

*Working Paper for the 7th meeting of the National Steering Board of the
Bangladesh Water Multi-Stakeholder Partnership*

The Bangladesh Water Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) has been formed through Gazette No. 42.00.0000.038.18.039.15.527 dated December 6, 2015. The National Steering Board (NSB) is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. The 1st through 6th meetings of the NSB were held on January 30, 2016, June 25, 2016, February 4, 2017, June 03, 2017, February 13, 2018 and October 13, 2018 respectively. The 7th meeting of the NSB is scheduled for May 11, 2019.

The agenda for the 7th NSB meeting:

The meeting is expected to start with the confirmation and approval of the 6th NSB meeting minutes and follow-up on the decisions of the 6th NSB meeting. The suggested agenda of the meeting are

Guidance/Approval

- (1) Managed Aquifer Recharge: review of status and guidance on way forward
- (2) A rapid needs assessment for rivers around Dhaka city
- (3) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign in support of Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) Project
- (4) Formation of new Work-Stream on Water Innovation

Progress Update on Work-Streams

Water Governance and Sustainability Work-Stream

- i. Haor Scoping Study
- ii. Valuing Water Project
- iii. Institutional Strengthening of Water Resources Management

Greater Dhaka Watershed Restoration Work-Stream

- iv. DPP for Water Quality Monitoring System

Industrial Water and Wastewater Work-Stream

- v. Green Economic Zone Guidelines and other BEZA related activities
- vi. Market led Incentivizing of Sustainable Production Practices

Agricultural Water Work-Stream

- vii. Economic Policy Incentive Project
- viii. South-west scoping study

Any Other Business

- ix. Barind Hotspot Multi-Stakeholder Partnership

Decisions of the 6th NSB meeting and Implementation Update:

The following decisions were made during the 6th NSB meeting of the Bangladesh MSP held on October 13, 2018. The corresponding status of implementation is also given below.

Sl #	Decisions at 6 th NSB Meeting	Implementation Status
1	The process of Institutional Strengthening of WARPO should be expedited including	MoPA approved the organogram in principle with some minor queries. WARPO submitted

	approval of organogram of WARPO which is currently in process. NSB will invite an official from MoPA in its next meeting.	information in support to the queries in due time and is currently awaiting further feedback from MoPA.
2	The NSB endorsed the study project titled “Online Processing and Tracking of Project Clearance and No Objection Certificates for Groundwater Development”, to send it to Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR).	The MoWR has approved the project and the funding process has started to initiate the project.
3	<p>The NSB endorsed the involvement of the Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPA) to oversee the detailed project development phase of the Gazipur City Corporation Wastewater Management & Faecal Sludge Management project.</p> <p>LGD will take a lead role in the implementation of the project.</p> <p>Deputy Commissioner, Gazipur will expedite selection of suitable land for this project.</p>	<p>The project was approved in principle by CCEA for implementation on PPP basis. Thereafter, PPPA agreed to oversee the detailed project development phase.</p> <p>LGD continues to be the lead Ministry for the implementation of this project.</p> <p>GCC has identified two potentially suitable sites. Technical Consultants will assess for suitability and after their report, the District Commissioner will provide guidance and assistance to acquire the land for the project purpose.</p>
4	Ministry of Water Resources has been assigned to approve PFS on Valuing Water Initiative. Additionally, the Chair asked for close cooperation between MoWR and General Economics Division and other relevant divisions of the Planning Commission and Planning Ministry and consultation with all relevant stakeholders, specifically LGD and the Ministry of Agriculture.	The MoWR approved the PFS on Valuing Water Initiative in March 2019. WARPO is leading the project and shall start implementation in close cooperation with GED and other relevant divisions of the Planning Commission and Planning Ministry and consultation with all relevant stakeholders specifically LGD and the Ministry of Agriculture.
5	LGD has been asked to submit report on the existing and completed project on Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) with recommendations of any future actions which will serve as a background material for further discussion and consideration in the next steering board meeting.	A task force was formed by the LGD and a draft of the report has been prepared and submitted to this NSB meeting containing information on existing and completed and projects on MAR with recommendations of the any future actions.
6	The initiative taken on the formulation of Green Economic Zone Guidelines for BEZA has been endorsed by the NSB. Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Industries were suggested to be included in the taskforce for the Green Economic Zone Guidelines. If required Task Force may co-opt additional members.	The Task Force for Green Economic Zone Guidelines held its first meeting on 18 th October and decided to form a Technical Committee which included development organizations IFC/WBG, GIZ, UNIDO and others. The Ministry of Industries was included in the Task Force and the Ministry of Commerce will be co-opted in in the next TF meeting.

7	Priority interventions under the south-west scoping study to be decided based on further stakeholder consultations and in close cooperation with the Agricultural Water work-stream and other relevant work-streams.	After review, the Agricultural Water work-stream decided on forming a task force to validate, prioritize and formulate recommendation of the scoping study including extension of region to Gopalganj and Faridpur for salinity intrusion issue and adoption of technologies such as Four-in-One Integrated Farming-System, Rainwater harvesting using ground/surface catchment areas, Drip Irrigation and Climate Smart Village as appropriate.
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Guidance and Approval

(1) Managed Aquifer Recharge: review of status and guidance on way forward

Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) is a simple, low-cost and effective and can be easily-replicated in Bangladesh, particularly in the water scarce areas. It is globally tested and proven alternative / complement to regulation for addressing water scarcity. This has been in practice in different countries across all the continents of the world. It is based on rainwater harvesting and water efficiency. In water scarce areas of Bangladesh MAR has great potential for up-scaling. The key interventions are the rooftop rainfall recharge from offices, schools, hospitals, go-downs and factories etc. This may turn into popular practice across the country. This can be practised in urban as well as in the rural areas. MAR has been in practice to prove its applicability, and already replicated in the saline areas of Khulna.

In the WGS WS meeting on Mar 14, 2019, it was proposed that a technical working group could be formed including a balanced representation from public, private and civil society sector to design a project feasibility study (PFS) and recommend on strategy for MAR. There was consensus to the fact that rain water is the best option for aquifer recharge now. However, concerns were raised on the monitoring mechanism, understanding recharge level and avoiding toxic water being dumped down. The Chair opined that MAR initiative can be targeted at urban and water-stressed areas at present.

The WS recommends that a MAR initiative to use rain water to recharge underground aquifer is to be prioritized with a focus on urban and water-stressed areas. Also, a MAR strategy note to be developed for further consideration of the Water Governance and Sustainability Work-Stream. Additional Secretary (Development) will act as focal person for this initiative.

In compliance to the decision of the 6th NSB meeting, a report will be submitted in this meeting on existing and completed projects on Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) with recommendations of any future actions which will serve as a background material for further discussion and consideration in the 7th NSB meeting.

(2) A Rapid Needs Assessment for Rivers around Dhaka city

The government has declared four rivers surrounding Dhaka city as Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) as part of the plan to protect the rivers from encroachment as well as conservation of the biodiversity of the ancient water courses. In September 2009, the four rivers - *Buriganga, Sitalakhaya, Turag and Balu* - have been declared by the Department of Environment (DoE) as ECAs. The GoB has undertaken an initiative through Department of Environment namely “Ecological Restoration of Four Rivers around Dhaka City” to address issues surrounding the rivers of Dhaka City.

The WGS work-stream members in its 8th meeting, chaired by Mr. Kabir Bin Anwar, Secretary, MoWR, opined that the inclusion of private sector in the initiatives of ecological restoration of surrounding rivers and canals of Dhaka city is a relatively new dimension and stopping source of pollution by incentivizing effluent treatment plants, equipment imports and stopping wastes from various industry segments are areas the high-level committee have aimed at. Now, there is more interest in development of an implementation plan with business model(s).

The WS recommends that for the rivers surrounding Dhaka city, a rapid needs assessment including relevant business models can be carried out with support from 2030 WRG for mobilizing required resources from development partners and other stakeholders.

(3) Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Campaign in support of GCC Project

The Greater Dhaka Watershed Restoration (GDWR) Workstream approved GCC Wastewater Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) & Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) Treatment Plant (FSTP) Project implementation on PPP basis. The work undertaken so far has been a rapid assessment to establish high-level feasibility. Significant amount of work on ground is required before the project can be assessed for readiness for implementation. Hence, a Transaction Advisor is under process of being contracted to conduct detailed technical feasibility, develop bidding documents and supervise procurement process all the way to financial closure. The project preparatory development work will involve in-depth consultations with the major stakeholders and financiers (Central Government, BMDF, GCC) to build consensus in order to secure funding.

Several consultation meetings between development organizations such as SNV, WASUP etc. were held with the objective of identifying one or two development partners for community awareness and consensus building program to be carried out in parallel and during the 12 to 18-month period required for the Detailed Feasibility Study is being conducted.

Formation of new Work-Stream on Water Innovation

(4) Formation of new Work-Stream on Water Innovation

Innovative solutions especially in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector is required to improve relevant services and practices across the country vis-à-vis the world. By creating a workstream, we can bring forth like-minded partners who can all work towards creating and promoting innovative solutions for the WASH agenda.

Progress Update on Work-Streams

Water Governance and Sustainability (WGS) Work-Stream (WS)

(i) Haor Scoping Study

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the *Haor* scoping study, also shared in the last NSB meeting, incorporated inputs from the last NSB and WGS WS meetings. The aim is to identify program and projects incorporating specific technologies and practices to and considering the unique ecological characteristics to improve the socio-economic condition of the habitats in a sustainable manner.

The WGS WS members emphasized on the importance of ecological balance and biodiversity of the haor region and a consideration of the broader wetland areas in Bangladesh in its last meeting. They recommended to form an Advisory Committee for the *haor* scoping study to provide guidance and to develop any potential *haor* initiatives by aligning institutions, incorporating biodiversity, capitalizing on technological advancements and supporting in policy and investment interventions. The task force

will have members from DBHWD, BARD, BWDB, DoE, Agriculture, Water Resource and Rural Institution Division (Planning Commission), DAE, BRAC, IUCN, CEGIS, IWM, BUET, DBL and 2030 WRG with the option to co-op members if required.

Decision point: Endorsement of the work-stream decisions to form a task force to provide guidance on conducting the scoping study.

(ii) Progress Update on Valuing Water Project in Bangladesh

Internationally, valuing water has been prioritized as global action to achieve sustainable water resources management by the UN and the World Bank High Level Panel for Water, of which the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh is a member.

In policy and investment decisions, the consideration of all benefits and costs related to water provides the foundation for sustainable water management and long-term socio-economic development. The absence of this consideration results in substantial misallocation of resources, which materialises in water resource management challenges which Bangladesh faces, such as localised severe groundwater over-abstraction and water shortages, surface water pollution and flooding.

A study project (PFS) on “Developing Operational Shadow Prices for Water to Support Informed Policy and Investment Decision Making Processes” was developed by the High-Level Valuing Water Committee, which was initiated by the NSB. WARPO submitted the PFS to MoWR and it was approved in March 2019. The project will develop operational shadow prices for water, so that the value of water can be considered in all policy, project and investment decisions in the public and private sector. This applies to all investment and policy decisions in which water resources are impacted directly, such as for dams, or indirectly, such as for projects requiring water as an input etc. The overall objective is to improve allocation of resources and thus enabling sustainable socio-economic development. Specifically, the project will a) Develop a set of harmonized shadow prices for water in Bangladesh and refine them as part of case studies (action research); b) Mainstream the developed shadow prices in policy and decision-making processes by operationalizing shadow prices within the DPP process; and c) Make shadow prices operational for private sector decision making processes by application of these in demonstration case studies with selected private sector companies.

The NSB will be appraised of the progresses made in this initiative.

(iii) Update on Institutional strengthening of water resources management

Since 2016, the WGS WS first prepared a Concept Note outlining broad objectives, and then formed a Task Force that developed eleven recommendations for institutional reform. With assistance from the workstream, a) the Bangladesh Water Rules 2018 have been gazetted, b) the WARPO organogram/staffing proposal has been approved by MoPA in principle and is under further process, c) Proposal for Feasibility Study (PFS) on Online Water Project Clearance approved, d) PFS on Valuing Water in Bangladesh was approved by MoWR and e) Capacity Building project (PDPP) for the strengthening of WARPO is under discussion.

Greater Dhaka Watershed Restoration Work-Stream

(iv) Update on DPP for Water Quality Monitoring System

In order to improve water quality from urban, industrial and agriculture pollutant sources a greater focus on monitoring must be included in the overall solution and especially as a precursor to future

investments or change in practices that lead to improvement in water quality. The concept note developed and accepted by the NSB in June 2017 has the key elements of pilot implementation, scaling up and replication.

2030 WRG has catalysed the process which has now been taken over by Oxford University's REACH program in partnership with BUET (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology) and the Department of Environment. The partners are now in the process of taking preparatory measures to implement the project.

Industrial Water and Wastewater Work-Stream

(v) Green Economic Zone Guidelines and other BEZA related activities

NSB approved the development of the Green Economic Zone (GEZ) Guidelines in Oct 2018. The technical committee formed afterwards agreed in principle to a development and implementation process involving 4 phases. It requires an estimated 9 months to develop and draft the Guidelines (National Framework) and an additional 9-12 months to pilot the GEZ framework at Mirsarai 2A. Intensive consultations took place with the key development partners (IFC, GIZ, UNIDO) for mobilizing resources for a collaborative effort to provide technical support to the development of the National GEZ framework. GEZ technical committee met in April 2019 to finalize the proposed action plan to send to the task force and work-stream for approval.

(vi) Market led Incentivizing of Sustainable Production Practices

Sustainable production activities must be economically effective for businesses yet, at the same time, have a positive impact on the environment and human health. Therefore, to be sustainable, the relationship between production activities and the environment and society must be considered as the basis for assessing performance.

The textile and apparel sector of Bangladesh urgently needs to adopt a holistic approach to sustainability and the existing environmental policy and legal framework of Bangladesh requires the textile industries to comply with environmental guidelines. Despite this, however, the overall compliance achievement is still quite low.

At the same time, the scope of existing compliance requirements is expanding internationally which may make this sector in Bangladesh more vulnerable for longer term. Global drivers of this process include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Paris agreement on Climate Change (COP 21), the European Union's vision of becoming climate neutral by 2050 etc.

Bangladesh, the second largest apparel exporter in the world, is enjoying its demographic dividend at a high environmental and social cost, which has a major impact on the textile sector. Thus, it is important to overcome this by developing a clear and realistic concept of 'green development' within a realistic framework that acknowledges the supply chain pressures and the imperative for suppliers to keep their prices as low as possible.

As per the 2nd meeting of the Industrial Water and Wastewater (IWW) Workstream (WS) Chaired by the Secretary PMO a task force was formed on 27th September 2018 to oversee the development of a "Market Led Initiative to Incentivize Sustainable Production Practices" in order to encourage and facilitate the development of the textile sector towards a vision of 'Compliance Plus' behavior. As per the decision of the IWW WS the Task Force is to be chaired by the Ministry of Industries and 2030 Water Resources Group (2030 WRG) to provide Secretarial support to the Task Force (TF).

Following the formation of the Task Force, a draft concept note was developed, and a presentation was made at a Brands Forum workshop and subsequently two additional follow up meetings have been conducted with the international Buyers (Brands) Forum to build consensus on the concept note. In order to proceed further, a meeting of the TF is scheduled on 28th April 2019 at IFC Dhaka Office. The Task Force discussed the importance of mapping the existing incentive mechanisms and consolidation of information on the compliance status of wet processing factories. The Task Force further recommended that an ISPP framework be developed including detailed definitions for compliance and compliance plus activities.

Agricultural Water Work-Stream

(vii) Update on the study project on Economic Policy Incentive

The Economic Policy Incentives (EPI) study proposes to pilot the interventions to graduate towards a system with higher productivity, higher efficiency and less wasteful use of irrigation water. The intervention design proposes i) a system where individual farmers have direct control over abstraction for irrigating his/her land through issuance and use of individual smart cards; ii) introduction of crop water-saving technology (such as Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD)) to minimize need for irrigation water; iii) higher supply-side efficiency through investment in more efficient water delivery system from the source of water to the field of farmers; iv) a water charge regime based on volume of water abstracted rather than on area irrigated for a fixed fee; and v) social mobilization for a community-based system of water management where the above four types of actions may be combined for wider acceptance by farmers.

The Task Force formed to support the implementation arrangement of the EPI pilots has developed the Proforma Feasibility Study (PFS) for the project which has been approved by the Agricultural Water Work-Stream. DAE has been selected as the lead agency with proposed activities of the external services to be conducted by BARI with support of BADC and BMDA.

The final PFS of the EPI study was submitted by DAE to the Agricultural Ministry and during the DPEC meeting convened by Ministry of Agriculture, the PFS has been reviewed extensively. The team members are now reviewing the decisions taken by the DEPC meeting and will submit the PFS for final approval shortly. The EPI project is expected to be initiated from July 2019 for a period of three years.

(viii) The south-west scoping study

Sustainable water use in south-western region of Bangladesh faces special problems because of extensive salinity in both surface water and groundwater which affects agriculture, aquaculture, and domestic and industrial water use. Given this context, improving water efficiency and water productivity in agriculture along with other modernizing interventions is a critical issue that needs urgent attention for a sustainable agriculture. Agricultural Water WS had selected this region as the second scope of intervention, with an aim to enhance agro-water productivity and mitigate salinity intrusion while improving livelihood options for farmers. This study intended to identify technology intervention packages, considering the agro-ecology and the socio-economic constraints (e.g. demography, resources availability, social capital, technical knowhow, etc.) within which a farm operates.

During the 6th NSB meeting, the Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), BRAC University the action research partner for the scoping study had shared the preliminary findings and it was decided that the priority interventions under the scoping study will be selected based on further consultations with the Agriculture Water work-stream.

The over-all findings of the Scoping Study was presented during the 8th Agriculture Water WS meeting, where it was decided that a Task Force will be formed for validation, prioritization and project formulation based on the recommendation of the Scoping Study on the Southwest region and will be chaired by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture. Task Force will include members from Department of Agricultural Extensions (DAE), BARI, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Local Government Department (LGD), Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), RDA (Bogura), BADC, BMDA, The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Solidaridad, BRAC, Private Sector participants etc. The Task Force will also include and will have the facility to co-opt new members as required. The Recommendations of the Scoping Study on the Southwest region was advised to extended to include Gopalganj and Faridpur since salinity intrusion of these two areas are noteworthy. Among the seven recommended technologies mentioned in the Scoping Study on Southwest region, the work-stream advised the Task Force to expand the ideas of Four-in-One Integrated Farming System, Rainwater harvesting using ground/surface catchment areas, Drip Irrigation, Climate Smart Village in detail and also consider new ideas / approaches as appropriate.

Any other business

(ix) Barind Hotspot Multi-Stakeholder Partnership: Presentation for Information and Guidance

The Barind is one of the hotspots identified in the Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP) 2100, water-centric integrated landscape transformation is vital for this region. Keeping this in mind, the Barind Integrated Landscape Transformation Multi-Stakeholder Platform (BILT-MSP) was introduced in a meeting in Rajshahi at the BMDA on February 17-18, 2018. It was jointly organized by the Bangladesh 2030 WRG and the BMDA, with technical collaboration from Eco-Agriculture Partners.

The main objective of the BILT-MSP is to connect all key stakeholders committed to a responsible and attractive future for the Barind region, with a focus on water management. The primary stakeholders (farmers, service providers, input sellers, producers, value chain actors dealing with Barind products) as well as secondary stakeholders are proposed to be included in the MSP. It was agreed to have three organs namely the i) MSP Open Forum; ii) Advisory Council; and iii) Committee of Convenor.

The MSP Open Forum is to serve as the apex body. Dr. Akram Hossain Chowdhury, Chairman BMDA was selected unanimously as the Chairperson of the BILT-MSP Open Forum. The Forum will meet 1-2 times in a year and include all the relevant public, private and civil society stakeholders including farmers' groups. The Advisory Council will provide guidance to the Committee of Conveners. This council will include Director Generals, Farmer Councilors, Agro-input/Processing Organizations, Academicians and Local Administration. The Committee of Conveners (COC) will deal with thematic areas.