

Draft Minutes of the 105th Virtual Executive Committee (EC) Meeting of Coastal Association for Social Transformation (COAST) Trust held on 25th April, 2020

Member participated:

1. Abbas U. Bhuiya, Ph.D, Chairperson
2. Minar Monsur, Vice-Chairperson
3. Mostafa Kamal Ahmed, FCA, Treasurer
4. Gawher Nayeem Wahra, Member
5. Jacob Kumar Sarker, Member
6. Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Member-GC
7. M Zahirul Alam FCA, Member-GC
8. Begum Shamsun Nahar, Member-GC
9. Nurul Alam Masud, Member-GC
10. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Member Secretary (Executive Director, COAST)

Agenda transacted:

1. Review of the last 104th Executive Committee Meeting
2. Staff Salary Withhold Plan
3. Operation and Statutory Fund Situation
4. COVID-19 Response
5. Money laundering compliances of MRA
6. Any other business (AoB)

The Vice Chairperson started the meeting with welcome as Chairperson could not able to join in the beginning of the meeting due to the technical problems of the Zoom Software. Then when the Chairperson could able to connect then the Vice Chairperson handed over the duty to the Chairperson. The major discussions and decisions of the meeting are as follows.

1. Review of the last 104th Executive Committee (EC) meeting minutes:

- a. The Deputy Executive Director (DED) presented the **Evolution and Strategic Plan 2020-24** in to the meeting since most of the EC members are new. The meeting appreciated the presentation and approved plan for the period of 2020-24.
- b. The Director-Core Program presented the Memorandum of Agreement for the registration with Joint stock. After a thorough discussion and feedback the agreement was finalized. Then all the necessary signatures have been taken from all EC and GC members. Now it is okay with the EC and GC members. After opening of office, the application with relevant documents will be submitted.
- c. The approved change matrix of some clauses [Clause: 31.1.1 (Ka/Kha/Ga) and 36] of HR policy is now being practiced in the organization.
- d. The secretary assured the meeting that the organization is implementing Money Laundering Act-2015 in all transections happening in the organization.

2. Staff Salary Withhold Plan:

The Director-Core Program presented the Due Staff Salary Plan in the meeting. He explored some information about the present financial and staff situations of the organization. The situations are; i) the micro finance operation in the field is stopped since 25 March, 2020, ii) total core program staff 843, iii) the total bank balance is BDT 18.22 crore as at 31 March, 2020 and v) after giving salary and loan instalments, the end of August 2020 the bank balance will be BDT 3.42 crore.

After the presentation, the secretary stated that with the liquid money we can only run the salary and installment up to May 2020. So, he proposed to keep due some portion of the salary. He informed the justifications of the due salary; i) to face COVID-19 outbreak with available cash/liquidity, ii) to maintain a smooth cash flow during this disaster (unknown how long the situation prolongs), iii) average 46% (highest 80% and lowest 40%), iv) Take-home salary will be due of the core program staff, v) with the due salary and the paying all installments (Banks, PKSf & SF) we can run the operation August 2020 and vi) the PKSf, SF and Bank defer the installment then the operation can be run up to February, 2021 and vii) the plan will be reviewed in middle of the May 2020.

Then the Chair opened the floor for discussion on the plan:

The house is agreed with the plan but they have raised some concerns to be kept in mind by Sr. Management Team (SMT) of the organization. The concerns are i) is it possible to reduce the % of withhold salary and minimize the gap between 1st and 2nd layers, ii) is it possible to stop the loan installments of PF and Welfare fund, iii) to keep motivation of staff in this situation, iv) to think on festival bonus issue, v) to maintain exercise back and forth, vi) to lobby with the bank, PKSf and SF for deferring their loan installments during this crisis period, vii) to check with the labor law or any other legal issues, viii) renaming the plan as Salary Due Plan, ix) to think on any negative effect with the staff, x) it is assumed that lock down may extended up to August, xi) advocacy and campaign to open the micro finance operation after lock down keeping health measures, maintain physical distancing, loan collection from door to door or by mobile banking, xii) lobbying with government and bank to get the maximum amount of loan from BDT 3,000 crore package for Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) declared by the Honorable Prime Minister, xiii) we should think seriously to protect our member-participants as they are our main stakeholders and xiiii) taking written agreement of salary withhold from all staff so that they are agreed with this withhold.

Taking floor, the secretary said before arranging this EC meeting, this issue has been discussed with all level of staff and they are agreed with this plan. He also said that after lifting of lock down and getting permission of micro finance operation we all will be involved to get back the discipline of the program. Although it will take may be 4-6 months for streamlining the discipline in the field. He said that it will be our best effort and campaign to get the maximum amount from special package. He also added that this is the first time the Honorable Prime Minister recognized the activities of MFIs. He also emphasized to create two funds for the organization one is Institutional Sustainability Reserve Fund and another one is Disaster Management Fund.

After a long discussions the house approved the following issues:

- i. The name of the plan will be as Staff Salary Due Plan
- ii. The due salary will be in an average 46% (highest 80% and lowest 40%) and effective from April, 2020
- iii. After starting the micro finance operation the due plan will be lifted.
- iv. As per calculation the present salary due plan will be for the month of April 2020. In May the situation will be reviewed and the due might increase or decrease.
- v. Stopping all loan installments of provident fund and staff welfare fund until the due amount will be reduced and ED will decide this through discussion with SMT (Sr. Management Team).
- vi. The due salary will be returned on the installment basis when the repayment rate will reach to 95%.
- vii. Stopping all final payments during the COVID-19 outbreak and until the core program resumed and recovery rate reach 95%.
- viii. Six days salary will be asked as willing contribution from project staff for contribution to Organizational Disaster Fund.
- ix. This calculation will be reviewed in the middle of the month of May 2020. Then the due portion may be more or less on the basis of situation. ED and SMT will take decision through the consultation with the Chairperson. This will be continued until the situation will be normal.
- x. Creating two reserve funds for the organization one is Institutional Sustainability Reserve Fund and another one is Disaster Management Fund.

3. Operation and Statutory Fund Situation:

The Director-FCA&HRM presented the latest fund situation of the organization. As per the presentation, the organizational fund situation as at 31 March, 2020 is as follows:

Cash at bank	BDT in crore	FDR information:	BDT in crore
In MF	18.22	FDR in Lien in MF	11.30

Cash at bank	BDT in crore	FDR information:	BDT in crore
Other operation	3.50	FDR against group savings	8.70
Projects	2.65	In reserved fund	3.42
PF Fund	0.06	Gratuity Fund	2.25
Gratuity Fund	0.06	Savings certificate of FP fund	5.00
Staff Welfare Fund	0-03	Staff Welfare Fund	3.40
Total	24.52	Total	30.04
PF, Gratuity Fund and Staff Welfare fund investment in in MF programs		Total fund	
PF Fund	6.24	PF fund	11.24
Gratuity Fund	4.07	Gratuity fund	6.32
Staff Welfare Fund	3.62	Staff Welfare Fund	6.02
Total	13.71	Total loan outstanding	264.22
In addition to other info: BDT 0.52 crore is payable from different projects.			

The house appreciated with the fund situation and they requested to present this information in all EC/GC meeting.

4. COVID-19 Response:

The Deputy Executive Director presented the COVID-19 response by the organization. He mentioned that after confirming one case on 8th March, i) COAST developed the Code of Conducts and revised bio-safety rules, mandatory online course completion by staff from WHO and Department of Health, ii) organized two on line training courses one is Protection of COVID-19 and another is COVID 19 and Mental Health, iii) on 10-12 March, the organization printed 4.5 lack leaflets on five different issues related to COVID-19 and completed distribution to community, schools, colleges, madrasa, religious institutions, union parishad, upazilla parishad, district parishad, upazilla and district administrations with discussions, iv) on 28 and 30 March total 1.5 lack leaflets with Burmese language and distributed to 27 camps and 77 camp mosques through discussion with refugees, v) donation of BDT 16.00 lack to Government created COVID-19 Relief Fund in 37 upazilla and 8 districts administrations, vi) developed 7 videos on health issues related to COVID-19 and they have been uploaded in the you tube and COAST Facebook page. The videos are also made with Burmese and Chittagonian languages, vii) published ten articles of ED's write on of different issues in the local and national dailies, viii) two virtual press conferences on inclusions of NGO in COVID-19 response and opening of 4G in Rohingya camps for the time being, ix) distribution of PPE, Nebulizers and other protective materials in Charfession, Monpura and Kutibdia Health Complexes, x) support with PPE to the Graveyard Committee of Rajapalong Union, Ukhiya, xi) provided food to 350 vulnerable families in Shyamoli slum areas and xii) in each week there is a virtual staff conference through the moderation of ED for keeping the motivation of staff high during this crisis period.

The house appraised the response of the organization and they advised to continue these supports to the victims.

5. Money Laundering Compliances of MRA:

The Deputy Executive Director informed the meeting that COAST is following the Money Laundering Act-2015 (amendment) properly. The issue regarding money laundering, terrorist financing, smuggling and illegal drug issues have been discussion in each group meeting as well as staff meeting. These issues also mentioned in the passbooks so that the member participants can follow and be strict during spending their money taken from the organization. The member participants have invested their loan at right schemes. From July'2019 to March, 2020 total loan disbursement was BDT 344.63 crore, savings collection was BDT 69.38 crore , loan outstanding was BDT 264.22 crore and members savings balance was BDT 94.51 crore The Director also mentioned that there are no any illegal financing has been reported for money-laundering, terrorist financing, smuggling, illegal drug and any other illegal engagements or purpose. The savings fund of borrowers also been utilizing properly in MF program and also as FDR.

The Deputy Executive Director also stated that the donor projects are also maintained properly. From internal audit section and also from central finance section, the audit and financial monitoring have been doing as per plan. No any suspicious and irregular/abnormal transactions have been made within the organization.

6. AoB:

Having no other discussions, the Chairperson concluded the meeting with a vote of thanks and hopes to follow the health issues to protect the COVID-19 and wishes that all should stay safe in this crisis period.

Prepared by

Approved by

M Rezaul Karim Chowdhury
Member Secretary-EC&GC and
Executive Director, COAST Trust

26 April, 2020

Abbas U. Bhuiya, Ph.D
Chairperson-EC&GC
COAST Trust