REALISING THE
MDGs BY 2015:
ANTI-CORRUPTION
IN **BANGLADESH**

Transparency International is the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption. Through more than 90 chapters worldwide and an international secretariat in Berlin, we raise awareness of the damaging effects of corruption and work with partners in government, business and civil society to develop and implement effective measures to tackle it.

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Background

This study on Bangladesh is part of an exploration of countries' experiences with advancing towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are a set of goals aimed at making significant progress by 2015 on key development areas, including poverty, education and health.[1] Taken together with findings from Ghana and Peru, the three studies provide a window into how anti-corruption activities can positively support sustained advances in achieving the MDGs. They demonstrate how civil society actors are working towards combating corruption in service delivery – a practice that severely compromises a country's ability to provide basic services and meet the MDGs.

The studies help to critically assess whether initiatives undertaken by Transparency International's National Chapters in Bangladesh, Ghana and Peru have promoted positive changes in the communities and services that they have targeted with anti-corruption focused programmes. More importantly, the studies underscore how chapter experiences support in practice the principle that comprehensive governance and anti-corruption work does have an 'MDG pay-off'.

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[1] This study was completed by TI-B, Transparency International's National Chapter in Bangladesh. It was commissioned by the Transparency International (TI) Secretariat in Berlin. TI Bangladesh was tasked with carrying out the work based on its experiences and activities related to the advancement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Similar country studies were completed in Ghana and Peru. These three TI Chapters were selected based on their continued involvement in projects designed to address poverty by building transparency, accountability and integrity in the local delivery of health, education and/or water services.

1. Overview: Corruption in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is characterised as having generally weak rule of law, opaque institutions and persistent corruption in the public and private sectors.[2] It has been argued that some of the key institutional pillars of democracy – such as the judiciary and legislature – are ineffective[3] and fail to implement existing laws, including the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004 and the Right to Information Act 2009.

Bangladesh scores the same on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2010 as Sierra Leone, Togo, Ukraine and Zimbabwe in terms of the country's perceived levels of public sector corruption.[4] Successive national household surveys conducted by Transparency International (TI) Bangladesh, have shown how these perceptions have played out in practice. According to the most recent study in 2010, more than 80 per cent of surveyed households have reported experiencing corruption when interacting with various public services and state institutions.[5] Based on these findings TI Bangladesh has estimated that corruption is costing the country 1.4 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) each year, or the equivalent of 8.4 per cent of its annual national budget.[6]

A series of high level corruption scandals, including allegations against former prime ministers, have helped to awaken the public and political discourse to the urgency of the problem.[7] Political leaders, at all levels and from across all parties, have committed publicly to fighting corruption and to establishing a corruption-free Bangladesh. The election platforms of the main political parties, including the present ruling grand alliance, have prioritised the issue.[8]

This political will reflects a broad national consensus on the high cost of corruption and the need to combat its debilitating effects on society, politics and the economy. There is increased awareness of how corruption negatively affects people's lives, especially the poor and marginalised. Through its research, TI Bangladesh has highlighted how corruption costs on average three per cent of families' household incomes – a share which is greater (four per cent) for lower-income households.[9]

As in other countries, the poor in Bangladesh are more vulnerable to bribery, extortion and intimidation when they interact with state services. They tend to have a greater reliance on public

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[2] Business Anti-Corruption Portal, 'Bangladesh Country Profile', Website, Accessed on 5 August 2011. See: www.business-anti-corruption.com/en/country-profiles/south-asia/bangladesh/snapshot/.

[3] Transparency International, 'National Integrity Systems: Transparency International Country Study Report' (Berlin, Germany: TI, 2003). www.transparency.org/content/download/1628/8305/file/bangladesh.pdf; Global Integrity, 'Global Integrity Report: Bangladesh – 2010', Website, Accessed on 5 September 2011. www.globalintegrity.org/report/Bangladesh/2010.

[4] See: www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010.

[5] TI Bangladesh, 'Corruption in the Services Sectors: National Household Survey 2010' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: TI-B, December 2010). See: www.ti-bangladesh.org/research/Executive%20Summary_23122010%20FINAL.pdf. For more information on past surveys, see: www.ti-bangladesh.org/index.php?page_id=242.

[6] Based on the 2009-2010 government budget, see: www.ti-bangladesh.org; Nita Bhalla, 'Q&A: Graft costs Bangladesh three percent of its GDP – Transparency International', Trust Law Website, Accessed on 8 July 2011. See: www.trust.org/trustlaw/news/qa-graft-costs-bangladesh-three-percent-of-its-gdp-transparency-international.

[7] BBC, 'Bangladesh opposition leader Khaleda Zia in graft case', 8 August 2011. www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14443509; David Montero, 'Bangladesh: The Blowback of Corruption: Canadian company leaves environmental scars, trail of allegations', PBS Frontline, 20 August 2009, www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/bribe/2009/08/bangladesh-a-dirty-deal-back-fires.html; David Montero, 'Bangladesh fights rampant corporate corruption', The Christian Science Monitor, 1 April 2009. www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-South-Central/2009/0401/p06s15-wosc.html.

[8] The alliance is led by the Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and the opposition alliance is led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). For more details, see: Iftekharuzzaman, " Fighting corruption: from consensus to crossroads", The Daily Star, 2 February 2009.

[9] TI Bangladesh, 'Corruption in the Services Sectors: National Household Survey 2010' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: TI-B, December 2010). See: www.ti-bangladesh.org/research/Executive%20Summary_23122010%20FINAL.pdf. For more information on past surveys, see: www.ti-bangladesh.org/index.php?page_id=242.

services yet have fewer alternatives when these cannot be accessed.[10] The chapter's survey work reveals that poor Bangladeshis confront demands for bribes that limit or even block their access to essential services such as education, health and justice – all of which support the achievement of the MDGs. Even in cases where access to services is secured through illegal payments, they are often low quality and provide reduced benefits to users.

2. Corruption and the MDGs

In recent decades, Bangladesh has made notable progress toward achieving the MDGs and advancing other social goals. Since the 1990s, it has maintained a steady annual economic growth rate of five to six per cent and has seen poverty, hunger and child mortality rates plummet. Of the 52 MDG targets, Bangladesh is on track to meet 19 of them and is advancing on another 14.[11]

These advances have not benefitted all citizens equally, however. There have been growing disparities between regions and social groups. While overall poverty rates have fallen sharply, this has not been the case in the southern and south-western parts of the country. Pockets of extreme poverty remain even in regions that have demonstrated notable gains, such as the east. Rural areas and female-headed households have also shown little change in their poverty levels.[12] Similar discrepancies characterise the gaps between regional advancements on educational goals. One of the reasons for this uneven progress is corruption.

Transparency International (TI) has found a strong correlation between lower levels of transparency, accountability and integrity, and reduced country progress on key MDGs.[13] In Bangladesh, corruption has aggravated levels of social injustice and poverty in the country and compromised development gains for all groups. Corruption has deprived children of access to education (MDG 2 and 3). It has increased poverty and hunger (MDG 1) and has prevented access to basic health services, particularly for the poor (MDG 4, 5 and 6). It has rendered development unsustainable (MDG 7) and distorted poverty alleviation and growth (MDG 1 and 8).[14] TI Bangladesh's research has demonstrated that a quarter of the primary school children who are entitled to income-determined stipends (*upabritty*) have been victims of bribery, and that nearly 27 per cent of households who receive in-patient/out-patient services in public hospitals have paid a bribe or suffered from some form of corruption.[15]

It has been recognised internationally that many of the MDGs are only achievable if the government and key stakeholders in Bangladesh change their current policy approach, including on corruption.[16] The government has voiced its support for pursuing development policies that simultaneously target better governance, and has highlighted the benefits of good governance for development in its

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[10] Findings from TI's Global Corruption Barometer have consistently shown that the poor pay more when it comes to petty bribery. For more information, see: www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/gcb.

[11] UNDP Bangladesh, 'MDGs in Bangladesh', Website, Accessed on 5 August 2011. See: www.undp.org.bd/mdgs.php.

[12] Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 'The Millennium Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report 2009' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: General Economics Division/Planning Commission of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2010): pg. 44.

[13] Transparency International, 'The Anti-Corruption Catalyst: Realising the MDGs by 2015' (Berlin, Germany: TI, 2010). See: www.transparency.org/publications/publications/other/mdg_report.

[14] Transparency International, 'The Anti-Corruption Catalyst: Realising the MDGs by 2015' (Berlin, Germany: TI, 2010).

[15] TI Bangladesh, 'Corruption in the Services Sectors: National Household Survey 2010' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: TI-B, December 2010). See: www.ti-bangladesh.org/research/Executive%20Summary_23122010%20FINAL.pdf. For more information on past surveys, see: www.ti-bangladesh.org/index.php?page_id=242.

[16] For more information on the country's MDG progress, see: www.mdgmonitor.org/country_progress.cfm?c=BGD&cd=50.

National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction.[17] It has also explicitly recognised that reducing corruption and strengthening governance are critical to the achievement of the MDGs.[18]

Bangladesh: Overcoming Corruption for Social Progress

In recent decades, Bangladesh has succeeded in making positive inroads on many key social and economic indicators. Between 1990 and 2009, the Human Development Index rating for Bangladesh increased from 0.313 to 0.463.[19] This change reflects strong gains made in education, health and income. Enrolment in primary schools rose from 72 per cent in 1980 to 97.6 per cent in 2008.[20] Child mortality decreased from 239 per 1000 live births in 1970 to 69 per 1000 in 2008.[21] Meanwhile, maternal mortality fell nearly 40 per cent between 2001 and 2010.[22] Despite these clear achievements, it could be argued that the performance would have been much better if corruption and low levels of accountability had not been pervasive. Indeed, the disparity between the performance of different regions and social groups shows that development has been unequal and not all Bangladeshis have benefited.

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3. An Anti-Corruption Response to the MDGs

Transparency International Bangladesh started its work in 1996 with the understanding that it needed to engage people to make sustainable progress in the fight against corruption. The focus of efforts nationally and locally has been to catalyse a broad-based participatory social movement. This movement is the backbone of efforts to combat corruption and strengthen the institutions, laws and practices needed for an efficient and transparent system of governance, politics and business.

As a part of its social engagement work, TI Bangladesh has created forums and mechanisms through which citizens can raise their opposition to corruption. Working on public service delivery, this social engagement strategy has demonstrated that real change is achievable in hospitals, schools and municipal services. These initiatives have helped to improve the access of the poor and disadvantaged to basic public services without harassment and unauthorised payments, serving to advance MDG achievement.

At the local level this engagement has used various social accountability tools to develop mechanisms to hold political officials accountable and responsive to the needs of their electorate.[23]

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[17] General Economics Division – Planning Commission, 'Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction' (Dhaka, Bangladesh, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2005). See: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/Bangladesh_PRSP(Oct-16-2005).pdf.
[18] Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 'The Millennium Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report 2009' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: General Economics Division/Planning Commission of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2010).
[19] UNDP, 'Country Fact Sheet – Bangladesh', Human Development Report Website, Accessed on 26 May 2011. See: http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/BGD.html.
[20] Information has been taken from Bangladesh's Directorate of Primary Education, see: www.banbeis.gov.bd/db_bb/primary_education_1.html.
[21] As presented in: UNICEF, 'The State of the World's Children Report 2008' (New York, NY: UNICEF, 2008). See: 'Child Mortality Rate Reduced by Half', The Daily Star, 17 June 2008.
[22] UNDP, op.cit.
[23] For further discussion on social accountability see, Samuel Paul, 'Strengthening Public Accountability: New Approaches and Mechanisms' (Bangalore, India: Public Affairs Centre, 1995); Carmen Malena, Reiner Forster and Janmejay Singh, 'Social Accountability: An Introduction to the Concept and Emerging Practice', World Bank Paper No 76 (Washington, DC: World Bank, December 2004).

How TI Bangladesh Operates

TI Bangladesh implements activities nationally and locally through a process of civic engagement, research and advocacy. At the national level, it has worked to bring corruption into the public discourse and contribute to strengthening the pillars of democracy and national integrity.

At the local level, it has established a network of Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) throughout the country. The network consists of 45 committees at the district and sub-district levels (*upazila*).[24] This is a social movement driven by volunteers who challenge the notion that corruption is a way of life. Members of the CCCs are on the frontlines, serving as local watchdogs against corruption. The CCCs help to raise awareness and promote social accountability in a range of public service institutions such as hospitals and schools.

The prime drivers of the CCC movement are young people, mainly college and university students, mobilised as YES groups (Youth Engagement and Support), another TI Bangladesh programme that works in tandem with the CCCs. Youths in the YES programme undertake initiatives that aim to inform and advise the general public. These activities include public awareness campaigns to improve the quality of education, health and local government services. They also organise outreach activities, including essay and debate competitions, street theatre events and cartoon competitions.

The creation of CCC and YES groups is done through a rigorous process. This involves a feasibility study to choose the location and assess the prospect of mobilising a sufficient number of community volunteers. The assessment also considers the extent and perceived impact of corruption on citizens, particularly the poor and marginalised. Once a community is selected, intensive field work is conducted to identify people who have a high degree of credibility in the eyes of the local people, demonstrating leadership qualities and showing a willingness to engage voluntarily. The selection process normally takes 8 to 12 weeks. The total number of volunteer members within the CCC and YES groups is more than 5,200 – nearly 30 per cent of whom are women.

Through social accountability, the involvement of citizens as stakeholders – in the design, delivery, monitoring and assessment of the quality of services – can reinforce and strengthen conventional accountability systems. This is achieved by making these systems – which include electoral processes, the judiciary and legislature – more responsive to the voices of different constituencies and their demands for change. The clear advantage of social accountability tools is that they help to bring the service providers and recipients together as joint-stakeholders, reduce communication gaps and build trust. In the process, they create a win-win situation for all.

Drawing on the concept of social accountability, TI Bangladesh has introduced the Integrity Pledge,[25] a non-binding social contract between public service providers and local citizens. The Integrity Pledge (IP) is typically a year-long agreement that is based on the voluntary engagement of stakeholders and involves a series of activities to help build trust, relationships and a sense of ownership by the community. At each step of the process, the Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) and Youth and Engagement Support (YES) groups are critical actors. They organise various activities to link service providers with service-users in the run up to the establishment of an IP. The respective local authorities and institutions are also an important force as their endorsement of the process is crucial for moving the work forward.

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[24] Each of these is supported by a YES group. In addition, there are 15-institution based YES Groups in the capital where there is no CCC.
[25] The project is funded by a consortium of four donors: DFID, SIDA, DANIDA and SDC.

In an Integrity Pledge, all signatory parties pledge to work together to:

- prevent and control the abuse of power for private gain;
- eliminate all forms of unauthorised payments, including bribery for services;
- ensure and promote the participation of service recipients (i.e. citizens) in decisions that affect the content and quality of services provided;
- ensure transparency of public contracts and the work implemented under such contracts; and
- promote greater disclosure and transparency to ensure accountability in all related actions.[26]

As part of the pledge, all parties agree to develop an action plan to implement the commitments in partnership with other relevant stakeholders. Also, to ensure that the Integrity Pledge is monitored and enforced, regular meetings must be held, and the public is kept informed through information boards that are set up in the community on the services delivered, the rates of payment and progress on development work. All information is provided in accordance with the Right to Information Act 2009. Existing standing committees within local government are called up into action and involved in the roll out of the pledge. Other social accountability tools that are being used in the community, such as participatory budgeting and public forums, are incorporated into the process.

Case study: The Alokdia Primary School Integrity Pledge

Corruption in education is a key challenge in Bangladesh and particularly affects the poor. It manifests in different ways, including the collection of unauthorised payments for admission to schools and skewed distribution of free text books, as well as the demand for bribes to disburse school stipends and grants. It can also take less obvious forms: teacher misconduct, absenteeism and neglect of duties (in order to conduct private tutoring), inactive school management committees and lack of accountability mechanisms.

To address these various forms of corruption, an Integrity Pledge was signed in 2010 at the Alokdia Primary School in Madhupur, a sub-district outside the capital Dhaka.[27] The Integrity Pledge followed a series of social interventions, including the use of citizen report cards and participatory budgeting. Within one year of adopting the pledge, some key changes have happened in the school and the community. The collection of unauthorised payments has stopped, the distribution of scholarships has become transparent and text books are now distributed freely (and free of charge). The use of private tutoring has also been reduced and teachers, school management committee officials and parents are now jointly engaged to ensure higher management performance. The dropout rate has fallen from 30 per cent to 7 per cent and in the most recent annual final examination, 100 per cent of students passed, with 80 per cent scoring first division marks. Due to these strong results, the state's grading of the school's performance has gone up from grade C to A. The success of Alokdia has encouraged the local education officials to replicate the Integrity Pledges elsewhere. The chapter has been asked to promote the adoption of pledges in seven more schools; work has already begun in two.

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[26] See Annexes A, B and C for sample Integrity Pledges.
[27] A translated version of the pledge signed with Alokdia can be found in Annex A.

At the district and sub-district levels, Integrity Pledges have been introduced in 28 institutions involved in the delivery of education, health and local government services. These institutions provide services directly to the people – more than 40 per cent of whom are below the poverty line. Pledges tend to be signed in urban and suburban areas as these are the communities where CCC and YES groups are more often in place.

In most cases, securing officials' endorsement of the Integrity Pledges has been met with resistance. However, this has been overcome thanks to persistent campaigning by the Committees of Concerned Citizens. TI Bangladesh's own credibility as a non-politicised, evidence-based organisation has also been crucial in gaining national and local government support. The need to secure the backing of different stakeholders underscores the importance of the engagement process.

The Integrity Pledge has contributed to increased local level accountability and transparency through a process similar to other social accountability tools, which TI Bangladesh has used to improve service delivery and advance MDG achievement. These include citizen report cards, information help desks, open and participatory budgeting, and Face the Public Forums. Often, these tools are used in a community prior to launching the pledge process and can create an environment conducive to the implementation of an agreement.

Citizen report cards

Citizen Report Cards (CRCs) measure user satisfaction with the quality of public services. CRCs are the first entry point for building good relations with a particular institution. CRCs have been conducted to assess 118 education, health and local government institutions around the country. One advantage of a CRC is that in addition to identifying the dimensions and processes of corruption and bribery, it also brings into focus various resource constraints and limitations with which the service providers operate. This creates an opportunity for multi-stakeholder ownership of the initiative. To implement a CRC, TI Bangladesh conducts a sample survey with users. The results are then triangulated with information gathered through interviews and consultations with the responsible institution providing the service, focus groups and/or key informant interviews. The findings of the CRC are usually released with the participation of the government authority. This serves the dual purpose of allowing for wider public information dissemination and awareness-raising.

Advice and information desks

TI Bangladesh has introduced an Advice and Information Desk (AI-Desk), which is set up in different communities by YES members for short periods of time. Its aim is to provide information to users of public services, such as parents taking their children to school or patients visiting a hospital. People are often victims of corruption because of a lack of information and knowledge about their rights and entitlements. AI-Desk volunteers inform service-users of the free services available to them, the rates of payment (where required) and official grievance mechanisms (if needed). The 46 YES member units are tasked with organising AI-Desks in different institutions. In 2010 there were 407 satellite AI-Desks, which served nearly 100,000 users. In addition, street theatre and other cultural activities are used to further disseminate information.

Participatory budgeting

Prior to starting an Integrity Pledge, TI Bangladesh has used participatory and open budgeting activities. More than 25 open budget sessions have been organised, mainly with local government bodies (and at times in hospitals and schools). In these sessions, public representatives share a

draft annual budget and solicit comments and suggestions from citizens. Once the participatory budget is formulated (by a city corporation, municipality, ward, sub-district or union council), it is made open to the public. The participation of beneficiaries as stakeholders during the process increases the budget's appropriateness, transparency, accountability and effectiveness. Participatory and open budgeting, budget tracking and monitoring (usually done on a quarterly basis by service-users) are key elements for promoting and following-up on an Integrity Pledge.

Face the public forums

TI Bangladesh has used Face the Public Forums to bring together public representatives, officials and other service providers with community members. The Forums were first introduced in 2006 and by 2010, they had been organised with 28 institutions. They are held on a quarterly basis in health and local government institutions and on average they are attended by an estimated 200 service-users. Forums provide the opportunity for government officials to respond to questions and demands raised by members of the public and service-users. In schools, the mothers of school students tend to be the key participants, and are organised around a forum known as a 'Mothers' Gathering'; in 2010, 69 Mothers' Gatherings were held. When Forums are held with local government bodies, members of the public usually take part as the stakeholders.

4. Looking Back and Moving Forward

While the Integrity Pledge process is still young, preliminary findings suggest that they have been largely accepted and implemented in the institutions that have signed them. Many cases show quantifiable progress, such as marked service improvements and results – including declines in drop-out rates, improved performance in school examinations, increased use of participatory governance, and reduced theft of social safety net funds. All of these positive changes – both in actions and attitudes – go towards advancing the MDGs. In the case of education (MDG 2), lower drop-out rates and improved school performance form part of the indicators used to measure progress on the relevant goals (i.e. net enrolment, completion and literacy rates).

Other qualitative changes[28] that have been observed are:
- greater control over the use of unauthorised payments for services;
- improved quality of services;
- fair, transparent and unbiased distribution of social benefits and delivery of public services (such as subsidised fertilisers, birth/death certificates, business licenses, etc.);
- reduction in corruption in procurement and construction projects;
- mobilisation of standing committees;
- engagement of public representatives and officials;
- transparent and fair distribution of school scholarships;
- fair and transparent text book distribution;
- improved awareness among citizens of rights, especially mothers;
- improved performance of teachers; and
- engagement of teachers, school management committees, officials and parents in school decisions.

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[28] The IP is a fairly new tool and is still being monitored. An impact evaluation is scheduled for 2013 which should provide a more comprehensive overview of the initiative's effectiveness.

Each of these advances, as a result of the introduction of Integrity Pledges and complementary accountability tools, has provided an improvement in the key inputs needed to achieve the MDGs. For education, this has been the delivery of scholarships and textbooks and improved teaching. Yet the approach has not been to focus solely on educational inputs, whether in qualitative or quantitative terms. Rather it has been to address governance and anti-corruption dimensions as integral components of delivering better education services.

All parties signing an Integrity Pledge share the belief that successful implementation will generate further interest, ownership and more effective enforcement. However, the failure to properly implement and monitor the pledges could lead to lower-than-expected results in any of these development areas, eroding stakeholder buy-in and potentially jeopardising the whole process. In implementing the current round of Integrity Pledges, some key lessons have been learned that can be used to prevent this from happening. These include:

- The changes that can be achieved through an Integrity Pledge are conditional on the level of resources locally provided and the capacities of the institution or local government that has signed the agreement.
- Increased levels of success will depend on a supportive policy and an institutional environment that is open to change and has the necessary resource allocations from the national level.
- The Integrity Pledge process is built on the voluntary participation of all stakeholders, including government officials and community members (mainly the poor and disadvantaged). Factors that discourage their interest in volunteering time and energy will undermine the prospect of the pledge's success since it is a non-binding, voluntary agreement.
- The Integrity Pledges have developed through a 'learning-by-doing' process. Much depends on the skills and capacities of the stakeholders to successfully enforce the pledges.

The risks and challenges that have been identified for the Integrity Pledges will always be there. As a process, the Integrity Pledges involve stakeholders whose actions are not exclusively dependent on factors within their control. However, none of these issues has yet to undermine an IP, as a result of the high level of local ownership developed by all parties.[29] Rather, public support for the initiative has grown and IPs have been expanded to other sectors that are related to MDG achievement. For example, the first IP with a public hospital was signed in March 2011, followed by two more in succession with other local hospitals. By 2013, the number of IPs signed with schools, hospitals and local governments is expected to reach 52.

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[29] For instance, despite three defamation cases lodged against TI-Bangladesh for revealing corruption in selected sectors of public service delivery, particularly the justice system (based on the national household survey 2010), locally none of the IPs has been affected.

Annex A: Integrity Pledge - Primary Education

Note: The following pledge is the translated version (from Bangla) of an Integrity Pledge (IP) agreement signed with the Alokdia primary school.

1. By signing the IP, the School Management Committee (SMC, first party) commits to:
    a. Make sure that all children over the age of six in their catchment area attend the school. A list of the students will be maintained and regularly updated;
    b. Refrain from corruption and bribery and take all measures to reduce the same in the relevant jurisdiction;
    c. Maintain the highest possible standard of education in the school with the given resources;
    d. Ensure transparency in any procurements including all development work of the school and engage/inform the community members about it on a regular basis;
    e. Disclose and display all information about stipends and other financial provisions and make these readily available for all;
    f. Engage the community members in all activities of the school;
    g. Mobilise all necessary support and help from the relevant governmental bodies (e.g. the Thana Education Office, Union Parishad[30], etc.);
    h. Take all measures to ensure regular attendance of students and good results in examinations;
    i. Regularly consult with the students and their parents to improve the standard of education;
    j. Arrange proper sanitation and drinking water facilities for the students;
    k. Arrange regular 'Mothers' Gatherings' to ensure transparency, responsiveness and accountability.

2. By signing the IP, the guardians and the community (the second party) commit to:
    a. Work with the SMC in the spirit of cooperation and provide them with support and advice to ensure quality education, transparency and accountability in the management of the affairs of the school;
    b. Remain vigilant about all expenditures and make sure that school resources are properly used and managed.

3. By signing the IP, the Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC, the third party) commits to:
    a. Provide technical support to the first and second party and help them to build capacity and ensure integrity, transparency and accountability of the school management system;
    b. Coordinate activities of all parties and advise to improve the quality of implementation of the IP.

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[30] A Union Parishad is a local government body (i.e. council) that is tasked with providing services to the people who live in rural areas especially villages. For more on their functions, see: Mohammad Mohabbat Khan, 'Functioning of Local Government (Union Parishad): Legal and Practical Constraints' (Dhaka, Bangladesh: Democracy Watch, 2008). See: www.dwatch-bd.org/L&P%20constraints.pdf.

Annex B: Integrity Pledge – Secondary and Higher Education

Note: The following pledge is the translated version (from Bangla) of an Integrity Pledge (IP) agreement signed with the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board in Rajshahi.

Parties to the Pledge: a) the Board Authority; b) the service recipients, bidders and contractors; c) Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC), Rajshahi.[31]

1. By signing the IP, the Board Authority (the first party) has committed to:
    a. Ensure transparency, accountability and integrity so that its service recipients are not harassed or become victims of irregularities or corruption;
    b. Refrain from corruption and bribery and take all measures to reduce the same in the relevant jurisdiction;
    c. Enforce the Citizens' Charter;
    d. Ensure all public examinations that it conducts are credible and acceptable to the people;
    e. Take necessary measures so that all schools and colleges under the Board will be run maintaining a standard procedure which will ensure quality education for the students;
    f. Ensure that the Board employees shall not take part in any bidding process which may benefit them directly or indirectly or in any other form. The employees will also not play the role of mediator in any part of the procurement process. In giving services to its clients, the employees shall not receive any financial or other benefits or resort to corrupt practices. The Board will take all measures to prevent corruption in these processes;
    g. Enforce the Right to Information Act 2009 and proactively disclose information to people. It will also update its records and disclose them when demanded and will also take steps to proactively disclose all information it holds;
    h. Introduce an e-governance system.

2. By signing the IP, the service recipients, bidders, contractors (the third party) have committed to:
    a. Ensure that while receiving services from the first party, corrupt practices will not be resorted to;
    b. Assist the Board in ensuring services according to the Citizens' Charter;
    c. Bidders and contractors will not bribe the Board Authority (or family members/friends of any of the Board's employees) while taking part in any procurement process.

3. By signing the IP, the CCC, Rajshahi (the third party) has committed to:
    a. Advise the first party on a regular basis on improving its services and the quality of education of the divisional area;

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[31] All signing parties have agreed that complaints, objections and grievances have to be placed before the Board first and can be made public if they are not addressed by them.

b. Work as a watchdog and monitoring body to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity of all parties and ensure people's participation in it. The Monitoring and Evaluation team from the CCC shall have the right and access to all related information.

Annex C: Integrity Pledge - Local Government Bodies

Note: This pledge has been translated from Bangla. Similar Integrity Pledges (IPs) have been signed with more than 10 local government bodies, many of which are union councils (the lowest tier of local government in Bangladesh). A pledge was also signed with a city corporation.

Parties to the IP: a) the authority (public representatives); b) service recipients (citizens); and c) Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC):

1. By signing the IP, the Authority (the first party) commits to:
   a. Abide by the laws and regulations (especially the Union Parishad Act 2009) and be sincere in fulfilling election commitments;
   b. Refrain from corruption and bribery and take all measures to reduce them in the relevant jurisdiction;
   c. Ensure people's access to information and to proactively disclose information;
   d. Assess and acknowledge the fundamental development requirements of the community and make efforts to meet them;
   e. Ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in all development efforts it will undertake;
   f. Engage the community in the planning process of development activities and take into account their suggestions and disclose all information related to such activities;
   g. Maintain the highest level of integrity and transparency in all its financial transactions and proactively share all information with community members;
   h. Arrange open budget sharing programmes and maintain the highest level of transparency in this regard. The budget will take into account suggestions of the community members and due importance will be given to their needs and priorities;
   i. Facilitate periodic budget tracking and regular social audits of all financial transactions;
   j. Observe existing rules and regulations to ensure the highest level of transparency in all procurements. Arrange monitoring of the procurement process by the citizens' committee members;
   k. Ensure honesty, transparency and accountability in the distribution of VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding programmes in wake of disasters), VGD (Vulnerable Group Development programmes to provide long-term food allocations), Senior Citizen Allowances, Freedom Fighters Allowances, humanitarian relief and other safety net allowances provided by the government. Eliminate all forms of unethical practices including nepotism, favouritism and partisan political consideration in the management and distribution of such services;
   l. Create conducive conditions for better coordination among all departments/offices within the jurisdiction and to ensure all offices, both government and non-government, are run with efficiency and integrity without any partisan political bias;
   m. *Shalish* (arbitrations) will be done transparently, fairly, objectively and without any bias for or against anyone;

n. Take all possible measures to facilitate improved health services for the community with special attention given to the poor and disadvantaged;

o. Make the best efforts to tackle social problems such as child marriage, the dowry system and also strictly deal with theft, robbery and other social crimes;

p. Regularly organise Face the Public Forums to monitor and review the progress of the implementation of the IP and to ensure their accountability.

2. By signing the IP, the service recipients/citizens (the second party) commit to:

a. Assist the authority (first party) in all its activities and provide them with advice and suggestions;

b. Actively engage and work with the authority to implement the IP in the spirit of cooperation.

3. By signing the IP, the CCC (the third party) commits to:

a. Provide technical support to the first party and help them to build their capacity;

b. Help the first party to ensure transparency, accountability and thus reduce corruption in the community;

c. Coordinate the activities of all parties and advise to improve the quality of enforcement of the IP.

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