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Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the CRVS related Steering Committee

Chairperson: Mohammad Shafiul Alam, Cabinet Secretary.

Date and time: 17 April 2016, 02:30 pm.

Place : Cabinet Room, Building No. 01, Cabinet Division, Bangladesh Secretariat.

Participants: Attachment-A.

The Chairperson opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the Steering Committee (SC) put in operation a robust CRVS system in Bangladesh. He conveyed his special thanks to the Principal Secretary, Prime Minister's Office for joining this meeting. He also thanked and welcomed the special invitees of this meeting i.e. Director General, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry Education (MoE), Policy Advisor, Access to Information (a2i) Programme, Prime Minister's Office and Additional Director General (Administration), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

- 02. In his introductory remarks, the Chair mentioned that since the 2nd meeting, held on August 2015, some new faces have been inned. He touched upon the activities happened during this period. He mentioned that this 3rd meeting has been called to get updates about progress, and further guide and decide on these efforts so that CRVS gets fully functional very soon. He called upon the Additional Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Division to go through the meeting agenda.
- 03. The Additional Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Division went through the items of the agenda one by one. The participants discussed each item and provided their opinions and suggestions.

Sl. no.	Item of the meeting agenda	Discussion		
1.	Confirmation of the minutes of the 2 nd meeting.	Since no corrections or modifications was suggested, the Minutes of the 2nd meeting of the CRVS related Steering Committee was confirmed.		
2.	Review of the decisions of the Steering	Two decisions (a and g) of the 2nd meeting were implemented completely. While the rest 9 decisions (b, c, d, e, f, h, i, and k) were being implemented or partially implemented.		
	Committee's 2nd Meeting.	The participants expressed their satisfaction on overall progress made so far. The Principal Secretary, Prime Minister's Office emphasized on further expediting the pace of implementation of the decisions.		
		It was also decided that the planned pilot involving the Secondary and Higher Education System in Narshingdi District be implemented without delay and the Directorate General of Secondary and Higher Education could provide necessary funding for the pilot expenses.		
		The Committee also took note of the fact that there was no		



Sl.	Item of the meeting agenda	Discussion
	3	dedicated team for implementation of CRVS in the CRVS-Secretariat. To speed up the pace of implementation a CRVS Implementation Committee was proposed in this regard.
3.	Short briefing on CRVS.	The Chair welcomed the seven new Senior Secretary/Secretaries on the Committee and with his permission the Policy Advisor, a2i Programme, PMO made a presentation on the CRVS in Bangladesh (presentation attached).
4.	Presentation on Birth & Death Registration status of Bangladesh and Bali Process Civil Registration Toolkit	With the permission of the Chair, Mr. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Project Director (Additional Secretary), Birth and Death Registration Project, Local Government Division made a presentation in this regard. There were two parts in his presentation i.e. (a) Overview on Birth & Death Registration Project; and (b) The Bali Process Civil Registration Toolkit. In the first part he discussed on Importance of Birth & Death Registration; State of Server and Software; Challenges of MRP issue; Establishment of Register General office; Formulation of New Rules; Trends of Multiple entry & their correction; and Future Dream. And in the second part he discussed on What is Bali Process, Indonesia; Background and objectives of Bali Process; Actions to be taken etc. The Director General (Administration), and Project Director, a2i Programme remarked that alike all over the world the forth
		coming Registrar General (Birth and Death) should be the single authority of all sorts of civil registration. He mentioned that one single authority the Registrar General of New Zealand actually deals with birth, death, marriage, citizenship and authentication. He opined that just make a single authority, every vital events and statistics could be stored and maintained when even the voter ID can be generated at the 1st day of 19th year. He suggested that the current legal structure should be reviewed and laws should be amended if necessary to empower our current Registrar General. The Chair and other members also agreed with this suggestion.
5.	Approval of the CRVS Implementation Committee.	The CRVS related Steering Committee is a very high level and high powered committee having the Cabinet Division as its convener and 16 Senior Secretary/Secretaries and other 5 high officials as its members. This committee provide policy directions towards implementation of CRVS in Bangladesh. Due to heavy engagements of the members, the committee meets as and when required.
		Now, there is a need for looking after the CRVS implementation issues in between the Steering Committee meeting. Therefore, a committee was proposed as the "CRVS Implementation Committee" where the respective heads of the executing agencies would be the member. The formation and ToR of the proposed committee were also discussed in the meeting.
		All the participants agreed that the proposed CRVS Implementation Committee was a very good initiative. It would speed up the implementation process and made the efforts more effective and efficient. The representative from the Ministry of

Sl. Item of the meeting no. agenda Discussion		Discussion
		Post and Telecommunication suggested that the Director General, Department of Telecommunications should be included as a member of the proposed committee. The Project Director, Birth and Death Registration Project suggested that since the project period of B&DR Project has been extended up to June 2016 (without further cost) only for establishing the office of the Registrar General and the process of implementing the same is in a final stage which might be gazette notified & Registrar General may be appointed within a month so, instead of the PD of the B&DR Project, the Registrar General should be the member of the proposed committee. The Secretary, Local Govt. Division also endorsed the opinion of the PD and recommended to record the decision accordingly.
6.	Organizing Intl. CRVS Conference.	The CRVS Secretariat proposed to showcase, by an international conference during March 2017, efforts towards realization of CRVS+ that are being implemented in Bangladesh to the international community while showing others experiences. The Committee was informed that a fund of BDT 2 crore for this purpose was available in the proposed "Preparatory Phase of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in Bangladesh" project.
		The Committee agreed to the proposal and entrusted the CRVS Implementation Committee should take the responsibility to organize it.
7.	Birth Registration Month.	Currently, the rate of birth registration within the compulsory period of 45 days from the birth is less than 4% in Bangladesh. While this rate increases up to 65% during age of 6 when the children get enrolled to education system. That means a huge number of population (children aged from 0 to 6 years) remain invisible to the national Civil Registry system. We need to improve this situation in order to effectively implement CRVS system. In many countries like Indonesia, Philippines etc. 'Birth Registration Month' is observed and organized by the state to boost up rate of birth registration. Their rate of success is almost 100%. The CRVS Secretariat proposes to do such event in Bangladesh during March 2017. The Local Government Division will implement it, while the CRVS Secretariat will provide necessary supports regarding implementing it.
		In this regard, the Secretary, Local Government Division showed his concern about the fact that this kind of month long event might result in reluctance in the people about ongoing birth registration and the might opt for waiting only for this month for doing their birth registration. He suggested that his division would have a deeper consultation regarding it before any decision was taken.
		Other participants remarked that we should also focus on death registration since its condition and status was very poor in our country. The Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare remarked that we should also emphasize on strengthening recording of Cause of Death for proper vital statistics generation. Without it, the quality of the CRVS would be

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		compromised. Awareness raising and linking the death- registration with service delivery is a must.			
8.	UID for former Indian enclave people.	Very recently, the Government has been successful to solve year old problem of enclaves (ছিটমহল). This is a grachievement of the current Government. Now, the people living in those ex-enclaves yet to have formal and permanent lesidentity. They have a temporary certificates of citizenship Bangladesh. Since we are implementing CRVS in Banglade where we plan to provide UID to every person of the country is a great opportunity for us to provide those people with lesidentity/citizenship certificates using UID. We can pilot oppoposed CRVS system there.			
		The Director General, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics informed the meeting that the BBS already did survey/census of these areas and made a list of population. This list is now under editing. Then it will be placed before the Ministry of Home Affairs. The representative of the Ministry of Home Affairs suggested that before his ministry is done with the official gazette notification of the population this kind of initiative should wait.			
9.	MOUs signing.	Based on the decisions of the 2nd Meeting of the CRVS related Steering Committee 4 MOUs was signed during this 3rd meeting. These were - (a) An MOU among the CRVS Secretariat, Cabinet Division; the Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education; and the a2i Programme, Prime Minister's Office. (b) An MOU among the CRVS Secretariat, Cabinet Division; the Directorate of Secondary and Higher, Ministry of Education; and the a2i Programme, Prime Minister's Office. (c) An MOU among the CRVS Secretariat, Cabinet Division; the Birth and Death Registration Project, Local Government Division; and the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. (d) One MOU among the CRVS Secretariat, Cabinet Division; a2i Programme, Prime Minister's Office and the Birth and Death Registration Project, Local Government Division.			

04. In general discussion, the Director General, NID Wing, Election Commission Secretariat commented that the Bangladesh is very much ready, in terms of infrastructure, for CRVS system. We just need to integrate the three major CR systems i.e. Birth and Death Registration, NID and Health Database. The Policy Advisor, a2i Programme commented that we have to integrate the Education, Migration, Social Safety Net, and Marriage and Divorce databases with the three databases mentioned by the DG, NID Wing, Election Commission Secretariat to make the CRVS system and robust and comprehensive one. And we also need to integrate all these CR databases with the VS database of the BBS to make the CRVS a complete system. The Additional Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Division commented that there should be a time-bound action plan to implement CRVS system in Bangladesh. The Chair advised the Secretary in charge (Coordination and Reforms), Cabinet Division to institutionalize the CRVS Secretariat and implement the MoUs as soon as possible.

- 05. After elaborate discussions the **following decisions were made** unanimously:
 - a) For faster, smoother and more effective implementation of the CRVS system in Bangladesh a CRVS Implementation Committee is approved including the suggestions made by the members of the Committee;
 - b) The CRVS Secretariat will further speed up its activities to complete the ongoing implementations of 2nd meetings decisions;
 - c) The Directorate General of Secondary and Higher Education, Ministry of Education can provide necessary funding for expenses of the planned pilot involving the Secondary and Higher Education System in the Narshingdi District.
 - d) The CRVS Implementation Committee will organize an International Conference on CRVS to be held in March 2017;
 - e) The Secretary, Local Government Division will decide on the proposed Birth Registration Month;
 - f) The proposed "UID for former Indian enclave people" will remain postponed until the issue of citizenship is legally solved by the Ministry of Home Affairs;
 - g) On policy level, the Steering Committee unanimously agreed that the current Registrar General (Birth and Death) under the Local Government Division would be the Registrar General for all sorts of civil registrations, citizenship and authentication. In this regard, the CRVS Secretariat will review the existing legal structure of the country to establish an all encompassing Registrar General for Bangladesh and submit a report;
 - h) The CRVS Secretariat be institutionalized as soon as possible;
 - i) The CRVS Implementation Committee will prepare a time-bound Action Plan integrating all related databases for CRVS implementation; and
 - j) The CRVS Secretariat will take necessary steps to implement the signed MoUs as soon as possible.

09. The Chairperson concluded the meeting by thanking everybody once again.

Mohammad Shafiul Alam

Cabinet Secretary

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Convener, CRVS related Steering Committee

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