

BIGD, BRAC University Monthly Updates, April 2015

Stakeholder Consultation Workshop On e-Governance and PCM Courses held

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and Management Development Foundation (MDF), the Netherlands, arranged a Stakeholders Consultation on e-Governance Course and Project Cycle Management Course on 4 April 2015, at the BRAC Centre Inn Auditorium, Mohakhali, Dhaka.



Mr. Sanaul Haque, Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Dr. Rizwan Khair and Mr. Md. Mosta Gausul Hoque at the inauguration of the consultation meeting (left to right)

The consultation meeting was inaugurated by Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Head of Research, BIGD. Dr. Rizwan Khair, Director, BPATC also spoke at the inauguration ceremony.

Followed by the inauguration, two individual plenary sessions on Project Cycle Management and e-governance courses were moderated by Mr. Md. Mosta Gausul Hoque, PMP, Director (Planning and Development), Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat and Mr. Shah Mohammad Sanaul Hoque, Capacity Development Specialist, Access to Information (A2I) programme, Prime Minister's Office respectively, which included presentations on each courses by BIGD Researchers Mr. Sirajul Islam and Md. Harun-Or –Rashid; group discussions and final presentation by two individual group representatives with feedback. BIGD Honorary Fellow Dr. Tofail Ahmed delivered the concluding remarks.

The objective of the consultation was to further develop the course in order to enhance the capacity of the prospective course participants. E-Governance is a two weeks short course aiming to enable e-governance Managers of both the public and private sectors in Bangladesh to develop required competencies in ICT and e-Governance management. A curriculum development team both from the BPATC and the BIGD developed this course in competence based teaching and learning framework through a series of workshops held in The Netherlands and Bangladesh. And the Project Cycle Management (PCM) is a two weeks long short course aiming to enable project management officials to manage projects through effective and efficient use of resources.



Distinguished participants in two different plenary sessions

The workshop was attended by representatives and experts on the courses from different institutions such as Democracy Watch, University Grant Commission (UGC), BRTA, Ministry of Shipping, Planning Division, LGED, Public works department, Ministry of Planning, BCS Academy, USAID, TIB, Datasoft Systems of Bangladesh, North South University, Manusher Jonno Foundation, BREB, Ministry of Information, BWDB, NAEM, NGO Federation, A2i – PM Office, GIU, BIM, Plan International, ICTD etc.

The e-Governance and Project Cycle Management Course has been developed jointly by BIGD and BPATC, in partnership with the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam and the Centre for International Cooperation, VU University Amsterdam, under Capacity Building for Promoting Governance project funded by Dutch Government.

Workshop on Internal Women Migration held

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University organized a Workshop on 'Internal Women Migration in Bangladesh: Prospects and Challenges' on Wednesday, 29th April 2015 at the BRAC Centre Inn Conference Room, Mohakhali, Dhaka.



Guests and participants at the Workshop of Internal Women Migration

BIGD Researchers Syeda Salina Aziz and Md. Harun Or Rashid shared the key research findings of the research. The research looked at the contexts, process and challenges faced by women migrants in Bangladesh, funded by Gender, Justice and Diversity Department of BRAC. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD chaired the event.

The workshop started with an introductory speech given by Sheeba Hafiza, Director of Gender, Justice and Diversity Department of BRAC. Syeda Rozana Rashid, Associate Professor of the Department of International Relations, Dhaka University and Research Fellow of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), discussed on the research report as Panel Discussants.

Among others, the workshop was also attended by the representatives of UNDP, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA), Ain o Shalish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Mohila Parishad and BRAC.

BIGD's Head of Research co-presented a paper on the ISA Workshop on *Foreign Aid and Government Legitimacy*

Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, the Head of Research of BIGD, BRAC University along with Mr. Simone Dietrich, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Missouri, Columbia and Mr. Matthew Winters, Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Illinois, co-presented a paper titled "Evaluating the Effects of USAID Branding on Government Legitimacy: Survey Experimental Evidence from Bangladesh" at the International Studies Association (ISA) Workshop on ***Foreign Aid and Government Legitimacy*** held at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. on April 11, 2015.

Apart from presenting paper, Dr. Mahmud also played his role as discussant at the Concluding Remarks, Reception and Poster Session.

Prof. Irfan Nooruddin and James Vreeland acted as local hosts. The workshop brought together academics, applied researchers and policy-makers to discuss frontier issues in the study of foreign aid and governance in aid-receiving countries. It also aimed to identify future research directions, and to provide opportunities for exchange and collaboration among scholars and policymakers.

In addition to ISA, the event had two additional sponsors: AidData at the College of William & Mary and the Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance at Princeton University.

BIGD participated the conference titled *"Towards Sustained Eradication of Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh"*

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director along with Ms. Simeen Mahmud, Fellow & Coordinator, Gender Studies Cluster and Ms. Lopita Huq, Research Fellow of BIGD, BRAC University participated at the conference titled "Towards Sustained Eradication of Extreme Poverty in Bangladesh", co-organised by the General Economic Division (GED) of Planning Commission of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bank and Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), held at the NEC Conference Room, Planning Commission Campus in Dhaka on April 8-9, 2015.

The Honorable Planning Minister of Bangladesh Mr. AHM Mustafa Kamal (Lotus Kamal) inaugurated the conference whilst M.A. Mannan MP, State Minister, Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Planning and Ms. Pauline Tamesis, Country Director of UNDP in Bangladesh spoke on the occasion.



The Honorable Planning Minister of Bangladesh Mr. A H M Mustafa Kamal (Lotus Kamal) inaugurated the conference whilst State Minister for Finance and Planning and UNDP Country Director in Bangladesh spoke on the occasion. The event was adorned by renowned economist from all over the world.

The current economic growth, lack of reflection of success stories on poverty reduction, assurance of public service delivery to the poor and increased budget allocation for real social programmes to eliminate extreme poverty were the main issues of this conference.

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman chaired a session titled "Inequality and Financial Inclusion".

The economists attending the programme have suggested to focus on eradicating poverty in the upcoming 7th five-year development plan, enhancing public investment in the social safety-net programmes for vulnerable groups, and enhancing foreign direct investment.

They said the government will have to ensure that the social safety-net programmes reach to real vulnerable groups in the country by checking fraudulence in resources distribution.

They also opined that graduation to a middle-income country does not mean that the poverty is eradicated properly. Rather the extreme poor will have to get all the state facilities to boost their socio-economic condition.

Ms. Simeen Mahmud and Ms. Lopita Huq presented a paper on “Women in poverty: capability and wellbeing” at the Conference which implicates different experience of poverty of men and women within and beyond the households level and also emphasized to understand how ‘social norms’ impose constraints on women’s choice and agency regardless of poverty, which later on described in the paper.

The conference was organized by the General Economics Division of the Planning Commission in collaboration with Bangladesh Bank and Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) with support from DFID and EEP/Shiree.

BIGD Research Associate presented on Upcoming SoG

Sadiat Mannan, the Research Associate, BIGD BRAC University presented the concepts of the upcoming State of Governance, a flagship annual report of BIGD, describing its methods and chapters to the external reviewers on April 21, 2015 at the BIGD Conference Room.

Dr. Kazi Iqbal, Macro Economist, SSIP Project, Ministry of Planning; Dr. Niaz Ahmed Khan, Chairman, Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka, Dr. Rashed-uz-Zaman, Academic Coordinator of BIGD and Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD were present at the event.

BIGD Researcher attended a workshop

Shahida Khandoker, Research Associate of BIGD, BRAC University, attended a workshop on “**Soft launch of the online knowledge platform Share-Net Bangladesh**” on 18 April, organized by James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University.

The concept of the workshop was to provide a platform for sharing experiences and resources, and networking among practitioners in the field of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for greater policy and programmatic impacts. It was initiated through a unique partnership between the Center for Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (CGSRHR) at James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, and, RedOrange Media and Communications, a social communications agency.

BIGD Researcher participated in a short course

Sadia Mustafa, Research Assistant of BIGD, BRAC University, participated in a short course titled ‘Introduction to Systematic Reviews and Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Evidence’ on 18-19 April, 2015, organized by James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University.

The Aim of this 2 days course was to develop participants’ understanding of systematic reviews by doing evidence synthesis, so that they would be able to produce systematic reviews, including the processes of question formulation, searching, data extraction and data synthesis. The course also introduced the purpose and processes of systematic reviews of both quantitative and qualitative research evidence.

The Continuing Education Program (CEP) at the School with financial support from the USAID organized the short course for practitioners, lecturers, researchers and clinicians with an interest in evidence based practice and decision making. A number of 40 participants are selected for the short course.

**BIGD Researchers activities of
“Gender Norms, Labour Supply and poverty reduction in Comparative Context” Project**

BIGD researchers Bayazid Hasan, Senior Research Associate, Shahida khandoker, Saiful Islam and Kabita Chowdhury, Research Associate and Sadia Mustafa, Research Assistant, visited Satkhira on 21-27 April, 2015 for taking Qualitative interviews, 2nd round quantitative data collection and Quantitative analysis respectively of the **“Gender Norms, Labour Supply and poverty reduction in Comparative Context”** Project. The project focuses on women's well-being as related to their attitudes and their work. It has two branches and involves research in two geographic areas, rural Bangladesh and rural low-income parts of India. The first branch is to use secondary data to look at changing attitudes and women's labor-force involvement over two decades. This part of the work has highly qualified specialist researchers in four countries (UK, Germany, India, and Bangladesh) working together to apply the most recently discovered methods of statistical analysis to both secondary survey data and a new primary survey data set. The survey experts will advise on the administration of the primary survey with 600 households in India and 600 households in Bangladesh.

A new research on health sector policy processes

BIGD is embarking upon a new research on health sector policy processes in partnership with Manchester University, UK titled “Political Settlement and Health Sector Dynamics in Bangladesh”. The research will identify the key actors in the political settlement, and examine their roles and contributions in the processes through which policy decisions are reached, operationalized and implemented, and agendas are set. Given that financial and governance deficits will increasingly become a real constraint on health sector performance and quality of care, a major aim of the research is to understand whether the prevailing "elite consensus" will recognize and be responsive to these altered need. The proposed research is particularly relevant and important for this sector, given that Bangladesh is perhaps reaching the limits of success in health sector performance that such a weak governance structure will permit. The Transcription, literature review, in depth interviews, data collections of the research project are ongoing.

Academics

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman visits MAGD programme

The Executive Director of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, attended the MA in Governance and Development (MAGD) spring 2015 semester concluding ceremony at BRAC CDM Savar on 30 April 2015. Dr. Rahman was accompanied by Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, Academic Coordinator (Acting), BIGD. Dr. Rahman highlighted the importance of the MAGD programme at the ceremony. A short cultural function was organized to mark the occasion. It was followed by a dinner attended by Dr. Sultan Hafeez, MAGD students and BIGD officials.



*Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, BIGD
is delivering his speech to MAGD students*

Training on Supplier Appraisal and Short Listing

BRAC Procurement department with support of Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supplying (CIPS) of BIGD, BRAC University organized a day long training on “Supplier Appraisal and Short Listing” on 16th April 2015 at the BRAC Center Inn, Mohakhali, Dhaka. BIGD provided the support to BRAC Procurement through providing the guest faculties to facilitate the training. Mr. Golam Yazdani and Mr. Md. Mahboob Hassan, two guest faculties of Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supplying (CIPS) of BIGD, BRAC University have conducted this training. Prof. Rashed-uz-Zaman, Acting Academic Co-ordinator and Mridha Fuhad Ahmed, Training Manager of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University were also present at the event. Considering the importance of procurement and its involvement, a total number 23 Participants from different departments of BRAC, those who are involved with procurement attended the training.

MSPM Final Exam and Admission Test of Summer 2015

Final exam of Spring 2015 semester of Masters in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM) program was held from 16th- 18th April, 2015. Total 40 students of Batch 4, 5, 6 and 8 have sat on the exam.

Admission test for MPSM batch 9 was held on 24th April, 2015 at BRAC University. In total, 15 students are selected for Summer 2015 semester in this program.

Regular Class of Cohort# 5 of MCIPS Program

Regular classes of cohort# 5 of MCIPS program is going on at BIGD, BRAC University. 24 participants are attending this program. After completing Level-4 (Diploma in procurement and Supply), they are now attending the classes of level-5(Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply).

BIGD Executive Director's Activity

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director of BIGD, BRAC University, attended the three day retreat to help with the formulation of BRAC's next 5 year strategy, held in Amari Hotel in Gulshan from 31 March to 2 April. Dr Muhammad Musa, the Executive Director of BRAC and Mr. Gavin co-facilitated the sessions.

Dr. Rahman held several meetings in April 2015 with number of distinguished personalities such as Ministers, prominent academics and researchers regarding the research collaboration and other relevant issues of BIGD. Among others, Dr. Rahman had meetings with Mr. Zafar Ullah Khan, Retd. Health Secretary; Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Managing Editor, The Daily Star; Dr. Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, Vice Chairperson, BRAC; Mr. Shin Umeza, Senior Political Affairs Officer, Department of Political Affairs (DPA) NY; Ms. Nipa banerji , Ottawa University.

Op-Ed Published by BIGD Staffs:

1. [The Daily Star: RESERVED SEATS: An impediment to empowerment?](#) by Ms. Nazneen Ahmed, Programme Officer, Local Governance Programme- Sharique, BIGD, BRAC University on 27 April, 2015.
2. [The Daily Sun: "Paradigm of Decentralisation and Local Governance"](#) by Mr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar, Senior Programme Manger, BIGD, BRAC University. April 09