Presentation on SAARC Development Fund

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SDF’s Focus:

Regional Integration through Project Funding & Collaboration

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SAARC Development Fund (SDF)

Secretariat: Thimphu, Bhutan

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SDFCreation

- Inaugurated by Heads of SAARC Member States (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka) on April 28, 2010 during 16th SAARC Summit held at Thimphu, Bhutan

- SDF has been created under a Charter approved by the Member States (MS) and has Bye-Laws approved by its Governing Council
Mandate of SDF

- To promote the welfare of the people of SAARC Region
- To improve their quality of life
- To accelerate economic growth, social progress and poverty alleviation in the SAARC Region, and
- To strengthen regional integration and cooperation among the Member States through project collaboration

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SDF’s Corpus

- Authorized Capital currently of USD 1.5 billion
- Supported by 8 SAARC Member States by way of capital and voluntary contributions
- Mobilization and generation of funds both within and outside SAARC Region
- Permitted to obtain technical and/or financial support from UN agencies, multilateral/regional and other non-regional partners.

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SDF Role - Funding of Regional Projects

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SDF’s Funding Mode

- Grants
- Concessional loans
- Non-concessional loans
- Grants + loans
- Returnable grants
- Co-funding

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Role of SDF in Social Sector Development

- SDF has committed USD 70.27 million for 10 projects in the Social Sector Development in the areas of:
  - livelihood, women empowerment, maternal and child health, post harvest management of fruits and vegetables, zero energy cold storage, reaching the unreached (rural people) by ICT, combating violence against children and women, academic master course in Rehabilitation Science for SAARC students and water, sanitation & hygiene promotion.

- Out of the committed fund SDF released USD 37 million to the projects in SAARC Member States.

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Association with CSOs like SEWA

- SDF funded a project of USD 20+ million for women empowerment (livelihood) under the technical expertise of a prominent CSO named Self Employed Women Association (SEWA), Ahmedabad, India.
- The project is in 7 SAARC Member States (except India).
- Women home based workers in 7 SAARC countries have been organized under registered organizations named SAARC Business Association of Home based workers (SABAH).
- Women home based workers are the owner (shareholder) of the organization. Women home based workers get trainings on building skills in the areas of food processing, stitching, tailoring, embroidery, garmenting, marketing, management of business etc.
- They receive work order from national and international buyers, produce the product from their homes, do the quality control at the Trade Facilitation Center - TFC (which is funded from the project) and deliver the products to the buyers. Sales turnover by home based workers as of 31st December, 2015 was USD 1.5 million (approx). 10,000 (approx.) home-based workers got skill based trainings in-country and in India. 5,000 (approx.) home-based workers are getting regular work from the TFCs.

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Possible role in SDGs

Under the previous MDGs, SDF funded projects in SAARC Member States to achieve/ensure:

1. eradicating extreme poverty and hunger - by 2 projects in agriculture sector and 1 project in livelihood,
2. reduce infant mortality & (c) improve maternal health - by 2 projects in health and health education,
3. environmental sustainability - by 1 project - WASH,
4. promote gender equality and empower women - by 2 projects - SABAH and Tollfree Helpline.
5. Global partnership - SDF signed MoUs with WB, UNDP, JAICA etc.

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Possible role in SDGs

SDF has developed its Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 specially targeting cross-border Infrastructure, Economic Growth, Livelihood and Health Sector funding which are the major goals adopted in the SDGs. SDF’s funding through Infrastructure, Economic and Social window will target the following goals of SDGs in further funding of SAARC regional projects:

• Poverty
• Hunger and Food Security
• Health
• Water and Sanitation
• Gender equality and women empowerment
• Energy (Hydro & Renewable)
• Economic growth
• Infrastructure
• Partnership

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Major green field projects and scope for social audit

Under Economic and Infrastructure funding SDF is targeting green field projects in energy sector (Hydro Power plants and renewable energy).

SDF committed USD 70.27 million projects under Social Window funding. SDF is in the process to review the impact of SDF funded major projects which are in the stage of formal closure. SDF will conduct Social Audits by sector specialists to review the outcome and impact of the project to the ultimate beneficiaries. The result of Social Audit will be shared among SAARC Governments, Development Agencies, like-minded organizations and Partners of SDF.
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Thank You!