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Launching

State of Cities: Governance for a Liveable Chittagong Report Launched in Chittagong



Distinguished guests launching the report

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University launched its annual flagship research report titled State of Cities: Governance for a Liveable Chittagong on 29th January, 2015 at the Chittagong Club, in Chittagong. Distinguished civil society members, academics, researchers, representatives from NGOs, politicians from mainstream parties, senior and other journalists were attended the event at the Club auditorium.

Engineer Mosharraf Hossain MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Housing & Public Works launched the report as the Chief Guest. Mr. Salahuddin Kasem Khan, Managing Director, A.K. Khan & Company Ltd. attended the ceremony as the Special Guest. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director of BIGD, presided over the programme.

Speakers at the programme said, development projects undertaken by government agencies in Chittagong should be need-based and Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) and other agencies should be given enough administrative power to mobilise their own funds lessening dependence on the centre. The speakers also put emphasis on good political intention of the leaders as well as public opinion for efficient implementation of any development project in the port city.

Followed by the report launching, Engineer Mosharraf Hossain MP admitted that the port city is not worthy of living for human beings in the recent years. Mentioning various development initiatives of the present government, he stressed to work on the waste management and recycling system as well along with focuses on other issues like water logging, transport and city corporation services. He also added, 'Chittagong had some unique advantages and we have to do a lot of work to make the city liveable and explore its resources.'



Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman delivering his welcome speech

In the welcome speech, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman said, urbanisation is a serious and growing challenge for all the cities of the world. He said BIGD worked on this research in the basis of all the indexes of liveability. To turn once the beautiful city Chittagong into a planned and liveable one, he stressed on few important issues. Firstly, as lack of pure and healthy water affects public life and hinders normal business growth, proper water and waste management is very important to be taken care of in Chittagong. Secondly, planned development of infrastructure and improved mass transit should be ensured to avail public services for the citizens. Thirdly, personal and human security should be ensured to counter increasing inequality and restrained economic growth; and finally, community organisation, the most important one to assure grassroots democracy and citizen's rights. He wished that this report will particularly contribute in re-building the beautiful and healthy Chittagong.

Mr. M. Shahidul Islam, Research Fellow, BIGD presented the findings of the report.

Mr. Salauddin Kashem Khan said, the projects of CCC should not gather dust in government offices rather the

City Corporation should be empowered to implement development projects under PPP (public- private partnership). "Why does not the government allow the CCC to take development project funds from the local and foreign private entrepreneurs? Proposals worth hundreds of millions of US dollar are lying pending with me for undertaking development initiatives," he added. Reminding Chittagong's 12 per cent contribution to the national GDP and 34 per cent to the national economic growth, he demanded real development for the welfare of the common people of Chittagong.

Followed by the speeches of the distinguished guests and speakers, the Chair moderated a question and answer session with the guests on the report.

The report is prepared considering all the indexes of liveability. It is the third report of its kind. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the economic and political dynamics which shape various facets of urban governance in Chittagong and aims to provide solutions in addressing the mounting problems that the policymakers face as far as urban governance is concerned.

This report indicates that systemic dysfunction of local institutions, lack of horizontal accountability, dualism in service delivery, weak administrative and fiscal autonomy and excessive dependence of the local government on the central government and other agencies, among other factors, are a constraint to good governance of Chittagong city.

The previous two reports, published in 2012 and 2013, analysed the state of urban governance of Dhaka and Narayanganj. The institute launched the series to promote research and analysis as well as to spur intellectual debates on city governance in Bangladesh.



Engineer Mosharrif Hossain MP, Mr. Salahuddin Kasem Khan, Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Mr. M. Shahidul Islam, Arch. Zarina Hossain and Professor Muhammad Sekandar Khan delivering their speeches (From left to right)

Workshops

A Workshop on Labor Markets and Growth held



Honourable guests at the workshop on Labor Markets and Growth

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BGD), BRAC University in collaboration with RAND Corporation (USA) and University of Sussex (UK) organised a workshop on Labor Markets and Growth on 2nd March 2015 at the BRAC Centre Inn auditorium, Dhaka.

Mr. Md. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, ndc, Secretary, Ministry of Industry of Government of Bangladesh attended the event as the Chief Guest while Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University and Mr. Arastoo Khan, Member of Planning Commission were present as Special Guests. Executive Director of BIGD, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman chaired the workshop.

The workshop was an initial event for two collaborative projects of BIGD funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), the Institute for the

Study of Labor (IZA) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The projects aim to study the formal and informal labor market nexus and growth, and the effects of disinvestment in public sector enterprises in countries in South-East Asia, including Bangladesh. The workshop solicited inputs from academics, researchers and policy-makers to shape the direction of the research so that it can be most useful and relevant to policy-makers and others concerned with labor markets and industrial policy. The Research team includes researchers Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Head of Research, BIGD and Dr. Farzana Munshi, Associate Professor, Department of Economic and Social Sciences, BRAC University; Dr. Krishna Kumar, Dr. Shanthi Nataraj and Dr. Italo Gutierrez from RAND (USA); and Dr. Amalavoyal Chari from the University of Sussex.



Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Head of Research, BIGD sharing his opinion (Right)

Prof. M. A. Sattar Mandal from Bangladesh Agricultural University, Prof. Mustafizur Rahman from CPD, Prof. Selim Raihan from Dhaka University, Ms. Simeen Mahmud from BIGD, Dr. Rushidan Islam Rahman from BIDS, Dr. Kazi Ali Toufique from BIDS and Dr. Nazneen Ahmed from BIDS attended the workshop as panelists.

Among others, the workshop was attended by leading academics, scholars, experts, civil society members and policy makers from different public, private, corporate organisations and representatives from trade unions.

Workshop on 'Exploring Unpaid Work of Women: Barriers, Implications and Opportunities' held



Honourable guests and participants at the workshop

The Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST) at BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University and Oxfam in Bangladesh, jointly organised a workshop to on 'Exploring Unpaid Work of Women: Barriers, Implications and Opportunities,' disseminate the results of a research on Thursday 26th February 2015 at the BRAC Centre Inn Meeting Room, Dhaka.

The research report was presented by Maheen Sultan, Lead Researcher; Sahida Khondaker, Research Associate and Bayazid Hasan, Senior Research Associate of CGST, BIGD.

Snehal V. Soneji, Country Director, Oxfam in Bangladesh and M.B. Akhter, Program Manager, Oxfam in Bangladesh also spoke on the occasion. Simeen Mahmud, Coordinator, CGST and Lead Researcher, BIGD chaired the event. Among others, Practitioners and experts from development NGOs, international agencies, women's groups, media and the research community attended the programme. Mr Snehal V. Soneji emphasised taking into account the rights and responsibilities of care givers. M.B Akhter emphasised taking on board the implications of care work for long-

term development programmes and working together as NGOs, development programmes and research organisations in order to ensure recognition, reduction and redistribution of care work. Simeen Mahmud questioned whether costing of care work is useful as it needs to be done. However we need to consider whether gender norms are changing or allow changes in the redistribution of care work.

The objective of the workshop was to present a research report on unpaid care work of women in rural area of Bangladesh which will help to design some interventions and strategies to reduce, redistribute, and recognise women's unpaid care work in the community. Unpaid care work is essential for an individual, family community and society. It is a social good and the "glue that holds societies together". However the unequal distribution of unpaid care work along gender lines and its lack of support have severe negative consequences: for women's rights, gender equality and poverty reduction initiatives.

The findings of the study show that women spent 8.8 hours on an average daily for care work, while men spend about an hour. For men this work is mainly

looking after the children's education and doing the groceries, which takes time because of the distance to the markets. On the other hand, men spend an average of 3 hours for paid work, 6.6 hours to produce products for sale and almost no time on production for own consumption. Women spend more time on production for own consumption (four hours a week) and about half of time given by men on producing products for sale (3.6 hours a day on an average for women). Women have 7.6 hours for sleep while men have 7.04 hours and women have 2.7 hours for personal activities while men have almost double (almost 6 hours per day on average). The

main differences are the time men have for recreation and self-care (double that of women) and the time women spend on care activities (eight times as much as men).

The research was based on participatory research techniques and interviews with a total of 169 women and men residing in char areas of four districts (Faridpur, Gaibandha, Jamalpur and Nilfamari) in Bangladesh. It was carried out under the project 'Scaling up Inclusive Dairy Markets' funded by DFID.

Seminar/Discussions/Talk

BIGD-BRAC Discussion on Effectiveness of Policy Advocacy: Lessons Learnt *Implementation is essential, if advocacy activities are to be effective, Experts say*



Maheen Sultan, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Afsan Chowdhury, Dr. Abdul Matin, Manzoor Hasan, Ariful Alam (left to right) seen at the discussion

Speakers at a discussion on 'Policy Advocacy and Lessons Learnt: Lessons learnt' said that implementation is essential, if advocacy activities are to be effective. The event was organised by BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) in partnership with BRAC Advocacy Unit on 12th March, 2015 at the

BRAC Centre Inn, Mohakhali, Dhaka. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Director General of BIGD presided over the discussion.

A Paper on Gender and Women Policy by Maheen Sultan on behalf of Md. Mahmuda Khatun of Dhaka University, a Paper on National Environmental Policies by Dr. Ahmed Shafi of Dhaka University, a Paper on Health Policy by Ms. Mahrukh Mahiuddin of BRAC University, and a Paper on Anti-corruption Advocacy by Tanim Ahmed of Dhaka Tribune, in total four papers were presented at the discussion. Maheen Sultan, Lead Researcher, BIGD; Dr. Abdul Matin, Secretary, Bangladesh Paribesh Andalon; Barrister Manzoor Hasan, Executive Director, South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies (SAILS) and Institutional Advisor, BIGD; and Dr. Md. Ariful Alam, Coordinator, Health, Nutrition and Population Programme, BRAC discussed on the papers.



Participants in the discussion

The speakers noted that while policy formulation is possible through policy, the main obstacle is in implementation. There is also insufficient evidence to link advocacy to policy making in many cases. Greater focus should be given to evidence gathering of success linking it to implementation and identifying specific targets for advocacy. While everyone agreed policy advocacy should be continued, they also said it should be done keeping implementation and achievement of realistic targets in mind.

The discussion was coordinated by Maheen Sultan of BIGD and Afsan Chowdhury of BRAC Advocacy Unit.

The discussion was attended by, among others, experts of relevant fields, eminent professionals and representatives from various academic and research institutions, government, NGOs, donor agencies, international organisations; civil society members, politicians and senior journalists.

Talk on Palestine by Grassroots International's Activist



Participants at the Talk on Palestine

BIGD organised a Talk by Ms. Hayat Imam, international grassroots activist and Member of the Board, Grassroots International, on Palestine: Perspectives from the field at BIGD Conference Room, Mohakhali, Dhaka on 15th Feb 2015.

Ms. Hayat Imam shared her experience based on her recent visit to occupied Palestine and Jerusalem, and interviews with the Palestinians. She also shared her thoughts and observation on the illegitimate occupation, human rights violation by Israel, apartheid wall built by Israel, increasing Israeli settlement,

oppressive livelihoods, lack of water supply and resettlement issue after Israeli bombings, faulty and inequitable governance in the Palestinian cities. She also made a presentation with visuals which provided rare glimpses of the state of governance and miserable livelihood of the Palestinian people.

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, BIGD chaired the talk. The programme was attended by, among others, BIGD Head of Research Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, staffs from BIGD Research, Academic and Operations divisions.

Visits

Nepalese Ambassador's visit to MAGD Programme

His Excellency Mr. Hari Kumar Shrestha, Ambassador of Nepal to Bangladesh, visited MA in Governance and Development (MAGD) programme of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University at the BRAC CDM in Savar, Dhaka on 28th March 2015. Dr.

Rashed Uz Zaman, Acting Academic Coordinator and Ekram Hossain, Communications Manager of BIGD welcomed the guests at the BRAC Centre for Development Management (CDM) premises.



BIGD Academic Coordinator Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman handing over a crest to HE Nepalese Ambassador

To commemorate his visit BIGD accorded a reception programme at the BRAC CDM in presence of MAGD students. Mr. Ekram Hossain introduced the ambassador to the students, who was accompanied by Mrs. Shakuntala Shrestha and Mr. Nirmal Prasad Bhattarai, the Third Secretary of the Embassy. Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman gave an introduction of BRAC University and the Institute through a presentation. Mr. Khan Md. Nurul Amin and Mr. Nay Lin, students of MAGD and public servant of Bangladesh and Myanmar respectively, shared their expectations and experience of their study.

In response to the reception H.E. Mr. Shrestha mentioned that the students of MAGD are the future

leaders and the role model of bureaucracy in the respective countries. The students need to be prepared to work in the rural areas, where modern facilities are not available and take challenges and hardship. He proposed to the BIGD to arrange exchange programme between Nepal and Bangladesh. H.E. Mr. Shrestha also thanked the institute for arranging the reception in honour to him. Mr. Shrestha also answered to a number of questions of the students about regional politics, economic growth and bilateral issues.

A video documentary film was screened at the starting of the reception as an introduction to BRAC and BRAC University.



HE Mr. Hari Kumar Shrestha is delivering his speech to the MAGD students (Left), MAGD students with the Nepalese Ambassador (Right)

All 22 students of MAGD attended the programme. Of them 20 are from Bangladesh and 2 are from Myanmar Government Cadre Service. At the end of his day-long visit, Mr. Shrestha goes around the BRAC University Savar campus to see the arrangements and facilities. He

also talked to a group of residential students and staff of the campus. Mr. Rehan Ahmed, Assistant Campus Superintendent of BRAC University Savar campus facilitated the visit at the residential campus.

BRAC University Vice Chancellor's visit to BIGD

Mr. Syed Saad Andaleeb, VC of BRAC University visited BRAC Institute of Governance and Development on 23rd February, 2015 and met the BIGD Researchers. Referring the latest Annual Report of BRAC University the VC said that so many activities have been done by different department and institutes; but, there is no collaboration among them to utilise their comparative

strengths. He envisions transforming the university into a referred research based university and sought support and cooperation from each and every institutes and departments. To reach this vision he highlighted on three pillars namely, collaboration, innovation and social impacts.



Mr. Syed Saad Andaleeb, VC of BRAC University, with the staff of BIGD

In the meeting, the Researchers gave their opinion and shared their ideas through a Q&A session. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, the Executive Director of BIGD chaired the meeting. Dr. Rahman told that since his joining as Executive Director, he has been focusing on regional collaboration and in the current year he is planning to take initiatives in this regard. He also mentioned that BIGD has a multidisciplinary team and their capacity can

be enhanced through exchange programs between regional centers of excellence.

The State of Governance and State of City reports are becoming influential in creating debates in public domain (e.g. TV talk shows, OpEds, etc), he mentioned. He urged that BIGD needs to have basic endowment fund to plan and implement its own research agenda.

BIGD's Executive Director attended 6th International Conference, titled 'Translating Research into Policy and Action' as Speaker

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University attended as a speaker at the 6th international conference, titled 'Translating Research into Policy and Action,' hosted by IFMR LEAD and the College of Agricultural Banking (CAB-RBI) held on January 16th and 17th, 2015 at the College of Agricultural Banking campus in Pune, Maharashtra.

The conference aimed to bring together policymakers, senior practitioners, bankers and researchers, to foster a productive and high-level dialogue based on evidence relevant to current and future policies and practices of

financial inclusion and financing livelihoods. This year, renowned development experts from academia presented results from a number of recent studies on the subject.

In addition, esteemed practitioners, bankers and government policymakers discussed the potential challenges and opportunities towards achieving greater financial inclusion. And the conference was well received among practitioners, representing a wide range of sectors from banking industry, microfinance, government departments, and academia.

Shri H R Khan, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India addressed the conference at the inaugural session. Mr. Khan discussed the importance of evidence based decision making where both policy and practice can inform high quality research and vice versa. At the valedictory session, Shri S. S. Mundra, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India also voiced the need of bridging the gap between policymaking and research. He opined the need to increase our understanding of the relationship between financial inclusion and economic growth, and the need to consider and develop alternative financial products in order to ensure 100% financial inclusion.

The two day conference brought together policymakers, senior practitioners, bankers and researchers, to foster a



Distinguished guests at the Conference

BIGD Researcher Presentation at HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

Dr. Mirza Hasan, Lead Researcher and Sadiat Mannan, Research Associate of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University presented on the 'Study on Institutional Relationships and Linkages' under the Sharique-III project report at Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation on 27th January, 2015. Representatives from SHARIQUE and BIGD also attended the program. The study maps and analyses the institutional-relational factors; i.e., formal and informal linkages between Upazila Parishad (UZP) and Union Parishad (UP). Linkages refer to administrative, financial, legal and accountability relations between the institutions. The study also plans to explore the nature of relationships that exist between actors

within each institution. These relations are also embedded in and shaped by larger contextual variables such as national and local politics and bureaucratic culture. A major focus of the study is to understand these institutional-relational and contextual variables and to explore how these influence the incentives, interests and power of the relevant actors. Given this political economy framework the study sheds light on the nature of institutional conditions which ensures citizens' effective oversight over the local government functionaries and capacitates them to provide services efficiently and inclusively.

BIGD Executive Director's Activities

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) held several meetings from January-March 2015 with a number of distinguished personalities such as Ministers, prominent academics and researchers regarding the research collaboration and other relevant issues of BIGD. Among others, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman met with State Minister of Finance and planning; Ms. Pauline Tamesis, Country Director and Mr. Rustam Pulatov, Assistant Country Director of UNDP; Stuart David, Economist of DFID Prof. Chitra and Farida Khan of University of Wisconsin-Parkside and Mr. Shama Prasad, Chief Engineer, LGED Cabinet Secretary, Mohammad Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan; Dr. Bjorn Lomborg, President of the Copenhagen Consensus Center, Dr. Kazi Iqbal, Mr. Faqrul Huq of Planning Commission; Mr. Rustam Pulatov, Assistant Country Director of UNDP and Dr.

Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, MP. He also met with the Secretary of Ministry of Finance and ERD Secretary and had a discussion on MAGD funding.

Dr. Rahman had also joined a Consortium plans meeting on local governance and development of Sharique and a working lunch in honor of Kaspar Grossenbacher, new Country Director of Helvetas Intercooperation-Bangladesh, Mr. Thirtha Sarathi Sikder and Ms Lilia Tverdun, Director, Local Governance Programme SHARIQUE HELVETAS Swiss Inter-cooperation. Dr. Rahman had also a meeting with Mr. Barry Spergel, KfW's Consultant and Mr. Mehedi Ahsan, Sector Specialist for Resilient Cities, KfW Development Bank and had a discussion on an upcoming Project on Climate Change Adaptation and Climate Induced Migration in Bangladesh.

Publications by BIGD Staff

- The Daily New Age: The beleaguered second city by Mr. Sarwar Jahan Chowdhury, Head of Operations, BIGD on 17th March, 2015.
- The Daily Star: _Local Government another Casualty of Deadlock by Tofail Ahmed on 19th March, 2015
- The Daily Kaler Kantha: "Local Government: Bangladesh & India by Dr. Tofail Ahmed
- The Daily Star: "Democracy, Elections and Misuse of Trust by the Institutional Advisor Barrister Manzoor Hasan
- Dhaka Tribune: "May we speak freely? by Mr. Sadiat Mannan, Research Associate, BIGD



BRAC Institute of Governance and Development
BRAC University

SK Centre (3rd - 7th Floor), GP, Ja-4, TB Gate
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Tel +88 02 58810306, 58810320, 58810326, Fax: +88 02 8832542
Website: <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd>