

Better Governance: Propelling Citizens' Participation

DEBATE concerning governance issues are dominated by approaches that are influenced by public sector reform experiences in the west. Standard reform prescription which have dominated thinking among policy makers are largely top down and supply driven. In this conception, the reform of state institutions is the central objective, while the needs and priorities of the citizens tend to be secondary. Citizens are treated as passive consumers of services and payers of taxes who stand to benefit from the economic benefits conferred by efficiency gains and improved financial management rather than as active stakeholders who can contribute to better governance. Growing recognition that supply driven reforms have not brought much changes in the way that government functions, along with continued evidence of public disenchantment, has stimulated the emergence of a very different approach. Central to this is the idea that citizens should exercise far greater control and oversight over government than is generally the case. Reflected in their greater participation in decision making process, the development of innovative approaches to fostering accountability, and experimentation with different public service provisions.

Traditional approaches to governance assume that primary responsibility for formulating and implementing policy decision lies with government officials. Citizens are treated merely as receivers who periodically vote in governments which then implement a chosen set of policy prescriptions. The idea that citizens can exercise popular choice in a manner that extends beyond electoral franchise is anathema to many politicians and policy makers. However it is increasingly recognized that greater participation in the affairs of the government may actually strengthen the quality of public services, public policy making and the effectiveness of resultant outcomes. For instance, greater consultation over the design of anti poverty programmes, especially at the local level, can help to ensure that preferences of poor people are taken into account. Citizen involvement in framing budgetary priorities and monitoring expenditure outcome can improve resources allocation in favour of priority sectors and reduce corruption. Given this context, there is a potential avenue to explore and develop a series of innovative approaches to solving problems of governance while generating informed citizen feedback, all of which have active citizen participation at their starting point. These include the following approaches:

Report Card Methodology: Decision makers in government, academia and advocacy groups have come to recognize the potentials of public feedback in making the government more responsive and accountable. Public feedback is especially important where the state operates as a monopoly service provider and leaves the

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by Syed Masul Hasan

user of the services with no exit option. In this disabling condition, public feedback or citizen's voice becomes a catalyst for change. This score card can be used to stimulate collective actions by citizens and provide organizational leaders an opportunity to design reform and bring in a strategic reorientation.

Report Card Methodology is a diagnostic tool used for assessing state of public service delivery and generating public feedback in making the state more responsive and accountable. The Report Card Methodology is rooted in quantitative research methods, but is enhanced by qualitative findings obtained from interviews and observation. The report card methodology is more than just a quantitative snapshot of citizens' satisfaction levels. It can provide a systematic measure of citizens' feedback with regards to their experiences and satisfaction levels of urban services. This quantitative tool can be a powerful new instrument of collective public voice at all levels of government and at all stages of democracies. Report card methodology can be transformed into a powerful advocacy tool to (a) generate citizens' feedback on degree of satisfaction with the services provided by various public services agencies, (b) catalyze citizens' to adopt pro-active stances by demanding more accountability, accessibility and responsiveness from the service providers, (c) serve as diagnostic tool for service providers, external consultants and analysts/researchers to facilitate effective prognosis and therapy, (d) encourage public agencies to adopt and promote citizen-friendly practices, design performance standards and facilitate transparency.

Participatory Budget Analysis: Budget reflects the country's socio economic policy priorities by translating policies and political commitment into expenditure and taxation. In this way, the budget emphasizes constraints and trade offs in policy choices. But the budget formulation process always lacks proper public consultation and therefore citizens' especially poor people's prioritized issues and needs never get the space for reflection in budget. The framing of budget priorities and decisions regarding budgetary allocations to different sector remains the prerogative of the national government. Legislators subject these priorities to debate but their power is limited to approval rather than proposing amendments. Aside from commentary of economic analysts and journalists writing in different media outlets and lobby groups representing different business interest, ordinary citizens generally have little say over budgets, nor have much understanding of how budgets

are developed and allocations apportioned. To date, there has been minimum budgetary information available to the general public from independent and partial sources, aside from official summaries. It has created enormous space for the civil society organizations to be engaged effectively in budgetary advocacy. Participatory Budget Analysis is instrumental to: (a) pick up factual errors in budget report and contribute to more accurate reporting by government departments (b) independent monitoring to improve the availability of information on departmental expenditure and allocations to different sub-heads over time and thus tracking of social sector expenditure such as education, health, drinking water that affect every day life of poorer citizens (c) enhance transparency of the budget process by making people aware of budgetary priorities and decision making process.

Public Hearing: At community and country levels worldwide, public hearing have been found to be both compelling for documenting and making visible violation of basic rights as well as effective mechanism for challenging government or the concerned authority to protect those rights. While Public Hearings are not legal proceedings per se and the judges or the panel of experts do not have the power to enforce recommendations, Public Hearing nonetheless can affect significant change in attitude, policies and practices which do not address needs, hopes and aspirations of the poor people. Public Hearing is a tool to achieve recognition of certain issues as rights issues of people and to document, define, publicize and make visible violation of rights, malpractice or policy implications. It can (a) challenge some of the existing thoughts, images, practices or issues of public concern; (b) sensitize attendees including those who possess the power to influence process of change; (c) empower those poor people who testify as well as who listen, (d) influence actions and enforcement through galvanizing organizers and attendees around a chosen issue. By insisting on an inclusive and democratic process one that is sensitive to the needs of poor people, public hearing provides us a new image of justice by pulling all concerned actors together to the domain of public discussion and accountability.

Popular Theatre: The potential of Popular Theatre to communicate, inform and educate is far greater than any other approach because it is at once intimate, accessible and full of cultural resonance in which the seeds of new knowledge can take root. It can tap into cultural resources, people's emotions, beliefs, values and personal experience; it also engages people's natural habit

solving faculties which enable them to find alternative solutions to the challenges of life. Popular theatre can be extensively used in civic education. It has proven to be an appropriate and powerful vehicle to deliver right message in right language to the right audience. If using participatory popular theatre as a language, the villagers are able collectively to express, analyse their own social reality, then they can also collectively address the problem and participate in their solutions. In the broad spectrum of governance and rights, Popular Theatre allows an element of control over the information at local level, encourages self expression, local input of knowledge and ideas, ownership of the process and solutions which may emerge. It can achieve far more than getting the message across.

Opinion Poll: Having accurate information about what citizen's think can enable decision makers to take informed decisions and policy choices and to implement service improvement that responds to citizen's needs and preferences. There are several methods for discovering what people think. One of the best ways is to ask people directly about their opinions. Opinion surveys are an accurate, affordable way to determine what large groups of people think. Opinion surveys are conducted to identify budgetary priorities, to obtain feedback from citizens, customers or clients on services and programmes and to acquire information on variety of issues, problems and choices that confront their organizations. The wide prevalence of opinion survey is one indicator of its popularity and potential for informing a whole range of citizens' feedback, decisions, quality that relate to management, accountability, resource allocation and responsiveness. Survey can help to broaden the scope of citizens' participation in government decision making process. It is a means of advancing deliberative democracy which provide the public officials with the scope to address citizens' concerns up front rather than later. It has the potential to enhance the quality of democratic governance.

Participatory Video: Most video usage in development set-

ting is concentrated to inform, train, educate, influence and also fund raising. Based on traditional production model, these videos have been made mostly by external production agencies. Therefore, issues, concerns and demands of poor people have little chance to be raised or voiced in the traditional video making process. When development is understood as a pedagogical process concerned with the causes and characteristics of poverty, the need for the voices of the poor to be heard becomes crucial. This has given rise to a new emphasis on the use of video as a tool for analysis using playback for participants to review their own debates, knowledge and learning; to formulate action and communications plans and to hold institutions and systems accountable and responsible for the betterment in delivery of public services and performance. Participatory Video the video made by the targeted community people themselves can be used to bring people together, stimulate discussion and expression and develop communications within and between the groups. Through making tapes the groups gain a sense of what can be achieved through working together and recognition of their capabilities.

Participatory Poverty Assessment: The concept of Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) was born out of widespread worry expressed by different donors about the plight on the poor caused by structural adjustment programmes and the lack of consultation mechanism to assess poverty by the poor themselves. The World Development Report 1990 and subsequent policy papers in the World Bank led to the emergence of the PPA as a process of identifying problems of the poor and linking it to the broader policy dialogue, 'policy change and influencing the policy delivery framework'. Disillusionment with existing poverty line measurements, allied to a belief that poor should be involved in the development of poverty reduction strategies, has created space for participatory methods to be adopted alongside more conventional quantitative methodologies in cross cutting poverty research. The purpose of Participatory Poverty Assessment is to

create space for the voice of the poor in providing a deeper understanding of the dynamics of poverty and its regional contextual characteristics, of the coping mechanism adopted by the poor, and of local perceptions of problems and priority interventions. To this end, PPA uses a variety of participatory methods and represents a ground breaking new departure in policy based poverty research. There is a tremendous potential for PPA to become more central in poverty analysis and in providing poor people's perspective in poverty issues.

The participatory approaches give ordinary citizens an opportunity to express themselves and feed opinion into local governance mechanism. These tools can also take local issues of public suffering/concern out of context and make them to be discussed and addressed publicly. In their different ways each of the participatory approaches has the potential to increase scope for citizens, especially the poor people, to demand better governance. There is potential for combining elements of these tools into more comprehensive approaches and linking those with government machinery and systems. Various participatory tools as stated above hold considerable promise for the resolution of deep set governance problems. Challenging opportunities exist for establishing partnership with public agencies that are not simply founded on contractual relationships, but which open up space for joint deliberation of innovative approaches designed to foster better governance, as a means of galvanising citizens' action and restoring public trust in the capacity of government to deliver services efficiently and equitably.

Unhealthy Mothers, Unhealthy Kids

by Ranjita Biswas writes from Calcutta

FATIMA Bibi looks frail. Her eyes are sunken, her hands are bony and her skin has an anaemic pallor. The six-month old baby she holds looks not a day older than three months. The baby is obviously suffering from malnutrition. "She is not eating, something has happened to her," Bibi tells the doctors.

Bibi could have avoided the situation had she known that malnutrition, which is one of the biggest problems in India affecting 55 percent of the children, is often the result of ignorance. According to a UNICEF report, gross malnutrition is responsible for half the deaths of children below five years of age in the country.

Poverty has always been blamed for malnutrition among children in India. However, says Dr K Pappu, Deputy Director, CINI: "Though it has been generally believed that malnutrition results because of poverty, we have found that it is not always the case. For instance, low birth weight accounts for more than 50 per cent of the deaths."

It is to provide help to such young mothers and their underweight babies that CINI runs a nutrition rehabilitation centre for severely malnourished children. These children can stay in the centre with their mothers until they are well enough to go back home. While at the centre, mothers are taught nutritional values of everyday food items like vegetables and rice.

Educating the family about food nutrition is an integral part of CINI's programmes. Because most of the mothers who come for help are not educated, CINI has worked out various ways of teaching them about the benefits of nutritious food. For instance, they use the national flag to get their message across. The green in the flag stands for vegetables, the saffron for pulses, white for rice and the circle inside for oil. A low cost ready-made food supplement called CINI-Nutrimix with wheat and green gram in proportions of 4:1 is also available for mothers. Each packet provides 71 grams of protein and 1,700 calories. Families can either buy this at the centre or they are also taught to prepare it at home.

But though significant, these steps are not enough to fight malnutrition of the scale at which it exists. For that what is needed is improvement in the status of women within the family. Women, especially in rural areas, usually get the last morsel of food. Heavy work for the housewife continues well into her pregnancy and there are many superstitions regarding certain food items, which are abundantly available, but are taboo. All this adds to the anaemic conditions of the mother leading to low birth babies. To educate the women and their families, health workers from CINI fan out to interior areas where they visit homes and hold meetings to emphasise that a woman needs family support during pregnancy and the lactation period.

Husbands too are included in these sessions where they are asked simple, though important, questions like "Do you see how much your wife gets to eat? Do you know that she should rest after meals?" The answers, predictably, are all negative.

It goes without saying that women who are educated have a greater knowledge of nutrition and a greater say in family matters. These aspects are important for the quality of child care and food security. The challenge now lies in informing uneducated and neo-literate women not only about their nutritional needs but also about those of the new born child.

--NewsNetwork/WFS

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer

Local Government Engineering Department
Habigonj

MEMO NO: LGED/XEN/HABI/2000/2683 Date: 27-11-2000

Tender Notice No-18/2000-2001

Sealed tenders are hereby invited for execution of the following schemes under Rural Development Project-3, LGED, Habigonj from the valid pre-qualified contractor/contractors firm of RDP-3 in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 along with the additional terms & conditions attached with this tender notice & tender schedule for the works. Tender schedule could be purchased from the offices of the undersigned; Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet Division, Sylhet; Project Director, RDP-3, LGED, HQ, Dhaka; Executive Engineer, LGED, Sylhet/Sunamganj/Moulvibazar & concerned Upazila Engineer Office of Habigonj district up to 20-12-2000 during office hours. Tender will be received up to 1:00 pm on 21-12-2000 in the specified tender boxes of the above mentioned offices & the boxes will be opened at 1:30 pm on the same day in presence of the tenderers or their authorised representative (if any).

Additional Terms & Conditions

- In the tender schedule rate must be quoted as overall per cent of above/less or at per based on estimated cost both in figures & in words in the 2nd page of 2911 form & at the last page of the tender schedule. In case of any discrepancy rate written in words will be considered for evaluation.
- The tender schedule shall not exceeding overall rate five per cent (5%) less than the estimated cost. Exceeding overall rate 5% less than the estimated cost the tender will be treated as cancelled.
- Quoted rate clearly be written in figures & in words in the specified place of the tender schedule & in the 2nd page of 2911 form over written, use of fluids or erasing by any means will not be accepted & the concerned tender will summarily be rejected & the subjected tender will be considered non responsive.
- Tender with a quoted amount more than 5% (five per cent) above than the estimated cost will be required to be supported by detailed analysis of every rate quoted in the tender schedule for necessary security by the authority. Tender without analysis & photocopy, overwriting, erasing by any means etc. in the analysis will not be accepted & will summarily be rejected.
- In case of more than one tender or same quoted rate & being the lowest contractor may be selected by means of lottery or by way of performance.
- Earnest money (security) amounting & 2.5% (Two point five per cent) of the total quoted amount must be submitted along with the tender in the form of BD/CD from any recognised & schedule commercial bank in favour of Executive Engineer, LGED, Habigonj. Successful tenderer will have to deposit security 7.5% (seven point five per cent) of total quoted amount in the form of BD/CD from any recognised schedule commercial bank in favour of Executive Engineer, LGED, Habiganj, within 7 (seven) working days from the day it has been asked for.
- Government decisions related to VAT & Income Tax etc. will be effective for the tenders. According to the Govt. circular certificate for Tax-payers Identification Number should be enclosed with tender document & no tender will be accepted without it.
- In case of purchasing schedule it is not required to present physically to show enlistment/pre-qualification, contractors may purchase the schedule by any of their representative. Name of works seal & signature of issuing authority must be in the tender document (schedule). While submitting the tender contractors have to submit photocopy of enlistment/pre-qualification license along with other required document stated in the tender notice otherwise tender will be treated as cancelled.
- If any tenderer protect other tenderers in purchasing schedule for submitting the tender or help in doing so or taking initiative by any contractor then the concerned contractor's enlistment will be cancelled.
- Tenderers will have to submit receipt of purchased schedule with the tender document. Code No. must be written clearly over the envelop for each group.
- Tender must be submitted to the tender receiving offices by registered mail with AD. In this case tender must reach the concerned offices before the last time of receiving date & time, otherwise it will not be acceptable.
- With proportionate progress in proportionate time the total works should be completed according to the specification of the schedule within the time mentioned in the work order.
- Only the tenderers those will be qualified to participate in tender who are valid prequalified enlisted contractors of RDP-3 and who have experience in successfully completion of road or bridge/culvert construction work in a single work order with an amount of at least Tk. 10,00 (ten) lacs. The experience certificate (from the person not below the rank of Executive Engineer) to be submitted with tender.
- The contractors who had failed to perform proportionate progress of work without any reasonable causes in case of one work under RDP-3 or two works under SDIDP will disqualify to participate in the tender and their tender (s) will not be accepted.
- As the project is foreign aided payment for works will be made when fund will be available. Estimated cost of the respective scheme may be varied. Earth work must be done before starting pavement work. This tender notice is precise. Other details information regarding the tender could be collected from the office of the undersigned during office hours. The authority preserves the right to accept any or reject all the tenders without showing any reason thereof.

| Group No. | Name of scheme | Estimated cost (Tk in lac) | Earnest money | Value of tender document | Time allowed (days) |
|-----------|--|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 267 | Protection work of Baniyachong-Azmiriganj Road, CH-8000.00-9000.00m | 18.00 | 45000/= | 750.00 | 120 |
| 268 | Protection work of Baniyachong-Azmiriganj Road, CH-9000.00-10000.00m | 19.10 | 47750/= | 750.00 | 120 |

DFP-29284-3/12 G-2134 Executive Engineer LGED, Habigonj.

Dr. Rubatul Murshed

All health information to keep you up to date

Know Your Medicines

What are antacids used for?

Antacids are taken by mouth to relieve heartburn, "sour stomach", or acid indigestion. Antacids may also be used to treat the symptoms of stomach or duodenal ulcers. Antacids may contain magnesium salt, aluminium salt, or a combination of both. Some preparations also contain simethicone which helps to relieve the symptoms of excess gas.

How should I take these medicines?

- Follow your doctor's instructions if this medicine was prescribed.
- Follow the manufacturer's package directions if you are self-medicating.
- For patients taking this medicine for a stomach or duodenal ulcer. Do not treat yourself.
- Take it exactly as directed and for the full time of treatment as ordered by your doctor.
- Take it 1 and 3 hours after meals and at bedtime for best results, unless otherwise directed by your doctor.

What precautions should I take?

- If you are taking this medicine without a prescription, you should be especially careful if you:
 - are allergic to any medicine;
 - are taking any other medicine;
 - are pregnant, intend to be pregnant, or are breast-feeding;
 - have other medical problems such as high blood pressure.
- If you have any question, check with your doctor.
- Do not take this medicine
- if you have any signs of appendicitis or inflamed bowel (such as stomach or lower abdominal pain, cramping, bloating, soreness, nausea, or vomiting).
- Within 1 to 2 hours after taking other medicine by mouth unless directed by your doctor.
- for more than 2 weeks unless otherwise directed by your doctor.

When to dispose of drugs

Old medications should be flushed down the toilet or returned to the pharmacy (registered), but, not put in the dustbin. Always dispose of:

- * Aspirin and paracetamol tablets that smell of vinegar;
- * Tablets that are chipped, cracked, or discoloured, and capsules that have softened, cracked or stuck together;
- * Liquids that have thickened or discoloured, or that taste or smell different in any way from the original product;
- * Tubes that are cracked, leaky or hard;
- * Ointments and creams that have changed odour, or changed appearance by discolouring, hardening or separating;
- * Any liquid needing refrigeration that has been kept for over two weeks.

Special Note: Don't forget to see the "Expiry date" of the Medicine.

Dhaka City Corporation

আপনার পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখুন

আপনার শিশুকে টিকা দিন

Invitation of Tender

Dhaka City Corporation invites sealed tender from eligible bidders for the works as mentioned below under Crash Program (4th Pilot Project). Bidders may obtain information from the office of the Project Director, Crash Program 3rd Pilot Project, Dhaka City Corporation, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka-1000, during the office hours on all working days. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested eligible bidders on submission of written application to the undersigned and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Tk. 10,000.00 in Sonali Bank, Nagar Bhaban Branch only in the form of challan. A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two sealed envelopes, one containing the technical proposal and the other one containing the financial proposal. All tenders must be accompanied by tender security (earnest money) as mentioned below in the form of BD/Pay Order of any scheduled bank addressed to Mayor, Dhaka City Corporation will be received by the undersigned on or before 12:00 hours on 20-12-2000. The tender security must be included with financial proposal. The technical proposal will be opened at 12:30 hrs. on the same day in presence of bidders representatives if there be any. The financial proposals of responsive bidders will be opened in presence of bidders or their representatives who like to attend at the time and date and at the address to be notified by the authority after approval of evaluation of the technical proposals by the concerned authority. The financial offers which are 5 (five) per cent above or below the estimated cost will be rejected.

The Corporation Authority reserves the right to accept or to reject any or all tender without assigning any reason thereof.

| Sl. No | Name of Work | Estimated Cost | Earnest Money | Period |
|--------|--|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| a. | Construction of City Bus Terminal behind the Inter-District Bus Terminal at Saidabad under Crash Program, 4th Pilot Project. | Tk. 8,75,19,000/= | 3% of the estimated cost | 9 months |
| b. | Construction of Bypass Road South of the Gabtaly Bus Terminal under Crash Program, 4th Pilot Project. | Tk. 7,39,43,000/= | 3% of the estimated cost | 9 months. |

Project Director
Crash Program
3rd Pilot Project
Dhaka City Corporation

Fund: Crash Program, 4th Pilot Project
DCC/PRD/235/00-01
GD-1129