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Seminar

SHARIQUE National Seminar on Social Accountability Mechanisms in the Union Parishad



Distinguished Guests at the National Seminar on Social Accountability Mechanisms

Provision of Ward Shobha, twice in a year, promulgated in the Local Governance Act (UP) 2009, to ensure social accountability of Union Parishad through participation of men-women and poor in its activities and improving the quality of its service, the programme couldn't be successful all across the country, experts said in a National Seminar titled Social Accountability Mechanisms in the Union Parishads on May 30th, 2015, jointly organised by BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Bangladesh.

Presided over by Barrister Manzoor Hasan, Executive Director, South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies (SAILS) and Institutional Advisor, BIGD Mr. Ashok Madhab Roy, Additional Secretary, Local Government Division, attended the event as the Chief Guest. Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Visiting Fellow, BIGD presented the keynote speech based on a study.

Mr. Nazrul Islam of UNDP and Mr. Arif H. Khan of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) have also made two separate presentations on Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP) and CARTA respectively.

Dr. Salauddin M. Aminuzzaman, Professor, University of Dhaka and Dr. Mirza M. Hassan, Adjunct Fellow, BIGD discussed on the presentations.

In his keynote presentation, Dr. Tofail Ahmed, the reputed Local Government Expert highlighted the research findings which shows, currently the Ward Shobhas lack of agendas, proceedings of meetings and proper conforming of the regulations; reflection of demands of members in the Shobhas and serious violations of rules in some places i.e inactivity of the Standing Committees, poor tax assessment, updated RTI etc. He also added, no open budgets are being made following the instructions and the budget lacks proper planning. Among others, the findings include scarcity of skilled workforces of the UPs, inadequate

allowances considering many informal public interactions of UP representatives and daily dispute reconciliations alongside all the responsibilities.



Speakers and guests at the National Seminar on Social Accountability Mechanisms

Earlier, Lilia Tverdun, Director, Local Governance Programme Sharique made the introductory remarks and welcomed the distinguished guests and participants which includes, Experts, Academics, Activists, UP representatives from Pabna, Sunamganj, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Khulna, and representatives from public and private organisations, different INGOs, NGOs, Donor Agencies and Media.



Participants, UP Representatives and guests at the event

Mr. Ashok Madhab Roy stressed on the interaction and relation improvement between the people and the representatives; increasing public awareness about the duties and responsibilities of UPs, enhancing the revenue of the UPs to strengthen local governments income and make the Ward Shobhas more operative. He said people skip Ward shobhas as their demands are not attended plentifully, and the housewives avoid the Shobhas as they consider the Shobhas should be attended by their husbands. He also suggested the UP Chairmen to raise their objections in the Upazila Parishads meetings as active members. In reply to the question on excessive number of committees at UPs, he said most of the committees are formed considering social safety net issues and it is not necessary to organise meetings of all the committees every month.

Professor Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman urged to plan and make decisions through analysing the economic and political condition of the rural areas. He said UPs are overweighed by number of committees. He suggested keeping 5-6 committees instead of 28. He added, it's impossible for one secretary to look after all the duties and responsibilities of UP.

Dr. Mirza Hasan said social accountability mechanism will work as a defensive tool in today's severe crisis of political democracy. He urged to free local government from partyarchy as UP representatives are forced to maintain dual accountability as apart from people, they also have to abide by particular political party. He asked for a justifying socio-economic system following these research findings.

Later, an open discussion on Policy Briefs, based on study was moderated by Maheen Sultan, Advocacy Specialist, BIGD where peoples representatives asked to cancel the regulation which instructs to follow the suggestions of the Member of Parliaments (MPs), as the suggestions arrive in the form of orders, according to the representatives. They mentioned it as a significant constraint similar to political interference and bureaucratic impediments.

The event concluded by the closing remarks of Ms. Melina Papageorgiou Trippolini, Programme Manager, Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh.

The event was attended by among others, representatives and experts from Local Government Division (LGD), NILG, BRDB, JICA, BRAC & BRAC International, TIB, NGO Forum, Save the Children, Care Bangladesh, Water Aid Bangladesh MDF, Democracy International, Nagorik Udyog, BLAST CARITAS

Development Institute, VOICE, PRIP-TRUST, IUCN, , Democracy Watch, Save the Environment Movement, CDC.

The seminar was organised as part of Sharique-III programme which is a Swiss Agency for Development

and Cooperation (SDC) funded Local Governance Programme mandated to the consortium of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation (HSI) and BIGD, BRAC University.

Workshops/Training Stakeholders Consultation On e-Governance and Project Cycle Management Courses

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 (PCM) Course on 4th 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 organised 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 Sheepa 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 Organisation for Migration (IOM), Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA), Ain o Shalish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Mohila Parishad and BRAC.

ILO Training at BIGD

BIGD organised a training on Better Work Bangladesh on 24th May at BIGD Conference Room. The training was facilitated by a team of International Labour Organization (ILO Better Work Bangladesh). Lopita Huq, Research Fellow; Kabita Chowdhury, Shahida Khandoker, Research Associates; Towhid Iqram Mahmood, Ahmed Asif Enam, Sanjida Parvin and Sufia Khatun, Research Assistants of BIGD, BRAC University attended the training.

The objective of the Better Work Programme is to improve working conditions and promote competitiveness in the global garment industry. It does so by promoting compliance with international labour standards and national law in global supply chains as a basis for building socially responsible export strategies, and by enhancing enterprise-level economic and social performance.

Training on Supplier Appraisal and Short Listing

BRAC Procurement department with support of Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supplying (CIPS) of BIGD, BRAC University organised 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.

Meetings

SHARIQUE Opinion Sharing Meeting with Local Government Associations' Representatives



Ms. Hosne Ara (Left), Maheen Sultan (Centre) and Mr. Rafiqul Islam Talukder are seen at the meeting

with the Local Government Associations' Representatives on Social Accountability Mechanisms in the Union Parishads on June 16th, 2015 at the BRAC Centre Inn under Local Governance Programme SHARIQUE III, implemented jointly by BIGD and Helvetas Swiss Inter – Cooperation.

In the inauguration part, Mr. Rafiqul Islam Talukder, Senior Programme Manager, BIGD welcomed participants and guests, and discussed SHARIQUE's background and activities while Ms. Hosne Ara Begum, Local Governance and Public Finance Specialist, Helvetas Swiss Inter-cooperation briefly explained the role of the implementing partners in the programme.

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University organised an Opinion Sharing Meeting



Dr. Tofail Ahmed (3rd from left) sharing his views on objectives of the research

BIGD SHARIQUE Advocacy Specialist Maheen Sultan highlighted the role of Swiss Development Corporation (SDC), and BIGD Senior Manager - Communications Ekram Hossain discussed on BIGD's role in implementation of the programme.

Followed by the introduction part, SHARIQUE Team made multiple presentations of proposals for policy reform and requested valued views and opinions of the associations and the participants on the following issues: (a) strengthening of Ward Shobhas as social accountability mechanism, (b) reform of Standing Committees and (c) streamlining other project-based and sectoral committees.

Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Local Government Expert and Honorary Fellow, BIGD shared the concept of the forthcoming SHARIQUE research on local government associations with the participants and collected their opinions on the challenges and prospects of the associations they individually represented. The Participants also reviewed the content of the policy reform proposals to which they made useful recommendations and corrections. An exciting sharing session followed wherein participants debated and discussed their positions on governance issues with Dr. Tofail Ahmed.



Participants at the meeting

The event was attended by among others, representatives from local government Associations and SHARIQUE Partners including Presidents and Secretaries of local government associations including Prof. Shamim Al Razi, General Secretary, Municipal Association of Bangladesh

(MAB); Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum; Upazila Parishad Association; Upazila Parishad Women Vice Chairmen Association; Municipality Councilors Association; Municipality Engineers Association; and Union Parishad Secretary Association.

TV Talk Show

BIGD organised a live programme on Elections of Women Representatives to the Upazila Parishad

BIGD, BRAC University in collaboration with Channel i organised a live programme titled Telehomoy in Channel i at 11 AM on 12th June, 2015. The programme was conducted by eminent journalist Muhammad Jahangir and participated by local government expert

Dr. Tofail Ahmed, former law-maker Advocate Apu Ukil, and Shibganj (Chapai Nababganj) Upazila's Vice Chairman Sayema Begum. The programme was organised to prioritise the elections of women representatives to the Upazila Parishad held on the 15th of June for the first time in six years.



This Sharique III programme is designed to discuss women's representation in the local government of Bangladesh. Sharique III programme is mandated by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and implemented by a consortium of Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University.

BIGD in National and International Programmes

BIGD Executive Director Chaired a session at 'High Level Meeting on South-South Asia and Triangular Cooperation in the Post-2015 Development Agenda'

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director of the BIGD, BRAC University, attended as one of the main speaker in a two-day 'High Level Meeting on South-South Asia and Triangular Cooperation in the Post-2015 Development Agenda' held on 17th-18th May, 2015 at Sonargaon Hotel, organised by the Economic Relations Division of the government, in partnership with the United Nations Office for South - South Cooperation and UNDP.

H.E. Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, adorned the ceremony as the Chief Guest. Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhit, Minister of

Finance, People's Republic of Bangladesh and Mr. Abul Hasan Mahmood Ali, Minister for the Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bangladesh chaired the Opening and Closing session of the event respectively.

Developing countries should stop running after low-hanging fruits but rather develop connectivity among them to promote sustainable development, analysts said at the meeting. South-South Cooperation is the mutual sharing and exchange of development solutions - knowledge, experiences and good practices, policies, technology and resources - between and among countries in the global South.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks at the opening ceremony of the high-level meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Post 2015 Development Agenda, at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka in the capital yesterday. Photo: PID

Triangular Cooperation involves partnerships between two or more developing countries along with a third partner, typically a traditional resource partner and/or multilateral organisation.

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman said, 'South-South cooperation is possible, and it can be built through multimodal connectivity such as physical connectivity and ICT. If we can do that, it will ultimately spur economic growth in developing countries and lift billions of people out of poverty,' he added.

Dr. Rahman also said nothing would happen if there is no strong political commitment from governments. Countries also cannot bypass local communities, apart

from political sensitivity, when they construct any infrastructure. Dr. Rahman said there has been rapid change in the areas of ICT, communications and people-to-people connectivity in recent times.

He added, apart from financial support from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, huge funds are available following setting up of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road plan, both led by China.

In another session, speakers called for enhancing South-South cooperation in science, technology and innovation between least development countries and emerging economies.

The theme of the high-level meeting was 'South-South and Triangular Cooperation in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Financing for Development in the South and Technology Transfer,' the event brought together Government ministers, senior officials and practitioners both from the South and the North for discussions on how South-South and triangular cooperation could be better oriented towards the attainment of internationally agreed upon development

goals today and in the years ahead. Bangladesh hosted the High-level meeting at a time when the country holds the Presidency of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the highest body in the United Nations for the promotion of South-South Cooperation. The event aimed at sharing of knowledge, experiences and best practices in financing for development and technology transfer towards the achievement of the post-2015 development goals.

BIGD Executive Director attended a PKSF Workshop as a Special Guest

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director of BIGD, BRAC University, attended as a Special Guest at the Policy Workshop on 'Initiatives on Clustering of small scale fish/ shrimp farmer, opportunities for improving market linkages and access to credit,' organised jointly by Bangladesh Shrimp and Food Foundation (BSFF) and Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) at the foundation Bhaban at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar on 5th May, 2015.



Guests at the policy workshop on Initiatives on Clustering of small scale fish/ shrimp farmer, opportunities for improving market linkages and access to credit

State Minister for Finance M A Mannan attended the workshop as Chief Guest while former Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, and former Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agriculture University Dr. M A Sattar Mandal were also present as the special guests.

Presided over by Managing Director of PKSF Abdul Karim, the function was also addressed, among others, by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestocks Mr. Anisur Rahman, Director General, Department of Fisheries; Dr. Syed Arif Azad and South Asia Country Director of Worldfish and BSFF Chairman, Syed Mahmudul Huq.

At the seminar, a memorandum of understanding was also signed between PKSF and BSFF for mutual cooperation and sharing of expertise.

The workshop was organised attuned to the outcomes and findings of a project titled 'Building trade capacity of small-scale shrimp and prawn farmers in Bangladesh: investing in the bottom of the pyramid'

Speakers at the policy workshop underscored the need for introducing contract farming arrangements for production of safe and quality shrimp and prawns for greater penetration of Bangladesh products to international market. They also put emphasis on innovation of appropriate technology for reducing the risks of diseases in shrimp and prawn aquaculture and evolving a National Code of Conduct for responsible aquaculture.

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 11th, 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 8th-9th, 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.



Participants at the conference

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 emphasised 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 organised 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.

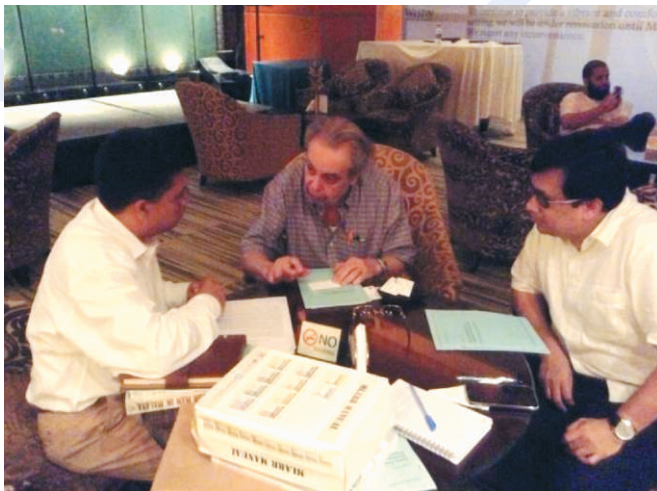
BIGD Researcher met Dr. Michael M. Cernea

A BIGD team led by Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Head of Research, met Dr. Michael M. Cernea, the non-residential Senior Fellow of Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, and Foreign Policy at The Westin Hotel, Dhaka on 10th June 2015.

Dr. Cernea appreciated BIGD's 14-week long post-graduate certificate course on Management of Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLARR). He advised to brand the MLARR training with 'Certificate in Resettlement Specialist' and draws students from neighbouring countries through proper

publicity. Dr. Cernea also suggested developing research proposals on resettlement issues and submitting them to relevant national and international funding organisations including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc.

BIGD's Head of Research Dr. Minhaj Mahmud invited Dr. Cernea to give a lecture in next MLARR batch. The BIGD team comprised Professor Rashed Uz Zaman PhD, BIGD's Acting Academic Coordinator, and Mohammad Sirajul Islam, MLARR Course Coordinator and Lecturer III of BIGD.



BIGD Researcher presented a Short Overview of Research

Ms. Lopita Huq, Research Fellow of BIGD, BRAC University presented a short overview of the total research titled "'BWB Impact Assessment Research Presentation' at the Better Work Bangladesh Impact Assessment Roll-out Workshop organised by ILO on 13th May, 2015 at the Hotel Sarina, Banani, Dhaka.

The overview was prepared along with Ms. Simeen Mahmud, Fellow & Gender Studies Cluster Coordinator of BIGD, BRAC University. Kabita Chowdhury and Shahida Khandoker, Research Associates; Sanjida Parvin and Sufia Khatun, Research Assistants of BIGD, BRAC University also attended the workshop.

BIGD Researcher attended a JPG School of Public Health workshop

Shahida Khandoker, Research Associate of BIGD, BRAC University, attended a workshop on 'Soft launch of the online knowledge platform Share-Net Bangladesh' on 18th April, organised 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 and Manchester University's joint Research Initiative

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, operationalised 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 recognise 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 attended MAGD Semester Concluding Ceremony

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 30th 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 organised 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

CIPS Training on Supplier Appraisal and Short Listing

BRAC Procurement department with support of Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supplying (CIPS) of BIGD, BRAC University organised 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.

BIGD Faculty Conducted Training on Procurement

A day long training on 'Setting Priority in Procurement and Managing Work Load' was held at BRAC Centre on 17th June 2015. There were total 20 Participants from different departments of BRAC, those who are involved

with procurement. Mr. Mainul Hasan Rumen, MCIPS and Mr. Asif Abdullah Chowdhury, MCIPS, two guest faculties of BIGD, BRAC University have conducted the training.

Teaching and Revision Programme for CIPS Advanced Diploma

To provide teaching and revision sessions for the CIPS Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply Management in order to prepare participants for CIPS July 2015 series exam, a faculty from CIPS, UK, Mr. Jeremy Johnson visited CIPS Cohort# 5 at BIGD, BRAC University from

14th June to 18th June 2015. To give an opportunity to review any problem in the subject areas for any of the modules of Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply, Mr. Johnson conducted a final session on 18th June. Also BIGD arranged a faculty meeting with Mr. Johnson on 16th June.

CIPS Exam on May 2015 held

CIPS exam on May 2015 was held in BIGD, BRAC University from 18th to 22nd May 2015. Total 24 government officials from different public sectors, such as- Public Works Department (PWD), Department of Public Health Engineering, WASA, Bangladesh Railway, Primary Education Board, REB, Ministry of Planning,

Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU), Ministry of Finance etc attended the exam. In addition another 23 participants from private sector have participated in this global exam. As the only exam center of CIPS in Bangladesh, BIGD has organised the exam at BRAC University.

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.

Op-Ed Published by BIGD Staff:

1. The Daily Star: Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Regional Governance Matters by Md. Harun Or Rashid, Research Associate, BIGD, BRAC University on 25th June, 2015.
 2. The Daily Prothom Alo: "A silent Election for Women by Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Honorary Visiting Fellow, BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University on June 4th, 2015
 3. The Daily Star: RESERVED SEATS: An impediment to empowerment? by Ms. Nazneen Ahmed, Programme Officer, Local Governance Programme- Sharique, BIGD, BRAC University on 27th April, 2015.
 4. "The Daily Sun: Paradigm of Decentralisation and Local Governance by Mr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar, Senior Programme Manger, BIGD, BRAC University. April 09th
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