

MINUTES OF THE 2ND MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NETWORKING PROGRAMME (SDNP) HELD ON SEPTEMBER 03, 2000.

A meeting of the Steering Committee for the Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) took place on September 03, 2000 under the Chairpersonship of Prof. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Chairperson, SDNP Steering Committee. The following other members were present:

1. Mr. Abu Ahmed Abdullah, DG, BIDS
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
2. Dr. M. Asaduzzaman, RD, BIDS and PD, SDNP
Secretary, SDNP Steering Committee
3. Mr. N. H. Chowdhury, MD, TSS
(Representative of Secretary, Ministry of Post and Telecommunications),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
4. Dr. Ainun Nishat, Country representative, IUCN
Member, SDNP Steering Committee
5. Mamunul H. Khan, HRD Specialist, PMU
(Representative of Programme Coordinator, PMU, SEMP),
Member, SDNP Steering Committee and
6. Mr. S. M. Iqbal, Coordinator, ISP-FORUM
Member, SDNP Steering Committee

The Chairperson welcomed the members to the meeting and requested Dr. M. Asaduzzaman, PD, SDNP and Secretary to the Steering Committee to begin the proceedings of the meeting.

PD, SDNP then presented the minutes of the 1st Steering Committee meeting, which already had the approval of the Chairperson. The minutes were approved without any modification (see attachment A).

PD SDNP then presented an integrated report (see attachment B) on the follow-up of the minutes of the first meeting and the progress of work so far. The discussions and recommendations by the Steering Committee are described below:

1. Follow-up
 - i) The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Steering Committee have been amended.
 - ii) Regarding modification of the project budget, adoption of the recent exchange rate realignment as per UNDP rule has been recommended.
 - iii) The meeting recommended to publish a press release in national newspapers, the appreciation of the SDNP Bangladesh's web page by the SDNP HQ as the best among all 52 SDNs.
 - iv) Inclusion of some important non-SIAs for connectivity was recommended.
 - v) Special attention should be given to students in the use of cyber cafe (Information Centre) and steps to be taken to filter objectionable sites and proper guidance to the users. The members recommended that schools be given preference for browsing at the cyber cafe.

vi) For hosting national and international events of importance in SDNP web site, it has been recommended to collect necessary information by directly communicating with different ministries

vii) If project necessitates, required additional manpower could be engaged for regular updating of the Sustainable Development Information (SDI) page of SDNP web site.

ix) More emphasis should be given to data exchange and exhaustive use of the SDNP backbone. The Chairperson put special attention to agro-data and collection of data from different NGOs who have been working at grass root level. Other speakers gave their suggestion for including weather forecast, flood forecast, etc. and similar other information. In any case, the general principle shall be to include as much as possible, all information related to sustainable development, which cuts across both scientific and socio-economic disciplines.

x) The issues of up-gradation of connectivity, available technology and their cost-effectiveness were raised. It was pointed out that not all are equally reliable or cost-effective from long-term point of view. PD has been requested to prepare a comparative statement regarding reliability, costs and long-term technical viability of the various currently available technology and technical setup and submit to the Chairperson for his guidance before a final decision can be taken.

xi) The PD raised the issue of various constraints faced over the last one year while implementing SDNP and all agreed on the fact that a major problem has been the telephone lines. From three days before the second Steering Committee meeting, all five newly installed telephone connections were made non-functional and all Internet services were closed. (This issue has been taken up at the Secretary's level later on and connectivity has been resumed the next day).

xii) The meeting agreed on putting charges on a "not-for-profit" basis and in principle agreed to formulate a policy to be prepared by the PD for initial approval of the Chairperson, Steering Committee.

xiii) The PD was requested to put up a proposal for maintaining the cyber cafe with additional manpower.

xiv) The committee agreed to the proposal of revising the PIP as per practical implementation view point and the Chairperson kindly gave his consent to look over the draft before final submission.

xv) The meeting agreed on the issue of recruiting one or more database consultants. However, the vacancy announcement should be made in full in the web site with indicative advertisements in at least two national dailies.

As there were no others issues, the Chairperson thanked every body present and concluded the meeting.