

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Finance

Economic Relations Division

PRS-HAP Cell

Subject: Concept Note for the Workshop on Harmonization Action Plan in Bangladesh

1. Background

Bangladesh with over 85 developing and developed countries signed in the year 2005 the "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness" which highlighted the importance of coordination and harmonization in development assistance to further enhance aid effectiveness. On the basis of the agreed principle of aid coordination and harmonization as well as outputs drawn from the Paris Declaration, GoB, with Finance Division in 2004/2005 and later with ERD since 2006 as focal point, prepared Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan (HAP) in close collaboration/consultation with Development Partners (DPs). Through the series of discussions between GoB and DPs, the HAP has been finalized and endorsed by GoB in August 2006.

HAP is a guiding framework for both GoB and DPs to follow the Paris Declaration at country level, and as such will remain a working document that will be revised and updated when required. Formulation of HAP itself is not a goal, rather, it is to be monitored and reviewed among stakeholders to ensure that HAP is implemented and actually enhance aid effectiveness. To make HAP more operational, it was agreed that workable indicators are to be worked out jointly by GoB and DPs, with wide participation from line ministries/divisions who are actually working on development projects. Indicators were further discussed during OECD/DAC survey 2006 exercise.

However, it appears that the common understanding of development effectiveness, Paris declaration or Harmonization efforts among the development practitioners needs to be enhanced and awareness on the practical realities needs to be raised. In view of the above, a seminar/workshop on aid effectiveness and harmonization has been proposed to respond to the strong needs from the relevant ministries/divisions to deepen the understanding of the issues.

2. Objectives of the Workshop

The Workshop aims to raise awareness among GoB officers, in particular among mid-level officers dealing with donor-assisted programs/projects in line ministries/divisions, about the concept of Aid Effectiveness and Harmonization. It will try to promote acknowledgement of important agenda on Harmonization, such as Paris Declaration and Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan. It also tries to enhance commitment of officers of line ministries/divisions in terms of operationalization of HAP for the improvement of aid effectiveness.

3. Expected outputs of the Workshop

(1) After attending the Workshop, the participants are expected to:

- know what is Paris Declaration and Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan,
- relate the implication of Paris Declaration and HAP to their day to day work,
- understand its relevance, benefit, and expectation of GoB officers for compliance, and
- be able to contribute, as a focal point of respective ministry/division, to update/revise Bangladesh Harmonization Action Plan as well as follow-up activities towards Ghana High Level Forum.

(2) After the meeting, ERD PRS-HAP Cell will have a list of focal points from relevant ministries/divisions, who are supposed to contribute to updating/revising of HAP.

4. Expected Participants

1 or 2 mid-level officers from relevant line ministries/divisions (total number will be approximately 40.) will be participate in the workshop.

5. Program: Details programme is enclosed.