

AID TRANSPARENCY COUNTRY PILOT ASSESSMENT

Country Report: Bangladesh

Study Conducted: September 2014

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COUNTRY REPORT: BANGLADESH AID TRANSPARENCY PILOT STUDY

March 2015

DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Name
ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
AIMS	Aid Information Management System
BMP	Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
BRAC	BRAC (formerly Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee)
BTRC	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
BWCCI	Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment Index
COAST	Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DCR	Development Cooperation Report
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
ENGAGE	Encouraging Good Governance and Global Anti-Corruption Efforts
ERD	Economic Relations Division (Part of the MoF)
EU	European Union – EuropeAid Development and Cooperation
FABA	Foreign Aid and Budget Account Unit (Part of the MoF/ERD)
FBO	Federal Business Opportunities website (FBO.GOV)
FPDS	Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS.GOV)
FSS	Forward Spending Survey
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)

Acronym Full Name

GOB Government of Bangladesh

IATI International Aid Transparency Initiative

ICT Information and Communications Technology

IDA International Development Association of the World Bank

IMF International Monetary Fund

INGO International Non-governmental Organization (such as Oxfam or Care)

ITU International Telecommunications Union

JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency

KOICA Korea International Cooperation Agency

LCG Local Consultative Group

MCC Millennium Challenge Corporation

MDG Millennium Development Goals

MoF Ministry of Finance

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

ODA Official Development Assistance

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECD DAC OECD Development Assistance Committee

PWC PriceWaterhouseCoopers

PPL USAID Policy, Planning and Learning Bureau

UK United Kingdom

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

USAID United States Agency for International Development

USG United States Government

VOICE Voices for Interactive Choice & Empowerment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GENERAL INFORMATION

From September 22 to 30, 2014, a team of three consultants and one staff member from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Policy, Planning and Learning Bureau (PPL), Office of Donor Engagement visited Bangladesh to conduct the third of three Aid Transparency Country Pilot studies. During this time, the team conducted 27 interviews with representatives of the government of Bangladesh (GOB), civil society organizations (CSOs), members of parliament, media organizations, the private sector, and program staff at the USAID/Bangladesh Mission. Following the interviews, all interviewees received an Excel spreadsheet with USG agencies' data from the ForeignAssistance.gov website and a survey on the user friendliness of the ForeignAssistance.gov website. This provided interviewees with immediate access to detailed data on aid from USG agencies. The team participated in donor consultation meetings to discuss how donors share information with the GOB.

The preliminary findings of this country pilot study are summarized below.

CURRENT ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON FOREIGN AID

Aid Transparency on the Government Agenda

Given that the GOB is concerned about aid transparency, it has supported the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) since the initiative's inception. The Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) within the Ministry of Finance (MoF) is the Vice Chair of the IATI Steering Committee and has promoted the development of an Aid Information Management System in Bangladesh (http://aims.erd.gov.bd), launched October 26, 2014.

NGOs in Bangladesh do not seem to seek increased aid transparency. While one NGO representative from Bangladesh has attended all meetings of the IATI's Technical Advisory Group, advocacy work on aid transparency by NGOs in Bangladesh is not well organized or centralized. However, there are isolated examples of advocacy work, including:

- Transparency International Bangladesh organized a campaign to increase transparency of climate funding in 2012.
- Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST) focuses on economic
 development and civil society and promotes greater transparency within the local NGO
 community. COAST indicated that there are many challenges in transparency between the
 INGO community and local organizations, as well as between the government and citizens. For
 example, data gaps exist because most INGOs don't proactively disclose data, and NGOs or
 CSOs don't feel empowered to demand this information.
- Members of the media reported interest in aid transparency among consumers but noted the challenges in improving aid transparency. These challenges are a result of several factors, including corruption, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act (that monitors

social media for anti-government sentiment), and a general sense of disempowerment among citizens.

Data Collection by the Government of Bangladesh

The MoF/ERD/Foreign Aid Budget and Account Unit (FABA) is responsible for managing incoming aid flows to Bangladesh. Data on aid flows are published annually in the "Flow of External Resources into Bangladesh" report. In partnership with the UNDP, the ERD Aid Effectiveness working group is also responsible for the development and management of the Aid Information Management System (AIMS). Since the ERD was transitioning from one data collection method to another, the pilot assessment team is reporting on both.

Gathering Data

The FABA sends out an Excel spreadsheet to all bilateral and multilateral donors who manually report monthly information on loans and quarterly information on grants. The Excel spreadsheet contains the following fields: project title, date of signing, disbursements to date, disbursements for the previous four quarters, and disbursed amount not liquidated. Donors provide information in hard copies so that FABA can develop an overview of all flows. This overview information is for its internal use. FABA shares this information with the Controller General, the International Monetary Fund, the Central Bank, and the planning division. Staff members of FABA and ERD are relatively satisfied, although they lack information on off-budget flows and data on projected activities. Additionally, the manual data collection is subject to data entry errors.

The new AIMS platform replaces this submission method by requiring donors to enter their activities and disbursement data directly online through the system. The AIMS cloud-based system follows the IATI standard and seeks more detailed information than previously requested by FABA, though not all of it is mandatory. This data is made available to the public at the same time that it is entered into the system.

Publishing Information

FABA publishes annual figures on foreign assistance flows in PDF format on the ERD website. According to USAID/Bangladesh, FABA's latest report contained several notable errors, including the omission of major donors and under-reporting of aid flows. AIMS is expected to help prevent these errors in the future.

The GOB collects information on NGOs working in the country through the NGO Affairs Bureau. Each NGO working in Bangladesh is required to register with the NGO Affairs Bureau and provide information on its funding. Aggregate data of annual funding received by each NGO is then transmitted to the FABA.

The ERD and key development partners have created the "Local Consultative Group (LCG)" that encompasses several data exchange for a such as the LCG plenary, the LCG Executive Committee, and

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¹http://aims.erd.gov.bd/

LCG sector working groups. In addition, each donor has an annual project review meeting with government representatives. These meetings are primarily focused on the monitoring of activities, strategic discussions, and planning rather than on information exchange.

The Planning Ministry is also involved in development cooperation, but the team was not able to meet with any Ministry representatives on this trip. However, information from other stakeholders suggests that the donors have very little information exchange with the Planning Ministry; this has been a source of complaint for the ministry.

Current Data Access by other Stakeholders in Bangladesh

Stakeholders outside the GOB access information on development cooperation through media reports, the annual report published by the ERD and donor websites. In general, Bangladesh is a data-driven and data-savvy country. As one USAID staff put it, "We are swimming in data." This interest in data is reflected in the fact that Bangladeshi government agencies often provide data on websites that are accessed by NGOs, journalists, and interested citizens. For example, one journalist stated that newspaper readers visit data websites and sources provided by newspaper articles to verify information in the news. At the same time, one media representative criticized data on government websites as often outdated and sometimes erroneous.

Bangladesh has a Freedom of Information Act, which should help citizens' access information from government sources. However, according to one journalist, the process of requesting information under this law is cumbersome and lengthy. Additionally, the 2006 ICT Act amended in 2013 has had a dampening effect on online discussions over corruption and transparency issues, and has raised privacy and freedom of expression concerns.

NGOs and journalists also use direct contacts in ministries or in donor agencies as sources of information. In addition, billboards setup for each project at the project site serve as channels of information. These billboards do not, however, provide detailed information. They usually include the project title, the budget, the timeframe and the implementing agency, and may occasionally provide information on the donor.

Donor Communication Strategies

Donors do not view the public in Bangladesh as their primary audience for communications. Instead, they consider themselves primarily accountable to the public at home and focus communications on the audience in their home countries.

The main communication tools for donors are press releases, project launch events, local websites, and social media. The U.S. Embassy in Dhaka has over one million followers on Facebook. Twitter is less prominent but is gaining traction. Social media is very popular for political discussions and sharing concerns about the government. In contrast to traditional donor communication strategies, citizens frequently use social media to send enquiries to the U.S. Embassy, including on development cooperation.

DATA NEEDS

Data Needs for Multiple Purposes

Stakeholders in Bangladesh are interested in better aid information for a variety of uses. Several civil society representatives explained that higher quality data is needed for citizens to actively engage in project activities, monitor project progress, prevent corruption, and promote accountability. Government representatives stressed the need for information to improve long-term planning and monitoring.

One journalist and data activist stated that both government and donors should provide detailed information on their activities to citizens because citizens have the right to be informed, irrespective of the extent of data usage. In the past, citizens may have refrained from questioning authorities and demanding information, but the younger Bangladeshis feel increasingly empowered to ask for such information. Several interviewees from the ICT sector, media outlets, and advocacy NGOs shared this notion. Increasingly, Bangladesh's citizens are demanding more information and this demand may currently be more pronounced in urban areas among well-educated segments of the population. Members of the media cited the active discussion of political and national issues on Facebook as an example of the changing culture in Bangladesh towards an increased demand for information.

Key Data Needs for Stakeholders in Bangladesh

According to most stakeholders, the public is interested in aid information so that it can hold the government accountable, particularly when projects are large or linked to allegations of government corruption. This interest in information seems to go beyond sensationalist newspaper headlines, and there seems to be a growing sense, particularly among young people, that the citizens have a right to this information. "Where's the Padma Bridge?" was mentioned repeatedly as an example of a long-awaited infrastructure improvement promised by The World Bank, JICA, and Asian Development Bank that does not seem to be moving forward.

While most CSOs confirmed that Bangladeshi citizens are generally interested in aid information, some CSO representatives stressed that the demand for aid information needs to be generated. Many citizens and CSO staff don't know that the information is available. Citizens must understand how an aid project relates to their everyday life before they develop an interest in project level information. Relevant information needs include:

- Sub-national geographic data
- Results data for progress monitoring
- Attribution of multi-donor funds to various donors
- Project documents
- Procurement information
- Level of participation at grassroots / beneficiary level
- Planned and disbursed funds that will allow for medium-term planning (3-5 years)
- Contact information

- Information on how to voice grievances or to report suspected misuse of funds
- Information on off-budget flows to local NGOs and INGOs

A specific data need highlighted by Transparency International Bangladesh and COAST was the need for information on climate funding, since Bangladesh is vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and donors have promised significant resources to mitigate climate change.

DATA CAPACITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility of information

Internet: Generally, it seems that accessibility of data is not an issue in Bangladesh for intermediaries based in major cities. In recent years, the internet has become increasingly more accessible and has reached a large portion of the population. Even in rural areas, citizens can access the internet via their mobile devices or the 4,545 community service centers within reach of each village. At these community service centers, a local person helps citizens gain access to government services. Although it was launched two years ago, the program reports 45M services provided to date.

According to an internet activist, internet speed in rural areas can be a problem, but generally people do have adequate access to the internet. There is also demand for internet based information, such as news, political opinion, and medical information. Access to information in Bangladesh is facilitated by the fast development of the ICT sector, as well as social media. Many internet service providers offer free data when browsing Facebook with a smart phone, and there are inexpensive (less than \$50) smart phones available in the market. Bangladesh has one of the largest Facebook communities worldwide and the number of Twitter users is growing rapidly.

Traditional Media Outlets: In addition to the internet, newspapers, radio and television are also widely used sources of communication, though the use of radio seems to be on the decline. Several interlocutors acknowledged that illiteracy can be a problem when information is disseminated through printed material. Many Bangladeshi households own a television set or can watch television newscasts in neighborhood shops. Women are likely to have less access to the internet and television than men, and more likely to have access to broadcast media than other forms of media. Therefore, any effort to share aid information more widely and to engage with citizens based on aid information should pay particular attention to women's access to information and feedback mechanisms.

CSO Networks: While accessibility of information is adequate compared to many other developing countries, the poorest section of society and people in remote areas are at risk of being excluded from the internet and other media sources. Existing NGO networks could be used to help close these gaps and reach otherwise excluded people. There are an estimated 3000 registered and 65,000 informal CSOs in Bangladesh that work throughout the country. BRAC, an international development organization based in Bangladesh with multiple activities being implemented nationwide, is the largest non-governmental development organization in the world. Transparency International has 45 local branches with over 6,000 volunteers. Additionally, the women's organization Mahila Parishad has over I 30,000 members nationwide. The NGO Mannusher Jonno Foundation financed I 22 local organizations working on social accountability in Bangladesh in 2013. COAST has over 2,000 employees throughout the coastal regions and has deep connections with other NGOs. These organizations and their networks

can be used to ensure that information on development cooperation is made available in areas with limited internet access.

Capacity to Use Data

The capacity to use data seems to be varied across regions. Particularly in Dhaka and in other urban centers, NGOs and the media outlets have the expertise to use data downloaded from on-line databases. This expertise is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years. However, according to one media representative, data journalism is not yet developed, but there is a growing interest among young journalists to develop data journalism skills. Many larger and well-established NGOs (especially INGOs) have advanced capacity to use and analyze raw data sets and offer regular training for their staff.

There are also many stakeholders who are not yet familiar with the use of data websites and the analysis of raw data. Transparency International Bangladesh stressed the need to develop the capacity of NGOs and citizens alike to access and use data so that they can monitor projects.

Feedback on the ForeignAssistance.gov Website

Most people interviewed had not heard of IATI or ForeignAssistance.gov, and had not visited the website prior to meeting with our team. The team did receive four completed questionnaires as a response to our follow-up correspondence with interviewees. Questionnaire responses indicated that improvements could be made in the level of detail provided and in navigation. In addition, responses noted some data anomalies that were not immediately understood.

Follow up of the Aid Transparency Country Pilot

The findings presented here, in combination with the findings from the other two country pilot assessments, will provide empirical support to the overall recommendations on advancing USG aid transparency efforts. The Aid Transparency Country Pilot Study Report will consist of an introduction, a detailed description of the methodology, the three country reports for Zambia, Ghana and Bangladesh, as well as detailed recommendations on how to further enhance the USG's aid transparency efforts. The report will be widely disseminated.

COUNTRY REPORT: BANGLADESH AID TRANSPARENCY PILOT STUDY

GENERAL INFORMATION

In 2009, the USG agreed to a deliberative policy on foreign assistance transparency which identified a concrete set of actions, including the establishment of the ForeignAssistance.gov website and undertaking assessments of three countries to determine the data needs and demands of various stakeholders in partner countries. The policy was codified in OMB-Bulletin 12-01, "Guidance on Collection of U.S. Foreign Assistance Data". These assessments aim to inform the aid transparency agenda of the USG and have been conducted under the direction of USAID. In 2014, USAID staff selected three countries to be part of the overall aid transparency study: Zambia, Ghana and Bangladesh. USAID contracted with the Washington-based QED Group, LLC to conduct this study. Once published, the complete study report will help to inform future USG aid transparency efforts. This report describes the process and the findings of the country visit to Bangladesh.

Process of Country Visit and Methodology: During September 22-30, 2014 a team of three consultants and the USAID lead on the Aid Transparency Study (Policy, Planning and Learning Bureau/Office of Donor Engagement) visited Bangladesh for the third pilot study.

Prior to the country visit, the team conducted a desk study (Appendix 2) to gain a better understanding of the political, social and development landscape in Bangladesh. The itinerary for the visit was developed in close collaboration with the USAID Mission in Bangladesh, who hosted the team and arranged all logistics for the pilot study.³

Interviews and Round-table Meetings: During the country visit, the team conducted 27 individual and group interviews at the USAID/Bangladesh mission with representatives from: five Bangladeshi government offices, two donors, six CSOs, one Parliamentarian Secretariat staff member, three media organizations, one private sector entity, and program staff. In addition, the team interviewed one representative of Bangladeshi academia via Skype after the country visit.

In addition, the team conducted eight interviews with members of USAID/Bangladesh staff. The interviews focused primarily on the overall aid information needs of the different stakeholders as well as the potential added value of IATI data and the USG ForeignAssistance.gov website in meeting those needs.

The team participated in donor consultation meetings to discuss how donors share information with the GOB. The team met with the donor coordination working group (with five different donor representatives in attendance) to discuss aid transparency issues, and viewed several demonstrations of

 $^{^2\,}Source: \underline{http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/bulletins/fy2012/b12-01.pdf}$

³ The authors would like to express their sincere thanks to Thomas Kress, Mahmuda Rahman Khan, Muhammad Moinuddin at USAID/Bangladesh for all of their efforts to ensure the success of this pilot assessment.

the GOB's Aid Management (AIMS) platform recently established with support from UNDP. Finally, the team debriefed the USAID mission in Bangladesh.

Provision of IATI Information and Data: Before arriving in Bangladesh, the team prepared two documents to share with stakeholders:

- I. A printed overview of the purpose of the trip, including a description of the ForeignAssistance.gov website, IATI, and a partial list of sites that use this data (d-portal.org, openaiddata.org, openaidsearch.org, etc.).
- 2. An Excel spreadsheet of USG transaction-level data for Bangladesh downloaded from the ForeignAssistance.gov website in September 2014. The spreadsheet included all USG transactions for 2013 and 2014⁴.

In the email invitation for the interviews, the USAID/Bangladesh Mission provided interviewees with links to the ForeignAssistance.gov website. During the meetings, the team shared the printed overview document. In some cases, team members also displayed the Excel spreadsheet to interviewees via a laptop to provide context and examples of types of data available from the website. Several interviewees were engaged and eagerly scrolled through the data. After the interviews were concluded, this Excel spreadsheet and a feedback questionnaire on ForeignAssistance.gov were emailed to every interviewee. The team received at least four responses that were shared with State Department team responsible for the ForeignAssistance.gov website.

Country Information

Economic Status: Bangladesh ranks 142 out of 187 countries on the 2013 UN Human Development Indicator report. Key factors include a gender inequality index of .0529 and a share of population in multidimensional poverty of 49.46% ⁵ However, Bangladesh has shown strong economic performance, a continuous reduction of the poverty rate for the past 20 years, as well as improvements in other key areas. ⁶

Half of Bangladesh's GDP is generated through the service sector, followed closely by the garment sector (making up 18% of GDP in 2014). However, the vast majority of Bangladeshi citizens are still involved in the agriculture sector (primarily rice production). Remittances from Bangladeshi citizens overseas make up 13% of the GDP.⁷

Bangladesh is experiencing strong economic growth (6.1% for FY2014)⁸ due to higher remittances and political stability. Inflation has been high (7.4 for FY2014) due to past political instability, especially food

⁴ The spreadsheet was downloaded from the following web page, filtered by agency and sorted by year. http://www.foreignassistance.gov/web/OU.aspx?FromRGA=true&OUID=180&FY=2015&AgencyID=0&budTab=tab_Bud_Impl

⁵ Source: http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BGD

⁶ Source: http://www.adb.org/countries/bangladesh/main

⁷ Source: http://www.indexmundi.com/bangladesh/economy profile.html

 $^{^{8}}$ The Bangladeshi fiscal years cover the period, July I to June 30.

prices; however, as outside and internal pressures ease (including lower oil prices) inflation is expected to drop.9

Political Status: Bangladesh, with a score of 25 out of 100, ranks 145 out of 175 countries on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (2014). According to The World Bank's governance indicator "Control of Corruption" (2010 data), the country typically controls 16% of government corruption. The government is scored at 58 out of 100 on the International Budget Partnership's 2014 Open Budget Index. The Press Freedom Index ranking (2011-2012), an annual ranking of countries compiled and published by Reporters Without Borders based upon the organization's assessment of a country's press freedom records in the previous year, is 129 out of 179 countries with a score of 57; for rule of law, in 2010, Bangladesh was included in the 27th percentile of all countries that were evaluated.

After the recent tragedies in the garment sector, there have been strong calls from the international community as well as within Bangladesh for increased focus on corruption and factory safety. An estimated 10% of parliamentarians are garment factory owners. I Immediately after the Rana Plaza building collapse in 2013, there were improvements to labor laws and agreements signed between the government, Bangladeshi unions, and employee organizations to work together to improve safety. However, most news reports indicate that the GOB has taken minimal action. Poor accountability standards are widespread and corruption still persists.

Telecommunications and Internet

Internet: As of 2013, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) reported a doubling of the internet penetration rate since 2009 to 6.5% of the population. ¹² However, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) calculates active Internet subscription rates as being closer to 25%, due to differing definitions of internet connection. ¹³ 3G services for broadband data access on mobile devices were piloted through a limited launch in September 2012, with full networkwide launches in October 2013. 4G services are not currently available in Bangladesh. ¹⁴ Facebook is very popular, with an estimated 3.5M users as of 2012 (and growing rapidly). Prothom Alo (a national newspaper) has 3.363M local subscribers. ¹⁵

Cell Phone Usage: In 2013, the ITU reported 67.08 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants. ¹⁶ Mobile penetration grew to 74% by 2014 ¹⁷ and BTRC reported a total of 118 million subscriptions across six mobile operators as of October 2014. ¹⁸

⁹ Source: http://www.adb.org/countries/bangladesh/economy

¹⁰ Source: http://www.transparency.org/country/ - BGD

¹¹ Source: http://www.cnn.com/2013/10/24/opinion/bangladesh-garment-workers/

¹² Source: http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx

¹³ Source: http://www.btrc.gov.bd/content/internet-subscribers-bangladesh-october-2014

¹⁴ Source: https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Bangladesh-Mobile-Market-Overview-Forecasts-and-Broadcasting.html?r=51

¹⁵ Source: http://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/facebook/pages/total/bangladesh/

¹⁶ Source: http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx

¹⁷ Source: https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Bangladesh-Key-Statistics-Telecom-Market-Overview-and-Forecasts.html

 $^{^{18} \} Source: http://www.btrc.gov.bd/content/mobile-phone-subscribers-bangladesh-october-2014$

Overview of Aid Flows to Bangladesh

Bangladesh is the 22nd largest recipient of foreign aid globally (based on 2010 information obtained from the website, Globalhumanitarianassistance.org). Bangladesh is one of the 10 most vulnerable countries to natural disasters, due to climate change impacts as well poor preparedness and lack of infrastructure to mitigate or respond to these impacts. The country hosts the world's largest humanitarian aid community, with 12 UN agencies, over 70 international NGOs, over 2,000 locally registered NGOs, and over 60,000 community based organizations.¹⁹

Overall official development assistance (ODA) commitments to Bangladesh was \$5.38 billion US Dollars and net ODA received was \$2.67 billion US Dollars (OECD 2013). Net ODA received per capita was \$14 US Dollars (World Bank 2012). According to 2013 OECD DAC data, the largest donors in Bangladesh in 2013 were Japan (32%), the IDA/The World Bank (30%), the IMF (7%) and the Asian Development Bank (6%).²⁰ Other bilateral donors were Canada (3.6%), the U.S. (3.5%), and the Netherlands (1.9%). From a 10-year perspective the largest donors to Bangladesh were IDA, followed by Japan, the Asian Development Bank Special Funds and the United Kingdom.

Table I: Overview of Aid to Bangladesh by top 10 Donor, ODA Gross Disbursements in USD\$ millions (OECD/DAC Statistics)²¹

Donor	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
IDA	836.8	328.5	352.4	364.7	703.9
Japan	886.9	128.6	142.5	201.6	449.5
AsDB Special Funds	0	0	286.0	288.3	356.8
United Kingdom	253.I	250.7	229.9	368.6	310.8
United States	134.6	99.8	151.5	142.9	215.7
IMF (Concessional Trust	0	0	0	0	140.0
Funds)					
EU Institutions	194.5	131.9	188.6	159.1	128.2
Australia	45.I	41.4	50.3	79.3	120.8
Germany	65.9	73.1	65.0	77.1	81.6
Netherlands	84.7	70.3	78.6	77.7	66.5
TOTAL	2,501.7	1,124.2	1,545.0	1,759.4	2574.0

Table 2: Overview of main Donors to Bangladesh (% of overall ODA commitments, OECD 2013)

Country/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	10 Year Total
Japan	3.4	18.8	18.4	13.3	5.8	33.0	16.0
IDA	44.1	10.7	33.3	49.0	27.4	30.7	30.9

 $^{^{19} \} Source: \underline{http://www.irinnews.org/report/96902/analysis-what-s-happening-with-\underline{aid-to-bangladesh}}$

 $^{^{20}}$ All data presented in this paragraph is commitment data from the OECD DAC Creditor reporting system.

²¹ Source: http://stats.oecd.org/qwids

Country/Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	10 Year Total
IMF (Concessional Trust Funds)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	5.2	7.8	2.9
AsDB Special Funds	14.6	16.1	5.2	13.5	15.3	6.6	12.4
Canada	1.5	0.1	1.4	1.9	1.3	3.6	2.1
United States	5.1	6.0	7.5	3.8	9.1	3.5	4.7
Netherlands	2.7	0.8	3.9	0.9	3.0	1.9	2.7
GAVI	0.8	1.1	1.9	0.6	1.0	1.8	0.8
Australia	2.5	0.3	1.5	1.4	4.5	1.7	1.7
France	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.7	0.5
United Kingdom	11.3	28.8	1.9	0.4	1.3	1.2	8.9

Bangladesh also faces concerns about corrupt management of foreign aid, with many uncorroborated accusations of diversion of funds to corrupt government employees and CSOs. As one international aid worker cited in an IRIN news report:

"...the real constraints are lack of good coordination of bilateral aid, poor governance and the excessive bureaucracy that surrounds aid. There is a need of a total revision of the aid system, more transparency and a strong will to tackle the priorities in aid."²²

Overview of Development Assistance: For all donors, net ODA provided was directed primarily at social infrastructure (about 30%), economic infrastructure (about 15%), multi-sector programs (about 12%) and the production sector (3.7%) (OECD 2013).

U.S. Government Donors: USAID is the largest USG development partner in Bangladesh, focusing on the social infrastructure and production sectors (OECD 2013). The second largest U.S. agency in Bangladesh is the U.S. State Department, investing primarily in programs to promote good governance and democracy. Other agencies with smaller budgets are the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services.

FOCUS ON AID TRANSPARENCY

Government

The GOB has supported the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) since its inception. The Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) at the Ministry of Finance (MoF) is the Vice Chair of the IATI Steering Committee and has promoted the development of an Aid Information Management System in Bangladesh (http://aims.erd.gov.bd), launched October 26, 2014.

CSOs

NGOs in Bangladesh do not seem to be focused on aid transparency and their demand is perceived as low. While one NGO representative from Bangladesh has attended all meetings of the IATI's Technical Advisory Group in the past, advocacy work on aid transparency by NGOs in Bangladesh is not well

²² Source: http://www.irinnews.org/report/96902/analysis-what-s-happening-with-aid-to-bangladesh

organized or centralized. However, there are isolated examples of advocacy work, including the following:

- Transparency International Bangladesh organized a campaign to increase transparency of climate funding in 2012.
- Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST), which focuses on economic
 development and civil society, promotes greater transparency within the local NGO community.
 COAST indicated that there are many challenges in transparency between the INGO
 community and local organizations, as well as between the government and citizens. For
 example, data gaps exist because most INGOs don't proactively disclose data, and NGOs or
 CSOs don't feel empowered to demand this information.

Academia

A primary focus of aid transparency research in Bangladesh has been aid effectiveness. BRAC University publishes a periodic "State of Governance Report" highlighting issues around effectiveness, transparency and accountability. Although one academic interviewed stated that it was a continual struggle to obtain consolidated and reliable information, she stated that researchers manage to obtain survey-based perception data for this kind of research. They often provide these kinds of surveys as a service to government, NGOs and foreign donors. Researchers may also have ties to advocacy or other types of NGOs, such as BRAC, Transparency International or the International ANSWER Coalition.

Media and Other Groups

Members of the media cited consumer interest in aid transparency but noted the challenges, including corruption, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act (that monitors social media for anti-government sentiment), and a general sense of disempowerment among citizens. The one private sector representative interviewed expressed frustration at the high level of perceived corruption within the Bangladesh government.

CURRENT ACCESS TO AID INFORMATION

Data Collection by the GOB

Aid Management by the National Government: The Economic Relations Division (ERD) at the Ministry of Finance (MoF) includes eight units that coordinate national efforts with donor agencies from eight different geographic areas of the world. In addition, the Foreign Aid Budget and Account Unit (FABA) and the Aid Effectiveness Unit support the ERD. The FABA manages incoming aid flows to Bangladesh, and publishes an annual report on the "Flow of External Resources into Bangladesh". In partnership with UNDP, the Aid Effectiveness Unit is commissioned to develop and manage the Aid Information Management System (AIMS) that was launched on October 26, 2014. Since the ERD was transitioning from one data collection method to another, the team is reporting on both.

FABA distributes an Excel spreadsheet to all bilateral and multilateral donors in order to collect monthly baseline data on loans and quarterly information on grants. The data fields covered by this Excel spreadsheet are:

- Project title
- Date of signing
- Disbursements to date
- Disbursements for the previous four quarters
- Disbursed amount not liquidated

Donors provide data to the FABA in printed formats to generate an overview of all flows for FABA's internal use. FABA then shares this information with the Controller General, the International Monetary Fund, the Central Bank, and the planning division of the ERD. Staff members of FABA and the Aid Effectiveness Unit are relatively satisfied, although they lack information on off-budget flows and data on projected activities. Additionally, the manual data collection also carries the risk of data entry errors.

The new AIMS platform replaces the manual data collection and reporting process described above. According to the AIMS website,

"The overall objective of an AIMS is to provide a common information sharing platform for Government, Development Partners and all other stakeholders, in order to increase aid transparency, strengthen mutual accountability, improve aid coordination, strengthen alignment and allow for more efficient aid management. AIMS is an essential tool to implement international mutual commitments reflected in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), the Busan Partnership Document (2011) and the Mexico Communique (2014). ²³

In the future, the AIMS will import data directly from the IATI data registry, thus reducing the burden of data provision and data collection. However, IATI data quality from most donors is not currently sufficient to meet the specific demands of the AIMS, and donor country offices have to enter the data into the on-line systems themselves. The AIMS system includes an online data entry option, which had not been activated at the time of the visit by the assessment team. AIMS was developed locally, partially funded by UNDP and based on a model from Cambodia. The AIMS system follows the IATI standard and asks for more detailed information than previously requested by FABA, though not all of it is mandatory. This data is then made available to the public.

FABA publishes annual figures on foreign assistance flows in PDF format on the ERD website. According to USAID/Bangladesh, FABA's latest report contained several notable data errors, including the omission of major donors and under-reporting of aid flows, largely due to the exclusion of off-budget data. The new AIMS platform is expected to help prevent these errors in the future. At the time of writing (February 2015) no Foreign Assistance report could be found on the MoF's website.

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²³ Source: http://aims.erd.gov.bd/

Local Donor Coordination Mechanisms: In addition to the work done by the MoF's Aid Effectiveness Unit, there are two multi-stakeholder mechanisms in place for donor coordination and information exchange between the GOB and the development partners. The first mechanism is the Local Consultative Group Plenary that includes the Secretary of the ERD at the MoF and 49 Bangladesh-based representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors. The plenary promotes the effective and efficient use of aid in harmony with the government's development priorities and the international aid effectiveness agenda.

The second mechanism consists of 18 sector-specific working groups, where representatives of the Bangladeshi government and development partners discuss specific thematic areas and monitor progress against jointly defined progress indicators.

In addition to these multi-stakeholder mechanisms, each donor has an annual project review meeting with representatives of the GOB. These meetings are primarily focused on the monitoring of activities, strategic policy discussions, and further planning.

The Planning Ministry is also involved in development cooperation, but the team was not able to meet with any representatives during the country pilot visit. However, information from other stakeholders suggests that the donors have very little information exchange with the Planning Ministry; this has been a source of complaint for the Planning Ministry.

Collection of NGO Data by GOB: The GOB collects information on NGOs working in the country through the NGO Affairs Bureau. Each NGO working in Bangladesh is required to register with the NGO Affairs Bureau and provide information on its funding. Aggregate data of annual funding received by each NGO is then transmitted to the FABA.

Data Access by Parliamentarians

The pilot team met representatives of the Parliamentary Secretariat, but not with individual parliamentarians. There are several commissions in the Parliament and in the Secretariat that oversee development projects, including projects funded by developing partners. According to the representatives of the Parliamentary Secretary, these commissions obtain the information from their respective donor partners and information flow was deemed sufficient.

Data Access by Other Bangladeshi Stakeholders

Stakeholders outside the GOB access information on development cooperation through media reports, the annual report published by the ERD, and donor websites. In general, Bangladesh is a data-driven and data-savvy country. As one USAID staff put it, "We are swimming in data." Bangladesh government agencies often provide data on its websites that are accessed by NGOs, journalists, and interested citizens. For example, one journalist stated that newspaper readers visit data websites and sources provided by newspaper articles to verify information in the news. At the same time, one media representative criticized data on government websites as often outdated and sometimes erroneous.

Bangladesh enacted a Freedom of Information Act in 2006. Amended in 2013, it is designed to help citizens to access information from government sources. However, according to one journalist, the

process of requesting information under this law is cumbersome and lengthy. Additionally, the ICT Act has had a dampening effect on the online discussions of corruption and transparency issues, and has raised privacy and freedom of expression concerns.^{24, 25}

NGOs and journalists also use direct contacts in ministries or in donor agencies as important sources of information. In addition, billboards set up at a project site serve as channels of information. While these billboards do not provide detailed information, they usually include the project title, the budget, the timeframe and the implementing agency, and may occasionally provide information on the donor.

Donor Communication Strategies

Donor representatives interviewed did not view the public in Bangladesh as their primary audience for communications. Instead, they consider themselves primarily accountable to the public at home and focus communications on the audience in their home countries.

The main communication tools for donors are press releases, project launch events, local websites, and social media. The U.S. Embassy in Dhaka has over one million followers on Facebook. Twitter is less prominent but is gaining traction. Social media is very popular for political discussions and sharing concerns about the government. In contrast to traditional donor communication strategies, citizens frequently use social media to send enquiries to the U.S. Embassy, including on development cooperation.

DATA NEEDS

Data Needs for Multiple Purposes

Table 2: Aid data usage by stakeholder type

Purpose	MoF	Line Ministries	Members of Parliament	Media	CSOs (advocacy)	CSOs (service)	Academia	Private sector
Planning	1	1						
Public accountability			٧	٧	٧	V	٧	
Civil society participation				٧			٧	
Anti-corruption				V	1		٧	
Business and funding opportunities						V		1

²⁴ Source: http://www.icj.org/bangladesh-information-and-communication-technology-act-draconian-assault-on-free-expression/

²⁵Source: http://www.voicebd.org/node/419

Planning: Government representatives stressed the need for information to improve long-term planning and monitoring. FABA and the Aid Effectiveness Unit are focused on collecting better data that can subsequently be made available to other government agencies. The Donor Coordination Committee is also focused on AIMS as a method to address their coordination efforts amongst donors as well as working with the government.

Public Accountability: One journalist and data activist stated that both government and donors should provide detailed information on their activities to citizens because citizens have the right to be informed, irrespective of the actual use of the information. A CSO representative stated that it was important to receive information on projects and their results.

A specific data need highlighted by Transparency International Bangladesh was the need for information on climate funding, since Bangladesh is vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change and donors have promised significant resources to mitigate climate change.

Academics, often supported by or in cooperation with CSOs, also conduct research and publish on topics related to government effectiveness and accountability.

Civil Society Participation: In the past, citizens may have refrained from questioning authorities and demanding information, but the younger Bangladeshis feel increasingly empowered to ask for such information. Several interviewees from the ICT sector, media outlets, and advocacy NGOs shared this notion. Increasingly, Bangladesh's citizens are demanding more information, and this demand may currently be more pronounced in urban areas among well-educated segments of the population. Members of the media and the USG State Department Public Relations representatives cited the active discussion of political and national issues on Facebook as an example of the changing culture in Bangladesh towards an increased demand for information. According to one CSO, this increased interest in participation is particularly pronounced in people who understand how specific projects relate to their own life and where a project directly influences peoples' livelihoods.

Anti-corruption: According to most stakeholders, the public is interested in aid information so that it can hold the government accountable, particularly when projects are large or linked to allegations of government corruption. This interest in information seems to go beyond sensationalist newspaper headlines, and there seems to be a growing sense, particularly among young people, that the citizens have a right to this information. "Where's the Padma Bridge?" was mentioned repeatedly as an example of a long-awaited infrastructure improvement promised by The World Bank, JICA, and Asian Development Bank that does not seem to be moving forward. ²⁶

Business and Funding Opportunities: There was relatively little mention of business and funding opportunities as a desired information type, but that may be related to the overarching concerns around corruption and linkages with the business community. Some CSOs cited interest in aid information for possible future funding opportunities.

²⁶ Source: https://www.albd.org/index.php/updates/news/1270-government-signed-deal-with-chinese-firm-to-construct-padma-bridge/

Comparison of Data Needs and Data Availability

All interviewees were asked to identify their specific information needs on aid flows. The following is a prioritized list of stakeholders' information needs.

- Sub-national geographic data
- Results data for progress monitoring
- Attribution of multi-donor funds to various donors
- Project documents
- Procurement information
- Level of participation at grassroots / beneficiary level
- Planned and disbursed funds that will allow for medium-term planning (3-5 years)
- Contact information
- Information on how to voice grievances or report suspected misuse of funds
- Information on off-budget flows to local NGOs and INGOs

The team concluded that the data currently provided by the national AIMS platform, IATI registry and Foreign. Assistance.gov website were sufficient to meet most of the stakeholders' data needs under the AIMS/IATI standard. Data quality remains a concern because, while each donor establishes its own implementation schedule for the IATI standard, few donors provide data on all IATI data fields.

DATA CAPACITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility of Information

Cell Phone and Internet: Generally, accessibility of data is not an issue in Bangladesh by most intermediaries and a growing percentage of Bangladeshi citizens, with cell phone subscriptions at 74% of the population and mobile data subscriber rates at 27% as of October 2014. In recent years, the internet has become increasingly more accessible and has reached a large portion of the population. Even in rural areas, citizens can access the internet on their own mobile devices or through one of the 4,545 community service centers within reach of almost every village. At these community service centers, a local person helps citizens gain access to government services. Although it was launched two years ago, the program reports 45 million services provided to date. ²⁸

According to an internet activist, internet speed in rural areas can be a problem (especially connections to 3G via mobile), but generally people do have access to the internet. There is also demand for internet based information, such as news, political opinion, and medical information. Access to information in Bangladesh is facilitated by the fast development of the ICT sector, as well as social media. Many internet service providers offer free data when browsing Facebook with a smart phone, and there are inexpensive (less than \$50) smart phones available in the market. Bangladesh has one of the largest Facebook communities worldwide and the number of Twitter users is growing rapidly.

²⁷ Source: http://www.btrc.gov.bd

²⁸ Source: http://www.a2i.pmo.gov.bd/content/union-digital-center

Traditional Media Outlets: In addition to the internet, newspapers, radio and television are also widely used sources of communication, though according to one interviewee the use of radio is on the decline. Several interlocutors acknowledged that illiteracy can be a problem when information is disseminated through printed material. Many Bangladeshi households own a television set or can watch television newscasts in neighborhood shops. Women are likely to have less access to the internet and television than men, and more likely to have access to broadcast media than other forms of media. Therefore, any effort to share aid information more widely and to engage with citizens based on aid information should pay particular attention to women's access to information and feedback mechanisms.

CSO Networks: While accessibility of information is adequate compared to many other developing countries, the poorest section of society and people in remote areas are at risk of being excluded from the internet and other media sources. Existing NGO networks could be used to help close these gaps and reach otherwise excluded people. There are an estimated 3,000 registered and 65,000 informal CSOs in Bangladesh that work throughout the country. ²⁹ For example, the Bangladeshi NGO BRAC is the largest non-governmental development organization in the world with multiple activities being implemented nationwide. Transparency International has 45 local branches with over 6,000 volunteers. Additionally, the women's organization Mahila Parishad has over 130,000 members nationwide. The NGO Mannusher Jonno Foundation financed 122 local organizations working on social accountability in Bangladesh in 2013. COAST has over 2,000 employees throughout the coastal regions and has deep connections with other NGOs. These organizations and their networks can be used to ensure that information on development cooperation is made available even in places where internet access is limited.

Capacity to Find and Use the Data

Data Demand: While most CSOs confirmed that Bangladeshi citizens are generally interested in aid information, some CSO representatives stressed that the demand for aid information needs to be generated. Many citizens don't know that the information is available. Citizens must understand how an aid project relates to their everyday life before they develop an interest in project level information and monitoring.

Data Research Capacity: The capacity to use data seems to be varied across regions in Bangladesh. Particularly in Dhaka and in other urban centers, NGOs and the media outlets have the necessary expertise to use data downloaded from on-line databases. This expertise is expected to grow rapidly in the coming years. However, according to one media representative, data journalism is not yet developed, but there is a growing interest among young journalists to develop data skills. Many larger and well-established NGOs (especially INGOs) have advanced capacity to use and analyze raw data sets and offer regular training for their staff.

There are also many stakeholders who are not yet familiar with the use of data websites and the analysis of raw data. Transparency International Bangladesh stressed the need to develop the capacity of NGOs and citizens alike to access and use data so that they can monitor projects.

²⁹ Source: http://www.irinnews.org/report/96902/analysis-what-s-happening-with-aid-to-bangladesh

Feedback on the ForeignAssistance.gov website

Most people interviewed had not heard of IATI or ForeignAssistance.gov, and had not visited the website prior to meeting with our team. The team did receive four completed questionnaires as a response to our follow-up correspondence with interviewees.

Questionnaire respondents requested improvements in navigation and in the level of detail provided. The two specific examples cited were an additional sector category for food aid and information on whether an activity is implemented by NGOs or the Bangladeshi government. In addition, respondents identified a few data anomalies that were not immediately understood.

Next Steps

The findings presented here, in combination with the findings from the other two country pilot assessments, will provide empirical support to the overall recommendations on advancing USG aid transparency efforts. The Aid Transparency Country Pilot Study report will consist of an introduction, a detailed description of the methodology, the three country reports (for Zambia, Ghana and Bangladesh), and detailed recommendations on how to further enhance the USG's aid transparency efforts. The report will be widely disseminated.

APPENDIX I: INFORMATION SOURCES

MISSION ITINERARY

Date	Туре	Organization
23-Sep	US Government	USAID Deputy Mission Director
23-Sep	US Government	USAID Senior Management Team
24-Sep	US Government	USAID Health office
24-Sep	US Government	Budget Specialist
24-Sep	US Government/Media	State Department Public Affairs Office
24-Sep	US Government	USAID Controller
24-Sep	NGO- Service	Manusher Jonno
24-Sep	NGO- Service	BRAC
24-Sep	NGO- Accountability	Transparency International Bangladesh
25-Sep	US Government	USAID Agriculture
25-Sep	US Government	USAID Democracy and Governance
25-Sep	GOB	Anti-Corruption Commission
25-Sep	GOB	Ministry of Agriculture
25-Sep	Donors	Aid Effectiveness working group (UNDP, EU, JICA, USAID, KOICA)
25-Sep	Private sector	Bangladesh Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry
28-Sep	GOB	ERD and FABA
28-Sep	GOB	Aid Effectiveness working group (GOB)
28-Sep	ICT4D/Private Sector	Maya.net
28-Sep	GOB	Secretary of ERD
28-Sep	ICT4D/Media	Open Knowledge Foundation Bangladesh

Date	Туре	Organization
28- Sept	Donor	GIZ (German
29-Sep	GOB	Parliament Secretary Staff
29-Sep	NGO- Accountability	VOICE
29-Sep	NGO- Service	COAST
29-Sep	Media	Prothom Alo (newspaper) and Channel I (TV)
29-Sep	NGO service	Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
17-Dec	Academia	Institute of Governance Studies at BRAC University

STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED:

Academics

1. Research Fellow at the Institute of Governance Studies at BRAC University

Non-US Donors

- I. JICA
- 2. UNDP
- 3. EU
- 4. KOICA
- 5. GIZ

Government of Bangladesh

- I. Anti-Corruption Commission
- 2. Ministry of Agriculture
- 3. Parliament Secretary Staff
- 4. ERD and FABA
- 5. Aid Effectiveness working group
- 6. Secretary of ERD

Media

- I. Prothom Alo
- 2. Channel I television news

3. Open Knowledge Foundation Bangladesh

NGOS (Service and Advocacy)

- I. Manusher Jonno
- 2. BRAC
- 3. TIB
- 4. VOICE
- 5. BMP

Private Sector

- I. BWCCI
- 2. Maya.com.bd

US Government

- I. USAID Senior management team
- 2. USAID Deputy Mission Director
- 3. USAID Health office
- 4. Budget Specialist
- 5. State Department Public Affairs office
- 6. USAID Controller
- 7. USAID Agriculture
- 8. USAID DG

APPENDIX 2: BANGLADESH DESK STUDY

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

(Source: CIA Factbook, unless otherwise noted)

Population: 166,280,712

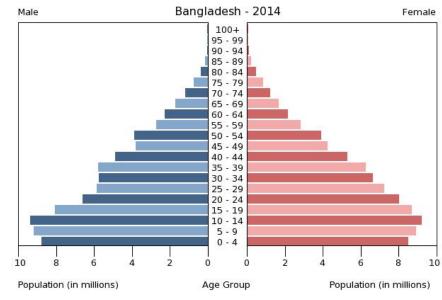
Rural Population of Total Population: 47% (World Bank 2012)

Religions: Islam (89.5%), Hindu (9.6%) and other (0.9%) (CIA World Factbook 2004). According to a Bangladesh government study, atheism is extremely rare (self-reporting from late 2003 30)

Age Distribution: 0-14 years: 32.3% (male 27,268,560 / female 26,468,883); 15-24 years: 18.8% (male

14,637,526 / female 16,630,766); 25-54 years: 38% (male 29,853,531 / female 33,266,733); 55-64 years: 5.9% (male 4,964,130 / female 4,870,447); 65 years and over: 5% (male 4,082,544 / female 4,237,592) (2014 est.)³¹

Life Expectancy: Total population: 70.65 years; Male: 68.75 years; Female: 72.63 years (2014 es.)



Languages: Bangla/Bengali, English

Literacy: Definition: age 15 and over can read and write. Total population: 57.7%; Male: 62%; Female: 53.4% (2011 est.)

Unemployment, Youth Ages 15-24: Total: 9.3%; Male: 8%; Female: 13.6% (2005 est.)

³⁰ http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2005/51616.htm

³¹ https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html#People

Unemployment Rate: 5% (2012 est.)

Internet Users per 100 people: 6,173

Mobile Phone Users per 100 people: 971,800

Head of State: President Abdul Hamid (since April 24, 2013)

Political Parties and Leaders:

- Awami League or AL [Sheikh HASINA]
- Communist Party of Bangladesh or CPB [Manjurul A. KHAN]
- Bangladesh Nationalist Front or BNF [Abdul Kalam AZADI]
- Bangladesh Nationalist Party or BNP [Khaleda ZIA]
- Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh or BDB [Badrudozza CHOWDHURY]
- Islami Oikya Jote or IOJ [multiple leaders]
- Jatiya Party or JP (Ershad faction) [Hussain Mohammad ERSHAD]
- Liberal Democratic Party or LDP [Oli AHMED]
- National Socialist Party or JSD [KHALEQUZZAMAN]
- Tarikat Foundation [Syed Nozibul Bashar MAIZBHANDARI]
- Workers Party or WP [Rashed Khan MENON]

Administrative Division: 7 divisions: Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Raishahi, Rangpur, Sylhet

Economy:

Bangladesh's economy has grown roughly 6% per year since 1996 despite political instability, poor infrastructure, corruption, insufficient power supplies, slow implementation of economic reforms, and the 2008-09 global financial crisis and recession. Although more than half of GDP is generated through the service sector, almost half of Bangladeshis are employed in the agriculture sector with rice as the single-most-important product. Garment exports, the backbone of Bangladesh's industrial sector and 80% of total exports, surpassed \$21 billion last year, 18% of GDP. The sector has remained resilient in recent years amidst a series of factory accidents that have killed over 1,000 workers and crippling strikes that shut down virtually all economic activity. Steady garment export growth combined with remittances from overseas Bangladeshis, which totaled almost \$15 billion and 13% of GDP IN 2013, are the largest contributors to Bangladesh's current account surplus and record foreign exchange holdings.

Net GDP Per Capita: \$324.6 billion (2013 est.)
GDP - Per Capita (PPP): \$2,100 (2013 est.)

Net ODA Per capita: 9.8 (2011 est.)

Net official dev aid received: 2,152,090,000 (2012 est. World Bank)

Remittances Received 2012 (US\$): \$14,460,000

GDP Growth Rate: 7%

GDP - Composition, by Sector of Origin:

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Agriculture – 17.2%
Industry – 28.9%
Services – 53.9%
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Agriculture-Products: Rice, jute, tea, wheat, sugarcane, potatoes, tobacco, pulses, oilseeds, spices, fruit, beef, milk, poultry

Industries:

Jute, cotton, garments, paper, leather, fertilizer, iron and steel, cement, petroleum products, tobacco, pharmaceuticals, ceramics, tea, salt, sugar, edible oils, soap and detergents, fabricated metal products, electricity, natural gas

Labor Force - by Occupation:

```
Agriculture – 47%
Industry – 13%
Services – 40% (2010 est. CIA World Factbook)
Fiscal Year = 1 July – 30 June
```

Basic Information about Aid in Bangladesh:

- Major donors:

United Kingdom, Japan, the Netherlands, United States, Denmark (UN.org)

- Sectors receiving largest amount of funding:

Agriculture and Industry (CIA World Factbook)

- There is/is not public aid management platform:

There currently is a public aid management platform.

Political Situation in Bangladesh:

Member of open government?

Yes

Freedom of press?

Yes (Chapter 12 of 1992 Constitution)

Freedom of information?

Right to Information Bill was reintroduced to Parliament for approval in November 2013 and is on the agenda for 2014. It has not yet been passed.

Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) for Bangladesh (I = low; 6 = high)

Economic management: 3.5 (2011)
Social Inclusion and Equity: 3.4 (2011)
Public Sector Management and Institutions: 2.9 (2011)
Structural Policies: 3.33 (2011)

OVERVIEW OF Bangladesh SHARED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

(Direct from USAID/Bangladesh CDCS)

Bangladesh is an important partner of the United States. The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has been an active partner in planning and implementing USAID/Bangladesh's (USAID/B) development programs. Past assistance has not only helped the GOB overcome some of its formidable development challenges but has also resulted in several broad-based benefits to the country and its citizens. USAID's

new Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for Bangladesh follows in this tradition of partnership. Over the next five years, USAID will support the GOB's plans to transform its economy to achieve Bangladesh's ambitious vision of becoming a middle income country by 2021 when Bangladesh celebrates its 50th year of independence.

USAID/Bangladesh's CDCS is based on Government of Bangladesh designed national plans, including the Sixth Five-Year Plan for 2011–2015. The overall goal of the CDCS is support the country's ambitious goal to become a lower-middle-income country by 2021, with a minimum per capita of \$999.

Given the gross national income per capita of \$640 in 2010, Bangladesh requires a GDP growth rate of eight percent or more each year to reach that goal. The Sixth Five-Year Plan focuses on: (1) Accelerating economic growth and employment; (2) Benefiting from higher labor force growth and ensuring labor quality; (3) Improving factor productivity through information technology; (4) Reducing population growth; (5) Ensuring food security; (6) Managing the spatial dimensions of growth; (7) Improving access of the poor to essential services and factors of production; (8) Ensuring social protection for the underprivileged population; (9) Ensuring gender parity; (10) Ensuring environmental sustainability; (11) Improving governance; (12) Strengthening administrative capacity; and (13) Establishing a results-based monitoring and evaluation system. Other significant plans developed in recent years with US and other donor assistance include: The Second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction for 2009–2011; the National Food Policy Plan of Action (2008–2011); the Health, Population and Nutrition Strategic Development Plan (HPNSDP); the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009 (BCCSAP); and the Bangladesh Country Investment Plan, a five-year plan to ensure sustainable food security through public investment in agriculture, food security and nutrition.

References:

http://www.state.gov/i/drl/rls/irf/2005/51616.htm

² https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html#People

APPENDIX 3: CY2012 U.S. ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH

ODA Net Disbursements, reported in \$US thousands

Source: U.S. Official Development Assistance Database

DAC Sector Name	USAID	State	USDA	HHS	Interior (Commerce	Total
Basic Education	3,635		•				3,635
Basic Health	10,378	•	560	206		•	11,144
Population Policies/Programs and Reproductive Health	32,899	•		•		•	32,899
Water Supply and Sanitation	1,400	•		•		•	1,400
Government and Civil Society, General	24,801	2,181	•	•			26,982
Conflict Prevention & Resolution, Peace and Security	952	75					1,027
Other Social Infrastructure and Services	1,234			•	•	•	1,234
Transport and Storage	48	•		•		•	48
Energy Generation and Supply	1,025	•		•		•	1,025
Business and Other Services	6,616	•		•		•	6,616
Agriculture	36,115	•	20	•	•	•	36,135
Trade Policy and Regulations				•	•	19	19
General Environmental Protection	16,283	•		•	162	•	16,446
Other Multisector	3,159	•		•	•	•	3,159
Developmental Food Aid/Food Security Assistance	42,503	•	-478	•		•	42,024
Action Relating To Debt		•	327	•		•	327
Emergency Response	5,241	1,671		•		•	6,912
Disaster Prevention and Preparedness	667			•			667
TOTAL	186,958	3,926	428	206	162	19	191,700

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding. Negative values result when amounts received by the US Government are greater than gross disbursements from the US Government.

Source: U.S. CRS++ Submission to the OECD/DAC via the USAID Foreign Assistance Database

Prepared by USAID Economic Analysis and Data Services on February 11, 2014

APPENDIX 4: BANGLADESH OVERVIEW DOCUMENT



US Government Country Assessment

on usage of
International Aid Transparency
Initiative (IATI) and

the US Government Foreign Assistance Dashboard

Contents

- 1. Definition of Aid Transparency and the International Aid Transparency Inititive (IATI)
 - Aid Transparency Efforts
 - About IATI
 - IATI Intended outcomes
 - How IATI Works
- 2. US Government Commitment to IATI
 - Foreign Assistance Dashboard
 - Aid Transparency country visits
- 3. Existing Aid Transparency Online Tools
 - IATI website
 - US Government Foreign Assistance Dashboard
 - Open Aid Data
 - Aid D-Portal
 - AKVO OpenAidSearch
 - Development Initiatives Development Finance

US Government Aid Transparency Country Assessment 2

Definitions: Aid Transparency Efforts

The objectives of **improving aid transparency** are to:

- Enhance foreign aid's development usefulness by assisting recipient governments to better manage their aid flows and empower citizens to hold governments accountable for how assistance is used
- 2) Increase the **efficacy of foreign assistance** by providing a clearer understanding of **what we are doing, where, and to what effect**
- 3) Strengthen international accountability by providing greater access to information to help host country governments and international civil society to hold donors accountable for the quality and quantity of aid flows.

US Government Aid Transparency Country Assessment

3

Definitions: About IATI

- Set up in 2008 by 18 leading international development organisations
- Aims to make information about aid spending easier to access, use and understand
- Launched at the Accra High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
- Aim to meet Accra Agenda for Action commitments on aid transparency.

US Government Aid Transparency Country Assessment

4

Definitions: IATI Intended Outcomes

IATI provides comparable classifications and definitions so that citizens, governments, parliamentarians, and people working in the development community can find out, across donors:

- Who is donating where?
- How much money is being provided?
- To whom and for what purpose?
- When it was, or is, due to be paid out?
- What are the funds expected to achieve? What have they achieved so far?

US Government Aid Transparency Country Assessment 5

Definitions: How IATI Works

IATI Secretariat

- Defines a common standard for the publication of aid information – the IATI standard (http://iatistandard.org/)
- Maintains on-line registry of IATI published data (http://iatiregistry.org/) with open data tools
- Most donors (including USG) have agreed to participate in IATI

US Government Aid Transparency Country Assessment 6

US Government Commitment to IATI: Foreign Assistance Dashboard

- Provides a view of U.S. Government foreign assistance funds
 - State Department, USAID, CDC/Pepfar, USDA, etc.
- Enables users to examine, research, and track aid investments in a standard and easy-to-understand format.
 - Available as export to Excel and XML and an API
- Shows funding by Country, US Gov't Agency, or Sector by:
 - Planned (i.e. asked for in the budget)
 - Obligated (i.e. given and allocated in the budget)
 - Spent (i.e. spent, usually through transfers to contracts or grants)
 - Transactions (USAID only every financial transaction in 2013 and Q1 2014)

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US Government Commitment to IATI: Aid Transparency Country Pilots

USAID is conducting three aid transparency country pilots in Zambia, Ghana, and Bangladesh.

Goal:

- Determine how aid flows are currently tracked;
- Learn what are the local needs and capacity for aid data;
- · Assess other aid transparency efforts to date; and
- Inform overall aid transparency policies going forward.

Mission: Aid transparency tools will assist partner countries in monitoring public financial and program-related data, thereby promoting greater transparency, accountability, and effective governance.

US Government Aid Transparency Country
Assessment

Existing Aid Transparency Online Tools

Select examples of current on-line resources

- 1) IATI Registry: http://www.iatiregistry.org/
- 2) Foreign Assistance Dashboard: http://www.foreignassistance.gov
- 3) OpenAidData: www.openaiddata.org
- 4) D-Portal: www.d-portal.org
- 5) AKVO OpenAidSearch: http://www.openaidsearch.org/
- **6)** Development Initiatives Development Finance:

http://devinit.org/data-visualization/ datavisualization-all-resources/

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