



PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WATCH

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THE STORY OF SCALE UP THE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT MODEL

— Mahan UI Hoque

Bangladesh makes substantial investment in the annual development program each year. It is estimated that the annual expenditure on public procurement amounts, amounting to over \$7 billion which is 70 percent of the annual development program (ADP) of the government. The overarching objective of the Citizen Engagement sub-component of Component-3 is to promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public spending by enabling multi-stakeholder engagement.

Only monitoring LGED's contracts by citizens couldn't reflect the overall purpose of this project. For getting experience, in the 1st year of Implementation, BIGD-BRAC CEP has been implementing citizen

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engagement model with only LGED's contracts like road construction, primary school, bridge, cyclone centre construction etc. However, to explore the different dimensions of the citizen engagement model in different types of contracts, BIGD has taken initiative to work with Education Engineering Department (EED), Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) and Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) in 2020. BIGD has also undertaken contracts in City Corporation and coastal areas for diversification of the citizen monitoring boundary. The process of inclusion of different implementing agencies was affected due to COVID-19 lockdown. From late March 2020 to August 2020, we were not able to take new contracts of any agencies under citizen monitoring. 90% running development works were stopped due to COVID. After the lockdown phase, we have started to resume the field implementation process with double

speed. We have taken 59 new contracts of LGED, DPHE and EED in August and September, 2020 under citizen monitoring process.

Due to different nature of the contracts of DPHE like the wash block of BWDB than traditional school and road construction, BIGD has assessed Citizen monitoring guideline by the relevant procurement entities and incorporated their recommendations in the guideline. If we want to explore a sustainable model of citizen engagement model, procurement entities need to engage with this citizen engagement process and they have to 'own' this initiative. Inclusion of different procurement agencies in this citizen engagement model has enhanced the citizen's opportunity to monitor different types of construction works with different procurement agency.

ANOTHER VICTORY FOR CITIZENS CITIZEN'S COMPLAINTS LED TO PROPER CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD IN KISHOREGANJ

The event took place in Bazitpur Upazila of Kishoreganj district, where road construction was going on from Jamtoli to Piriipur union. Local Citizen Monitoring group members were monitoring the work to ensure that it was being done properly.

On the 4th of July, group members raised a complaint to BIGD Field Officer. At the final stage of construction, the workers who were appointed by the contractor started rolling without removing the sand and dirt from the road. Group members took pictures of the incident and complained to BIGD Field Officer

and Assistant Upazila Engineer. Assistant Upazila Engineer personally checked the issue and verified the claim. He immediately ordered the contractor to remove the sand and dirt from the road and start rolling, otherwise the contractor would not be paid. The contractor then completed the rolling as instructed.

7 days later, another complaint came from another location on the same road. And on 11th July, some citizens complained with pictures that the road is breaking down due to light rain, just 1 week after the work was completed. Regarding this complaint, upazila engineer assured to take action right away.





INSTITUTIONALIZING BGTF MAKES A PROGRESS DESPITE PANDEMIC MEETINGS OF CONVENING COMMITTEE HELD

The Bangladesh Government-Tenderers’ Forum (BGTF), an apex body of GTFs at districts represented by Procuring Entities and Tenderers has been working for its institutionalization through holding meetings of the convening committee. Formation of BGTF is a part of the ongoing activities for institutionalizing Government-Tenderers’ Forums (GTFs) at district levels under the DIMAPPP.

During the quarter of July-September 2020, the 7th online and the 8th face-to-face meetings of the convening committee of the BGTF took place. In the 7th virtual meeting, Director General, CPTU, Mr. Mohammed Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury was present as the Chief Guest and Senior Communication Consultant Mr. Shafiu Alam joined the meeting as an observer.

Convener of the BGTF convening committee and Executive Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Abdus Sattar chaired the meeting and Senior Deputy Director, BCCP & Team Leader, BCC/DIMAPPP, Ms. Khadija Bilkis, facilitated the meeting. Convening committee members participated in the meeting, approved the draft MoA and rules and regulations which will be sent to CPTU for final approval. Maintaining the current health protocol, BGTF convener, co-convener and most of the members of the convening committee participated at the 8th BGTF meeting.

At the meeting, the representatives from both tenderers and procuring entities made recommendations to form a framework and give BGTF a structure with an institutional and legal basis. After thorough scrutinization by all members of the convening

committee, the Memorandum of Association (MoA) of BGTF has been prepared in Bangla and after CPTU’s approval and finalization it will be translated in English.

Bangladesh Center for Communication Programs (BCCP) has conceptualized and mobilized a unique platform of the Procuring Entities and Tenderers the first kind of in the country the “Government and Tenderers’ Forum” (GTF) where they can share and exchange ideas for resolving any confusion on public procurement and overcoming disputes for ensuring good practices in the system and enhance its performance for better utilization of public money. The convening committee is working for formation of a full-fledged committee after finalizing a Memorandum of Association (MoA), prepare a work-plan, confirm a legal structure for sustainability and help form a regular committee as well as formal launching.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN FIELD LEVEL

Tri-monthly update

Activity	Until September 2020
Group formation	125
Group Orientation	125
Site meeting	144
Citizen’s grievances	140
Complaints of Citizen monitoring group	134



Aware citizens monitoring if the construction of Pirijpur Highschool of Kotiyadi in Kishoreganj is being carried out properly



Orientation of Citizen Monitoring Group members taking place in Monohardi of Norshingdi



Sub-assistant engineer of Department of Education Engineering Md. Ariful Islam gave briefing on the quality of construction materials to all the present local citizens at the orientation at 3rd Chithulia Girl's Dakhil Madrasa in Dhunot upazila in Bogura.



Gathering of Citizen Monitoring group members for the construction in Sonyashir Chok Government Primary School of Kaliganj in Satkhira.



Orientation session took place while maintaining necessary health protocols at Satighota Government Primary School building construction project in Ramnagar union of Jashore sadar upazila.



Upazila engineer Md. Ismail Hossain briefing citizens in Bejora GPS site Meeting in Shahjahanpur upazila of Bogura.

