

Paris Declaration and Harmonisation Action Plan
Dissemination Workshop
6 August 2006 –ERD

Talking Points of Mr Manoj Basnyat, Resident Coordinator a.i,

Mr Secretary, Excellency, distinguished colleagues.

- It's an honour and a pleasure for me to be here with you this morning and I thank you for this opportunity to share these few words.
- His Excellency has already said that we should recognise and congratulate the ERD for taking another step towards bringing the Paris Declaration and the harmonisation agenda closer to Dhaka.
- Much has been said – and will be continue to be said throughout this morning – about the process, and the work done so far on the Paris Declaration and the Harmonisation Action Plan in Bangladesh.
- As we know, the entire workshop is dedicated to our colleagues from line ministries and departments;
- By the end of the morning, we should all have a much better understanding of:
 - the Paris Declaration's key messages
 - the Bangladesh Harmonisation Action Plan
 - some examples of its application at the country level and,
 - how all these are relevant to [y]our day to day work.
- Before we move to the presentations, it's important to remind ourselves that
 - Despite the progress made so far in increasing harmonisation and alignment, there does remain a substantial gap between the commitments made in Paris and the ground realities.
- There are probably several reasons for this. I'd like to highlight two.
- First, there is a gap between knowledge of the commitments themselves, and the work being done at the country level.
 - I say this because, as most of us know, the turnover among development staff is high – at the top, or ministerial, level; as well as at the task manager level. People that attended Monterrey, Marrakech, Rome or Paris may no longer be working in development.
 - One way of addressing this is to institutionalise knowledge. By that, I mean that knowledge should be systematically available, disseminated and transferred among colleagues.

- § For example, an ERD session on Aid effectiveness, relevant global Declarations and the Bangladesh Harmonisation Action Plan could become part of the curriculum for young BPATC civil servants.
- § Or the ERD might consider discussing the same issues in regular sessions with ministerial and departmental colleagues.
- A second reason for the discrepancy between global commitments and ground realities concerns capacity.
 - All 5 Partnership Commitments of the Paris Declaration – Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability — are to be fulfilled at the local level. So, staffs need specific and appropriate capacities if they are to work effectively.
 - Those charged with implementing the Bangladesh Harmonisation Action Plan also need specific and appropriate capacities to do their jobs.
 - To be successful and effective, aid coordination and aid management need a collective effort from all parties: from Policy, Planning, Budgeting, Sector Prioritising and Monitoring/Evaluation, to Reporting
 - And all of us have to be properly equipped, at the right time, with the information, tools and skills needed to avoid duplication and recurrent transaction costs.
 - In a country like Bangladesh, where there are many people, organisations and institutions working for development, this coordination itself might become cumbersome.
- Bangladesh has already made progress in this regard and we are on track to make further progress.
- His Excellency has said that efforts from the ERD to further enhance the capacities of development actors will be fully supported by all development partners.
- I trust that our joint efforts to outline a comprehensive capacity development strategy for aid effectiveness will close the gaps –
 - not only between Paris and Dhaka...
 - but also between Dhaka and Rangpur, Sylhet, Khulna and St Martins.
- This kind of strategy, focussed on the needs of those involved in aid management and coordination, should help to add real value to all our development efforts.
- I hope that this workshop will be a first step in addressing both these important issues: the knowledge gap and the capacity gap.
- Mr Secretary, I once again congratulates you and your colleagues for organising this event.
- I also thank the resources people. They are of, and from, Bangladesh. And that's a rather good demonstration of the first Paris commitment: "Ownership".
- As we do today, the development partners look forward to extending our collective future support to the ERD leadership in coordinating and making better use of Aid, so that human development may become an ever more sustainable reality in Bangladesh.