



PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WATCH

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14th Public Private Stakeholder Committee Meeting held at Ministry of Planning

The 14th Public-Private Stakeholders' Committee (PPSC) Meeting was held on 2nd October 2021 in the NEC Conference Room. Honorable Minister of Planning, the PPSC Chair, Mr. M. A. Mannan MP presided over the meeting. The meeting was organized by CPTU and facilitated by BIGD. The PPSC was formed with the representatives from the business community, think-tanks, media and civil society organizations along with government officials. The members came together at the 14th PPSC meeting to discuss on



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the progress of DIMAPPP so far, share the existing drawbacks, and decide on the future agenda needed to be addressed. Mr. Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty, Secretary, IMED, Ministry of Planning, delivered the opening speech by welcoming the PPSC members, briefly introducing the DIMAPP Project, and setting the objective of the 14th PPSC Meeting. Mr. Mohammed Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury, Director General, CPTU, then delivered his presentation on the public procurement reform journey of Bangladesh. After Dr. Mirza Hassan, Team Leader of Citizen Engagement sub-component, BIGD, presented on the ongoing efforts in citizen engagement, the floor

was opened for discussion. Mr. Md. Ishtiaque Zahir, Vice-President, Institute of Architects Bangladesh, suggested that the stakeholder consultation process should begin from the inception of the public procurement projects instead of only at the monitoring stage to ensure quality design and implementation, keeping in mind the sustainable procurement and adherence to heritage. In the end, Honourable Planning Minister said that it is vital to keep up the engagement with citizens, especially highlighting the improved ownership and interest among citizens in recent times towards public works projects.



Citizen Engagement Forum (CEF) Updates

Rangpur

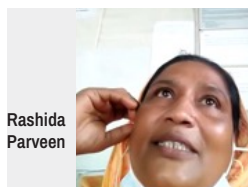
After a long break, on 3 October 2021, CEF Rangpur took place physically at Conference Room, Tourism Corporation, Rangpur. Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty, Secretary, IMED, Planning Ministry; A. W. M. Raihan Shah, Additional District Magistrate, Rangpur; Biplob Kumar Sarkar, SP, Rangpur; Abdul Wahab Bhuiyan, Divisional Commissioner, Rangpur; Md. Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury, Director General, CPTU a team of CPTU panelists and a team of researchers from BIGD alongside others attended the event. A. W. M. Raihan Shah recollected that there was a time when he used to see people think of reporting irregularity in government projects as negligible but now even in the most rural part of the country people regularly report grievances by dialing 106. Biplob Kumar Sarkar pointed out a real-life fact that before people

were completely dependent on media to work as a third eye, now due to the arrival of smartphones and social media everyone in a sense is carrying a third eye in their pockets. Abdul Wahab Bhuiyan recalled how serving as a UNO and solving the grievances of his people helped him to learn and gain experience for his career straight from the field. Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty praised the government for its readiness to introduce the Electronic Procurement Management Implement System (EPMIS) during this pandemic so that processes were not halted. The participants of the workshop promised to work on the learnings from this workshop.

Satkhira

CEF Satkhira was arranged virtually on 28 October 2021. The event was graced by Pradip Ranjan Chakraborty, Secretary, IMED, Ministry





Rashida
Parveen

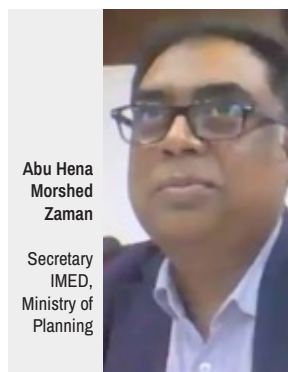
of Planning; Md. Humayun Kabir, District Commissioner, Satkhira; Md. Aziz Taher Khan, Director, IMED, CPTU, Ministry of Planning; Mirza Hassan, Team Leader, BIGD,

BRAC University, participants from CPTU, BIGD, citizen engagement groups, contractors etc. Mirza Hassan pointed out that during the corona pandemic, initially the project was halted but later on using technologies it was resolved. Sayeed Mehedi, Upazila Chairman, Kaliganj, Satkhira stated a few concerns that there had been a “Kaliganj Masterplan” and few other roads that had been planned to be constructed by ECNEC itself that hadn’t been seen through yet. Khaleda Ayub Doli, Upazila Woman Vice Chairman, Shyamnagar, Satkhira requested that local contractors be given the tenders as they can be held responsible easily rather than big contractors who later on sub-contract the tenders to other contractors who cannot be held responsible. Rashida Parveen, Citizen Engagement Group member stated that when they reported a grievance, the contractor had misbehaved with them and told them that they should not over step their boundaries which resulted in a strife that required third party intervention.

Barisal

On 18 November 2021, virtual arrangement was made for CEF Barishal. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, Secretary, IMED, Ministry of Planning; Md. Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury, Director General, CPTU Jashim Uddin Haider, District Commissioner and District Magistrate, Barishal; Mirza Hassan, Team Leader, BIGD, BRAC University; A.H.M. Tareq Iqbal, Additional Chief Engineer, Roads and Highway Division, Barishal; panelists from CPTU, researchers from BIGD, citizen engagement group members, public engineers etc. graced the event. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman stated that the experience from these workshops through the complaints, opinions and recommendations received, would be presented in the public-private stakeholders committee. Through this, all these information can be passed to the top policy makers of the government. Mirza Hassan expressed delight that among factors which came out positive in BIGDs endeavor, one is that women finally played participatory role in many

cases more than men. A. H. M. Tareq Iqbal stated that although the scope for inclusivity has broadened, however this has caused biasedness in the current process. It is difficult to create entrepreneurship and leadership among new local contractors who do not operate as bigger organizations that compete



Abu Hena
Morshed
Zaman

Secretary
IMED,
Ministry of
Planning

against them. The secretary took note of everyone’s statements and promised that he would see what can be done about them.

Jashore

On 25 November 2021, CEF Jashore was arranged at Conference Room, Jashore Circuit House, Jashore. The event was graced by Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, Secretary, IMED, Ministry of Planning; Md. Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury, Director General, CPTU, Md. Tamijul Islam Khan, District Commissioner and Magistrate, Jashore; Mirza Hassan, Team Leader, BIGD, BRAC University; alongside others. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman stated that inclusivity of people creates ownership among people in public projects. He personally suggested that as he himself was a former district commissioner, he realized that leadership in this initiative must be led in cooperation with everyone by the district commissioners. Md. Tamijul Islam Khan affirmed that when citizens are engaged in public procurement and implementation in a meaningful manner such as this initiative, the end result is always the best as they will be the consumers. The participants of the workshop looked forward to working together better in the future.



Patuakhali

CEF Patuakhali was arranged virtually on 9 December 2021. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, Secretary, IMED, Ministry of Planning; Md. Humayun Kabir, Additional District Commissioner (General), Patuakhali; Syeda Salina Aziz, Senior Programme Manager BIGD; participants from CPTU and BIGD; Citizen Engagement Groups, public engineers and contractors as well. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman reminded everyone that these workshops should not be a place where stakeholders play the blame game or hold each other accountable for punishment. He advised that these workshops be a place of constructive criticism for all the stakeholders. Md. Humayun Kabir suggested that a central complaint center can be set up where citizens can share their grievances by calling 333 or 999 to strengthen the monitoring process. Syeda Salina Aziz pointed out that BIGD has worked to design and monitor this program for the past 2-3 years. Sobahan Mridha, a Citizen Member stated that in the current scenario even now citizens in general



CPTU officials in discussion with Imrul Hossain Talukder

feel threatened to approach contractors who are politicized, or engineers to complain about such contractors. The panelists took note of the learnings from the workshop.

Sirajganj

CEF Sirajganj was arranged virtually on 30 December 2021. The event was attended by Abu Hena Morshed Zaman, Secretary, IMED, Ministry of Planning; Md. Shoheler Rahman Chowdhury, Director General, CPTU, IMED, Ministry of Planning; Dr. Farook Ahmed, District Commissioner and Magistrate, Sirajganj. Abu Hena Morshed Zaman stated that these workshops are important as the feedbacks collected here from all the participants

are presented to the Ministry of Planning so that it can be considered while preparing the annual budget as 80% of government project dictates public procurement. Dr. Farook Ahmed observed that the inclusion of women must be made a priority and not be limited to a certain quota. Dr. Mirza Hassan in his presentation stated that certain incentives can be given to the citizens, engineers or contractors based on their performances but this cannot be a long-term solution. Imrul Hossain Talukder, Upazila Chairman, Raiganj, Sirajganj suggested that the mix of the models can be in the manner that after a group is formed, other individuals who also want to participate can do so out of their own volition. The panelists looked forward to better their work in the future based on the learning made at the workshop.

Field Updates



Engineer of EED, Mr. Jamal Uddin Ahmed testing the strength of piling and casting before the base casting of Mohammad Elias Mia Chowdhury High School, Sadar, Cox's Bazar district. Some Citizen Monitoring Group members observed the process.



Citizens have been overseeing the bricklaying work of the wash block for Deul Mura Government Primary School, Raiganj, Sirajganj since its inception.

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