

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Labour and Employment
International Organizations (IO)-2
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Subject: Minutes of 1st Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting of the "Social Dialogue and Harmonious Industrial Relations in the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garment (SDIR)" Project Dated 27 September 2017

The first PAC meeting of the "Social Dialogue and Harmonious Industrial Relations in the Bangladesh Ready-Made Garment (SDIR)" Project was held on 27 September 2017 in the conference room of the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Ms. Afroza Khan, Secretary-in-Charge, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) and Chairperson of the PAC chaired the meeting. The list of participants present in the meeting is attached (Annex A)

2. The Chairperson of the meeting welcomed all members of the PAC for attending the meeting. In her opening remarks, she emphasized the importance of social dialogue in the RMG sector. She requested the Joint Secretary (IO) Mr. Khondaker Mostan Hossain to conduct the meeting as per the agenda. Being requested, the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) of the SDIR Project gave an overview of the project and presented the progress as well as way forward of the project. He mentioned that the project has been designed to integrate and intensified ILO's works in the country to promote international labour standards in relation to freedom of association, collective bargaining, effective social dialogue and industrial relations etc. The update of the project included the following achievement:

- (1) Establishment of RMG Tripartite Consultative Council (TCC) in March 2017,
- (2) Development of Terms of Reference (ToR) for the TCC Support Unit at MoLE which is already adopted;
- (3) Initiated baseline survey on piloting in 58 factories provided by BGMEA and BKMEA (20 unionized and 38 non-unionized);
- (4) Training of 30 Officials from the DoL-IRI (30% women) as Master Trainers on Workplace Cooperation;
- (5) Development of participation committee election process for piloting and submission to the (MoLE);
- (6) Designing of ToT for DoL-IRI Officials on Grievance Handling (by the ITC).
- (7) Compiled drafting of Grievance Handling Procedures through separate consultations with BGMEA and BKMEA-affiliated RMG factories;
- (8) Preparing Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) on registration of trade unions which is adopted by the MoLE;
- (9) Preparing Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) on the unfair labour practices and anti-union discrimination which is adopted by the MoLE;
- (10) Completed mapping of laws and practices for up-gradation of DoL's labour dispute resolution mechanism completed;
- (11) Development of 10 guidebooks on the trade union related issues in consultation with NCCWE and IBC.

4. Discussion:

(a) The Secretary General of the Industrial Bangladesh Council (IBC) thanked ILO and MoLE for taking such an important project which would increase capacity building in grievance handling activities. He stated that "Worker Resource Centre" is a good initiative for workers-employers relationship. The President of the National Coordination Committee for Workers Education (NCCWE) also appreciated the initiatives of harmonious industrial relations under the SDIR project.

(b) The Secretary-General of Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF) opined that a standard operating procedures for smooth functioning of Workers Resource Centre (WRC) is very much important and requested to develop such procedures as soon as possible. Pointing out that election in one or two factories doesn't represent the whole sector. He emphasized on the election of participation committee.

(c) Referring CTA, The Director of BGMEA requested the CTA to provide clarity on the link between the project and the special paragraph of CAS report. This clarity was provided by the CTA, and accepted. The director of BGMEA also commented on the importance of the piloting election process of participation committee. The representative from BKMEA proposed for intensive training for their members.

(d) It was opined that along with the physical progress the financial progress should be reviewed in the meeting. In connection to this the chair advised ILO to submit a detail work plan based on the ADP allocation of the project for its approval by the PAC. She added that the PCC should review the physical and financial progress based on the work plan.

(e) The members opined that all relevant publications/ communication materials developed by the project should be endorsed / approved by the MoLE. Since the PAC meeting will be held twice in a year, the chair opined that Project Coordination Committee (PCC) can look into the matter for publications/ communication materials and take necessary steps to approve it. It was advised that the annual work plan should be approved by the PAC.

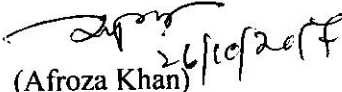
(f) The representatives of the Embassy of Sweden and Denmark in Bangladesh thanked the chair to invite them in the meeting as observer. They opined that all stakeholders except the brands are engaged with the project and proposed to invite the Brands in the process of project monitoring. However, the members of PAC did not any rationale agree with that proposal.

5. Upon discussions the following decisions were taken unanimously:

- a) Based on the ADP allocation ILO will submit a detail time bound work plan for implementation of the project activities containing physical and financial targets for its approval by the PAC.
- b) The progress of the project will also be reviewed in the PCC meeting.
- c) ILO will submit all sorts of publication / communication materials developed by the project for its approval/ endorsement.

d) The Piloting of PC election process needs to be expedited.

As there was no other issue to discuss, the Chair concluded the meeting with thanks.


(Afroza Khan)
Secretary in Charge, MoLE
and Chairperson of the PAC

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