To May 24, 2022

Ms. Diana Bashur

Secretary, BIEN

286 Ivydale road London SE15 3DF

United Kingdom

Subject: Bangladesh Basic Income Network’s(BBIN) request to become affiliate

member of BIEN

Dear Ms, Diana Bashur,

Greetings from Bangladesh Basic Income Network (BBIN)! I still remember Dr. Sarath Davala’s (the then Vice Chair of BIEN) presentation on BIEN at “Tackling the drivers of child labour and children in modern day slavery” at Consortium Planning workshop held from November 19-23, 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand organized by IDS Sussex University UK. The issue of Universal Basic Income struck myself and my Colleague A.K.M Maksud from Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee’s mind and felt the urgency of BIEN’s involvements in Bangladesh. Dr. Sarath Davala and Dr. Neil Howard of University of Bath walked all of us in the workshop on UBI and BIEN activities and how it could change the lives of the citizens of any society or country where BIEN is active. Dr. Niel also shared a future plan which is to be researched and implemented in Dhaka, Bangladesh slums in the near future.

After returning back to Bangladesh, A.K.M Maksud and myself shared concept of BIEN and UBI among group of intellectuals, journalists, economists, development practitioners, sociologists, government bureaucrats, NGO workers, human rights activists, business professionals, political leaders, academics and many more. OHDIR Foundation which is a nonprofit research and program based organization was very much interested to start a dialogue with BIEN members whom they met earlier i.e, Dr Sarath Davala and more who, they can refer to. The first meeting with few directors of OHDIR Foundation and some development practitioners was held in mid-September 2020 in a zoom meeting facilitated by Imtiaj Rasul, Director -OHDIR Foundation, participated by A.K.M Maksud, ED- Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee, Tariq Ali, Management Consultant and former NBR official, Dr. Sohel Reza Chowdhury, Chair- OHDIR Foundation, Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuyian, Vice Chair- OHDIR Foundation, Kh. Reaz Hossain, Program Director- Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee. Dr. Sarath Davala, the then Vice Chair of BIEN actively participated in the introductory meeting on prospect of UBI and BIEN in Bangladesh. BIEN Vice president recommended to form a UBI network in Bangladesh. The participants of the meeting came to a consensus of establishing a network which to be known as Bangladesh Basic Income Network (BBIN).

OHDIR Foundation started to work as the programme Secretariat of BBIN after this productive meeting. OHDIR Foundation board of directors were highly motivated and took the initiative to search for like-minded personals to develop a concept note to discuss the possibilities of BIEN Bangladesh. BBINSG started to operate as a study group consisting of eight members in the group:

1. Mr. Imtiaj Rasul, Director -OHDIR Foundation
2. Mr. A.K.M Maksud, ED- Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee
3. Mr. Tariq Ali, Management Consultant and former NBR official
4. Dr. Sohel Reza Chowdhury, Chair- OHDIR Foundation
5. Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuyian, Vice Chair- OHDIR Foundation
6. Mr. Kh. Reaz Hossain, Program Director- Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee
7. Dr, Ishraat Saira Wahid, Assistant Professor, BBA & MBA program -University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh
8. Dr. Lailufar Yasmin, Professor-Department of International Relations-University of Dhaka

Under the mentorship of Dr. Sarath Davala, after several brainstorming sessions and internal strategic meetings a draft concept note was developed and was circulated among the BBIN members along with our mentor Dr. Davala. It is to be noted that during mid-2020 when Covid -19 was highly active in Bangladesh, government of Bangladesh took initiative and supported 5 million families with 5000 taka to each family with unconditional cash transfer nationwide. Bangladesh government’s planning commission has previously launched some social safety net or social protection programs where the issue of unconditional cash transfer had been indirectly addressed. Most recently Bangladesh also has declared universal old age pension scheme for sixty year older and above.

These are the indications which our BBIN members are confidently thinking that the time has arrived in Bangladesh to design and implement UBI in Bangladesh. We therefor humbly request you to give us opportunity to become BIEN affiliate member representing Bangladesh. Please note that BBIN will register as a separate legal entity under government of Bangladesh’s rules and regulations and will work to promote Basic income related activities and advocate UBI in Bangladesh. We will also educate and advocate for establishing Bangladesh Basic Income Chapter in Bangladesh.

Looking forward to hearing from you.



Imtiaj Rasul

Secretary

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