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National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme



Workshop on

INFORMED POLICY MAKING FOR FOOD SECURITY: *Research in support of the National Food Policy*

INTRODUCTION

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, Government of Bangladesh are jointly implementing the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP) with the financial support of the European Commission and USAID.

A core objective of the NFPCSP is to expand and deepen the capacity of civil society to conduct high quality research on food security and support effective dialogue between policy makers and researchers so as to inform and enrich the implementation of the National Food Policy.

To support this, the NFPCSP is promoting socio-economic research on a broad range of food security issues and policies related to food availability, access, and utilization for nutrition, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender, governance, environment and infrastructure under its Research Grant Initiative. Through the Programme Funded Research (PR) facility, NFPCSP supports long-term substantive research, while, under its Challenge Fund (CF) facility, the NFPCSP supports short-term research work on existing specific policy interventions and practices, including options for scaling-up best practices.

The NFPCSP made open calls for research proposals from academic and research institutions and civil society organizations. Following thorough evaluation, 22 research proposals selected by the Research Grant Panel (RGP) received funding in October 2007.

The NFPCSP has also conducted a Benchmark Survey (BMS) covering three decades of literature relevant to food security in Bangladesh, which is meant to serve as a reference tool for both researchers and decision-makers in identifying food security research gaps and priorities. While the principal focus has been on research and policy documents directly related to food security in Bangladesh, the review has also taken cognizance of important contributions pertaining to other countries that are of particular relevance and interest to Bangladesh.

Finally, as part of NFPCSP efforts to promote high quality food security research, an evaluation of Research Institutions in the field of food security research has been undertaken to identify research institution(s) potentially able to take a leading role in coordinating research under NFPCSP Programme Research facility in the future, whilst, in the short-term, the evaluation is expected to

provide relevant information for screening and evaluating research proposals for funding under the programme.

A two-day consultative workshop is planned for 5-6 December 2007 to present and discuss the above initiatives. Specifically, the **objectives** of the workshop are:

- ✓ To present the research projects being undertaken under the Research Grant Initiative of the NFPCSP
- ✓ To facilitate dialogue among the researchers and between the researchers and policy makers
- ✓ To share findings of the Benchmark Survey (BMS) on Food Security Literature in Bangladesh.
- ✓ To discuss the findings of the evaluation of research institutions in Bangladesh in view of its finalization.

The workshop is expected to result in an increased awareness of NFPCSP's support to food security research and, in particular, the following **outcomes** are expected:

- ✓ Research activities funded by the project improved through interactions with the NFPCSP Technical Assistance Team, the Research Grant Panel Members and the government officers involved in NFP implementation
- ✓ BMS made available to the participants and feedback for the finalization of the evaluation of research institutions received

The workshop will be organized in 6 sessions including interactive discussions. In addition to the inaugural and morning's technical session, the remaining sessions will focus on the Programme Research and Challenge Fund Research proposals so as to provide an opportunity to the researchers to present their research plans. The sessions will be organized around specific food security dimensions.

Participants

GoB stakeholders, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) holding the NFPCSP grants, International Agencies and national experts.

Expected number participants: about 350.

WORKSHOP PREPARATION

The participation of the research awardees in this workshop is highly solicited so as to facilitate exchange among researchers, promote synergies among activities being undertaken and their focus on implications for the National Food Policy implementation. This will also be an occasion for the TAT and members of the RGP to provide specific technical inputs. The consultative workshop will also provide a platform to elicit additional views from a broader audience within a wider perspective.

The food security dimension wise break up of the PR and CF proposals being funded is given below:

Proposal type	Food Security Dimension				Total
	Production & Availability	Access	Utilization/Nutrition ¹	Cross Cutting Issues	
PR	2	3	1	2	8
CF	2	4	2	6	14
Total	4	7	3	8	22

In order to ensure a smooth roll out of the workshop, research awardees are expected to:

I. Prepare a brief summary of the proposal (2 pages for PR proposals and 1 page for CF proposals). The short briefs will be distributed to participants prior to the presentations, and can have a more informed participation in the workshop.

The summary would need to contain the following sections:

- ⇒ Statement of the problem in a wider context
- ⇒ The key questions the research seeks to answer and the added value of the research
- ⇒ Relevance of the work and its potential use for Food Security policy in Bangladesh
- ⇒ The testable hypotheses arising from the above, as relevant
- ⇒ The methodology adopted (including data to be used and the analytical/quantitative approach)
- ⇒ Collaboration with other institutions (if any)

The Briefs should reach the RGA not later than a full week before the Workshop by E-mail to nur.khondaker@fao.org.

II. Prepare a power point presentation (15 minutes for the PR and 10 minutes for the CF) to be delivered by the Principal Investigator or his/her representative focusing on the issues above and any other salient points regarding the proposals.

¹ One PR proposal under Cross Cutting Issues will be discussed under the Utilization/Nutrition Dimension because of its close link to the area of Nutrition

