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# Strengthening Strategic Planning and Monitoring for Results: Guidance Note on Third Party Analysis



Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Program  
**MAKING PUBLIC MONEY COUNT**

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Strengthening Strategic Planning & Monitoring for Results (SPM) project focuses on strengthening the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The SPEMP is a comprehensive programme funded by CIDA, Danida, DFID, EC and the Netherlands, and administered by the World Bank. GED is responsible for preparation of Bangladesh's Five Year Plans. The 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FY2011-YF2015) is on-going.

The third component of this project is concerned with establishing a results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. This Guidance Note (GN) is intended to provide advice on establishing Third Party Analysis (TPA) in the context of the results based monitoring and evaluation system. It should be read in conjunction with another GN concerning stakeholder analysis and a GN on establishing a Results Based Monitoring & Evaluation Unit.

### Third Party Analysis and its Application

TPA is defined in this context as *“a system whereby the Planning Commission engages an individual entity (such as a responsible NGO) to provide an independent assessment of the results of the Five Year Plans”*.

This definition is important because of the independent assessment of performance rather than the outsourcing of analytical work contracted out to third parties such as the Planning Research Institute (PRI). The GED has utilized the latter on a routine basis, for example the 2012 review of the SFYP. However this out-sourcing of tasks implies a lower degree of independence than the TPA envisaged in the ToR as clarified in the paragraph above.

TPA is becoming widely used in many countries including Bangladesh, and its application in monitoring progress with implementing the SFYP is a natural extension to its use in monitoring budget performance and other dimensions of economic governance.

It has an important potential role to feedback how the SFYP is being implemented, taking account of primary and secondary information sources. GED and other GoB stakeholders would benefit from a better understanding to the impediments to development projects, if the increase in the growth rate (and achievement of other national development goals), as envisaged in the SFYP, is to be fulfilled.

A key requirement is that the assessment process should be independent and evidence based. For TPA to work well it must be properly constructed, funded in a non-partisan manner and be seen to be fair. TPA should be seen as part of a system of strengthened accountability that is based on an enhanced role for civil society.

## Use of Third Party Analysis in Bangladesh

The use of TPA is growing in Bangladesh. Three major TPA initiatives are summarized in this section. These are as follows:

- a) Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA);
- b) Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) funded Citizen's Action for Result, Transparency and Accountability (CARTA); and
- c) International Budget Partnership (IBP).

It should be highlighted from the onset that GPSA and CARTA are grass-roots level exercises applying social accountability tools such as Citizen Report Card, Social Mapping and Focus Group Discussions. CARTA and GPSA have been applied to specific, on-going projects focusing on specific service delivery to the people on the ground. They therefore have some limitations at the national level with regard to macro-level goals. However they are important to highlight for two reasons: i) they demonstrate that the concept of TPA is established and evolving in Bangladesh (to an extent that has not been widely recognised in GED); and b) there are lessons to be learned in terms of their governance as well as illustrating some of the practical issues arising with TPA including the care needed to scope requirements, lead times for its establishment, and the need to fund TPA properly and to address continuity/sustainability issues.

**GPSA** is a new initiative hosted by the World Bank and is a coalition of donors, governments and CSOs. It aims to improve development results by supporting capacity building for enhanced citizen feedback and participation. The GPSA will contribute to country-level governance reforms and improved service delivery. This is also referred to as *social accountability*. Each activity funded by the GPSA is intended to yield measurable and realistic results in one or more of the following “pillars of governance”: transparency; representation and voice; accountability; and learning for improved results.

GPSA's funding component will only operate in countries where the government agrees to 'opt-in' to the GPSA. So far 20 countries, including Bangladesh, have chosen to opt-in. In March 2013 the GPSA issued its first Global Call for Proposals for Bangladesh with an Indicative Funding Range of US\$0.5 to US\$1million for successful applicants. It has sought proposals from CSOs that will: Strengthen citizen capacity to access local budget data to engage constructively in budget planning and implementation at the Union Parishad level within the framework of the Right to Information Act 2009, the open budgeting provisions of the Local Government Act 2009 and the Union Parishad Operational Manual of August 2012.

GPSA has pre-selected 12 projects from 10 countries as finalists for the first grants, including two from Bangladesh. The two potential Bangladeshi beneficiaries are: Care Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation.

The Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF), has funded **Citizen Action for Results, Transparency & Accountability (CARTA)**, which in turn awarded the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) to support *independent civil society monitoring* of development

projects funded by the World Bank in Nepal and Bangladesh. PTF is working with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF).

Its objective is to enhance the development impact, sustainability and local ownership of the selected projects financed by the World Bank in Bangladesh, by promoting civil society engagement to support improved governance. This is the first time that World Bank-financed projects will be tracked by civil society organizations funded by an independent agency rather than through the project budgets. It involves monitoring only six programmes out of the World Bank's total portfolio of 34 projects in Bangladesh, although this includes large projects such as Local Governance Support Project (LSGP).

The **Open Budget Initiative (OBI)** is a global research and advocacy program to promote public access to budget information and the adoption of accountable budget systems. It is organized through the International Budget Partnership (IBP) which supports CSO work to improve government budget practices, systems, and policies. There are now budget-focused organizations in over 100 countries. Recent evidence on the impact of budget transparency and accountability indicates:

- *Transparency can help attract cheaper international credit:* Even for countries with similar credit ratings, higher transparency is associated with lower spreads.
- *Opacity in fiscal matters can undermine fiscal discipline:* An IMF study found that an important predictor of a country's fiscal credibility and performance is the level of transparency in its public finance systems and practices.

In 2012 Bangladesh scored 58 in the Open Budget Survey, reflecting availability of budget information. This was the same score as achieved by Pakistan, although behind that of India, which scored 68. On an international perspective Bangladesh performed well above average and towards the upper end of the second quartile.

### **Lessons Arising from Experiences of TPA**

A number of key messages can be identified:

- i) TPA is rapidly growing in importance on an international basis. A key driver is the need for both Governments and donors to demonstrate results from their spending. .
- ii) TPA initiatives are taking strong hold in Bangladesh, and implementation of these will gather momentum in late 2013 and 2014. It would be highly appropriate for GED to monitor implementation of existing TPA initiatives in order to draw lessons to inform GED's own steps to initiate and implement TPA.
- iii) Lead times for implementing TPA have been quite long. This partly reflects the need to put in place suitable governance arrangements, the need for transparency in contracting CSOs, as service providers and the multi-donor nature of the major international funding schemes.

iv) TPA is quite expensive to implement. This suggests that if TPA is to be provided over the medium term, care will need to be taken to secure appropriate budgets and to focus ToR.

v) Bangladesh is playing a key role in structuring the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is highly likely that this will include further steps to strengthen mutual accountability. This is likely to further strengthen the role of TPA in Bangladesh.

vi) Although most TPA have been instigated by donors, the concept is gaining international traction. Use of electronic media means information is being disseminated much more widely, and in more languages.

### **Application of TPA to the Sixth Five Year Plan**

In the context of the SFYP, TPA should be viewed as a tool to verify progress and monitor achievements on the ground from the citizens/beneficiaries perspective. The scope of work for the TPA should be achievable, affordable and time-bound. Information flowing back into the review process must be presented in a form that is easy to understand, identifies emerging trends and is technically robust. This is a challenge, because the SFYP is wide-reaching. It also has spatial dimensions. Some parts of the Plan include lagging indicators whilst others have immediate or short term impacts. The scope of work should be carefully considered.

External factors impact on SFYP performance, including the world economic environment, international business confidence etc. The Plan needs to be responsive to these changes. To minimize the effect of external factors it may be appropriate to work closely with MoF.

### **Organising and Utilizing the Findings of Third Party Analysis**

Like Stakeholder Analysis TPA is a tool, not an end in itself. It is most effective as an input, helping to inform policy preparation, planning, budgeting and expenditure management. It can play a key role in supporting an effective feedback mechanism at each stage of the national planning and budgeting mechanism.

GED has experienced difficulties in monitoring implementation of the SFYP. These partly relate to challenges utilizing indicators included in the Plan, many of which lacked specificity and were not SMART. Given the long lead times needed to establish TPA, it does not look feasible to establish a TPA mechanism in advance of the Mid-Term Review. This leaves a gap in terms of bottom-up monitoring of the Plan, which may be partly filled through stakeholder consultations.

Since TPA is gaining momentum so rapidly in Bangladesh, it is recommended that consideration should be given to establishing a knowledge network or anchor within GED to keep abreast with developments. This would represent a “do minimum” response.

A more proactive approach would be to use TPA to strengthen feedback in time to assist preparation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. Dialogue would focus on working collaboratively to refine what information GED needs and how it should be structured and utilized. It appears

appropriate to focus on a small number of issues/topics that are not currently addressed through existing governance mechanisms. One need would seem to be in the area of the enabling environment for the private sector, given this lies at the heart of the SFYP growth strategy.

GED is at the core of the planning process in Bangladesh and has much to gain by taking the initiative. It would also strengthen its role as a knowledge centre/think tank, and help to put it at the heart of the development process in Bangladesh.

## Acronyms

CARTA	Citizen’s Action for Result, Transparency and Accountability
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DFGG	Demand for good governance
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
GED	General Economics Division
GN	Guidance Note
GPSA	Global Partnership for Social Accountability
CPM	Country Program Manager
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
IBP	International Budget Partnership
IPC	Independent Project Committee
JATRA	Journey for Advancement in Transparency, Representation and Accountability
JSDF	Japanese Social Development Fund
LGSP	Local Government Support Project
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OBI	Open Budget Initiative
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PTF	Partnership for Transparency Fund
PEM	Public Expenditure Management
PSD	Private Sector Development
RBM	Results Based Management
SA	Stakeholder Analysis
SEBA	Social Engagement for Budgetary Accountability

SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
SFYP	Sixth Five Year Plan
SPEMP	Strengthening Public Expenditure Management Program
SPM	Strengthening Strategic Planning & Monitoring for Results
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
TI	Transparency International
TPA	Third Party Analysis
TPM	Third Party Monitoring

# Strengthening Strategic Planning & Monitoring for Results: Guidance Note on Third Party Analysis

## 1. Background and Approach

The Strengthening Strategic Planning & Monitoring for Results (SPM) project focuses on strengthening the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The SPEMP is a comprehensive programme funded by CIDA, Danida, DFID, EC and the Netherlands, and administered by the World Bank. GED is responsible for the preparation of Bangladesh's Five Year Plans. The 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FY2011-YF2015) is on-going.

The third component of this project is concerned with establishing a results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. This Guidance Note (GN) is intended to provide advice on **third party analysis (TPA)** in the context of the results based monitoring and evaluation system. It should be read in conjunction with another GN concerning **stakeholder analysis** and a GN on establishing a **Results Based Monitoring & Evaluation Unit**. Further work is being undertaken with respect to governance, performance indicators and their measurement. The process entails extensive consultation and associated training.

The approach to this assignment has been to prepare an outline of the note which was discussed at a well-attended inception meeting on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013, followed by meetings with GED staff members, Implementation Monitoring & Evaluation Division (IMED) and key external stakeholders. It also reflects a literature review and consideration of best practice. The GN summarizes the context, explores the current use of TPA by the World Bank in Bangladesh, as well as its use by IMED and other parts of the GoB. It proposes a possible introduction of TPA in the context of the 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (SFYP).

The GN describes the evolution of TPA internationally, and reflects on potential pitfalls as well as current best practice lessons. It highlights the benefits of effective stakeholder engagement, in terms of increasing ownership of the SFYP and ensuring that good feedback is received to inform plan monitoring and possible revisions, as well as links to the budget process. The latter is particularly important given that it is envisaged as a living document. The GN highlights the benefits of undertaking it in a manner that complements other strengthening measures. These include attention being paid to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to lay down a quantitative results framework (RF) to measure progress with the implementation of the Sixth Plan on a regular cycle, including the experience of the first implementation review that was completed in July 2012

The note is structured as follows:

- Section 2 explores the context, provides definitions of TPA, explores its origins and examines its application in Bangladesh;
- Section 3 considers the current use of TPA by the Planning Commission;

- Section 4 reviews whether TPA could play a new role in GED, considers the practical issues of implementation and makes preliminary implementation recommendations.

## 2. Definitions and Current Use of Third Party Analysis

### 2.1 What is Third Party Analysis?

Task 2 of the consultant's Terms of Reference (ToR) specifies the following: *“Prepare a guidance note on how to do third-party analysis”*. Clarification was sought from the World Bank on the definition of Third Party Analysis (TPA) in this context and it was confirmed that it *“concerns establishing a system whereby the Planning Commission engages an individual entity (such as a responsible NGO) to provide an independent assessment of the results of the Five Year Plans”*.

In the literature it is variously described as Third Party Analysis, Third Party Review or Third Party Monitoring, and it appears that all may be used interchangeably. This is important for GED, because there has been a perception that TPA focused on analytical work contracted out to third parties such as the Planning Research Institute (PRI). This has been ongoing on a routine basis, for example the 2012 review of the SFYP was undertaken by PRI on an outsourced basis. However this out-sourcing of tasks implies a lower degree of independence than the TPA envisaged in the ToR as clarified in the paragraph above. Given that the ToR use the term Third Party Analysis it is appropriate to retain this term, abridged to TPA, but for the reader to keep in mind that the focus of the GN is on the independent assessment of performance, in terms of results, rather than the outsourcing of analytical work. It can form a key element of a process to strengthen social accountability, helping to give voice to citizens about national strategy and development planning priorities. This can be particularly beneficial in Bangladesh, given rapid change and urbanization as well as helping to address the concerns of citizens who may consider that their elected representatives do not pay sufficient attention to their needs and priorities. GED expressed some concern that TPA, as envisaged above, would be unusual in the context of Bangladesh, and could be used in a negative manner to create dissent or criticism of the performance of GED in managing the Five Year Plans, or more widely of the GoB. Therefore the first part of this GN, is a description of the evolution of TPA, its application in other countries and the existing use of TPA in Bangladesh, including for monitoring the World Bank's own portfolio of projects in Bangladesh. This is intended to de-mystify it, and to highlight that TPA is becoming widely used in many countries including Bangladesh, and its application in monitoring progress with implementing the SFYP is a natural extension to its use in monitoring budget performance and other dimensions of economic governance.

It has an important potential role to provide feedback on how the SFYP is being implemented, taking account of primary and secondary information sources.

If used properly TPA can help GED by providing vital information on the strengths and weaknesses of the SFYP and subsequent Five Year Plans. A key requirement, if the findings are to be widely accepted and acted upon, is that the assessment process should be

independent and evidence based. For TPA to work well it must be properly constructed, funded in a non-partisan manner and be seen to be fair. TPA should be seen as part of a system of strengthened accountability that is based on an enhanced role for civil society. This is explored below.

## **2.2 Enhancing the Role of Civil Society in Strengthening Governance and Accountability**

An empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and is seen by many experts as an asset in itself. It represents and fosters pluralism and can contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth. It is an important player in fostering peace and in conflict resolution. By articulating citizens' concerns, civil society organisations (CSOs) are active in the public arena, engaging in initiatives to further participatory democracy. They embody a growing demand for transparent and accountable governance.

The relationship between Governments and CSOs should be seen as being complementary. Ensuring effective provision of social services - including health, education and social protection - is the responsibility of governments, whether on central or local level, depending on the institutional framework of the country. However, no government can on its own fulfill all the tasks required for sustainable development. This goal requires active participation of citizens and their organizations. CSOs play a vital role in enabling people to claim their rights, in promoting rights-based approaches, in shaping development policies and partnerships, and in overseeing their implementation. Hence, CSOs are participants, legitimizers and endorsers of government policy, and collaborators in the national development effort. They provide services in areas that are complementary to those provided by the Government. Recognizing the vital role played by CSOs, signatories to the Busan Outcome Document committed to:

- Implement their respective commitments to enable CSOs to exercise their roles as independent development actors, with a particular focus on an enabling environment, consistent with agreed international rights, that maximizes the contribution of CSOs to development;
- Encourage CSOs to implement practices that strengthen their accountability and their contribution to development effectiveness, guided by the Istanbul Principles and the International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>

CSOs on their part are expected to be guided in their work by the Istanbul CSO Development Effectiveness Principles, which among others require CSOs to promote environmental sustainability and practice transparency and accountability, including through clearly assigned responsibilities, transparent operational procedures, ethical information practices,

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<sup>1</sup>The Istanbul Principles were agreed at the Open Forum's Global Assembly in Istanbul, 28-30 September 2010. They are statements of values and qualities that should inform CSO socio-economic, political, and organizational relationships. They are universal points of reference for CSO activities in development. The framework provides CSOs with detailed guidance to implement the principles.

anti-corruption policies and a demonstrated respect for gender balance, human rights standards, integrity, honesty and truthfulness.<sup>2</sup>

Beyond the provision of services, states assume responsibility for their oversight, regulation and quality. They may choose to work through a wide array of organisational arrangements, from participatory schemes to public-private partnerships. CSOs have increasingly become active players in the economic realm, with initiatives having an impact on local economy or by monitoring repercussions of national and international economic policies.

While states carry the primary responsibility for development and democratic governance, synergies between states and CSOs can help overcome challenges of poverty, widening inequalities, social exclusion and unsustainable development. CSOs' participation in policy processes is key to ensuring inclusive and effective policies. CSOs therefore contribute to building more accountable and legitimate states, leading to enhanced social cohesion and more open and deeper democracies.

The concept of "CSOs" embraces a wide range of actors with different roles and mandates.

Definitions vary over time and across institutions and countries. These are generally considered to include all non-state, not-for-profit, non-partisan and non-violent organizations, through which people organise to pursue shared objectives and ideals, whether political, cultural, social or economic. Operating from the local to the national, regional and international levels, they comprise urban and rural, formal and informal organisations. As noted by the EU, for example, the last decade has witnessed contrasting developments. CSOs are now widely recognised as development actors in their own right<sup>3</sup>. They have increased in number and respond to new social bases, building coalitions at all levels. CSOs stand out thanks to their capacity to reach out to, empower, represent and defend vulnerable and socially excluded groups, and trigger social innovation. Against this background, governments in several countries have strengthened their engagement with CSOs.

Yet the relationship between states and CSOs is often delicate. A limited tradition of dialogue still prevails in many countries and far too often the space for civil society remains narrow or is shrinking, with severe restrictions applied. In many contexts, CSOs focused on human rights and advocacy, including women's organisations, face limitations in their opportunities to work and to secure funding. On their side, CSOs may face challenges of representativeness, transparency, internal governance and capacity, dependency on international donors as well as competition over resources. The space and opportunities opened up by the Internet and the social media are also playing a substantial role in driving this change.

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<sup>2</sup> For details see [http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/international\\_framework\\_open\\_forum.pdf](http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/IMG/pdf/international_framework_open_forum.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with Civil Society in External Relations" Communication From The Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee Of the Regions Brussels, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012, COM(2012) 492 final

Civil society participation in public policy processes and in policy dialogue leads to inclusive and effective policies, if conjugated with adequate allocation of resources and sound management. CSOs participation is a key factor in devising policies that meet people's needs.

Governments can benefit from the constructive participation of CSOs in the development, implementation and monitoring of national strategies, at all levels. The political will of public authorities to engage is crucial and the EU and other development partners including the World Bank encourage actions to progress in this direction. These development partners are seeking to invest more in promoting, supporting and monitoring effective mechanisms for result-oriented dialogues, emphasising their multi-stakeholder dimension. National or sectoral policy dialogues should include all concerned actors, such as CSOs and the private sector where relevant, and partner governments, local authorities, parliaments and other national institutions.

To be meaningful, dialogue must be timely, predictable and transparent. In turn, for a policy process to be credible, CSOs must be independent, representative and competent

At the local level, dialogue mechanisms between CSOs and local authorities should be promoted, as they guarantee useful entry points for policy input in decentralised contexts.

This enhances the responsiveness of national policies to local realities. CSOs can also help mobilise local resources and social capital, share information and bring marginalised groups into play, thus helping improve local governance and territorial cohesion.

Poor governance constrains development. The ability to hold those who govern to account is crucial for better governance. In democratic systems it is the prime responsibility of parliaments to hold governments to account; CSOs can also play a role in boosting domestic accountability at local and national levels through a free, clear, accessible flow of information. They can contribute to nurturing respect for the rule of law by monitoring effective implementation of laws and policies and they can initiate and support anti-corruption efforts. By analysing and contributing to budget proposals, monitoring and tracking public revenues and expenditures, and supporting citizens' budget literacy, CSOs play an important role in the budget processes, helping to ensure that public resources are used effectively and efficiently. Linking the budget to the population's priorities, needs and human rights can increase the impact on poverty reduction and inclusive growth.

Donors are seeking to step up support to country-led efforts to strengthen domestic accountability systems, promoting CSOs' role in oversight, alongside parliaments, supreme audit institutions, public procurement monitoring agencies and the media. They are increasingly supporting CSO capacities to engage effectively in these systems with a long term perspective, including at local level where a wealth of diverse and innovative approaches is emerging in the area of "social accountability", including through the use of new technologies.

DFID Bangladesh, for example, states that: *"We will increase support to civil society organisations to help marginalised communities demand basic services, land rights, fair*

*wages and accessible education for ethnic minority groups, and empowerment of women and girls*"<sup>4</sup>.

It is also appropriate to note that this support for CSO oversight is being strengthened in cases where countries are beneficiaries of budget support. For example the EU has introduced a new eligibility criterion on "transparency and oversight of the budget" which will focus on the timely availability of comprehensive and sound budgetary information with which CSOs can better hold decision makers to account<sup>5</sup>.

### **2.3 Use of Third Party Analysis in Bangladesh**

The use of TPA is growing in Bangladesh. Initiatives to date have largely been donor initiated and funded, but since the Government of Bangladesh has been so closely involved in the post-Busan international development policy dialogue, and as a key part of these discussions relate to strengthening bottom-up social accountability, this may be expected to change.

Three major TPA initiatives are summarized in this section. These are as follows:

- a) Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA);
- b) Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) funded Citizen's Action for Result, Transparency and Accountability (CARTA); and
- c) International Budget Partnership (IBP).

It should be highlighted from the onset that GPSA and CARTA are grass-roots level exercises applying social accountability tools such as Citizen Report Card, Social Mapping and Focus Group Discussions. CARTA and GPSA have been applied to specific, on-going projects focusing on specific service delivery to the people on the ground. They therefore have some limitations at the national level with regard to macro-level goals. However they are important to highlight for two reasons: i) they demonstrate that the concept of TPA is established and evolving in Bangladesh (to an extent that has not been widely recognised in GED); and b) there are lessons to be learned in terms of their governance as well as illustrating some of the practical issues arising with TPA including the care needed to scope requirements, lead times for its establishment, and the need to fund TPA properly and to address continuity/sustainability issues.

#### **a) Global Partnership for Social Accountability**

The Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) is a new initiative that is hosted by the World Bank. The GPSA is a coalition of donors, governments and CSOs that aims to improve development results by supporting capacity building for enhanced citizen feedback and participation<sup>6</sup>. The GPSA will contribute to country-level governance reforms and

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<sup>4</sup>Operational Plan 2011-2015 DFID Bangladesh Updated: June 2013

<sup>5</sup>The Future Approach to EU Budget Support to Third Countries (2011)

<sup>6</sup>The Global Partners in the GPSA so far include Ford Foundation, Trust Africa, Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, Cordaid, Asociación por los Derechos Civiles, CIESAS, Instituto de Comunicación y Desarrollo,

improved service delivery. To achieve this objective, the GPSA provides strategic and sustained support to CSOs' social accountability initiatives aimed at strengthening transparency and accountability. The GPSA's funding component will only operate in countries where the government agrees to 'opt-in' to the GPSA; to date 20 countries, including Bangladesh, have chosen to opt-in to GPSA. GPSA aims to reach overall funding goals of US \$75 to 125 million over the next seven years.

As noted on the GPSA website, social accountability has received increasing attention across the development community in recent years<sup>7</sup>. This includes a growing emphasis on beneficiary engagement in monitoring and assessing government performance—particularly in providing feedback on, and voicing demand for, improved service delivery—and thus contributing to greater development effectiveness. This kind of engagement, which is also referred to as *social accountability*, enables: ***“beneficiaries and civil society groups to engage with policymakers and service providers to bring about greater accountability and responsiveness to beneficiary needs”***.

Many factors, especially the proliferation of new information and communications technologies, are changing how beneficiaries and civil society organizations (CSOs) engage with governments; and many governments are creating better enabling environments for voice, transparency, and accountability. However feedback from international surveys indicates that there are large knowledge and evidence gaps, especially in terms of:

- What works and why?
- Under what conditions approaches can be scaled up? and
- How to sustain successful approaches?

Moreover, civil society groups often operate on short programmatic funding cycles, and they lack the sustained support to build technical and institutional capacity to engage with governments over the long term on selected themes.

GPSA aims to improve development results by supporting capacity building for enhanced citizen feedback and participation. It is envisaged that the GPSA will contribute to country-level governance reforms and improved service delivery. To achieve this objective, the GPSA provides strategic and sustained support to CSOs' social accountability initiatives aimed at strengthening transparency and accountability.

Each activity funded by the GPSA is intended to yield measurable and realistic results in one or more of the following “pillars of governance”: **transparency; representation and voice; accountability; and learning for improved results**. Key social accountability activities or approaches that could be supported would include: budget literacy campaigns, citizen charters, citizen report cards, community contracting, community management and/or contracting, community oversight, community scorecards, grievance redress mechanisms,

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AlianzaONG, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Partnership for Transparency Fund and the Georgetown Initiative for Innovation, Development and Evaluation.

<sup>7</sup><http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/CSO/0,,contentMDK:23017716~pagePK:220503~piPK:220476~theSitePK:228717,00.html>

independent budget analysis, input or expenditure tracking, integrity pacts, participatory budgeting, participatory physical audits, procurement monitoring, public access to information legislation, social audits, and user management committees.

In March 2013 the GPSA issued its first Global Call for Proposals for Bangladesh with an Indicative Funding Range of US\$500,000-US\$1,000,000 for successful applicants. This is seeking proposals on Social Accountability from Civil Society Organizations that will:

- Strengthen citizen capacity to access local budget data to engage constructively in budget planning and implementation at the Union Parishad level within the framework of the Right to Information Act 2009, the open budgeting provisions of the Local Government Act 2009 and the Union Parishad Operational Manual of August 2012;
- Monitor and report on the open budgeting process at the Union Parishad level, including consistency of public expenditure planning and implementation with provisions in the Union Parishad Operational Manual.

The information emerging from the GPSA supported activities will be used by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives to ensure transparent and responsive public finance management system at the local level.

GPSA foresees that a broad range of CSOs may be suitable for this kind of task: they may be Non-government organizations; Not-for-profit media organizations; Charitable organizations; Faith-based organizations; Professional organizations; Labour unions; Workers' organizations; Associations of elected local Representatives; Foundations; Policy development and Research institutes. It is a requirement that recipients need to be legal entities in Bangladesh.

According to the GPSA website<sup>8</sup>, the Steering Committee has pre-selected 12 projects from 10 countries as finalists for the first grants, including two from Bangladesh, out of a total of 216 CSOs that responded to the first Call for Proposals. The selection process is on-going with a due diligence process that includes receiving comments on the proposals from government and the public, and a fiduciary assessment. All comments received will be taken into consideration in revising the project proposals before GPSA gives final approval for the grants. The two potential Bangladeshi beneficiaries are:

**Table 1: GPSA Round 1- Selected CSO Projects in Bangladesh**

<b>Civil Society Organisation</b>	<b>Project Title</b>
Care Bangladesh	Journey for Advancement in Transparency, Representation and Accountability (JATRA)
ManusherJonno Foundation (MJF)	Social Engagement for Budgetary Accountability (SEBA) [In Bangla SEBA means 'service']

<sup>8</sup>as of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013

These two projects are described in more detail in Annex A of this GN. In addition their grant applications are published on the GPSA website.

**b) Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) and Citizen Action for Results, Transparency & Accountability (CARTA)**

The Government of Japan, through its Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF), has awarded the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) a grant of US\$ 1.9 million to support *independent civil society monitoring of development projects funded by the World Bank in Nepal and Bangladesh*. The budget is roughly the same for Nepal and Bangladesh, suggesting that the cost of the Bangladesh monitoring will be approximately US\$1m.

The (PTF) entered into an agreement with the World Bank in July 2011 to undertake a program, called “Citizen Action for Results, Transparency & Accountability (CARTA)” to carry out the program during 2011-2014. The PTF is working with ManusherJonno Foundation (MJF) in Bangladesh.

This is the first time that World Bank-financed projects will be tracked by civil society organizations using funding from an independent agency rather than through the project budgets for program implementation in Bangladesh. The program’s objective is to enhance the development impact, sustainability and local ownership of the selected projects financed by the World Bank in Bangladesh, by promoting civil society engagement, experience and capacity for supporting improved governance. It will support the active involvement of citizens in the implementation of World Bank-financed projects. In addition the program aims at building a significant body of knowledge and good practice in the “demand for good governance” (DFGG).

A unique aspect of this program is that the funds are managed by an independent international organization, the PTF, and channeled through MJF Bangladesh to selected CSOs. Since many Bank-financed projects in Bangladesh have already incorporated elements of citizen engagement in project design and implementation, this program supplements these project components by offering CSOs independent funding and support for additional results-oriented activities.

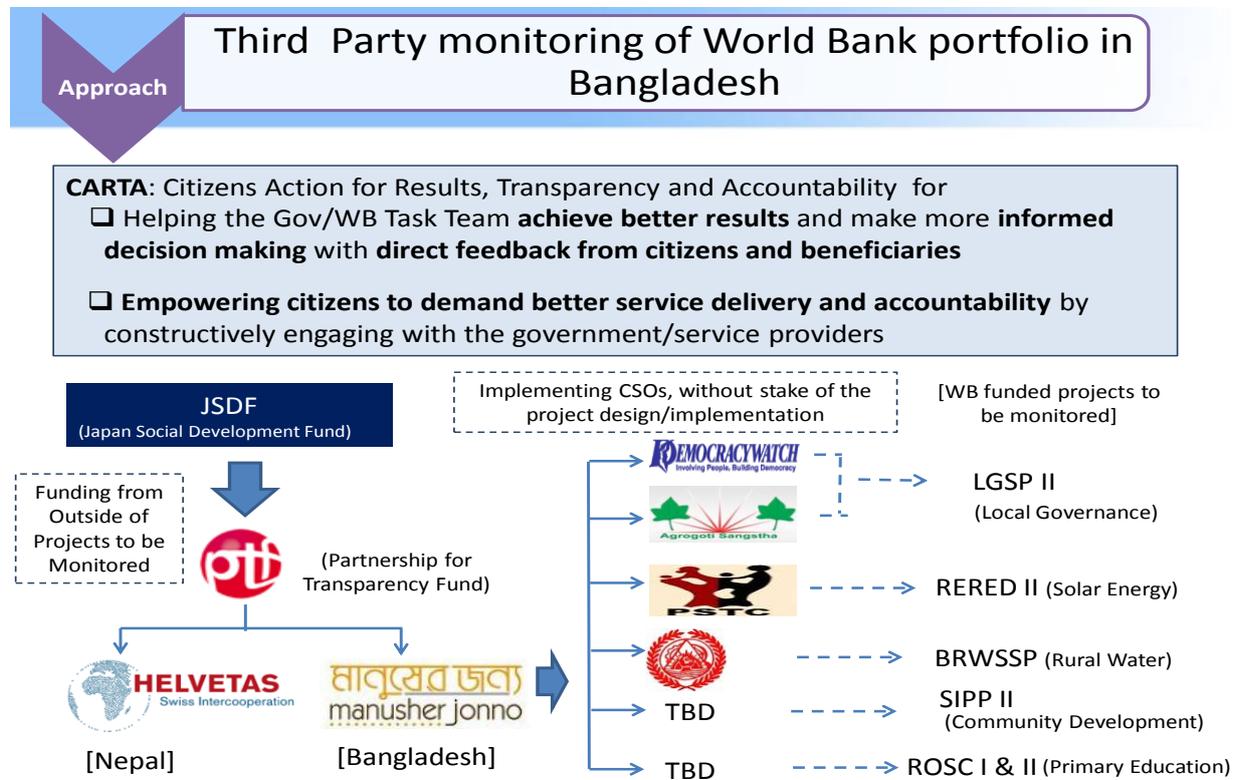
The program has three operational components:

- i. Small Grant Facility for Civil Society Engagement;
- ii. On-the-job Capacity Building;
- iii. Learning & Knowledge Sharing.

**CARTA Implementation in Bangladesh:** Figure 1 below, which was provided by the World Bank, presents how the CARTA is structured in Bangladesh. It can be seen that it is quite a complex implementation hierarchy. It is also appropriate to note that it involves monitoring six programmes out of the World Bank’s total portfolio of 34 projects in Bangladesh, although this does involve large projects such as the Local Governance Support

Project (LSGP). In this regard the World Bank noted that some primarily technical projects, such as e-procurement, do not lend themselves to TPM.

**Figure 1: CARTA Execution in Bangladesh**



**c) Open Budget Initiative**

The Open Budget Initiative (OBI) is a global research and advocacy program to promote public access to budget information and the adoption of accountable budget systems. It is organized through the International Budget Partnership (IBP). The core of IBP’s work since its inception has been to collaborate with and support its civil society partners’ work to improve government budget practices, systems, and policies within their country. This includes improving public access to budget information, creation of opportunities to engage in budget processes, and supporting more responsive government budget institutions. There are now budget-focused organizations in over 100 countries, and the potential for many more. There is also growing interest amongst other civil society networks – such as those working on public health, education, extractive industries, aid and the environment – that recognize the importance of budget information to their own advocacy.

While improvements in budget transparency, participation, and accountability are driven primarily by stakeholders within individual countries, IBP argues that there is increasing evidence that both pressure and support from external factors contribute significantly to governments’ decisions to undertake improvements. It believes that *“it is promising then that, in addition to this growth in civil society interest, most major multilateral and bilateral donor agencies understand the importance of open budgets for aid effectiveness, and are*

*committed to supporting governments – and increasingly civil society – in efforts around this”. Their interest is shared by many legislators and auditors who are eager to have access to data and oversight opportunities to fulfill their constitutional mandates.*

Proponents of the initiative note that pressure from these internal and external stakeholders has contributed to an increasing number of governments showing that open budgeting is possible in a wide range of environments. Transparency and public participation can help shine the light on leakages and improve efficiency in public expenditures, as presented in Box 1:

### **Box 1: Examples of Successful Third Party Monitoring**

In **India** the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights exposed how the government had diverted funds for programs for Dalit communities — one of the poorest and most marginalized groups in India — to finance the 2010 Commonwealth Games. Using investigative reports based on budget tracking and analysis, the NCDHR launched an advocacy campaign to recoup the money, which resulted in widespread national and international media coverage. Under this pressure, India’s Home Minister ultimately admitted publicly that US\$130 million of public funds for Dalits was wrongly diverted and committed to returning the money. So far the government has returned almost US\$100 million, which is now supporting services and programs for approximately 2.4 million Dalits

*Transparency and public participation foster equity by matching national resources with national priorities:* In **South Africa**, a country with an alarmingly high rate of HIV infection, the national government resisted funding programs to prevent the transmission of the virus from expectant mothers to their babies and to provide antiretroviral medicines (ARVs) to those infected, arguing these services were unaffordable.

In response, the Treatment Action Campaign, a broad-based civil society coalition, launched a high-profile advocacy effort that included taking the government to court. By analyzing available government budget data on health spending, TAC was able to produce solid evidence that there was more than enough in the health budget to pay for ARVs for all HIV-positive South Africans, as well as for programs to prevent new infections. TAC won its case, and the government increased spending on HIV/AIDS treatments by US\$6 billion, providing lifesaving medicines to 1.6 million people who were not receiving such help before.

*Source: OBI website*

This initiative includes different elements: the **Open Budget Survey** is a comprehensive analysis and survey that evaluates whether governments give the public access to budget information and opportunities to participate in the budget process at the national level. The IBP works with civil society partners in 100 countries to collect the data for the Survey. The first Open Budget Survey was released in 2006 and it is conducted biennially.

In order to measure the overall commitment of the countries surveyed to transparency and to allow for comparisons among countries, IBP created the **Open Budget Index** from the Survey. The OBI assigns a score to each country based on the information it makes available to the public throughout the budget process.

The Open Budget Initiative plans to collaborate with civil society organizations worldwide to undertake research and advocacy to raise public awareness of the connections between budget transparency and people's daily lives to mobilize public support for reform.

The new evidence on the impact of budget transparency and accountability indicates:

***Transparency can help attract cheaper international credit:*** Research commissioned by the IBP finds that, after controlling for various economic variables, countries with higher levels of fiscal transparency have higher credit ratings and lower spreads between borrowing and lending rates, thus reducing governments' borrowing costs. Even for countries with similar credit ratings, higher transparency is associated with lower spreads.

***Opacity in fiscal matters can undermine fiscal discipline:*** An International Monetary Fund (IMF) study found that an important predictor of a country's fiscal credibility and performance is the level of transparency in its public finance systems and practices. In looking at the recent global economic crisis, the IMF study attributes almost a quarter of the unexpected increases in government debt across the countries studied to a lack of available information about the government's fiscal position. Opacity in fiscal matters contributes significantly to the suffering being felt directly by the citizens of the crisis-stricken countries in Europe.

It is of note that in 2012 Bangladesh scored 58 in the Open Budget Survey, in terms of the availability of budget information. This was the same score as achieved by Pakistan, although behind that of India, which scored 68. However on an international perspective Bangladesh performed well above average and towards the upper end of the second quartile.

Related initiatives include the Transparency International (TI) surveys, including the TI **Corruption Perceptions Index**, which is widely monitored to establish which countries are improving their position and which are facing increasing corruption concerns. The Index reflects a range of surveys and is therefore based on third party monitoring principles.

From a GED perspective, there may be a sense that the Open Budget project is more relevant to the Ministry of Finance, with its direct responsibility for preparing the budget. However as Box 1 above highlights, the OBI is equally focused on how resources are used to achieve national objectives, so it is central to the planning process.

### **3. Determining the Scope of Third Party Analysis for Bangladesh**

#### **3.1 Lessons Arising from Experiences of TPA**

A number of key messages can be identified from the review above.

i) The first point to note, as comes across strongly from the information sources reviewed, is that TPA (in its various forms including Third Party Monitoring) is rapidly growing in importance on an international basis. There are several reasons for this, but a key driver is the need for both Governments and donors to demonstrate results from their spending. Given

the deep recession in the many Western countries, there is intense pressure to prove that funds are being used in an accountable manner. TPA is one element of a package of measures to strengthen results monitoring and accountability.

ii) **TPA initiatives are taking strong hold in Bangladesh**, and implementation of these will gather momentum on late 2013 and 2014. It would be highly appropriate for GED to monitor their implementation, whilst noting that these have been donor funded and not all findings may be specifically applicable to GED.

iii) **Lead times for implementing TPA have been quite long**. This partly reflects the need to put in place suitable governance arrangements, and also the need for transparency in the manner in which contracts are left to CSOs, as service providers. It also reflects the multi-donor nature of the major international funding schemes, which may not apply if GED utilizes alternate funding sources.

iv) **TPA is quite expensive to implement**. CARTA is costing in the range of US\$1m to implement in Bangladesh and the grants to be funded under GPSA to the two NGOs will be in the range of US\$500,000 to US\$1m each. In each case the programme scope is necessarily quite focused and time-bound. This suggests that if TPA is to be provided over the medium term, care will need to be taken to secure appropriate budgets and to focus Terms of Reference sufficiently tightly.

v) **Bangladesh is playing a key role** in structuring the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and has submitted proposals for these. Whilst the final agreement of what will be included has yet to be determined internationally, it is highly likely that it will include further steps to strengthen mutual accountability. In the context of TPA, mutual accountability reflects the latest international thinking, as expounded at the 2011 Busan conference of: *“accountability to the intended beneficiaries of our co-operation, as well as to our respective citizens, organisations, constituents and shareholders, is critical to delivering results. Transparent practices form the basis for enhanced accountability”*<sup>9</sup>

This is likely to further strengthen the role of TPA in Bangladesh.

vi) Although most TPA have been instigated by donors, the concept is gaining international traction, and the use of electronic media mean that information is being disseminated much more widely, and in more languages.

### **3.2 Application of TPA to the Sixth Five Year Plan**

Reflecting the above findings, it is important that the scope of work for the TPA should be achievable, affordable and time-bound. Information flowing back into the review process must be presented in a form that is **easy to understand, but also identifies emerging trends and is technically robust**. This is a challenge, because the SFYP, by definition, is

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<sup>9</sup>Declaration of Busan Partnership For Effective Development Co-Operation Fourth High Level Forum On Aid Effectiveness, December 2011; <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49650173.pdf>

wide-reaching and operates at different levels (i.e. at macro, sectoral and project/programme levels).

It also has **spatial dimensions**. Bangladesh is facing key challenges in terms of urbanization, as well as trade-offs between the use of natural resources such as coal reserves that entail compulsory purchase and resettlement plans. Some of these will evoke strong reactions and polarized opinions at local level. Care will have to be taken to ensure that TPAs undertaken in a manner that is seen to be balanced and measured.

Furthermore some parts of the Plan include **lagging indicators** whilst other parts have **immediate or short term impacts**. The consequence of this is that the scope of work should be carefully considered, including whether it is appropriate to award a multi-year performance monitoring contract. This partly depends on budget availability and predictability.

**External factors** impact on SFYP performance, including the world economic environment, international business confidence etc. The Plan needs to be responsive to these changes.

#### 4. Organising and Utilizing the Findings of Third Party Analysis

Like Stakeholder Analysis TPA is a tool, not an end in itself. It is most effective as an input, helping to inform policy preparation, planning, budgeting and expenditure management. It can play a key role in supporting an effective feedback mechanism at each stage of the national planning and budgeting mechanism. This section is intended to help the Planning Commission work out how it will facilitate implementation of TPA.

GED has already experienced difficulties in monitoring implementation of the SFYP. These largely reflect the challenges in utilizing the indicators included in the plan, many of which lacked specificity and were not SMART in all respects. A mid-term review of the SFYP is due in 2014 and preparations for it are expected to start shortly. Timespans to set up TPA could be shortened if the GoB, specifically GED, took the lead in establishing an appropriate mechanism.

Since TPA is gaining momentum so rapidly in Bangladesh, it is recommended that consideration should be given to establishing a **knowledge network or anchor** within GED to monitor existing TPA initiatives, participate in existing consultation mechanisms, working groups (such as Open Budget fora) to keep abreast with developments. This would seem to represent a “do minimum” response.

A more proactive and preferred approach would be to use TPA to strengthen feedback in time to assist preparation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. GED should engage with funding bodies, such as but not limited to GPSA, in order to mobilize funding for this specific purpose. The funding would be channelled through credible CSOs and would reflect competitive grant application processes. Whilst these include some inevitable risks and uncertainties, these could be minimized through a proactive and collaborative approach. Dialogue would focus

on working collaboratively to refine what information GED needs, and how that information should be structured and how it would be utilized.

A five step process may be identified to assist GED is establishing TPA mechanisms in time to guide the preparation of the 7<sup>th</sup>FYP<sup>10</sup>. These are presented in Table 2:

**Table 2: Structured Approach to Implementing TPA**

<b>Step</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Observations</b>
1.	Establish appropriate governance arrangements	In order to broaden ownership of both the process and findings it is recommended that a broad spectrum of stakeholders should be brought on board, including key public sector actors (Ministry of Finance key line Ministries local Government representatives etcetc), together with independent, non-partisan civil society stakeholders). Sub-working groups may be established to oversee particular aspects of the process.
2	Scoping of priorities for TPA	For the 7 <sup>th</sup> FYP to be credible, it must address a broad spectrum of development needs, including enterprise, social, environmental and spatial dimensions. Not all are equally suited to TPA, and key priorities and gaps need to be identified for initial monitoring.
3.	Preparation of ToR for CSOs	These ToR should be specific and detailed, but avoid being so prescriptive as to stifle innovation or to create in-built biases. It is recommended that an independent review/quality assurance process should be instigated, in order to ensure that the resulting ToRare fit for purpose.
4	Tendering and appointment of CSOs	The work packages should be structured to encourage competition. (Subject to confirmation of the funding sources) GoB procurement processes should be utilized given the emphasis on national capability and systems, Clear performance and reporting milestones should be established.
5	Analysis and incorporation of findings	GEDmay choose to outsource part of the analysis of feedback from the third party monitoring, ensuring that as an evidence base it is credible and avoids inappropriate advocacy, political bias or subjective conclusions. TPA findings may be triangulated with other evidence sources in order to inform and strengthen policy formulation.

<sup>10</sup>It is not appropriate to include timeframes or milestones for this process prior to further consideration by GED

It is useful to identify the criteria required for identifying suitable CSOs, because these attributes provide a good indication of the attributes needed if CSOs are to successfully undertake TPM, regardless of the funding source. According to GPSA, they need to demonstrate the following:

### **Box 1: Necessary Attributes for Effective TPA**

- **Representation:** key criteria are community ties, accountability to members or beneficiaries, diversity and gender sensitivity;
- **Governance:** sound internal management policies and practices, comprising organizational dimensions, such as clear management roles and responsibilities, clear methods of planning and organizing activities, human capital, financial and technical resources, and partnerships;
- **Transparency:** including disclosure of sources of funding, financial accountability and governance transparency;
- **Fiduciary capacity:** ability to meet applicable World Bank policies for grants [This criteria could be adapted according to the funding source];
- **Institutional capacity:** appropriate scale of operations, facilities, and equipment;
- **Competence:** proposed executing team possesses relevant skills and experience across all areas for which activities have been proposed;
- **Proven track record:** organization can provide evidence of its experience (at least 3-5 years) in the area of the call for proposals, and a vision matching the goals of the GPSA.

It appears appropriate to focus initially on a number of issues/topic that are not currently addressed through existing governance mechanisms. One opportunity/need would seem to be in the area of the enabling environment for the private sector, given that private sector development lies at the heart of the growth strategy included in the SFYP. There are other needs, and GED should give careful consideration to prioritization, taking account of likely financing envelopes, key requirements for the Mid-Term review and 7<sup>th</sup>FYP preparation and areas of greatest impact.

In summary, the introduction of TPA is evolving rapidly, including its application in Bangladesh. Whilst initiatives to date have largely been driven by donors, its greatest potential exists as an organically owned and driven tool to strengthen democratic governance and accountability in Bangladesh. Civil society plays a strong role in Bangladesh, and if managed properly, TPA can build on its existing strengths to enhance feedback on implementation of the SFYP and to assist preparation of the 7<sup>th</sup> FYP. GED is at the core of the planning process in Bangladesh and has much to gain by taking the initiative. It would also strengthen its role as a knowledge centre/think tank, and help to put it at the heart of the development process in Bangladesh.

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## Annex B: People Met

Mr Syed Ali Bin Hassan	Assistant Chief, GED, Planning Commission
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Mr Monirul Islam Mohd	Senior Assistant Chief, GED, Bangladesh Planning Commission
Dr TaiburRahman	Senior Assistant Chief, GED, Planning Commission
Mr Faizul Islam	Deputy Chief, GED
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Mr JorgNadoll	Senior Public Sector Specialist, World Bank Country Office, Bangladesh
MrYoichiro Ikeda	Operations Officer, Country Management Unit, WB
Mr K.A.M. Morshed	Assistant Country Director, Policy Support and Communications, UNDP
Professor GourGobindaGoswami	North South University, Dhaka
Mr Abdul Hamid Chowdhury	Principal, London College of Legal Studies (South), and ex-Secretary, Government of Bangladesh
Dr Ahsan H Mansur	Executive Director, PRI
Mr. Rafi Hussain	Economist, PRI
Mr Syed Md. Nazim	General Manager, PRI

## **Annex C: Summary of Global Partnership for Social Accountability Grants in Bangladesh**

**i) Care Bangladesh: Journey for Advancement in Transparency, Representation and Accountability (JATRA):** The overall goal of this project is to strengthen *Union Parishad public finance management systems so that they are transparent and aligned with the Local Government Act 2009*. This institutional strengthening will ultimately improve the UP legitimacy, their effectiveness in delivering services and ultimately their income revenues. Components will focus on:

- Building the capacity of citizens so that citizens actively participate in decision-making spaces to influence budget allocation.
- Strengthen transparent provision and access to information.

**ii) ManusherJonno Foundation (MJF) Social Engagement for Budgetary Accountability (SEBA).** The project proposal for **SEBA** highlights that: “*strong and financially transparent local government is being gradually recognized as an important vehicle for sustainable development and poverty reduction*”. In line with MJF’s mission, the proposed project will be implemented by its CSO partners on the ground. MJF will provide financial and technical/capacity building assistance, monitor progress and results and provide necessary guidance. SEBA reflects the findings of a pilot project to monitor the World Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for Bangladesh was successfully implemented under this program. The JSDF funded Citizen’s Action for Result, Transparency and Accountability (CARTA) is also being implemented currently by MJF under this program in partnership with Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF).