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Secretary
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Public Service Innovation Branch
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government
Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat.

November 27, 2018

Subject: Recommending “registration process simplification service to form effective and sustainable cooperative societies” for United Nations Public Service Awards 2019

To whom it may concern,

Since its independence, Bangladesh has not only charted its own unique pathway to socioeconomic development but has also often pioneered many new development models. In doing so, Government of Bangladesh has achieved many MDG goals ahead of its time and is progressing towards achieving SDGs. The progress however is not possible without strengthening the capacity of all the ministries. Hence, a new culture of innovation has been promoted within and between the ministries of Bangladesh. As the representative of the Cabinet Division, who oversees all the ministries and their departments within the government, it is my pleasure to refer Department of Cooperatives under The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives for its outstanding contribution in innovation. Previously, the department made a significant stride towards forming 1,76,841 cooperative societies, benefitting over 1,06,84,749 citizens. Now, the department of cooperatives has implemented an innovative initiative “registration process simplification service to form effective and sustainable cooperative societies,” lessening citizens’ hassle. Considering the exemplary work of the department, it has the potential to bolster innovation culture in other public service institutions of Bangladesh.

Citizen are entitled to get basic services from the cooperative division of the country, like- the registration of their cooperative society within a short period of time. However, at field level, registration of a cooperative society had been considerably difficult a) due to the lack of registration records; and b) the tendency of brokers of taking advantage of a situation in the absence of citizens’ appropriate knowledge regarding the registration process. Many cooperative societies were thus being formed without proper records and the direct involvement of members of the cooperative societies; which in turn resulted in the formation of untenable cooperatives. The initiative “registration process simplification service to form effective and sustainable cooperative societies,” has emphasized on providing training to all the members of a cooperative before the actual registration date. Result of providing training to members of cooperative societies has been astounding. Now, the members are well informed about the registration process and have all the record documents (for free) that is required to register a cooperative.

Since members of cooperatives do not rely on brokers any more, it only takes one to five days to register their cooperative society. This is a significant reduction in time from before; which was 30-90 days in total. The elimination of brokers have also saved costs and visits for cooperative members. They now do not have to spend the extra speed money and frequently visit the brokers to prepare records for cooperative registration. The overall reduction in cost has been between BDT/-19,655.00 to 39,655.00; and the overall reduction in visit has been
between 14 to 19 times. Moreover, different professionals of cooperatives are benefiting from the elimination of brokers; as they are being able to form better linkage with the market and get fair price for their products. The simplification of cooperative registration process has made citizens to avail the benefits of cooperative societies in both short and long run.

Initially it was piloted in ten unions of Panchagarh District of Bangladesh. Formation of twelve cooperative societies and its significant contribution in uplifting socio-economic status of its members has made “The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives” to replicate the initiative “registration process simplification to form sustainable cooperative societies” in 28 sub-districts from seven divisions of Bangladesh.

Cabinet Division is thus confident about the initiative and believes that this initiative is worthy of receiving this prestigious award that is contributing significantly in institutionalizing innovation in a public sector institution of Bangladesh. For any further clarification, please contact with the division.

Yours Sincerely,

N M Zeaul Alam
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