

### Your urgent attention please!

This is for information of all concerned that the Office of the Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM) is located at the following address with effect from 28 July 2024:

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All mobile numbers remain unchanged. Please contact InM at the new address.

### Advisory Committee Meeting of 'Comprehensive Rural Finance' Study

The 4th meeting of the Advisory Committee of the "Comprehensive Rural Finance" study supported by the Bangladesh Bank was held on 23 May 2024 at QK Ahmad Foundation, House: 50 (1st Floor), Road: 8, Block: D, Niketon, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212. Dr. Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Chairman of the Advisory Committee chaired the meeting which was attended by Dr. Nazma Begum, former Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka; Dr. Mustafa K. Mujeri, Executive Director, Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM) and Dr. Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury Former Vice Chairperson BRAC. The meeting reviewed the progress of the study and the work plan for the next six months. During the discussion meeting, the main findings from three background reports, one policy brief, and one policy note that was produced from field survey were shared with the members. Based on the findings, advisory

committee members explored different options and suggested various actions to ensure quality and relevance of the report. The members also appreciated the efforts put forward by InM to achieve the overall objectives of the study.



# CRFS Consultation Meeting with Bangladesh Bank for Institutional Level Analysis

Under the Comprehensive Rural Finance Study (CRFS), Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM) organised a consultation meeting with selected department of Bangladesh Bank on 9 July 2024 at the Hamidullah Conference Room of Bangladesh Bank. Directors and representatives from 17 corresponding departments of Bangladesh Bank such as: Agriculture Credit Department, Banking Regulation and Policy Department, Chief Economist's Unit, Credit Guarantee Department, Credit Information Bureau, Department of Financial Institutions and Markets, Department of off-site Supervision, Equity and Entrepreneurship Fund Unit, Financial Inclusion Department, Financial Stability Department, Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Monetary Policy Department, NFIS Administrative Unit, Payment Systems Department, Research Department, SME & Special Programmes Department, Sustainable Finance Department were participated in the discussion meeting. As an important component of the study, institution level analysis has been included. The objective is to understand the characteristics of current financial products and services (savings, credit, insurance, mobile financial services, agent banking etc.), their limitations in reaching the target groups as seen by the providers, and their views on how to develop appropriate, user-friendly and sustainable financial services for the excluded and under-served rural population groups and enterprises. To identify policy, regulatory and other relevant issues related to designing and delivery channels of financial services for the excluded/underserved groups in



the rural areas, InM organised a series of consultation meetings during March 2024 with relevant financial institutions including IDRA, MRA, BTRC, banks/NBFIs, fintechs, PKSF, MFIs, insurance companies and associations, BPO, SME Foundation, trade bodies and associations, SDF, and other agencies. After getting their feedback, InM consolidate the findings and organised this consultation meeting with relevant departments of BB with the aim of sharing

the findings and identifying different options and policies for designing sustainable financial products to the rural people.

Dr. Md. Ezazul Islam, Executive Director (Research) was the Chief Guest of the meeting who presides the meeting. Dr. Farhana Nargis, Research Fellow, InM give an introductory speech while Professor Md. Nehal Ahmed, BIBM, and Core Researcher of the CRFS project uphold the summary of issues raised from the supply side.

## Regional Workshop with WCAD Programme Partners

Under the WCAD Scale-up programme, The Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM) conducted a series of regional workshops across different regions in Bangladesh by August 2024. These workshops were designed to enhance the skills and capacity of mid-level management staff including Area Managers, Regional Managers and Zonal Managers from all participating Microfinance Institutions (MFIs).

The main objective of these workshops was to empower the mid-level staff so that they can lead their teams effectively and implement the WCAD project objectives on the ground. InM had focused on building the capacity of field level staff throughout the project but these regional workshops were a critical step in building the leadership and management capacity of the mid-level staff. This will have a trickle-down effect where the

knowledge and skills acquired by the mid-level managers will be transferred to their sub-ordinate field staff and thus overall project implementation will be enhanced.

During these workshops, WCAD partners facilitated in-depth discussions on the challenges faced at the field level during the implementation of the WCAD project. Participants were asked to share their experiences and together they explored the opportunities and action points to overcome the challenges. The workshops also served as a platform to identify the best practices and innovative approaches that can be adopted in the next phase of the project for smoother and better implementation.



A key feature of these workshops was the use of “train-the-trainer” model. Master trainers who had received Training of Trainers (TOT) certification from InM were facilitating the workshops. These master trainers played a key role in motivating their peers and building their capacity so that the knowledge and skills imparted during the workshops can be cascaded down to the field staff. This approach maximises the impact of the training and accelerates the dissemination of key learning’s across the organisation and promotes a culture of continuous improvement and capacity building.

## Implementation of WaterCredit Adoption (WCAD) Programme (Phases III-V)

Following the successful completion of the first two phases of the WCAD programme, InM and Water.org signed an agreement on August 21, 2024, to implement the next three phases. This Agreement commences on September 1, 2024, and accomplishes on August 31, 2027. This new phase aims to expand access to small loans for impoverished households, providing affordable financing solutions to improve household water and sanitation facilities. Additionally, InM will offer climate resilience loans to those living in geographically vulnerable areas.

InM is partnering with eight microfinance institutions (MFIs) for this phase, including Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK), Shariatpur Development Society (SDS), Society Development Committee (SDC), Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra (PMUK), BASA Foundation, Shakti Foundation for Disadvantaged Women (SFDW), Development Initiative for Social Advancement (DISA) and Integrated Development Foundation (IDF).

This phase will be implemented over three years, during which approximately 125,000 water supply and sanitation (WSS) loans are expected to be disbursed. These efforts aim to benefit around 537,500 people, leading to improved water and sanitation facilities and increased capital mobilisation.



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