

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)

RURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES NETWORK (RSPN)

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement

From: [January 1, 2020]

To: [December 31, 2021]

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

[The UN Global Compact]

[December 13, 2022]

To our stakeholders:

I am pleased to confirm that Rural Support Programmes Network reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles as suggested for an organisation like ours. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Sincerely yours,

*Shandana Khan
Chief Executive Officer*

Part II. Description of Actions

RSPN's vision represents the basic philosophy of Rural Support Programmes' (RSPs) social mobilisation approach to community-driven development. RSPN's work therefore aligns itself with RSPs work and centres on the belief that poor men and women have an innate potential to help themselves, that they can better manage their limited resources if they organise first. Peoples' own institutions serve as the primary partners in fulfilling the nation's development agenda by extending outreach to the household level across the country, for it is at the household level that poverty is experienced on a daily basis. Similarly, RSPN's mission is to further facilitate, enable and provide technical support to member RSPs to foster sustainable institutions of the people. RSPN's mandate focuses on:

1. Ensuring that all RSPs follow the core social mobilisation approach;
2. Improving coordination and communication between RSPs, and between the network and key development partners especially the government, donor organisations, and civil society;
3. Providing technical assistance to RSPs;
4. Piloting innovative concepts and projects for scale up by the RSPs;
5. Mobilising resources for RSPs and providing implementation support when required;

The following RSPN's strategic objectives are based on the vision, theory of change, mission, strengths, weaknesses, and the requirements of its key stakeholders:

1. Further promote and expand the Community Driven Development (CDD) approach;
 - a. Sub-objective 1: Increase collaboration for CDD;
 - b. Sub-objective 2: Raise awareness about the RSP approach towards CDD;
 - c. Sub-objective 3: Mobilise resources for RSPs;
2. Generate sound evidence and practical knowledge for improving development results;
3. Improve RSPN's performance in delivering better results;

RSPN's THEMATIC FOCUS

In terms of thematic priorities, RSPN's main focus remains on integrated rural development using the social mobilisation approach to CDD. The RSPs emphasise on a broad range of thematic areas covering several aspects of development. As the network organisation, RSPN is contributing towards all those thematic areas in which RSPs are actively involved. The following thematic areas accordingly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are identified to broadly cover the work of RSPN:

a) Pro-poor Economic Empowerment:

It includes projects/programmes related to poverty reduction, productive assets, women economic empowerment, access to finance, enterprise development at the household level and micro-enterprise, basic physical infrastructure, skills enhancement, low-cost housing, and support for income generation activities e.g. in agriculture, livestock and small enterprises.

b) Governance and Peace:

RSPN continue supporting RSPs in building stronger links between communities and the government. This include policy-level input at the federal and provincial levels, as well as support RSPs for similar input at the local level, as required. In addition, RSPN is working with donors and RSPs for creating awareness on voter education with objectives for increased women voter turnout in upcoming local bodies and general elections. RSPN is also working with RSPs and donors to use the community institutions fostered by RSPs for promotion of peace and reduction of violence and conflicts at the community level.

c) Social Development and Improved Access to Basic Services:

RSPN is working with national and international donors, development partners and RSPs to work on social sector issues and improved access to services for the poor. Key areas covered under these themes include education, SRH/FP, MNCH, Nutrition, Adolescent and Youth Development, WASH, Child Protection, Social Inclusion, social issues (equity, civic rights, dispute resolution, etc.) and support for minorities and marginalised groups.

d) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: RSPN has assisted RSPs in the past in revising their HR policies to make them more gender-sensitive, undertaking gender analyses, design and review of projects, staff training in gender concepts and the formulation of related manuals and guidelines. RSPN continue supporting the RSPs for gender integration at all levels in projects/programmes and provide support for organisational level gender policies and beneficiary safeguarding policies.

e) Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, and Humanitarian Response:

RSPN is working with donors, development partners and RSPs to work on alternative and renewable energy initiatives, climate change adaptation, community preparedness and adaptation to mitigate the risks associated with natural disasters, climate smart agriculture, and humanitarian response to natural and manmade disasters and medical emergencies.

f) Regional Cooperation:

RSPN has been advocating and providing technical support to regional countries to replicate the RSPs' approach for social mobilisation. RSPN will focus on further strengthening partnerships for Community Driven Development especially between Pakistan and regional countries, e.g. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, etc.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

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1. Generate sound evidence and practical knowledge for improving development results

Part of RSPN's core mandate is to provide technical assistance to RSPs through research, evaluation & knowledge management. The work in this area focuses on informing both policy as well as programming. Documentation of lessons learned through experience is a regular practice at RSPN. A knowledge management system has also been put in place which has produced significant results during the reporting period.

Knowledge Products: RSPN has produced high quality knowledge products including assessment and evaluation reports and reports produced by our knowledge management Communities of Practice or 'resource groups'. The knowledge products including publications and video documentaries produced during the reporting period were assessed by colleagues from all RSP Resource Group members. These assessments were carried out with an objective to get the feedback and improve RSPN's work in the light of feedback of partner RSPs.

Monitoring & Evaluation: at RSPN, M&E focuses on both learning and accountability. When RSPN is leading a project involving member RSPs or other organisations, both aspects are emphasised. In other instances, where RSPN is supporting its member RSPs, M&E focuses more on learning and improvement rather than accountability. RSPN's M&E policy manual and Management Information System (MIS) are being used for tracking the progress and project management.

Research: RSPN recognises the importance of collaborative research for development that goes beyond M&E and believes that the overall strategy be guided by research conducted in the areas - including but not limited to - livelihood, infrastructure, public services, gender, and access to capital. In this regard, RSPN is undertaking a comprehensive research experiment and a participatory action research in collaboration with University of Mannheim and Center for Evaluation & Development, Germany on community-driven development and household poverty dynamics under the EU-funded SUCCESS and BRACE programmes and will continue to pursue research efforts in association with reputable national and international institutions on issues that are of priority to the RSPs and rural communities in future.

Knowledge management: RSPN has taken the initial steps towards implementing global best practices in knowledge management. The foundations in this area have been successfully established through creating resource groups for social mobilisation, social sector, gender, M&E, finance, compliance, and communications. Future strategies include fostering a culture of information sharing, cross-project learning, post action reviews, and communities of practice, expert directories and knowledge repositories. Attention is being paid towards the creation of practical knowledge, proper documentation and effective dissemination within the network and outside.

2. Improve RSPN's performance in delivering better results

With over 20 years of extensive experience and several major achievements, RSPN now aspires to become even more effective in delivering its mission and objectives and associated sub-objectives. In order to be more effective, RSPN continue to enhance its technical capabilities, build a performance-oriented culture, improve coordination within the network, and ensure financial sustainability. Several assessments by donor agencies and external audits were positive and found that the proportion of costs covered through income from endowment has an insignificant and little decreasing trend, however this proportion will be enhanced through development and tracking of annual work plan of the subsequent reporting year. Moreover, assessment of RSPN's performance by RSPs exercises are being carried out in each RSPN's BoD meeting and received positive feedback.