmed, IG, DIFE informed the participants that Ms Begum Monnujan Sufian, MP, the Honourable State Minister, MoLE launched the Bangladesh's National Plan of Action on Occupational Safety and Health in September 2021.
6. Mr. Farooq Ahmed, General Secretary of Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) suggested whether any other arrangement can be made for resource sharing between RMGP, BWB and SDIR. Mr Md Rafiqul Islam, Additional Secretary, BGMEA also reiterated the subject to avoid overlapping of activities among projects. The CTA of the programme informed that BWB is a part of the programme that supports Strategic Area 4, Outcome 5. RMGP works with NI factories and BWB work with its affiliated factories. There are some areas that could have been arranged better to bring more synergies and share comparative advantages. ILO is currently working on a cluster approach that, in future, will improve synergies and resource sharing. But now all projects are operational according to the commitment to its donors, and on agreed Logframe, but are always looking out for synergies between RMG facing programmes. Mr Yousuf added, RMGP and BWB have been operational as per the resource allocation. Resource sharing will be improved in future when the ILO fully adopt the cluster approach.
7. On the decision point 3 of third PSC meeting, Mr. Md. Humayun Kabir asked who will define the responsibilities of Labour Inspectors (LIs) and other agencies for building safety monitoring in other industrial sectors. Mr Faller informed that this issue cannot be addressed only by MOLE or DIFE, as there are also other ministries with responsibilities for building safety. Many fatalities are caused by improper/no application of building code safety measures and LIs cannot be expected to be as well informed/knowledgeable about all building code safety issues, or to take full responsibility for them. The LIs should not be responsible for addressing failures to ensure implementation of the building codes, which is the responsibility of RAJUK and in some cases other agencies. The programme cannot address responsibilities of all agencies in the design, construction and occupation

permit for buildings, but it will make recommendations on the extent of LIs role in industrial safety and make suggestions on where others should be held responsible.

8. Ms Farzana Sharmin, Joint Secretary (Compliance), BKMEA suggested to strengthen the RCC coordination meeting with all relevant stakeholders. The IG, DIFE informed that due to COVID-19 and current capacity of DIFE, the frequency of meeting remains limited. It will be increased once DIFE has 24 engineers of RCC.
9. Upon discussion, the following decisions were taken:
  - MoLE would like to call a NTC meeting soon.
  - the programme should not include any new things out of agreed rules and conditions.
  - the presentation slides should be printed out and shared before the meeting.

Since there was no other decision made in the meeting. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks from the Chair.



(Md. Ehsan-E-Alam)  
Secretary

Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE)  
And Chairperson of the PSC