

ABSTRACT

Bangladesh Water Development Board plays the most important role in water sector management of Bangladesh. Since its establishment in the 60's, lots of water management related project has been completed through this renowned organization of Bangladesh. The funding of these projects was both from the Government exchequer and Development Partners Aid/Grant. These completed projects have achieved mixed success in terms of sustainability. Previous planning efforts tended to focus on constructing major single purpose flood protection works, and overlooked diverse stakeholder's needs and multidimensional implications of water management. Implementation was also top down. O&M of the infrastructure was inadequate and under resourced, with little beneficiary participation and support. These called for major reforms in the policy and institutional framework and capacities of agencies to effectively meet the countries significant and highly complex sector challenges and opportunities. On the basis of fact findings, the Government initiated comprehensive policy and institutional reforms for the sector. The National Water Policy (NWP) was adopted in 1999 that set out due policy goals and principles for participatory and integrated water resources management (IWRM), strategic planning, sustainable O&M with progressive management transfer to water management associations (WMAs) and improved governance of sector organizations. Along this line, Guidelines for participatory water management (GPWM) were finalized. The National Water Management Plan (NWMP) was also finalized in 2004, which provided a strategic roadmap for achieving NWP goals, with its short term programme emphasizing on enabling environment and institutional capacities.

The SWAIWRPM Project was prepared through a project preparatory TA (PPTA) of ADB to institutionalize the said management process for medium and large FCDI schemes in the selected hydrological sub-regions in the South West. The standard procurement practice in SWAIWRPMP along with the participation of the beneficiaries at some important stages of the procurement cycle has made it a suitable candidate for the present study.

The Objects of the present study are to identify steps of procurement cycle followed in SWAIWRPMP, assess the compliance of sample work procurement packages with the procurement cycle, identify the constraints in implementing the procurement cycle, assess the sustainability of the procurement and assess the achievement of value for money in public procurement.

Key informants interview with the different stakeholders of the supply chain of the project was conducted to express their views regarding the objectives of this study. Questionnaire survey was also conducted among the beneficiaries to have their primary view. Data regarding some sample packages of procurement was also collected from the field office. The Qualitative and quantitative analysis of these data has helped to reach a conclusion of this study.

The key findings of the study reveals Procurement cycle that described in the DPP of the project is followed strictly here with the direct guidance from the ISPMC consultants and time to time monitoring by the development partner ADB. Sometimes delay in designing of civil works creates bottlenecks which subsequently delays the whole procurement cycle. Besides involvement of local beneficiaries at important stages of procurement cycle, other steps taken by the project authority e.g. training programme on different income generating activities, construction of WMG building, resettlement programme of the affected people, transfer of O&M activities of the completed work to the local beneficiaries etc have ensured the sustainability of the procurement. Two most important stakeholders of the supply chain the executing agency and the local beneficiaries have also optimistic about the sustainability of the procurement.

Need identification from the local stakeholders, making congenial atmosphere for a genuine competitive bidding, rigorous time, quality and cost control by more than one party especially local stakeholder have ensured the achievement of value for money in the procurement practice of the SWAIWRPM project.

Though study reveals that good procurement practice is followed in the SWAIWRPM project, for further improvement, at Pre bidding stage more skilled manpower should be deployed in the design circle for short term solution of the problem as they are overloaded with the design work. In the long term the design of the civil works should be laid upon the consultants which will expedite the project implementation. Some power of estimate sanction may be delegated the field Executive Engineer as per the Delegation of Financial Power of BWDB which will expedite the project work.

At the Bidding stage All the qualification criteria (financial and experience) should be reset in accordance with the PW3 document issued by the CPTU in order to ensure the participation of the local suppliers. In setting the experience criteria (both general and specific) the inflation of money should be taken into consideration. Provision of pre bid meeting should be kept so that the bidders can fill the bid document appropriately. Training classes on the procurement rules and regulations, contract management should be conducted for the suppliers so that they become aware of the rules and guidelines of the Development partners and the PPR and take part in the bid and manage the contract accordingly.

At Contract management stage the advance payment procedure should be relaxed or the amount of performance security should be made 5% if not front loaded. Better coordination among the three parties who are engaged in control of quality should be made in order to expedite the implementation. Local stakeholders should be involved more in contract management stage to control quality .Local stakeholders should be adequately trained so that they can take the responsibility of the O&M after transfer of the responsibility. If the newly constructed WMG building is rented for training purposes then the house rent will be a source of income for the WMGs. Moreover the interaction among the WMG members will also increase. The initiatives taken by the project authority should be supported by an expert from the concerned sector. For example if a WMG takes initiatives for Apiculture, the project authority should engage an Apiculturist to support that initiative. Key players of the WMGs should be trained in BIRRI, BARI, BFRI etc to give them the state of the art technical knowledge about different income generating activities then entrepreneurs will be developed and the procurement will be successful.