

# Citizen Engagement in Monitoring Public Procurement

Findings From an Impact Assessment Study

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# Introduction

Public procurement accounts for a significant portion of national budgets worldwide, about 40% in Bangladesh (Central Procurement Technical Unit [CPTU], 2023). As such, it is imperative that these processes be transparent, accountable, and reflective of the needs and aspirations of the citizens.

There is a growing recognition of the transformative potential of citizen engagement in shaping public service outcomes. According to the literature on effective governance, engaging citizens in decision-making not only enhances transparency and accountability but also fosters trust, promotes social inclusion, and ensures that public resources are allocated efficiently and effectively (Bhargava, 2015).

However, despite the promises, the practice of engaging citizens in public procurement remains underdeveloped, with numerous challenges and knowledge gaps (Waddington et al., 2019). One of the challenges is the limited evidence on the effectiveness of citizen engagement in public procurement. Of the few available studies, some even found a negative relationship between the two. For example, Olken (2007) found that top-down official monitoring in public construction was more effective than citizens' monitoring. We conducted an impact evaluation of an

initiative that engages citizens in monitoring the implementation of small-scale public work projects in selected areas of rural Bangladesh. The project started in July 2018, and field implementation began in March 2019.

The Digitizing Implementation Monitoring and Public Procurement Project (DIMAPPP) is a World Bank-funded initiative aimed at improving public procurement performance and enhancing capacity for monitoring public works in Bangladesh. A key component of DIMAPPP is citizen engagement, which seeks to promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public spending through multi-stakeholder engagement. This component focuses on raising awareness and building the capacity of various stakeholders, including the government, civil society, and the private sector, to engage in informed monitoring and collaborative dialogues on procurement performance.

To explore the benefits of citizen engagement in monitoring government programmes, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) partnered with the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) to implement a pilot project in 16 upazilas in 2019. Following the successful implementation of the pilot, the project was scaled up to 48 upazilas in 2020. The primary objective of the pilot project was to

monitor public works, such as the construction of roads, schools, and bridges, across the country.

This study was conducted to understand the underlying dynamics of collective action within the citizen monitoring groups and to evaluate the impact of citizen engagement. A randomized controlled trial (RCT) was designed to assess the effectiveness of the programme, which had to be modified to a quasi-experimental design due to challenges with adhering to the research design while implementing interventions.

The study highlights the potential of citizen engagement in improving public work outcomes. By increasing citizen participation and fostering multi-stakeholder engagement, the government can ensure the effective and efficient use of public resources and enhance the quality of public works. Overall, the findings of this study underscore the importance of citizen engagement in public procurement and suggest that targeted interventions and improved implementation strategies can enhance transparency, accountability, and quality in government programmes and projects.

## Programme Description

As mentioned earlier, the GoB is currently undertaking the implementation of the World Bank-funded DIMAPPP. The primary goal of this project is to enhance public procurement performance and strengthen the capacity for monitoring development programmes/projects. DIMAPPP consists of four components: (i) restructuring CPTU and institutionalizing e-GP, (ii) enhancing digitization of public procurement, (iii) professionalization of procurement and citizen engagement, and (iv) digitizing project implementation monitoring.

Within the third component, the citizen engagement sub-component aims to promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public spending by fostering multi-stakeholder engagement.

This sub-component focuses on raising awareness and building the capacity of various stakeholders, including government, civil society, and the private sector. Different streams within this sub-component work separately to build avenues for engaging citizens in the procurement process. These streams include sensitizing contractors and public officials about citizen engagement, creating applications for disseminating information and collecting feedback about the public procurement process, and developing a model

for engaging citizens in public procurement. Drawing on lessons learned from the earlier Public Procurement Reform Project (PPRP I) and PPRP II (extension phase) implemented between 2009 and 2017, DIMAPPP seeks to enhance and institutionalize citizen engagement throughout the country at various levels, both local and national. Special attention was given to gender sensitivity, mainstreaming public dialogue, and incorporating beneficiary feedback using both traditional and innovative information and communications technology (ICT) tools and techniques.

BIGD has been assigned the primary responsibility for implementing two core activities under the citizen engagement sub-component of DIMAPPP. These activities include (i) conducting dialogues through the Public Private Stakeholder Committee (PPSC) and (ii) facilitating Site-Specific Citizen Engagement (SSCE) at the local level. Some of the PPSC activities were conducted in Dhaka, while others were done regionally.

This impact evaluation was conducted for the latter—the intervention to implement citizen engagement in monitoring public work, which was also designed by BIGD throughout the two PPRP phases. Two different models of citizen engagement were proposed to be implemented

in the target upazilas: site-specific organized citizen engagement and site-specific general citizen engagement.

## Site-Specific Organized Citizen Engagement (SOCE)

In this model, a construction site-specific citizen's group was formed to monitor the implementation of a contract and report back to the procuring entity. The implementing non-governmental organization (NGO) was responsible for selecting group members for each project site, based on criteria set by BIGD. The criteria for forming a group were:

- Members had to join the group willingly and live close to the project sites.
- A group did not include any locally elected representatives or short-term residents.
- Each group comprised six to eight members and was gender-balanced.
- At least two members were women, and one was youth. The rest came from different occupational categories, including schoolteacher/headteacher, social worker, NGO representative, retired government official, or former contractor. In the selection process, retired employees were given preference as they were assumed to have more free time to spend on monitoring.
- This committee remained active only during the implementation period of individual projects.

## Site-Specific General Citizen Engagement (SGCE)

This model allowed citizens to engage in the monitoring process without forming a group. In other words, all citizens living close to the project site were responsible for overseeing

the implementation and reporting back to the procuring agency.

## Implementation

- In the majority of upazilas, there was a combination of organized citizen groups as well as general citizen engagement in the monitoring of public works projects.
- In a few selected upazilas, there were no groups. The monitoring was entirely done by citizens living near the project sites.
- In Year 1, BIGD implemented the SOCE-based approach in 12 upazilas and the SGCE-based approach in 4 upazilas. Based on the lessons learned from Year 1, the design for Year 2 and 3 was proposed.

## Site Selection

Intervention for citizen monitoring took place in all eight divisions to ensure national representation. The unit of intervention was the upazilas (sub-district level), which comprise several smaller localities called unions. Two districts were selected from each division. The target was to reach approximately 48 sub-districts, three from each district, by the end of DIMAPPP. While selecting the districts and sub-districts, the following factors were considered:

- Distance between two districts and sub-districts: Adjacent units were preferable for smooth implementation, ease of monitoring, and facilitating the evaluation study.
- Availability of three projects implemented by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) in some target districts and sub-districts (coastal districts): A few urban projects like roads, drainage systems, etc. were chosen in selected municipalities while intervention was made at the ward level.



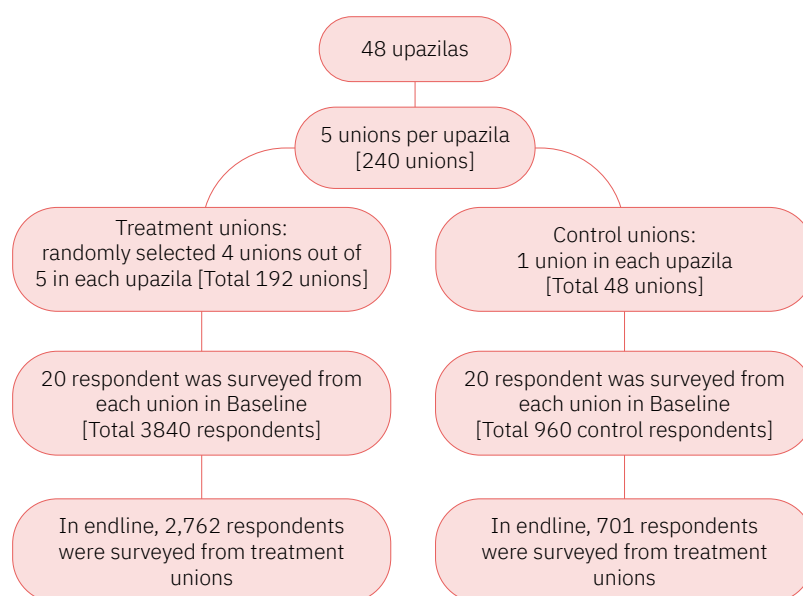
# Data and Methodology

## Sampling Design

Two separate surveys were conducted for this study: the citizen survey and the contractor survey. Following the project design, the first baseline survey was conducted in 16 upazilas in 2019 and the second baseline survey was conducted in the remaining 32 upazilas at the beginning of the second year. After the programme ended, an endline survey was conducted in all 48 upazilas simultaneously.

For each round of surveys within each upazila, five unions were chosen, out of which four unions were randomly assigned as treatment unions and one union as the control. In the citizen survey, 20 citizens were surveyed from each union, resulting in 100 citizens surveyed per upazila and a grand total of 4,800 respondents. In the endline survey, we were able to survey 3,463 out of the 4,800 respondents surveyed during the baseline.

Figure 1. Sampling Design



Due to low participation among treatment citizens and a high attrition rate, we surveyed an additional 257 programme participants for the study, in addition to the citizens surveyed in the baseline. These individuals are referred to as participants in the report. For the contractor survey, we initially created a list of contractors who worked in the programme-selected unions. From each union, two contractors were randomly selected from the list, resulting in a total of 960 contractors surveyed at the baseline. In the endline, we were able to reach 480 contractors.

## Citizen Characteristics

As stated earlier, we will be presenting the findings from three different citizen groups in this report: treatment (where the intervention took place), control (where the intervention did not take place), and the participant group (a sub-group among the treatment who participated in this intervention but was not part of the baseline survey).

The proportions of males in the treatment and comparison groups were similar, with 72% and 71% respectively. However, in the participant group, the proportion of male respondents is significantly lower (52%) compared to the comparison group, demonstrating gender considerations in targeting participants.

The age of the respondents was similar across all groups, with averages of 40.92, 40.69, and 43.22 years respectively in the comparison, treatment, and participants groups. Among the comparison and treatment groups, 57% of the surveyed respondents were household heads. In the participants group, this percentage was slightly lower (51%). Half of the respondents from both the treatment and comparison groups stated that they lived in *pacca*/semi-*pacca* households. However, the rate was significantly higher (66%) for the participants group. While the majority of respondents from all three groups mentioned electricity as their main source of light, the proportion was significantly higher for the participants group.

In terms of income-generating activities (IGAs), 56% of the participant group reported being involved in any kind of IGA; the rate is significantly lower than the rates (77%) for the comparison and treatment groups.

The average monthly income of respondents was significantly higher for both the participants and treatment groups, at BDT 17,433 and BDT 19,367 respectively, compared to the income for the comparison group.

**Table 1. Characteristics of the Citizens of Different Groups**

Characteristic	Comparison	Treatment	Participants	B–A [p-value]	C–A [p-value]
	A	B	C		
Respondent is male (%)	0.71	0.72	0.52	0.01 [0.52]	-0.19*** [0.00]
Age (years)	40.92	40.69	43.22	-0.23 [0.70]	2.30** [0.02]
Respondent is household head (%)	0.57	0.57	0.51	0.00 [.95]	-0.06 [0.10]
Pacca/semi-pacca household (%)	0.50	0.50	0.66	0.00 [0.97]	0.16*** [0.00]
Light source is electricity (%)	0.94	0.95	0.99	0.01 [0.29]	0.05*** [0.00]
Participation in IGA (1=Yes, 0=No)	0.77	0.77	0.56	0.00 [.82]	-0.21*** [0.00]
Monthly household income (BDT)	16,298.15	17,433.92	19,367.70	1,135.78** [.013]	3,069.56*** [0.00]

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

## Contractor Characteristics

As a contractor can work in different locations and as DIMAPPP was not contractor-specific, there were no assigned treatment or control contractors. Instead, we asked in the survey whether the contractor knew about the citizen’s engagement programme or not. In the survey, out of 480 contractors, 253 responded that they knew about citizen’s engagement programme, while the remaining 227 stated that they did not know about the programme.

For contractors, we have done our analysis disaggregated by the contractors who knew and did not know about the programme at the time of the endline survey.

As contracting is a male-dominated occupation, among the 480 contractors we surveyed in both baseline and endline, only one was female. The insufficiency of data did not allow us to draw any meaningful conclusions about any significant gender difference in the awareness of the programme.

On average, contractors who were unaware of the citizen’s engagement programme were older on average (44.79 years) than those who were aware (43.30 years). The difference between the two groups is -1.48, and although it did not reach statistical significance (p-value = 0.070), it suggests that younger contractors are more likely to be aware of the programme.

Among the contractors who were unaware of the citizen’s engagement programme, 85% were household heads of their respective houses, compared to 89% among those who were aware. The difference in proportions is 0.04, which is not a statistically significant difference (p-value = 0.256).

Both groups, those who were aware and unaware of the programme, had similar proportions of pacca/semi-pacca households, with 95% and 96% respectively. The difference in proportions is 0.01, which is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.482).

All contractors, regardless of awareness, reported electricity as the primary light source, resulting in identical proportions of 1.00.

Finally, we investigated any differences in monthly household income. The average monthly income for contractors included in this survey who were unaware of the programme

was BDT 37,896, while for those aware of the programme, it was slightly higher at BDT 39,604. The difference in income between the two groups is 1,708, which is statistically significant, suggesting that contractors with higher incomes were more likely to be aware of the citizen's engagement programme.

**Table 2. Characteristics of the Contractors**

Characteristic	Unaware of the citizen engagement programme	Aware of the citizen engagement programme	Difference [p-value]
Respondent is male (%)	1.00	1.00	0.00 [0.29]
Age (years)	44.79	43.30	1.48* [0.07]
Respondent is household head (%)	0.85	0.89	-0.04 [0.26]
<i>Pacca</i> /semi- <i>pacca</i> household (%)	0.95	0.96	-0.01 [0.48]
Light source is electricity (%)	1.00	1.00	0.00
Monthly household income (BDT)	37,896	39,604	-1,708 [0.04]**

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

# Findings

## Findings From the Citizen Survey

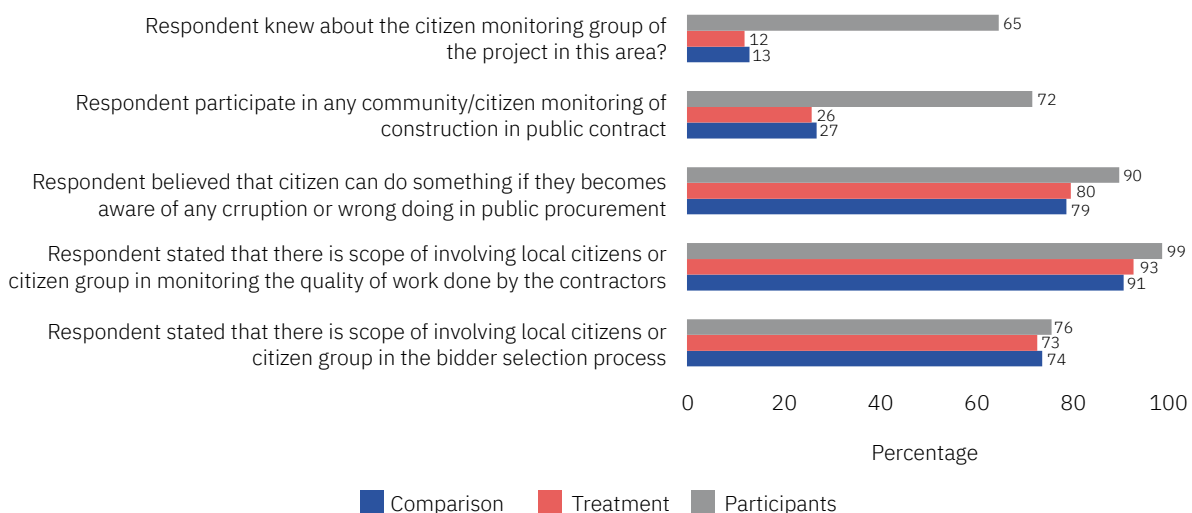
To assess the impact of the citizen engagement programme on citizens, we asked citizens a set of questions about how much knowledge they had about the ongoing or recently completed projects in their local area. Among the participant group, approximately 65% were aware of the citizen monitoring group, while it was only 13% in the comparison group and 12% in the treatment group. The majority (72%) of participant group respondents who were aware of the citizen monitoring programme also reported participating in monitoring public contracts themselves. In contrast, the participation rates were significantly lower in the treatment group (26%) and the comparison group (27%).

The belief that citizens can take action against corruption or wrongdoing in public procurement was highest among the participant group (80%), followed by the treatment and comparison groups (90% and 79% respectively).

The majority of participant group respondents (approximately 99%) believed in involving local citizens or citizen groups in monitoring the quality of work done by contractors. This belief was also high in the treatment and comparison groups (93% and 91% respectively).

Regarding the participation of local citizens or citizen groups in the bidder selection process, 76% of participants expressed that there is scope for involvement. The percentage was similar in the treatment and comparison groups (73% and 74% respectively).

Figure 2. Citizens' Views on Monitoring Government Projects



In both the treatment and control groups, 16% of citizens stated that they have heard about the citizen observers. However, this percentage is significantly higher among the participant group.

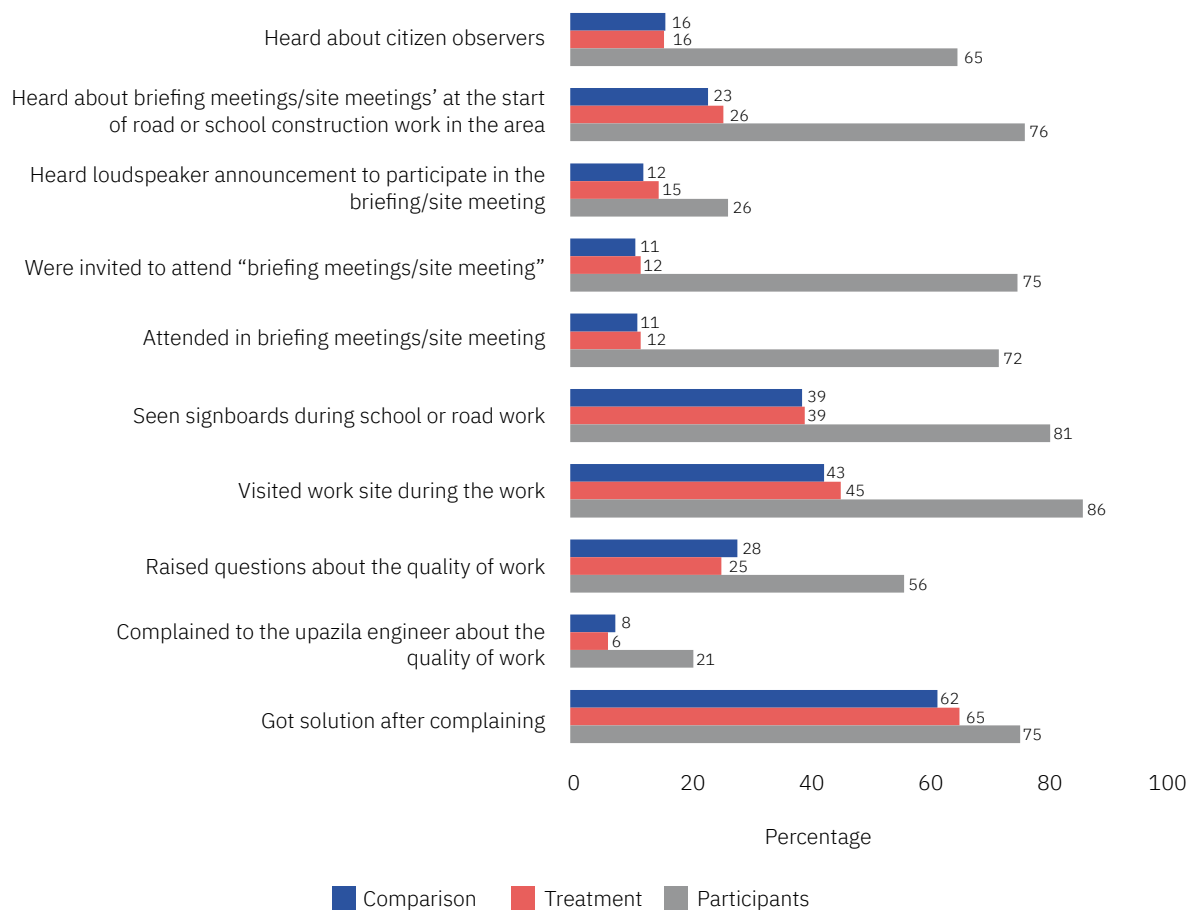
In the participant group, 76% stated that they had heard about briefing meetings/site meetings at the start of road or school construction work in their areas. In comparison, only 26% of the treatment group and 23% of the comparison group were aware of these meetings.

In the treatment group 15% mentioned hearing loudspeaker announcements to participate in the meetings in comparison 12% of the comparison group heard announcement. Regarding attendance at briefing meetings/site meetings, only 11% of citizens from

the comparison group and 12% from the treatment group reported being invited. 75% of the participant group stated they were invited. Overall, 72% of the participant group respondents attended the meetings, while the rates were 12% for the treatment group and 11% for the comparison group.

Significantly more participant group respondents (81%) reported seeing signboards during construction, compared to 39% in both the treatment and comparison groups. Furthermore, 86% of the participant group respondents visited the work site, and 56% reported raising questions about the quality of work. In the treatment group, 45% visited the work site and 25% raised questions, while in the comparison group, 43% visited the work site and 28% raised questions.

Figure 3. Citizens' Participation in Monitoring Projects



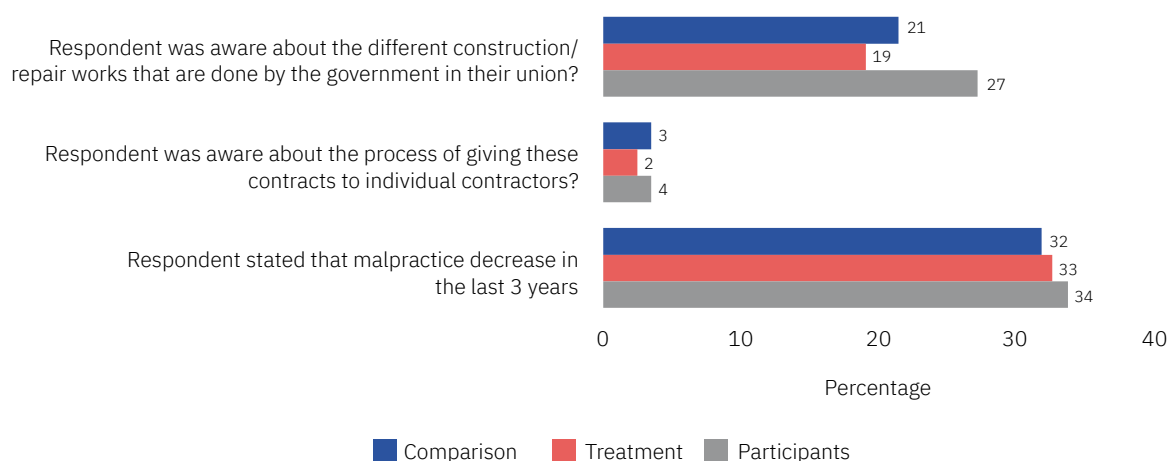
Complaints to the upazila engineer about the quality of work were made by 8% of the control group and 6% of the treatment group citizens. Among those who complained, 62% in the control group and 65% in the treatment group reported getting a solution. In contrast, 21% of the participant group citizens made complaints, and among them, 75% stated that they received a solution.

Approximately 19% of the treatment respondents stated that they were aware of the various construction projects carried out by the government in their union. In the comparison group, the rate was higher (21%). However,

the proportion of respondents who were aware of these projects is significantly higher in the participant group (27%).

Less than 5% of citizens in all groups stated that they were aware of the process of awarding contracts to individual contractors. Conversely, approximately 33% of citizens in all groups mentioned that malpractices in the contract awarding process have decreased in the last three years. The impact of treatment and participants can be observed through the regression estimates, which are presented in Tables A1–A5 in the annex.

**Figure 4. Citizens’ Knowledge About Local Projects**



We compiled a list of constructions implemented in all the study unions by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED). In the control group unions, 222 projects were implemented, while the numbers were 955 and 185 in the treatment and participant groups, respectively. There is some overlap in the projects between the different group types, resulting in a total of 1,225 projects that were implemented in the study unions.<sup>1</sup>

Among the citizens of the participant group, approximately 33% were aware of the contracts implemented in their respective unions. However, awareness is significantly lower among the treatment and control groups—20% and 21% of the respondents, respectively.

The citizens were asked about their perceptions regarding the awarding process of the contracts in their areas. Fifty-two per cent of the contracts were believed by the participant group respondents to be awarded to the best bidder. In comparison, this proportion was 37% for the treatment group and 39% for the control group.

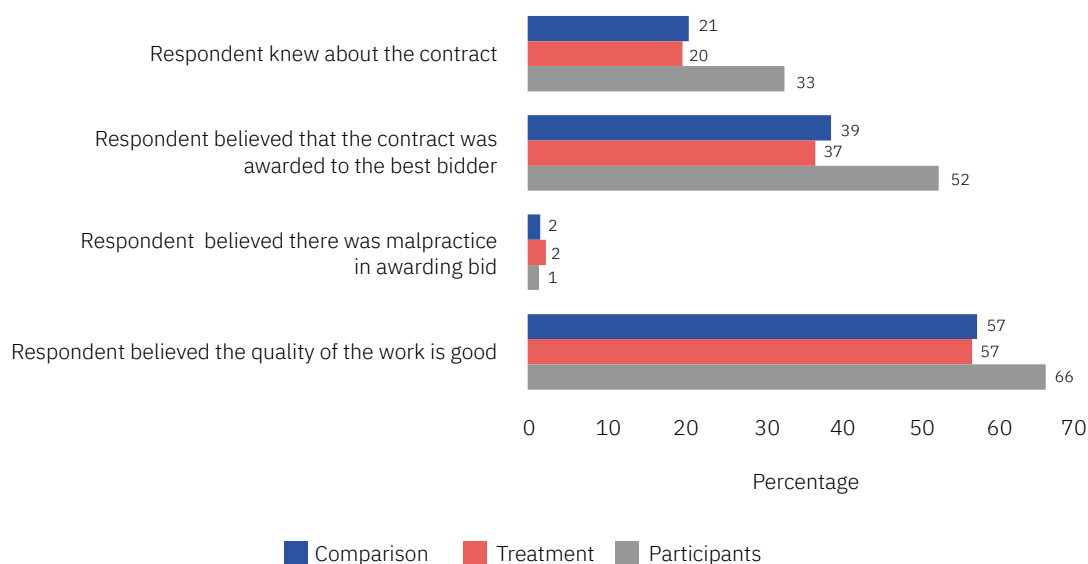
<sup>1</sup> There were some government projects that covered both treatment and control areas.

It is possible that because more participant group respondents had knowledge about the bidding process due to their participation, they were more likely to perceive that the best bidder was awarded. It is worth noting that for less than 3% of the projects, citizens from all groups believed that there was malpractice in the bidding process.

Regarding the quality of the work, approximately 66% of the projects

implemented in the participant’s union were considered as good quality work by the citizens engaged in citizen monitoring. This percentage was around 57% for the projects in both the treatment and control unions. The impact of the programme on the knowledge and perception of the treatment group and participant group regarding local government projects is demonstrated in Table A6 in the annexe.

Figure 5. Citizens’ Knowledge About Local Government Contracts



## Findings From the Contractor Survey

Contractors who were aware of the citizen engagement programme were 11 percentage points more likely to believe that involving citizens in monitoring is beneficial for the quality of the project compared to contractors who are unaware of the programme.

Additionally, there is an 11 percentage point difference between contractors who were aware of the programme and those who were not in terms of believing that citizens can take action against corruption or wrongdoing in public procurement.

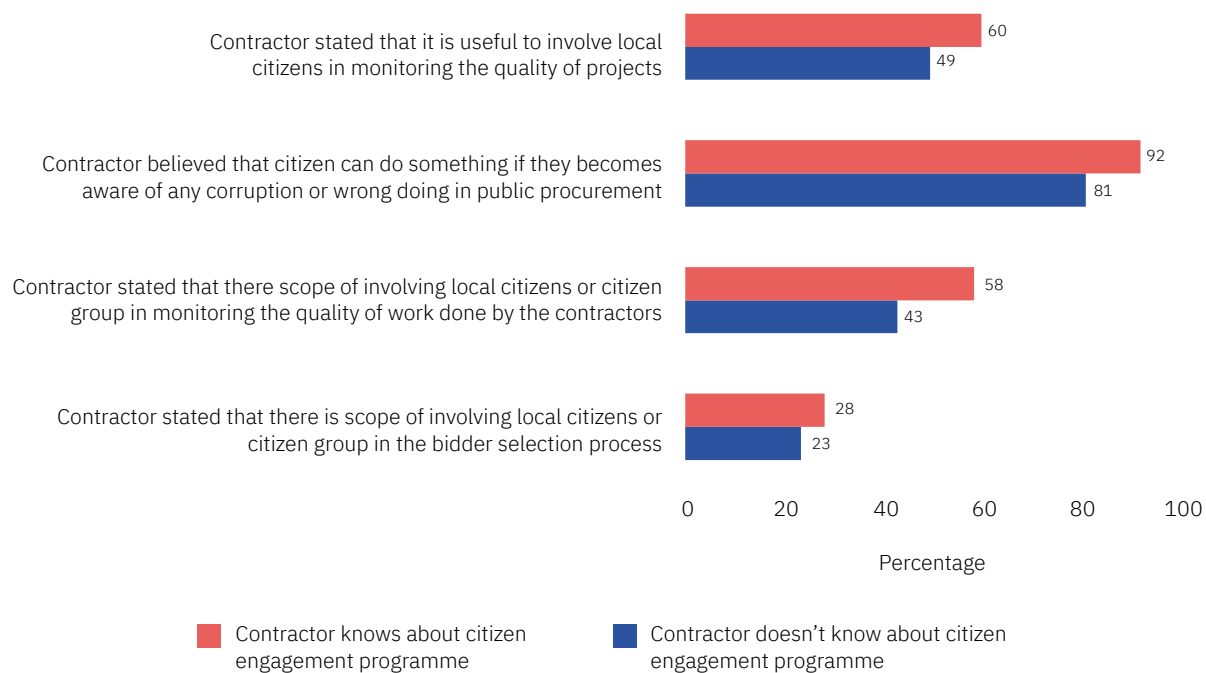
Furthermore, compared to contractors who were unaware of the programme, 15 percentage points higher share of those who were aware state that there is scope for including local citizens in monitoring the contract. Moreover, 28% of the aware contractors also believe that there is scope to involve citizens in the bidder selection process, while among the contractors who were unaware of the programme, this percentage is 23%. However, while the majority of the contractors were not convinced about citizen engagement



in bidder selection, most see possible scopes for involving citizens in monitoring the quality of projects. This is in line with the design of citizen

engagement that intends to engage citizens as allies of the government agency in ensuring quality.

Figure 6. Contractors' Perception About Citizen's Monitoring of Government Work



## Conclusion

When the results for the treatment and participant groups are considered together, the results indicate that citizen engagement through the programme has a positive influence on a few aspects of public procurement. We can see that programme participants had higher levels of awareness about ongoing projects in their local areas, as well as greater participation in public contracts. They also exhibited a stronger belief in the ability of citizens to take actions against corruption and expressed support for involving local citizens or citizen groups in monitoring the quality of work done by contractors. Additionally, the programme increased the likelihood of citizens

attending briefing meetings and site visits, raising questions about the quality of work, and filing complaints with relevant authorities. These findings highlight the potential of citizen engagement to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public spending.

However, during implementation, we found that people only participated in site meetings if the location was nearby, challenging our assumption that people would participate in site meetings organized in their respective unions. They also tend to monitor less given the distance. Thus, most of the respondents

assigned to the treatment group did not receive programme intervention. This limited their ability to actively participate in the programme and potentially diluted the overall impact. Future programmes should consider selecting respondents who live nearby project sites to ensure their active involvement and maximize programme effectiveness.

Furthermore, in terms of evaluating the impact on contractors, the study faced challenges in directly identifying contractors who worked on the projects included in the programme. Instead, contractor awareness of the citizen engagement programme was used as a proxy. A more targeted approach, isolating the contractors directly involved in the programme's implementation, could provide more meaningful insights into the impact on contractors and their attitudes towards citizen engagement.

In future evaluations, selecting respondents on a rolling basis for the treatment and control

groups, based on proximity to project locations, would enable a more accurate assessment of the programme's impact. This approach would ensure that the treatment group comprises individuals who can actively participate and benefit from the programme interventions, leading to more robust and reliable findings.

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize the importance of citizen engagement in improving the transparency, accountability, and efficiency of public procurement systems. By empowering citizens and involving them in monitoring processes, governments can harness the collective power of the public to enhance the quality of public works and ensure the effective utilization of public resources. The lessons learned from this study can inform the design and implementation of future citizen engagement programmes, contributing to the broader goal of improving public procurement systems and governance practices.

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# Annexe

The regression model employed in this study is as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta * \text{Treatment} + \gamma * X$$

Here, Y represents the outcome variable.

Treatment is a binary variable, taking the value 1 for households receiving the treatment and 0 otherwise. Participant is also a binary variable, equal to 1 for individuals who participated in the programme and 0 otherwise. X represents an array of additional variables, including gender, age, household head status, pacca housing status, employment status, monthly income, whether the respondent's friends or family members work in the Union Parishad, whether the respondent's family or friends have close

acquaintances working in the Union Parishad, knowledge about Union Parishad meetings, participation in any Union Parishad meetings, and awareness of the Project Implementation Committee (PIC).

These variables were included in the regression model to examine their relationship with the outcome variable. The estimates obtained from the regression analysis are provided below. Only the coefficients of the treatment and participant variables are shown to focus on the impact of the programme. For the regression, errors were clustered in upazila level.

**Table A1. Impact on Citizens**

Variables	Aware about government construction works <sup>2</sup>	Aware about contract giving process <sup>3</sup>	Change in corruption level <sup>4</sup>	Scope of involving local citizens in bidder selection <sup>5</sup>	Involving local citizen group to monitor quality of work <sup>6</sup>
Treatment	0.00642 (0.0161)	0.00177 (0.00741)	-0.0623*** (0.0197)	0.00210 (0.0185)	0.0124 (0.0114)
Participants	0.00383 (0.0289)	-0.0134 (0.0133)	-0.0376 (0.0353)	0.00966 (0.0331)	0.0757*** (0.0205)
Constant	-0.0532 (0.0381)	-0.0232 (0.0175)	0.392*** (0.0465)	0.788*** (0.0436)	0.932*** (0.0270)
Observations	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718
R-squared	0.144	0.040	0.015	0.011	0.015

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

<sup>2</sup> How aware do you think you are about the different construction/repair works that are done by the government in your union?

<sup>3</sup> How aware are you of the process of giving these contracts to individual contractors?

<sup>4</sup> How has this corruption level changed in the last three years?

<sup>5</sup> Is there any scope for involving local citizens or citizen group in the bidder selection process?

<sup>6</sup> Is there any scope for involving local citizens or citizen group in monitoring the quality of work done by the contractors?

**Table A2. Impact on Citizens**

Variables	Citizens can do something about local procurement corruption <sup>7</sup>	Local community/citizen monitoring of construction work in public procurement <sup>8</sup>	Participated in community/citizen monitoring of a contract <sup>9</sup>	Knows about citizen monitoring group <sup>10</sup>	Involving local citizens in bidder selection process is useful <sup>11</sup>
Treatment	-0.0240 (0.0165)	0.00619 (0.0188)	-0.00752 (0.0178)	0.0154 (0.0137)	-0.0155 (0.0204)
Participants	0.0655** (0.0296)	0.349*** (0.0337)	0.391*** (0.0319)	0.437*** (0.0246)	0.0242 (0.0366)
Constant	0.867*** (0.0390)	0.156*** (0.0444)	0.0387 (0.0420)	0.0480 (0.0324)	0.284*** (0.0481)
Observations	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718
R-squared	0.046	0.102	0.160	0.246	0.013

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

**Table A3. Impact on Citizens**

Variables	Involving local citizens in monitoring construction work is useful <sup>12</sup>	Corruption hampering work <sup>13</sup>	Known constructions <sup>14</sup>
Treatment	0.00660 (0.0209)	0.0255 (0.0194)	0.0636 (0.0521)
Participants	0.0382 (0.0375)	-0.0517 (0.0348)	0.405*** (0.0934)
Constant	0.568*** (0.0494)	0.226*** (0.0459)	1.136*** (0.123)
Observations	3,718	3,718	3,718
R-squared	0.023	0.022	0.069

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

<sup>7</sup> If a citizen becomes aware of any corruption or wrongdoings in public procurement in his/her locality, is there anything he/she can do?

<sup>8</sup> To the best of your knowledge, has there been any community/citizen monitoring of construction work in public procurement in your locality in the last three years?

<sup>9</sup> Have you participated in any community/citizen monitoring of construction in public contract?

<sup>10</sup> Do you know about the citizen monitoring group of the project in this area?

<sup>11</sup> How useful is it to involve local citizens in the bidder selection process along with the engineers/ administrators?

<sup>12</sup> How useful is it to involve local citizens in monitoring the quality of construction work?

<sup>13</sup> How commonly do corrupt practices take place that hamper the quality of the work? (1 = frequently/all the time & 0 otherwise)

<sup>14</sup> Number of construction (in last three years) respondents know about.

**Table A4. Impact on Citizens**

Variables	Heard of citizen observers <sup>15</sup>	Heard of briefing meetings/site meetings <sup>16</sup>	Invited to attend briefing /site meeting <sup>17</sup>	Attended meetings <sup>18</sup>	Heard miking/ announcement <sup>19</sup>
Treatment	0.0371** (0.0152)	0.0349** (0.0172)	0.00715 (0.0131)	-0.00216 (0.0133)	0.0134 (0.0144)
Participants	0.442*** (0.0272)	0.457*** (0.0309)	0.585*** (0.0236)	0.550*** (0.0238)	0.110*** (0.0259)
Constant	0.0209 (0.0359)	0.122*** (0.0407)	-0.0198 (0.0310)	0.0122 (0.0313)	0.0945*** (0.0341)
Observations	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718
R-squared	0.179	0.172	0.271	0.260	0.027

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

**Table A5. Impact on Citizens**

Variables	Seen signboards during construction <sup>20</sup>	Visited the work site during the work	Raised questions about quality of work <sup>21</sup>	Complained about quality of work <sup>22</sup>	Got solution after complaining <sup>23</sup>
Treatment	-0.0183 (0.0199)	-0.00553 (0.0197)	-0.00608 (0.0182)	-0.0179 (0.0113)	0.0395 (0.0717)
Participants	0.370*** (0.0357)	0.395*** (0.0354)	0.255*** (0.0327)	0.102*** (0.0202)	0.112 (0.0955)
Constant	0.135*** (0.0470)	0.243*** (0.0466)	0.0798* (0.0431)	-0.0280 (0.0266)	0.586*** (0.220)
Observations	3,718	3,718	3,718	3,718	305
R-squared	0.100	0.130	0.113	0.066	0.074

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively .

<sup>15</sup> Have you heard of citizen observers who have been involved in monitoring/observing local construction work in the last two to three years?

<sup>16</sup> Have you heard of any “briefing meetings/site meetings” at the start of road or school construction work in the area?

<sup>17</sup> Have you ever been invited to attend briefing meetings/site meetings?

<sup>18</sup> Have you attended any such meetings?

<sup>19</sup> Have you heard miking/announcement to participate in the briefing/site meeting?

<sup>20</sup> Have you seen any signboards during school or road work with all the information related to the building or road under construction?

<sup>21</sup> Did you raise any questions about the quality of work? (Did you talk to other people?)

<sup>22</sup> Did you complain to the upazila engineer about the quality of work?

<sup>23</sup> Did you get any solution if you complained?

As observed in the descriptive statistics presented in the report, the results indicate that, in most cases, there is no significant impact on the treatment group compared to the comparison group. However, as explained in the report, it is important to note that the lack of significant impact might be attributed to the geographic proximity of the surveyed citizens to the project locations. It is possible that if the surveyed citizens lived closer to the project sites, we might have observed a significant impact on the treatment group. Conversely, for the participant group, the findings reveal a significant impact on citizens' knowledge and perception regarding citizen participation in monitoring government projects.

We have observed a noteworthy difference between citizens in the participant group

and the comparison group in terms of their knowledge of locally implemented government contracts. Participant group citizens demonstrate a significantly higher level of awareness regarding government contracts compared to the comparison group. Specifically, participants strongly believe that a greater number of contracts are being awarded to the best bidder. Moreover, participants hold the perception that there is a significantly higher number of contracts associated with good quality of work. Conversely, no significant impact on the treatment citizens' views regarding government contracts has been detected. These findings highlight the influence of participation in shaping citizens' perceptions and understanding of the government's contracting processes.

**Table A6. Impact on Citizens' Knowledge and Perception About Local Contracts**

Variables	Knows about contract <sup>24</sup>	Contract awarded to best bidder <sup>25</sup>	Malpractice in awarding bid <sup>26</sup>	Quality of work <sup>27</sup>
Treatment	-0.00414 (0.0143)	-0.0188 (0.0171)	0.00664 (0.00515)	-0.00314 (0.0174)
Participants	0.103*** (0.0233)	0.0972*** (0.0277)	-0.00243 (0.00836)	0.0596** (0.0283)
Constant	0.0874*** (0.0330)	0.242*** (0.0393)	-0.00382 (0.0118)	0.406*** (0.0401)
Observations	5,504	5,504	5,504	5,504
R-squared	0.029	0.032	0.008	0.024

Notes: \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate significance at <10%, <5%, and <1% levels, respectively

<sup>24</sup> Do you know about this contract?

<sup>25</sup> Do you think this contract was awarded to the best bidder?

<sup>26</sup> Do you think there was any malpractice in awarding the bid?

<sup>27</sup> How was the quality of this work?

