



Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA)
Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme (PLGSP)

7th National Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting

Aide Memoire

The 7th meeting of the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme (PLGSP) was held under the chair of Mr. Arjun Prasad Pokharel, Secretary of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA), Government of Nepal (GoN), on 25 November, 2022. The main purpose of the meeting was to review the progress of PLGSP ASIP 2022/23, to approve a Concept Note for the Programme's future direction and decide on the agenda items proposed by PLGSP/Programme Coordination Unit (PCU). Joint Secretaries of MoFAGA, senior officials of sectoral ministries, NNRFC, NPC representatives of the Joint Financing Agreement (JFA) Development Partners (DPs), UNDP, and representatives of the provincial government and local government (LG) associations participated in the meeting. Agenda item and discussion is provided in Annex-1. The list of participants is provided in Annex-2. The meeting concluded with the following decisions.

1. Opening Remarks

The Chair of the meeting, Arjun Prasad Pokharel, Secretary of MoFAGA, addressed the meeting by welcoming all to the meeting, and requested the National Program Manager, Mr. Hem Raj Aryal to continue with the agenda of the meeting.

2. Decisions

1. NEC noted progress against the actions since the last NEC meeting of 26 May 2022.
2. NEC approved the Annual Progress Report 2021/22 and Annual Financial Monitoring Report (FMR) 2021/22, and acknowledged the important feedback and suggestions from NEC members. NEC instructed PCU to make all necessary changes in the Annual Progress Report prior to final circulation.
 - NEC received and noted the first quarter progress 2022/23.
 - NEC received the Third Party Monitoring Report of PLGSP and recommendations, and instructed PCU to take the necessary management action and policy measures to improve the performance and quality of the programme
3. NEC received PLGSP re-programming Concept Note and approved the approach to come to a transitional arrangement of one year including the following principles;
 - Agreement on phased approach and key changes to be addressed during transitional period;
 - A one year transitional period (July 2023 – July 2024)
 - Interim ASIP(s) to be developed with achievable delivery & budgets by March 2023

- Key priorities, structures, and the roles of PPIU, PCGG & review and possible extension of TA to be agreed
- Maximize existing flexibility in ProgDoc, JFA & UNDP NIM Guideline and implementation may start before July 2023

NEC instructed PCU to consult with key stakeholders including province and local governments, LG Associations, statutory bodies; amongst other, and submit the Concept & approach for PLGSP's re-programming at the next NSC meeting.

4. NEC welcomed the formation of the Re-programming Working Group (RWG) and instructed TASC and RWG to prioritise securing agreement on TA arrangements for the Transitional Period by March 2023.



Annex-1: Agendas Items and Discussion

1. Reflection on the 6th NEC meeting's decisions and actions

All actions completed as per decisions made in 6th NEC meeting:

- ASIP 2022/23 duly finalised after incorporating feedback and comments from all
- MTR report presented to NSC meeting held in June, 2022
- Task group formed (as Re-programming Working Group, RWG) to work on PLGSP re-programming (following up MTR) and Concept Note prepared for the same.

2. PLGSP Annual Progress Report 16 July 2021 – 15 July 2022 – to be noted

Shared in previous meeting and PLGSP annual progress update 2021/22 circulated to NEC members for further comments.

3. Re-programming Concept note -Shared for approval on the following principles:

- Formation of Re-programming Working Group and full engagement of stakeholders to be inclusive and representative
- Concept Note is consistent with NSC decision of July 2022; Transitional year (July 2023- July 2024) focusing on key priorities; Full Re-programming to be completed by December 2023; Multi - year extension of duration to be agreed based on 'logical' approach, impacts / targets / deliverables and budgets
- Transitional Arrangements: 1 year transition (July 2023 – July 2024); Interim ASIP(s) setting out achievable delivery targets & budgets to be agreed by March 2023; Agreement on key priorities, structures, role of PCGG, PPIU and UNTA; Existing flexibility in ProDoc, JFA & UNDP NIM Guideline and Implementation may start before
- Re-programming: Shall focus on Stakeholder engagement & re-programming during transitional year; Consultation with potential new JFA DPs, and reorientation of ProDoc, governance structures, cost centres, budgets, MEL and GESI targets to be agreed.
- Multi-year extension of duration to be agreed, but needs to be sufficient to deliver PLGSP's objectives / impacts.

4. Comments from Secretary

The Secretary asked everyone present in the meeting to critically and candidly present their opinion on the re-programming concept note and transitional arrangements and to provide feedback based on their experience of the programme. He further clarified that the re-programming and multi-year extension shall be taken to NSC meeting after incorporation of the stakeholders' views.



5. Comment from Representative of Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

- As the major component of the programme being to capacitate the political leaders, the old model of training is obsolete and needs to be abolished. New, efficient models of engaging participants with practical sessions is necessary as the participants / PLGs officials have limited time.
- Two separate units PPIU and PCGG are unnecessary and should be combined.
- Use of consultants needs to be seriously looked into especially their qualifications and delivery.
- Creation of roster for reach of officials in the PLGs.

6. Comment from Representative of Province 1

- Programme is good; however, the activities need to be reprioritized as the context has changed.
- Capacity development interventions needs to be reprioritised and revamped in terms of model of delivery and outcome.
- IPF is a good component but the outcome is not as expected for Province 1 and this needs to be further strengthened in any new phase.
- PCGGs deliver conventional training at present but needs to be strengthened as a research-based, capacity development institution. Residential training need to be encouraged.
- The use of TA experts should be evaluated in terms of needs in each province.
- The idea of merging PPIU and PCGG is not feasible; rather the role of the two needs to be clear and-well defined.

7. Comment from representative of Ministry of Women, Child and Senior Citizens

- The focus should be on developing and enhancing capacity of PCGG as an institution to deliver quality training.
- Interaction and meetings with the appointed new leaders of PLGs.
- Focus on PIS handover at province level as that is an imminent issue.

8. Comments from representative of OPMCM Joint Secretary

- Integrated reports from all the provinces can help determine the actual progress of PLGs
- Use the recommendations given by Monitoring Committee of the Parliament to develop relevant action plans for reprogramming
- Online registration and digitization should be expanded to ward level through IT support



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9. Comment from representative of NARMIN

- The relevancy of activities to be gauged each year as the context varies and the activities might need to be revised from year to year, thus the flexibility to amend and move on should be considered significantly in re-programming
- LG associations to be engaged in wider stakeholder consultations - currently missing in the document
- MoFAGA to focus more on intergovernmental cooperation and coordination
- Structural changes are required to enhance provincial level ownership
- National progress indicators for monitoring progress and performance of local level should be considered

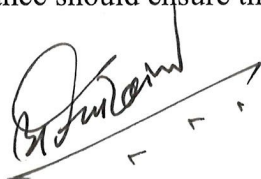
10. Comments from representative of ADCCN

- Stakeholder identification and their meaningful participation should be the prime focus for program redesigning discussion
- The programme is skewed towards meeting targets set out in the document; it needs to be aligned with the actual needs of the PLGs
- The training modality needs to be changed. It is important to bring together government officials and elected representatives in joint training
- Inter-agency collaboration needs to be significantly strengthened and working mechanisms needs to be further developed

11. Comments from DPs

DP Chair

- DPs approve the Annual Progress Report subject to comments being incorporated prior to NSC approval.
- DPs need to see more analysis on the outcome level results with analysis on the overarching goals of strengthening federalism, institutional reform and GESI Mainstreaming and asked MoFAGA/PCU to submit analytical report based on the results and outcome focused achievements and impact of the interventions.
- Development Partners emphasize training for newly elected representatives of local governments and PCGGs to prioritize their training and plan orientation for newly elected provincial assembly members.
- PCGG's are crucial to the successful delivery of impacts but DPs are concerned that 4 PCGGs are still not legislated by provincial parliaments and that staffing levels are inadequate.
- DPs welcome the Concept Note, and emphasize the need for full consultation and engagement of provincial and local level stakeholders for re-programming as crucial
- DPs also requested MoFAGA to ensure the functioning of Technical Assistance in the programme at the full potential as recommended by the Mid-Term Review. Technical Assistance should ensure the deliberations and quality of the



programme products and policies, promote learning, and deliver on the principles and fundamental values of federalisation against the results framework.

DP Co-Chair

- Congratulated the Programme on delivering various GESI-related activities for effective GESI mainstreaming; MTR and TPM findings on GESI need to be widespread and institutionalized.
- The sustainability aspect was missing in the Annual Progress Report which needs to be addressed.
- Only 7 schemes of IPF were found to be highly relevant, 26 below average following assessment and verifications. PCU must ensure that a thorough independent monitoring mechanism is in place, based on which lessons can be learned from the first round of implementation to inform decision-making on adaptations and possible future rounds of IPF.

12. Representative from Swiss Embassy

- Requested MoFAGA to develop a concrete strategy and action plan to address the findings and recommendations of the MTR for further restructuring and improvements in PLGSP.
- As per one of the recommendations of MTR, the programme needs to be federalized. Provinces must take the lead in every aspect of the programme and not receive top-down instructions from federal government. The federal government has of course an important role in providing necessary frameworks.
- A comprehensive process of full stakeholder engagement, negotiation and re-programming is required to implement the 6 recommendations of MTR. Requested to ensure that the process including consultations are inclusive and that the province and local governments are equally engaged throughout.
- PCU is requested to develop a concrete strategy and action plan to address the findings and recommendations of TPM based on a consultation on the findings with the province and local governments and relevant federal agencies and other stakeholders

13. Representative from the EU

- Acknowledged the large participation of the federal and provincial level government representatives
- The unaudited financial monitoring reports are well received and requested MoFAGA /PCU to submit the consolidated reports from provinces, to verify expenditure incurred against the budget disbursed by Programme Coordination Unit to the provinces and requested Programme Coordination Unit to also provide assurance of the utilization of the financial contributions of the government and UNDP in the programme.
- Request MoFAGA/PCU to have a more realistic planning and budgeting process for activities; the targets need to be meaningful for higher delivery rate.



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- DPs would like to get updated on the way forward for the adoption of Civil Service Act and a need for political push, immediately after the new government is in place. PLGSP support is very much focused on strengthening capacities at provincial and local levels and for that to be successful staff issues need to be addressed, including means to reduce staff rotations, and increase staff physically allocated to PLGs.
- DP requested clarification on any MoFAGA plan to incorporate LED in the PLGSP programme?

14. Response from NPM

- The current auditing system at OAG at does not generate consolidated report separately for the PLGSP. Nonetheless, for each unit, the OAG duly has conducted an audit and has provided reports. MoFAGA shall explore the possibility of getting the consolidated reports with OAG.
- The need for planning to be more realistic is well taken and activities shall be planned in the same way for the remaining period of the programme.

15. Response from NPD

- The suggestion to incorporate LED in the PLGSP programme is well received and we will definitely contemplate to work on innovative LED during the re-programming. The ministry has already started with LED initiation in this year's planned activity as a start to this initiative. We are currently working on its procedures, guidelines and implementation modality.

16. Response from Secretary

- In the re-programming, LED can be well incorporated, action is required and the support from DPs is much appreciated and welcome.
- The Civil Service Act is in the last stage and the technical work is in progress. We are hopeful and positive that a logical end will be concluded with the new parliamentary session.

17. Closing Remarks

Major Highlights – Secretary, MoFAGA

- Progress tracking should be a component of provinces and GESI implementation must be effective in all ministries
- TA is required but the quality needs to be re-evaluated and seriously accessed and to be fully utilised.