

Report on
Comparison Between the Compliance and Effectiveness of
Procurement Process Under GoB and Donor Funded Projects in
ICT Division

By

ASHOKE KUMER ROY

Student ID: 21282014

An internship report submitted to the BRAC Institute of Governance and
Development (BIGD) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
‘Masters in Procurement and Supply Management’

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD)

BRAC University

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our original work while completing my degree at BRAC University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/we have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Ashoke Kumer Roy
Student ID: 21282014

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, MCIPS, PMP
Procurement Specialist, Bangladesh High Tech Park Authority (BHTPA)
Information and Communication Technology Division
Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information technology
Agargaon, Dhaka-1207

Letter of Transmittal

Masud Akhter Khan, MCIPS, PMP

Faculty Member

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development

BRAC University, Dhaka.

and

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education.

Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.

Subject: Submission of PSM- 665 Report on ‘Comparison between the compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT Division’.

Dear Sir,

With due respect, I am submitting the report entitled ‘Comparison between the compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT division’ as a partial requirement for fulfillment of the MPSM at BIGD, BRAC University.

I have attempted my best to finish the report with the essential data and recommended proposition in a comprehensive manner as possible. I trust that the report will meet the desires.

Sincerely yours,

Ashoke Kumer Roy

Student ID: 21282014

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Date:

Non-Disclosure Agreement

This agreement is made on 15 January 2023, and entered into by and between Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, Procurement Specialist, Bangladesh High Tech Park Authority (BHTPA), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, Ministry of Posts Telecommunication and Information Technology, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207 and the undersigned student at BRAC University Ashoke Kumer Roy, SID No. 21282014.

Ashoke Kumer Roy, a student of BRAC University will collect and collate data, prepare a report on ‘Comparison between the compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT Division’ and will submit to BRAC University for partial fulfilment of Masters in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM) degree, and hence all required support will be provided by ICT Division for preparing the report.

I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student’s Full Name & Signature:

Ashoke Kumer Roy
Student ID: 21282014

Supervisor’s Full Name & Signature:

Dr. Md. Nurul Islam, MCIPS, PMP
Procurement Specialist, Bangladesh High Tech Park Authority (BHTPA)
Information and Communication Technology Division
Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information technology
Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.

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Executive Summary

Effective procurement is key element of successful implementation of both GoB and donor funded projects. A study was taken to compare the compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT Division. It was conducted in 19 projects during January to December 2024 of which 15 were GoB, and 4 were donor funded projects. An open and close ended questionnaire was prepared to collect the data based on the practical situation and scenario.

In ICT Division average projects value of 15 GoB funded projects was Tk. 877.12 crore, whereas in 4 donor funded projects it was Tk. 2801.81 crore which is 3.19 times higher than GoB funded projects, average project duration were 6.00 years in GoB and 4.50 years in donor funded projects, average number of package/project of works, services, and goods were 38.04, 20.80, and 25.75, respectively in GoB funded projects whereas in donor funded projects it were 3.00, 25.75, and 15.00, respectively. In GoB funded projects in some case, the tender and REOI advertisements were not published in highest circulated newspaper like Prothom Alo and Daily Star, but in donor funded projects it was always published in highest circulated newspapers. Both GoB and donor funded projects under ICT Division comply the PPA 2006, and PPR 2008 guidelines, in addition to that donor funded projects may comply some additional guidelines like, ISO 90001, ISO 20400, and Systematic Tracking of Exchange in Procurement (STEP) etc., and have to take concurrence in some important stages of procurement from the authority of donor office. Value for money varied in GoB and donor funded projects 75-95%, 90-95%, respectively. In donor funded projects efficiency in procurement was ensured appointing suitable procurement experts and continuous capacity development training, but in 7 GoB funded projects there were no any procurement expert. For free and fair competition, and freedom to innovation some additional measures were taken in procurement in donor funded projects. Supplier risks observed minimum in donor funded projects

due to strong monitoring, regular training, mentoring, advance payment, running bill payment etc. Absence of procurement expert was a vital issue for some GoB funded projects in ICT Division, but political influence, and inefficient bureaucracy were challenges both for GoB and donor funded projects.

The ICT division strived to achieve accountability, transparency, and efficiency in all its procurement activities. The absence of procurement experts, political influence and unskilled manpower are the major constraints of it specially for some GoB funded projects. Ensuring procurement expert, strong monitoring and regular training on procurement for key officials could be a somewhat solution of it.

Keywords: ICT Division; Public procurement; Procurement expert; Free and Fair Competition.

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List of Acronyms

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Full meaning</u>
A2i	Aspire to Innovate
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AT	Training and Audit
BDSET	Bangladesh-Bharat Digital Service and Employment Training Center
BHTPA	Bangladesh High-Tech Park Authority
BPPA	Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority
CPTU	Central Procurement Technical Unit
DEIED	Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation Eco-System Development
DoICT	Department of Information and Communication Technology
DPP	Development Project Proposal
EDC	Establishing Digital Connectivity
EDGE	Enhancing Digital Government and Economy
e-GP	Electronic Government Procurement
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HOPE	Head of the Procuring Entity
HQTC	Hardware Quality Test Certificate
ICB	International Competitive Bidding
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDEA	Innovation Design and Entrepreneurship Academy
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KLAS	Knowledge Level and Attitude of Supplier
KOICA	Korean International Cooperation Agency
NOA	Notification of Award
OLPC	One Laptop Per Child

PD	Project Director
PE	Procuring Entity
PEC	Proposal Evaluation Committee
POC	Point of Contact
PPA	Public Procurement Act
PPR	Public Procurement Rules
PPRA	Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
PWD	Public Works Department
REOI	Request for Expression of Interest
SHQTC	Software and Hardware Quality Test Certificate
SQTC	Software Quality Test Certificate
TD	Tender Document
TDS	Tender Data Sheet
TEC	Tender Evaluation Committee
TOC	Tender Opening Committee
TOR	Terms of References
TP	Technical Proposal
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
VfM	Value for Money

Glossary

Procurement Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, services, or works from an external source, often through purchasing or contracting, to obtain the required goods or services at the right quality, quantity, price, and time to meet the needs of the organization or project.

Public Procurement Public procurement refers to the process by which government agencies or public sector organizations acquire goods, services, or works. It involves the use of public funds to purchase goods or services that are necessary for the functioning of government institutions or for providing public services to citizens.

Sustainable Public Procurement Sustainable public procurement involves integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into the purchasing process of goods, services, or works by public sector organizations to promote sustainable development goals.

Sustainability Sustainability is the practice of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, through balanced consideration of environmental, social, and economic factors.

Supplier management Supplier management is the process of managing relationships between a procuring entity and its suppliers. Overall, effective supplier management is crucial for optimizing supply chain performance and achieving business success.

Whole Life Costing Whole life costing is a comprehensive approach that considers all costs associated with a product or asset over its entire lifespan, from acquisition to disposal, to make informed decisions that optimize value.

Head of the Procuring Entity Head of the Procuring Entity (HOPE) refers to the Secretary of a Ministry or a Division, the Head of a Government Department or Directorate, or the Chief Executive of a local Government agency, an autonomous or semi-autonomous body or a corporation, or a corporate body established under the Companies Act.

Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) refers to the use of digital technologies to enable a more efficient and transparent exchange of information, and interactions and transactions between government and the business community in the procurement of goods, services and works.

Value for money Value for money refers to choosing the most cost-effective option that provides the best combination of quality and price. It is a concept used to assess the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of expenditures or investments, aiming to achieve the best possible outcome for the resources invested.

Free and fair competition In federally funded procurements, the goal is to ensure all viable contractors have an equal opportunity to compete. This helps secure the best value for money, provides opportunity and mitigates risks like fraud, waste, and abuse.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Procurement processes are vital for the successful implementation of projects, particularly in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector. In Bangladesh, the procurement process may vary based on whether the funding is from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) or from Donor agencies. Both GoB and Donor funded projects follow different compliance and effectiveness protocols due to variations in funding sources, regulations, and project priorities based on the risk matrix.

In Bangladesh the procurement process in GoB funded projects, the rules and regulations are imposed for ensuring transparency, accountability, fair competition, equal treatment, and efficient use of resources. These guidelines are typically put in place by the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA), Ministry of Finance, the Planning Commission, and other relevant authorities. In this case Public Procurement Act 2006 governs the procurement of goods, services, and works by government entities, and Public Procurement Rules 2008 specify procedures for inviting tenders, selecting contractors, and managing the procurement process etc.

Procurement in Donor funded projects involves the acquisition of goods, services, and works necessary for project implementation. It encompasses the entire procurement cycle, starting from planning and tendering to contract award, and contract management. The procurement process in these projects must adhere to the principles of fairness, competition, transparency, and value for money. The procurement under Donor funded projects is a hybrid mechanism followed both Donors' procurement regulations and respective country system based on the financial agreement signed between implementing agency and the Donors. GoB funded projects have been playing a crucial role in the development of the Information and

Communication Technology (ICT) sector through various initiatives, which have led to the sector's substantial growth in the country such as digital infrastructure including high-speed internet connectivity, data centers, and fiber optic networks across the country including rural and underserved areas, establishment of Tech Parks and IT hubs, job creation and skill development, enhancing digital literacy, promoting e-commerce, offer training programs to empower the youth and woman with technical skills, making them more competitive in the global digital job market, focus on reducing unemployment by preparing the workforce for jobs in software development, cybersecurity, data analysis, and other ICT fields, digitalizing government services through platforms like e-Government and e-Office, investments in ICT Research and Development, encouraging collaborations between the private sector, academia, and research organizations (Molla and Licker, 2005). Similarly, it emphasizes that ICT policies supported by government initiatives can lead to better digital infrastructure and foster economic growth by enhancing access to technology in underserved areas (Heeks, 2002).

Donor-funded ICT projects, often funded by international organizations like the World Bank, UNDP, and the European Union are crucial in bridging the digital divide, especially in low-income and developing countries. These projects help to address gaps in technological infrastructure, promote digital literacy, and encourage the creation of inclusive information societies. It highlights that Donor funding allows for the implementation of ICT projects that might be difficult for governments to fund independently, particularly in poor or rural areas (Williamson and de Lancer Julnes, 2003). For instance, the World Bank has supported several ICT initiatives in developing countries, including digital infrastructure projects, rural broadband initiatives, and technology training programs. These projects aim to empower citizens by increasing access to technology and improving the skills needed to engage with the digital economy.

For the development ICT sector in Bangladesh the role of ICT based GoB and Donor funded projects, implemented by ICT Division is very important and result oriented. The procurement process in the context of GoB and Donor funded projects is an essential function for ensuring the successful implementation of ICT projects. It is very crucial for improvement of project implementation to know the differences between procurement processes of GoB and Donor funded projects. Accordingly, the investigation had been taken to compare the existing compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT Division.

So, the current study was taken in ICT Division

- I. To study the comparative compliance in procurement between GoB and Donor funded project in ICT Division,
- II. To study the comparative effectiveness in procurement between GoB and Donor funded project, and
- III. Comparing the existing challenges in procurement in GoB and Donor funded project.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Procurement processes are very important for the successful implementation of GoB and Donor funded projects for all of the sectors in Bangladesh. Procurement procedures under government agencies, such as different ministry, division, department, institution, council etc., and Donor-funded projects, such as World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAICA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) including other Donors have been the subject of this studies. These studies examine how compliance and effectiveness of procurement processes influence project outcomes. Understanding the differences between procurement processes in GoB projects and Donor funded ICT projects is crucial for improving governance and project implementation in Bangladesh's ICT sector. Procurement refers to the activities involved in acquisition of goods, services, or works from external sources. In the context of ICT projects, procurement includes the acquisition of hardware, software, telecommunications infrastructure, and external expertise such as consultants and service providers (Carter & Narasimhan, 1996). It also involves managing supplier relationships, negotiating contracts, and ensuring the delivery of high-quality products and services (Akinci & Sadikoglu, 2013). It argues that ICT projects have a direct impact on economic growth by fostering innovation, improving communication, and streamlining government services (Asongu and Nwachukwu, 2017).

2.1. Procurement under Government of Bangladesh (GoB) funded projects

The GoB procurement process is governed by the Public Procurement Act 2006, and Public Procurement Rules 2008 accompanied by STD's. The rules are designed to ensure transparency, efficiency, and fairness in the procurement process. However, the compliance to

these regulations is often challenged by bureaucratic inefficiencies, political influence, and corruption (Ahmed, 2014). A key concern is the time-consuming nature of GoB procurement procedures, which often lead to project delays (Rahman, 2019). Additionally, a lack of trained personnel and inadequate monitoring systems have been identified as factors affecting the effectiveness of procurement in government projects (Khan & Hossain, 2021). According to the author, the procurement system under GoB has often been criticized for lacking flexibility, which makes it difficult to meet the dynamic needs of fast-paced ICT projects (Mollah, 2017). The GoB follows a strict regulatory framework for public procurement. The Public Procurement Act (PPA) 2006 and the Public Procurement Rules (PPR) 2008 govern the procurement process for government-funded projects. Research outlines the effectiveness of these regulations in ensuring compliance with procurement standards (Jabbar, 2009).

2.2. Procurement under Donor funded projects

In contrast, Donor-funded projects typically follow hybrid procurement procedures both the country system and procurement Regulations set by World Bank, UNDP, ADB, JAICA, KOICA etc. These Donor agencies and development partners have more stringent procurement procedures, emphasizing efficiency, transparency, and competition. A key feature of these projects is the reliance on international competitive bidding (ICB), which is perceived to enhance transparency and reduce corruption (Rahman & Sarker, 2020). Moreover, Donor-funded projects benefit from dedicated procurement staff and external monitoring mechanisms that ensure compliance with international standards (Hossain et al., 2022). Studies reveal that Donor-funded ICT projects in Bangladesh have more structured and timely procurement processes compared to GoB projects, often due to external oversight (Sultana, 2021).

2.3 Comparison of compliance and effectiveness between GoB and Donor funded projects

One of the central differences between GoB and Donor-funded procurement is the level of compliance with set rules and regulations. According to some authors (Hossain & Jahan, 2021), Donor-funded projects tend to exhibit higher compliance with procurement rules due to the strict monitoring by Donors and the risk of funding being withheld including mis-procurement. On the other hand, GoB procurement processes face challenges related to political interference and a lack of accountability, which often result in non-compliance with regulations (Islam & Chowdhury, 2018). It's revealed that non-compliance with procurement guidelines led to increase project costs and delays in projects implementation. Additionally, non-compliance can reduce Donor confidence, making future funding more difficult to secure (Karim & Masud, 2017). In a study (Islam & Rahman, 2016), highlight the growing use of e-Government procurement systems in Bangladesh, which aim to improve transparency, reduce corruption, and streamline the procurement process. The introduction of e-tendering systems has enhanced compliance and effectiveness, but challenges like internet access, technology infrastructure, and resistance to change still remain.

Effectiveness is another key area where differences emerge. While GoB projects often face delays and cost overruns, Donor-funded projects are generally seen as more effective in terms of on-time delivery and adherence to budgets (Rashid et al., 2020). A study highlighted that Donor-funded ICT projects are more likely to meet their objectives within the allocated budget, partly due to the rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms employed by Donors (Rahman, 2019). In contrast, GoB ICT projects are hindered by resource constraints and lack of skilled procurement staff (Zahid & Hasan, 2019). Effective procurement helps ensure that Donor funds are used efficiently, leading to timely project completion and avoiding cost overruns (Faruque & Alam, 2020). Adherence to procurement guidelines ensures the selection of high-quality vendors, which in turn leads to better project outcomes (Molla, 2018).

Continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are crucial to measure procurement effectiveness and address any deviations from the planned procurement process (Barua & Ahmed, 2016).

2.4. Challenges in public procurement

2.4.1. GoB funded projects

GoB funded projects face issues related to political patronage, absence of dynamic procurement systems, and lack of accountability (Khan & Hossain, 2021). In a study it is found, procurement practices in Bangladesh often face challenges such as limited technical expertise, lack of accountability, and resistance to following set guidelines (Chowdhury & Roy, 2013). These challenges hinder the full implementation of the regulatory framework. Research suggests that political interference and corruption are significant issues that affect procurement compliance and effectiveness (Uddin, 2014). It is noted that procurement decisions sometimes favor politically connected individuals or companies, resulting in suboptimal outcomes. It is revealed that insufficient capacity among procurement officers, combined with inadequate training programs, leads to inefficiency and poor management of procurement processes (Rahman (2015). According to some authors (Sarker et al., 2019), procurement processes in GoB projects often face delays due to slow decision-making and delayed payments to contractors, which negatively impact on the project timelines. Studies suggest that enhancing the capacity of procurement officers through continuous training programs and capacity-building workshops is crucial to improving procurement performance and compliance in GoB-funded projects (Barua et al., 2013). Strengthening independent oversight bodies such as the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) would enhance accountability and reduce corruption risks in government procurement (Hossain, 2017). As said, expanding the use of e-Government procurement systems, along with proper monitoring tools, can significantly improve compliance with procurement regulations and the effectiveness of GoB-funded

projects. Despite the positive impact of GoB and Donor-funded ICT projects, there are several challenges in their implementation (Rahman & Mahmud, 2020). An author identifies issues such as poor infrastructure, limited local expertise, and insufficient funding as significant barriers to the success of ICT based procuring projects in developing countries (Sarker, 2008). Furthermore, it emphasizes that ICT projects in developing countries often fail due to a lack of alignment with local contexts, resulting in ineffective adoption and use of technologies (Avgerou, 2008).

2.4.1. Donor funded projects

Despite the strengths of Donor-funded projects, challenges still exist. For instance, Donor agencies often impose procurement guidelines that are difficult to adapt to local contexts, which can create inefficiencies (Rahman & Hossain, 2020). Additionally, Donor-funded projects may face delays due to the complexity of international bidding processes and the dependency on external parties for procurement approval (Sultana, 2021). Corruption remains a major concern in procurement processes, despite legal frameworks in place (Gulati, 2014). Delays in procurement due to corruption can undermine Donor confidence. Both government officials and project management teams often lack of the necessary skills and knowledge to fully comply with complex Donor procurement guidelines (Rashid, 2019). Political factors often interfere with procurement decisions, leading to suboptimal choices (Abdullah & Chowdhury, 2017). In Bangladesh, issues like limited internet penetration, inadequate digital literacy, and gender disparities in ICT access have slowed the widespread impact of ICT policies and Donor-funded projects (Sarker & Rahman, 2017).

2.5. Good Practices for Improving Compliance and Effectiveness

Providing training to government officials and project managers on Donor procurement rules and regulations to improve compliance (Hossain & Rahman, 2017). The integration of electronic procurement systems can help minimize corruption, improve transparency, and speed up procurement processes (Rahman, 2021). Strengthening the oversight mechanisms through independent audits, evaluations, and third-party reviews can help to ensure that procurement processes are compliant with Donor regulations (Faruque & Alam, 2020).

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

In this chapter the methodology of the study is described. A questionnaire with open and close ended questions was prepared which had been administered among nineteen projects of ICT Division of which fifteen were GoB and the rest four projects were Donor funded. Twelve questionnaires were filled up by the concerned project's procurement specialist. In seven projects where there was no provision of procurement specialist, concerned Project Directors were selected for responding those questionnaires.

3.2 Questionnaire design

Since this study focuses on the compliance and effectiveness of procurement process under GoB and Donor funded projects in ICT Division, questionnaire survey was undertaken for assessing major compliance, effectiveness, challenges, and best practices in public procurement. Findings collected from survey questionnaire were analyzed in different matrix using computer for easy assimilation and understanding.

Mostly close-ended and some open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to reveal the real experiences of the respondents. Questions were asked to the respondents to collect actual data in their concern project regarding the subject issues. A questionnaire is attached herewith (Appendix 1).

3.3 Selection of Study Area

Nineteen ongoing projects were selected for collection of data. Emphasis was given on the ongoing development projects of ICT Division; especially those which are in the middle stage of their

implementation. Out four Donor funded projects 02 were the World Bank, 01 was the European Union, and 01 was Indian Government funded project.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

All data pertaining to the study was collected in such ways that the results obtained from the study present the actual situation. Before request for the filling the questionnaire, the general idea of the research objectives was shared with them. They were requested to fill the questionnaire based on their experiences and actual scenario.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The study was conducted in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Division, under the Ministry of Posts Telecommunication and Information Technology during June to December 2024. There were four major stakeholders under ICT Division, namely Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC), Bangladesh High Tech Park Authority (BHTPA), Department of Information and Communication Technology (DoICT), and ICT Division itself. All of these offices are located at Agargaon in Dhaka. Seven, six, three, and three projects are being implemented by BCC, BHTPA, DoICT, and ICT Division respectively. One, two, and one Donor funded projects are being implemented by BCC, BHTPA and ICT Division respectively while fifteen projects are funded by GoB (Appendix 2).

4.1.1. Project value

Project value of nineteen projects under ICT Division varies from Tk. 27.50 to Tk. 7457.59 crore with an average value of Tk. 1433.18 crore. In case of fifteen GoB funded projects, its value varies from Tk. 27.50 to Tk. 5900.00 crore with an average of Tk. 877.12 crore, whereas in Donor funded four projects varies from Tk. 353.00 to Tk. 7457.59 crore with an average of Tk. 2801.81 crore which is 3.19 times higher than the average of GoB funded project (Table 1).

4.1.2. Project implementation period and duration

Nineteen projects were studied and its implementation period varies from July 2016 to June 2027. As per original and revised Development Project Proposal (DPP) duration of the project varies from 3.00 to 10.00 years with an average value of 5.68 years. In case of fifteen GoB funded projects duration of project varied from 3.00 to 10.00 years with an average of 6.0 years

where as in Donor funded project it varied from 4.00 to 5.00 years with an average of 4.50 years. GoB funded projects are not normally completed within the original DPP fixed timeline, but in Donor funded projects in most of cases are completed original DPP fixed timeline. Out of nineteen projects only one project is completed with original DPP detected duration of 3 years, rest of the eighteen projects were not completed within the original DPP detected timeline or applied for time extension or have to extend the duration. Some of the GoB funded projects had been extended its duration for 3 times (Table 1).

4.1.3. Number of packages of works, services and goods

Total number of packages of works, services and goods under nineteen projects of ICT Division were 588, 415 and 313, respectively. Services and goods packages are available in all of the nineteen projects, but work package(s) is available in only eleven projects. ICT Division itself has no any works package of its three projects (Appendix 3). In GoB funded fifteen projects, number works packages varied from 00 to 491 with an average number of 38.04/project whereas in Donor funded project it was ranged from 00 to 07 with the average of 3.00/project. In GoB funded fifteen projects number service packages varied from 01 to 145 with an average number of 20.80/project whereas in Donor funded project it was ranged from 05 to 70 with the average of 25.75/project. In GoB funded 15-project number goods packages varied from 01 to 44 with an average number of 16.87/project whereas in Donor funded project it was ranged from 09 to 20 with the average of 15.00/project (Table 2).

4.2. Procurement stages

4.2.1. Pre-procurement stage: Annual Procurement Plan (APP) is prepared in all 19-project by concern Procuring Entity (PE) and Project Director (PD) under ICT Division and its approval from Head of Procurement Entity (HOPE) are taken as per PPR 2008 provision.

Table1. Project value, implementation period, source of fund and implementation agency in 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Value (cr. tk.)	Project Imp. Period	Duration (yrs)	Duration	Fund Source
1	IDEA Project	442.50	July 2016-June 2026	10.00	2 times extended	GoB
2	Bangla Language Project	158.90	July 2016- June 2026	10.00	3 times extended	GoB
3	Digital Sylhet City Project	30.20	Jan 2018- June 2024	5.50	1 time extended	GoB
4	Connectivity Project	504.43	July 2018- June 2025	7.00	2 times extended	GoB
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	167.18	July 2019- June 2025	6.00	1 time extended	GoB
6	EDGE Project	2541.64	Jan. 2022- Dec. 2026	4.00	Have to extend	Donor
7	VDO Conferencing Project	49.51	July 2021- June 2024	3.00	Completed	GoB
8	11-IT Project	837.00	July 2020- June 2025	5.00	Have to extend	GoB
9	12-IT Project	1846.00	July 2017- June 2025	8.00	Extended	GoB
10	DEIED Project	353.00	July 2021- Dec. 2025	4.00	Have to extend	Donor
11	BDSET Project	7457.59	Jan. 2021- Dec. 2025	5.00	Have to extend	Donor
12	14-IT Project	1114.00	July 2022- June 2027	4.00	Have to extend	GoB
13	08-IT Project	533.54	July 2020- June 2025	5.00	Extended	GoB
14	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	927.00	July 2020 - June 2025	5.00	Extended	GoB
15	EDC project	5900.00	Dec. 2021- Nov. 2026	5.00	Extended	GoB
16	Her Power Project	289.00	July 2022 - June 2025	3.00	Have to extend	GoB
17	Aspire to Innovate (A2i)	855.00	Jan. 2020- Dec. 2025	5.00	Extended	Donor
18	Mobile Game Project	330.08	July 2016- Dec. 2024	9.00	Extended	GoB
19	DIKKHA project	27.50	Jan. 2021- June 2025	4.50	Have to extend	GoB
	Grand Range	27.50 to 7457.59	July 2016- June 2027	3.00 to 10.00	0 – 3 times	
	Grand Average	1433.18	-	5.68	-	
	GoB funded projects' range	27.50 to 5900.00	-	3.00 to 10.00	-	
	GoB funded projects' average	877.12	-	6.00	-	
	Donor funded projects' range	353.00 to 7457.59	-	4.00 to 5.00	-	
	Donor funded projects' average	2801.81	-	4.50	-	

Table 2. Total number of packages of works, services and goods in 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Works (package)			Services (package)			Goods		
		Number	Range	Average	Number	Range	Average	Number	Range	Average
GoB funded										
1	IDEA Project	03	00 - 491	38.04	18	01 -145	20.80	44	01 - 44	16.87
2	Bangla Language Project	00			25			36		
3	Digital Sylhet City Project	00			01			08		
4	Connectivity Project	15			04			07		
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	00			27			44		
6	VDO Conferencing Project	00			06			08		
7	11-IT Project	22			06			12		
8	12-IT Project	03			02			02		
9	14-IT Project	14			01			04		
10	08-IT Project	27			01			07		
1	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	00			01			12		
12	EDC project	491			142			41		
13	Her Power Project	00			36			10		
14	Mobile Game Project	00			41			17		
15	DIKKHA project	01			01			01		
Donor funded										
16	EDGE Project	02	00 - 07	3.00	10	05 – 70	25.75	14	09 - 20	15.00
17	DEIED Project	07			18			17		
18	BDSET Project	03			05			09		
19	Aspire to Innovate (A2i)	00			70			20		

Similarly, specification preparation, official cost estimation, Tender Document (TD) preparation and its approval from the HOPE are taken in all of the projects as PPR 2008 provision (Appendix 4). In addition to PPR 2008 provisions and guidelines for Donor funded projects, concurrences are needed to take from authorised person of Donor office for each of the important stages of procurement.

4.2.2. Procurement stage: During the procurement stage for free, fair and open competition all of tender notice and Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) of projects implemented by BCC are published in BCC (bcc.gov.bd) and ICT Division (ictd.gov.bd) website. Similarly, BHTPA publish it their own (bhtpa.gov.bd) and ICT Division (ictd.gov.bd) websites, and DoICT publish it their own (doict.gov.bd) and ICT Division (ictd.gov.bd) websites. On the other hand, ICT Division publishes tender notice and REOI in their own (ictd.gov.bd) website. Based on the value of tender or REOI ICT Division itself and all of the implementing agencies under ICT Division publish it in Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority-BPPA (cptu.gov.bd) website. In case of work, and goods if the price is equal to one crore or more, and for service if the price is equal to fifty lac or more then it is mandatory for publication in BPPA website (Table 3.1).

In case of tender or REOI advertisement it is published in both online and printing version newspaper for all of the GoB and Donor funded projects under ICT Division. They publish it at least one Bangla and one English daily newspaper, but it revealed that it was not published in most of cases highest circulated daily Bangla and English newspapers like Dainik Prothom Alo and Daily Star. In case of some projects, it was not published for any of their procurement package in Dainik Prothom Alo and Daily Star. In some projects the tender notice and REOI are published in top 10 newspapers by turn for their subsequent procurement packages. For Donor funded projects all of the tender and REOI advertisement are compulsorily published in

Daily Star and Prothom Alo, which are most popular English and Bangla newspaper in Bangladesh, respectively (Table 3.1). Opening of tender and REOI, evaluation, Notification of Award (NOA) and contract signing are done as well as PPR 2008 and Procurement Regulations of Donors in both for GoB and Donor funded projects, respectively (Table 3.2).

4.2.3. Post-procurement stage: Out of 19 projects under ICT Division nominated subcontract were not found for any of the procurement package. Subcontracting was found in all cases of works procurement of GoB funded project, but it was always done informally i.e. subcontract(s) was done for all of the works procurement, but documents were not submitted to Procurement Entity (PE) (Table 4). In case of services and goods no subcontracting was observed for any package of procurement of any 19 projects in ICT Division. Contract amendment was observed in all work packages of all of the concerned projects, and it was mainly for time extension, and frequently for land purchasing for government projects. In case of goods, procurement reports from the receiving committee were ensured for all cases and accordingly, they ensure goods as per specification. Having the positive reports from receiving committee PE receives the goods (Table 4), accordingly pays the final bill.

4.3. Major compliance in procurement

4.3.1. Annual Procurement Plan (APP) Approval: As per PPR 2008 APP is prepared by PE/PD, and taken approval from the HOPE for all the projects under ICT Division for both GoB and Donor funded projects, but further concurrence is needed for Donor funded project from the authority of Donor office. Normally, APP is revised quarterly if it is needed. It could be changed at any time in special case with the approval of HOPE (Table 5.1).

4.3.2. Technical specification: According to the PPR 2008, all the projects under ICT Division technical specifications and terms of references (TOR) were prepared through the concern committee. However, in GoB funded projects technical specification and TOR were

Table 3.1. Procurement stage: Advertisement, name of newspapers, opening, evaluation, NOA and contract signing of 15 GoB projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Advertisement	Name of newspaper	Opening	Evaluation	NOA	Contract signing
1.	IDEA Project	BCC, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, Financial Express, Daily Sun, Jugantar, Manab Jamin, Kalarkantha etc.	Done	Done	Issued	Done
2.	Bangla Language Project	Do	Top ten newspapers by turn				
3.	Digital Sylhet City Project	Do	Daily Star, Financial Express, Ittefaq, Amader Somoy				
4.	Connectivity Project	Do	Daily Star, Financial Express, Daily Sun, Business Standard, Dhaka Tribune, Ittefaq, Jugantar, Manab Jamin, Kalarkantha, Bonik Barta				
5.	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	Do	Top ten newspapers by turn				
6.	VDO Conferencing Project	Do	Business Post, Observer, Kalbela, Kalarkantha				
7.	11-IT Project	BHPA, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, New Age, Jugantar, Bangladesh Protidin, Kalarkantha,				
8.	12-IT Project	Do	Daily Star, New Nation, New Age, Observer, Daily Sun, Bangladesh Protidin, Kalarkantha				
9.	14-IT Project	Do	Daily Star, Observer, Financial Express, Jugantar, Inkilab, Kalarkantha,				
10.	08-IT Project	Do	New Nation, New Age, Asian Age, Daily Sun, Jugantar, Manab Jamin, Kalarkantha,				
11.	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	DoICT, and *BPPA website, newspaper	New Nation, New Age, Financial Express, Dhaka Tribune, Samakal, Ittefaq, Jugantar				
12.	EDC project	Do	Except: Daily Star and Prothom Alo				
13.	Her Power Project	Do	Financial Express, Daily Sun, Dhaka, Tribune, Jugantar, Kalarkantha, Samakal				
14.	Mobile Game Project	ICTD, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Dhaka Tribune, Independence, Observer, New Nation, Jugantar, Janakantha, Samakal				
15.	DIKKHA project	Do	Except: Daily Star and Prothom Alo				

*In case of Goods and Works if price $\geq$ one crore, and Service price $\geq$ 50 lac advertisement is published in BPPA website

Table 3.2. Procurement stage: Advertisement, name of newspapers, opening, evaluation, NOA and contract signing in 04 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Advertisement	Name of newspaper	Opening	Evaluation	NOA	Contract signing
	EDGE Project	BCC, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, Financial Express, Observer, Prothom Alo, Amar Desh, Jugantar, Bangladesh Protidin, Kalarkantha	Done	Done	Issued	Done
	DEIED Project	BHPA, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, Financial Express, Dhaka Tribune, Inkilab, Dainik Bangladesh, Bangladesh Protidin				
	BDSET Project	BHPA, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, Bangladesh News, Dhaka Tribune, Prothom Alo, Observer, Jugantar, Manab Jamin, Kalarkantha, Amader Sangbad, Bangladesh Samachar				
	<u>Aspire to Innovate (A2i)</u>	ICTD, and *BPPA website, newspaper	Daily Star, Financial Express, Daily Sun, Jugantar, Manab Jamin, Kalarkantha, Prothom Alo				

*In case of Goods and Works if price $\geq$ one crore, and Service price $\geq$ 50 lac advertisement is published in BPPA website

Table 4.0. Nominated subcontract, sub-contracting, contract amendment, reporting from receiving committee, handover and receiving, payment of final bill in 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Nominated subcontract	Sub-contracting	Contract amendment	Reporting from receiving committee	Handover and receiving	Payment on final bill
GoB funded							
Yes	IDEA Project	No	No *	No **	Yes	Yes	***
2	Bangla Language Project		No	No			
3	Digital Sylhet City Project		No	No			
4	Connectivity Project		No*	No**			
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project		No	No			
6	VDO Conferencing Project		No	No			
7	11-IT Project		No *	No **			
8	12-IT Projects		No *	No **			
9	14-IT Project		No *	No **			
10	08-IT Project		No *	No **			
11	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project		No	No			
12	EDC project		No *	No **			
13	Her Power Project		No	No			
14	Mobile Game Project		No	No			
15	DIKKHA project		No *	No **			
Donor funded							
16	EDGE Project	No	No	No **	Yes	Yes	***
17	DEIED Project			No			
18	BDSET Project			No			
19	Agency to Innovate (A2i)			No			

*Sub-contracting is found for works but informal

** Contract amendment is found for works

***In case of goods, receiving committee ensured the goods as per specification, accordingly, PE receives the goods and pays the final bill.

Table 5.1. Major compliance in procurement (APP approval, Proper Technical Specification/ Terms of References (PTS/TOR), Opening Committee formation and their activities) in 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	APP approval	PTS/TOR preparation and approval	Tender Opening Committee formation		
				Yes or no	When	Major activities
GoB funded						
1.	IDEA Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Before specification or TOR finalization	Prepare TDS containing (i) name and address of the Tenderer; (ii) withdrawal, substitution or modifications, if any; (iii) the Tender price; (iv) discounts, if any; and (v) Tender security, if required and information relating to its amount
2.	Bangla Language Project					
3.	Digital Sylhet City Project					
4.	Connectivity Project					
5.	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project					
6.	VDO Conferencing Project					
7.	11-IT Project					
8.	12-IT Projects					
9.	14-IT Project					
10.	08-IT Project					
11.	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project					
12.	EDC project					
13.	Her Power Project					
14.	Mobile Game Project					
15.	DIKKHA project					
Donor funded						
16.	EDGE Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Before specification or TOR finalization	Prepare TDS containing (i)name and address of the Tenderer; (ii) withdrawal, substitution or modifications, if any; (iii) the Tender price; (iv) discounts, if any; and (v) Tender security, if required and information relating to its amount
17.	DEIED Project					
18.	BDSET Project					
19.	Agency to Innovate (A2i)					

prepared by project personnel in some cases, and then approvals were taken from concerned formal committees. In case of Donor funded projects beyond the HOPE approval additional concurrence is taken for prior review packages from Donor authorized personnel of the concerned local office or abroad office (Table 5.1).

4.3.3. Tender opening committee (TOC) formation and their activities: Three membered tender opening committee is formed according to PPR 2008, Rule 07 in both GoB and Donor funded projects under ICT Division and it is compulsory for all governmental procurement in Bangladesh. According to the Rule, one member from the PE, one member from PEC/TEC and one from other than PE, and must be approved by the HOPE. According to the PPR 2008, Rule 07 the major responsibility of tender opening committee is to prepare tender data sheet (TDS) and it contains (i) name and address of the Tenderer; (ii) withdrawal, substitution or modifications, if any; (iii) the Tender price; (iv) discounts, if any; -and (v) Tender security, if required and information relating to its amount etc. (Table 5.1).

4.3.4. Tender Evaluation Committee (TEC) and Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) formation and their activities: Tender Evaluation Committee (TEC) or Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) formation is a common phenomenon of any public procurement in Bangladesh and it is strictly followed in procurement for both GoB and Donor funded projects. Five to seven membered TEC/PEC committee is formed which includes two members from other than PE ministry, and rest of the members are nominated by the PE, and finally approved by the contract approving authority in accordance with the Delegation of financial power. Major activities of TEC are reviewing Tender Document, evaluation Technical Proposal, opening Financial Proposal, comparing & ranking of submitted proposal, prepare evaluation reports, and recommendation for award. On the other hand, major activities PEC is proposal

opening, preliminary examination, detailed evaluation (technical & financial), ranking of proposal, recommendation for contract award (Table 5.2).

4.3.5. Procurement within DPP provision: All of the respondents of GoB and Donor funded projects under ICT Division replied that their concerned all procurement were done within the DPP indicated price. In some cases, procurement of works, services and goods beyond the DPP provision were done, but after the revision of DPP (Table 5.2).

4.3.6. Free and fair competition: Free and fair competition are one of major goal of public procurement as well as for development partners or Donors in Bangladesh. For ensuring free and fair competition open advertisement, use Standardized Tender Documents (STD), non-discrimination, clear evaluation criteria, no unfair advantages are ensured according to Legal Framework of GoB (PPA 2006, PPR 2008, and e-GP) in both 15 GoB and 04 Donor funded projects in Bangladesh (Table 5.2). In Donor funded projects some additional tools like ISO 90001, and ISO 20400 guidelines, Systematic Tracking of Exchange in Procurement (STEP) etc. are strictly followed for free and fair competition and transparency.

4.3.6. Software and Hardware Quality Testing Certificate (SHQTC): For testing quality and compliance with technical specification necessary to ensure SHQTC and it is done under SHQTC Centre of BCC. Out of 19 projects under ICT Division, 09 had the provision of new software development, and accordingly, they ensured the Software Quality Testing Certificate (SQTC). Rest of the 10 projects have no any provision of software development and hence they had no scope of SQTC. All of the 19 projects under ICT Division had the provision of hardware (computer, personal computer, desktop, and other electronics goods) procurement.

Accordingly, they ensured HQTC. There was no meaningful difference in SHQTC between GoB and Donor funded projects (Table 5.2).

4.4. Effectiveness of procurement

4.4.1. Value for money: Value for money (VfM) in 19 projects under ICT Division varied from 75% to 95%. In case of GoB funded projects it was similar with gross value, but in Donor funded 4 projects it varied from 90% to 95%. VfM mainly depends on economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity for all suppliers, and sustainability of procurement process, but when it was asked them how they are rating it in percentage, they could not reply it properly (Table 6).

4.4.2. Openness: Openness in public procurement in Bangladesh has been evolving as an issue and reflecting the country's commitment to increasing transparency, accountability, and efficiency in case use of public fund and development partners' fund. In response to the questions on openness in procurement, all the 19 projects under ICT Division replied that openness had been main issue in their projects in case procurement works, services and goods. They are maintaining Public Procurement Act 2006 works as legal foundation for public procurement in Bangladesh emphasizing transparency, competition, and accountability, whereas PPR 2008 Rules operation, and provide detailed guidelines for procurement processes. Finally, e-Government Procurement (e-GP) introduces the digitalize and streamline procurement process, reducing human intervention and increasing transparency (Table 6).

Table 5.2. Major compliance in procurement (TEC/PEC formation, its activities, procurement within DPP provision, free and fair competition, SHQTC) of 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Technical Evaluation Committee/Proposal Evaluation Committee				Procurement (within DPP)	Free and fair competition	SHQTC for
		Formation (Yes or no)	Formation (When)	TEC Activities	PEC Activities			
GoB funded								
1	IDEA Project	Yes	Before specification or TOR preparation	*	**	Within DPP provision	Through Legal Framework	New SW & HW
2	Bangla Language Project				Not applicable			New SW & HW
3	Digital Sylhet City Project				**			New SW & HW
4	Connectivity Project				**			HW
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project				Not applicable			HW
6	VDO Conferencing Project				Not applicable			HW
7	11-IT Project				**			HW
8	12-IT Project				**			HW
9	14-IT Project				**			HW
10	08-IT Project				**			HW
11	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project				**			New SW & HW
12	EDC project				**			New SW & HW
13	Her Power Project				Not applicable			New SW & HW
14	Mobile Game Project				**			New SW & HW
15	DIKKHA project				**			
Donor funded								
16	EDGE Project	Yes	Before specification or TOR preparation	*	**	Within DPP provision	Through Legal Framework ***	New SW & HW
17	DEIED Project				**			HW
18	BDSET Project				**			HW
19	Agency to Innovate (A2i)				Not applicable			New SW & HW

TEC- Technical Evaluation Committee, PEC- Proposal Evaluation Committee, DPP- Development Project Proposal, SHQTC- Software and Hardware Quality Testing Center, SW- Software, HW- Hardware

* Reviewing tender documents, evaluation technical proposal, opening financial proposal, comparing & ranking proposal, Prepare evaluation reports, and recommendation for contract award

** Proposal opening, preliminary examination, detailed evaluation (technical and financial), ranking of proposal, recommendation for award

*** Additional tools like ISO 90001, and ISO 20400 guidelines, and STEP (Systematic Tracking of Exchange in Procurement)

Table 6. Effectiveness of procurement (value for money, openness, efficiency, free and fair competition, lower costs and high quality, freedom to innovate, skilled manpower, and reduced supplier risks) in 15 GoB and 4 Donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No	Name of project	Value for money	Openness	Efficiency	Free and fair competition	Lower cost & high quality	Freedom to innovate	Skilled manpower	Reduced Supplier Risk
GoB funded									
1	IDEA Project	85-90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	Yes	Yes
2	Bangla Language Project	95%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	Yes	Yes
3	Digital Sylhet City Project	95%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	95%	Yes
4	Connectivity Project	90-95%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	Yes	Yes
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	Yes	Yes
6	VDO Conferencing Project	95%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited	Yes, ****	Yes
7	11-IT Project	90%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited, spec. oriented	Yes, ****	Yes
8	12-IT Project	90%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited, spec. oriented	Yes, ****	Yes
9	14-IT Project	90%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited	Yes, ****	Yes
10	08-IT Project	90-95%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited	Yes, ****	Yes
11	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	75-80%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	Yes	Yes
12	EDC project	80-85%	Yes	*	Available	**	Yes	70%	Yes
13	Her Power Project	90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Limited	80%	Yes
14	Mobile Game Project	85-95%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited, *****	Yes, ****	Yes
15	DIKKHA project	90%	Yes	****	Available	**	Limited, *****	Yes, ****	Yes
Donor funded									
16	EDGE Project	90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Yes	Yes	Yes, ***
17	DEIED Project	90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Yes	Yes	Yes, ***
18	BDSET Project	90-95%	Yes	*	Available	**	Yes, for training	Yes	Yes, ***
19	Aspire to Innovate (a2i)	90%	Yes	*	Available	**	Yes, due to frequent amendment	100%	Yes, ***

* Transparency, time saving, cost efficiency, and accessibility from a wider range of bidders were maintained for efficiency

** Is being ensured; *** Insurance, mentoring, advance fund, running bill etc. helped to complete timely

****Procurement experts/specialist is not available in the project which was difficult to ensure the effectiveness in procurement,

*****Need DPP amendment

4.4.3. Efficiency in procurement: Efficiency in public procurement is a key determinant of effective governance and economic development, especially in a developing country like Bangladesh. Transparency, time saving, cost efficiency, and accessibility from a wider range of bidders were maintained for efficiency in procurement in 08 GoB funded projects and all of the Donor funded projects under ICT Division. In case of 7 GoB funded projects, namely VDO Conferencing project, 11-IT project, 12-IT project, 14-IT project, 08-IT project, Mobile Game project, and DIKKHA project efficiency in procurement were not maintained as the expected range due to the lack of public procurement knowledge or absence of procurement experts in their concerned projects. On the other hand, in all Donor funded projects efficiency in procurement is ensured through experience public procurement experts and regular capacity building training on procurement (Table 6).

4.4.4. Free and fair competition: In response to the questionnaire all of the representative of the concerned 19 projects responded that for free and fair competition they followed all of the act and rules prescribed by PPA 2006 and PPR 2008, and e-GP system in most of cases. In addition to PPA 2006, PPR 2008, and e-GP system Donor funded 4 projects were needed to take additional concurrence from the authorized person of local or abroad office for prior review packages which ensured the transparency, fairness, and accessibility and open competition for all the packages (Table 6).

4.4.5. Lower costs and high quality: By enhancing transparency, fostering competition, building capacity, and leveraging technology, Bangladesh can achieve a balance between cost efficiency and high-quality outcomes in public procurement. This will not only ensure optimal utilization of public funds but also build public trust in government spending. For achieving low cost and high quality for procurement of works, services, and goods in 19 projects under

ICT Division all possible best efforts are being ensured through PPA 2006, PPR 2008 and e-GP system in both 15 GoB funded and 4 Donor funded projects (Table 6).

4.4.6. Freedom to innovate: Out of 15 GoB funded projects, in 10 projects there were limited scope of freedom to innovate. This was because of DPP bounded activities. Without DPP revision no major changes could be done in development projects. Only Establishing Digital Connectivity Project (EDC project), they reported that there was freedom to innovate in their project. On the other hand, there was enough scope of freedom to innovate in 4 Donor funded projects. Only having the concurrence from Donor office, they could bring the innovation in their procurement. Afterward they would revise the DPP as per need. In this case, Aspire to Innovate (A2i) frequently changes their concerned DPP for attain the innovation as needed (Table 6).

4.4.7. Skilled manpower: In respond to the question GoB funded 12 projects replied that their manpower was skilled, but 7 of them (projects) had no procure expert or specialist which were very suffering experience for their procurement. Rest 3 of the GoB funded projects answered that their 70 to 95% manpower were skilled and in that case EDC project was minimum (70%) and Digital Sylhet City project was maximum (95%). On the hand, in Donor funded projects all of manpower were skilled i.e. 100% skilled. Besides, in Donor funded projects there were provisioned of procurement specialist and it were ensured timely (Table 6).

4.4.8. Reduced supplier risks: In response to the question all the respondents from 19 projects including GoB and Donor funded projects replied that they always try to reduce the supplier risk. In response to how do they reduce supplier risks they said that they provide the access to all potential bidders, sufficient time was given for bid or proposal preparation and

submission, bids were opened in presence of bidder or their representatives immediately following the deadline of bid submission, procurement was done through e-GP system in possible cases, complying all of the criteria and lowest evaluated responsive bids was selected. All of the respondents replied they ensured performance guarantee, 100% respondents said they timely paid the payment of suppliers, all the respondents said they paid advance payment and conducted training and audit (AT) for the suppliers. In addition of that the 4 Donor funded projects ensured strong monitoring, regular training for procurement experts and management personnel, mentoring, advance payment, running bills etc. to complete the delivery timely (Table 6).

4.5. Challenges in procurement

4.5.1. Process: In the public procurement process political influence, limitation of technology, inefficient bureaucracy, limited training for procuring entity, and unskilled tenderer or supplier were the major challenges for public procurement in most the GoB funded projects under ICT Division. Besides, the above-mentioned issues absence of procurement specialist or procurement expert in the concerned projects was another challenge for some project of 7 GoB funded projects. On the other hand, in Donor funded 4 projects, political influence and inefficient bureaucracy are the common issues like GoB funded project. Some exceptional issues were received from some project, such as knowledge level and attitude of supplier is one of the constraints of procurement process in Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation Eco-System Development Project (DEIED Project) is implemented by BHTPA (Table 7.1).

4.5.2. Supplier management: In response to the challenge of supplier management 12 respondents replied that political influence, Covid-19, limited supplier, price hiking were the major challenges for their supplier management. Three of GoB funded projects namely

Establishment of IT Training and Incubation Center Project (14-IT Project), Establishment of IT Training and Incubation Center Project (08-IT Projects), and Establishment of Digital Labs in Educational Institutions (2nd Phase) Project (Digital Labs 2nd phase project) reported that they had challenge for supplier management. On the other hand, 4-Donor funded project had no any major challenge for supplier management (Table 7.1).

4.5.3. Risk management: In response to the challenge of risk management 11 GoB funded projects responded that they had limited problem for risk management during the procurement. Enhancement of Bangla Language in ICT through Research and Development (Bangla Language Project) reported that contract management within the time, and software development and its implementation were the main challenges for risk management, and according to Establishment of Broadband Connectivity in the Area of Underprivilege Telecommunication Facilities Project (Connectivity Project) UD\$ price hiking was their main challenge for them as the vendor was international, but contract was signed in BDT. On the other hand, there was no challenge for risk management for 3 Donor funded projects, but Enhancing Digital Government and Economy Project (EDGE Project) responded that top-down specification approach was the major challenge for risk management (table 7.1).

4.5.4. Transparency: In response to the question on challenges on transparency in their procurement system, all of the GoB and Donor funded projects informed that political influence, and inefficient bureaucracy were two major challenges for maintaining transparency in procurement process (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. Major challenges in procurement (process, supplier management, risk management, limited transparency, sustainability, lack of bench marking (LBM), data inaccuracy, and outdated technology) of 19 projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No	Name of project	Process	Supplier Management	Risk management	Transparency	Sustainability	LBM
GoB funded							
1	IDEA Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS, PH	No	PI, IB	No	No
2	Bangla Language Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS, PH	CM within the allocated period, Developed SW implementation	PI, IB	How the software will be run by EA after delivery	No
3	Digital Sylhet City Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	One time procurement	No
4	Connectivity Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	\$PH (Thakral das not like to work)	PI, IB	No	No
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT (no actual vendor in Bd)	PI, Covid-19, LS, SW PH	*	PI, IB	No but risky	No
6	VDO Conferencing Project	NPE, PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No
7	11-IT Project	NPE, PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No
8	12-IT Project	NPE, PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS, PH	**	PI, IB	No	No
9	14-IT Project	NPE, PI, land purchase	Late fund release, No (Monitoring, advance bill, partial bill etc.)	No	PI, IB	No	No
10	08-IT Project	NPE, Govt. Pressure, PI, LUT, IB	No	No	PI, IB	No	No
11	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	No (SLA, Warranty)	No	PI, IB	No	No
12	EDC project	*** PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No
13	Her Power Project	PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No
14	Mobile Game Project	NPE, PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No
15	DIKKHA project	NPE, PI, LUT, IB, LT	PI, Covid-19, LS	No	PI, IB	No	No

Sl. No	Name of project	Process	Supplier Management	Risk management	Transparency	Sustainability	LBM
Donor funded							
16	EDGE Project	EP, PI, LUT, IB	No supplier development prog.	PH, product not available in the market	PI, IB	How the software will be run by EA after delivery	No
17	DEIED Project	STEP is followed but KLAS, PI	No (advance bill, running bill, mentoring, training)	No (advance bill, running bill, mentoring, training etc.)	PI, IB	Social, economic, environmental	No (M. Price is approved after retuning)
18	BDSET Project	PI, QCBS, e-GP is followed	No (Advance payment, mentoring, partial bill etc.)	No (training, mentoring, partial bill, time extension etc.)	PI, IB	No	No
19	Agency to Innovate (A2i)	PI, LUT, Fixed price contract modality	No (SRM is done formally)	No (Risk management framework is maintained)	PI, IB	No, only in Bangladesh who maintain ISO-20400 Guideline Certificate	No

NPE- No procurements expert, PI- Political influence, LUT- Limitation of technology, IB- inefficient bureaucracy, LT- Limited training, LS-Limited suppliers,

PH- Price hiking, PNALM- Product not available in local market, RCT- Rapid change of technology, NS- Knowledge of supplier, EP- External pressure, NSD- No supplier development, KLAS- Knowledge level and attitude of supplier, SRM- Supplier Relationship Management

* Goods: Product is not available, no local supplier/agent is available, we can purchase directly from abroad, LS,

Service: Not available local consultant, consultant doesn't stay long time, lack of SW base consultant

** 65% Ext. consultant, 35% national consultant, CD Vat only 6.5 C but needed 495 C, cement, rod have import from India

***Top-down approach, imposed by govt. officials

4.5.5. Sustainability: In response to the question 17 projects (of 14 GoB and 3 Donors funded) responded that they had no any problem or challenges in sustainability. They also said they strictly followed the PPA 2006, PPR 2008 and e-GP imposed act, rules and regulations along with environmental and social, economic issues. Bangla Language Project, and EDGE Project reported that how their delivered software would be run after the project completion, it was a challenge for sustainability. Agency to Innovate (A2i) reported that A2i only the Agency in Bangladesh had been maintaining ISO 90001 and ISO-20400 Guideline and they had no any sustainability challenge. (Table 7.1).

4.5.6. Lack of benchmarking: The lack of benchmarking in public procurement in Bangladesh is a critical issue that affects efficiency, transparency, and the quality of goods and services acquired. In 19 projects under ICT Division there was not a lack of benchmarking, as the respondents reported. As they reported, market price, and technical specification are presented by the Official Cost Estimate and Technical Specification Committee, and it is approved by PE after retuning and reviewing the proposal (Table 7.1).

4.5.7. Data inaccuracy: All of the respondents from GoB and Donor funded projects reported that there were not any data inaccuracy. Data was kept digitally. Besides, intensive monitoring and cross checking helped to data accuracy (Table 7.2).

4.5.8. Outdated technology: Although it is difficult to maintain the latest tools and technologies in ICT sector, but out of 19 in 17 projects under ICT Division, there was not a single use of outdated technology. One GoB funded project (IDEA project) one Donor funded project (EDGE project) reported that in ICT technology changes very rapidly, but update technology and tools were ensured carefully in their concerned projects (Table 7.2).

4.5.9. Lack of strategy: In response to questionnaire all of the respondents from GoB and Donor funded 19 projects under ICT Division reported that there was not any lacking of strategy. The respondents replied that their DPPs were prepared based on the Perspective Plan 2021-2024, 8th 5-year plan, Delta Plan 2100, Bangladesh Country Strategic Plan 2022-2026, Government Priority Plan etc., and during implementation they also maintain Annual Procurement Plan, Gantt Chart for successful implementation of projects (Table 7.2).

4.5.10. Ineffective contracts: Ineffective contracts can result in delays, cost overruns, substandard quality of work, and legal disputes. Out of 15, 13 GoB funded projects reported that there was not any ineffective contract in their projects, rest two GoB funded projects (IDEA project, and Bangla Language Project) reported that in same case vendors failed to handover the software even after two years of deadlines. On the other hand, in Donor funded 4 projects there was not any ineffective contract (Table 7.2).

4.5.11. Dark purchasing: Dark purchasing, sometimes referred to as off-the-books purchasing, is a term used to describe the act of procuring goods and services outside the formal procurement channels. In 15 GoB funded projects, 14 projects reported that there was not any dark procurement as all of procurement were done following PPA 2006, PPR 2008, and e-GP. Rest one GoB funded project, Digital Labs 2nd Phase responded that they procured some goods through Request for Quotation (RFQ) and Direct Procurement Method (DPM). On the other hand, in 4 Donor funded projects there was not any dark procurement. The world bank funded two projects (EDGE project, and DEIED project) follow Systematic Tracking of Exchange in Procurement (STEP) and Agency to Innovate (A2i) follow ISO-90001 and ISO-204000 tools, which are ensuring the transparent and sustainable procurement (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2. Major challenges in procurement (data inaccuracy, outdated technology, lack of strategy, ineffective contract, dark purchasing, and global crisis) of 19-project under ICT Division

Sl. No	Name of project	Data inaccuracy	Outdated technology	Lack of strategy	Ineffective contract	Dark purchasing	Global crisis
GoB funded							
1	IDEA Project	No	No (RCT)	No	In some cases, 2-yr after contract SW is not delivered	No	Covid-19, PH, people would come in office
2	Bangla Language Project	No	No	No	After deadline of contract SW is not delivered	No	Covid-19, \$PH, foreign consultant due to Covid
3	Digital Sylhet City Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19
4	Connectivity Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19 (delay and loss of contractor), \$PH
5	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	No	No	No	*	No	Covid-19, PH, int. crisis (Ukraine- Russia conflict)
6	VDO Conferencing Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19, PH
7	11-IT Project	No	No	No	No	No	Price schedule PWD 2028 to PWD 2022, PH
8	12-IT Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19, int. crisis
9	14-IT Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19, PH
10	08-IT Project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19
11	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	No	No	No	No	No, partially dark as DPM & RFQ	Covid-19, PH
12	EDC project	No	No	No	No	No	Covid-19, PH
13	Her Power Project	No	No	No	No	No	PH
14	Mobile Game Project	No	No	No	No	No	PH, Covid-19
15	DIKKHA project	No	No	No	No	No	PH, Covid-19

Sl. No	Name of project	Data inaccuracy	Outdated technology	Lack of strategy	Ineffective contract	Dark purchasing	Global crisis
Donor funded							
16	EDGE Project	No	No (RCT)	No (STEP is followed)	No	No	PH, Covid-19
17	DEIED Project	No (STEP is followed)	No	No (STEP is followed)	No	No	PH, Covid-19
18	BDSET Project	No	No	No	No	No	India-Bangladesh bilateral relation, PH, Covid-19
19	Agency to Innovate (A2i)	No	No	No	No	Disqualification letter is offered to unqualified Firm	PH, Covid-19

RCT- Rapid change of technology

*Goods: Product is not available, no local supplier/agent, we can purchase directly from abroad, LS, no local is not available for supply; Consultant: Not available local consultant, consultant doesn't stay long time, lack of SW base consultant

4.5.12. Global crisis: Out of 15 GoB funded projects, 12 projects reported Covid-19, and price hiking, 2 projects reported Russia-Ukraine conflict, and 1 project reported Public Works Department (PWD) price rate hiking (2022 rate comparing with 2018) were the major global crisis which were the challenges for their project implementation. During the Covid-19 the regular project staffs and consultants would not come to offices, even International Consultants would not come to Bangladesh. All of Donor funded projects reported that their projects were also affected by Covid-19, and price hiking, besides, BDSET project reported that India-Bangladesh bilateral relation also affected on implementation and procurement of the project (Table 7.2).

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

While both GoB and Donor-funded projects aim for effective procurement processes, the major difference lies in compliance and effectiveness due to regulatory frameworks, funding sources, and oversight mechanisms. Both the GoB and Donor funded projects face bureaucratic inefficiency and political influence in case of procurement and implementation, but Donor funded projects tend to offer more rigorous and transparent procurement processes with better oversight, leading to timely delivery and high-quality outcomes. In Donor funded projects they always ensure skilled personnel in project management and implementation including procurement expert, and continuously provide training for capacity building. On the other hand, GoB funded projects face challenges related to bureaucratic inefficiency, political influence, delayed timelines, and cost overruns, though they benefit from local expertise and more flexible requirements at times.

To improve the overall procurement effectiveness in GoB and Donor funded projects under ICT Division are recommended to adopting more flexible and transparent procedures, and

- Establishment of good governance in govt. offices,
- Ensure skilled personnel including procurement expert in project implementation and management,
- Continuous capacity development training for procurement, and management related staff,
- Intensive monitoring and auditing the activities and regular supervision of the staffs of the project,
- Incorporating international best practices in all Donor and GoB funded projects,
- Efficiency in drafting technical specification, and
- Performance measurement.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Name of the Project:

Sl.	Name of Content	Information					
1.	Implementing agency						
2.	Project value						
3.	Project Implementation period						
4.	Source of Fund						
5.	Project objectives						
6.	Major activity						
7.	Total number of packages	Work		Services		Goods	
8.	Procurement status:						
	a. Pre-procurement stage	Use yes / no / Comments					
		i. Preparation of APP:					
		ii. Specification preparation & official cost:					
		iii. Tender document preparation & approval:					
	b. Procurement status	i. Advertisement:					
		ii. Opening:					
		iii. Evaluation:					
		iv. Notification of award/					
		v. Contract signing:					
	c. Post procurement status/ Contract management	i. Subcontracting/ Nominated subcontract:					
		ii. Contract amendment:					
		iii. Handover and receiving:					
		iv. Reporting from receiving committee:					
		v. Payment of final bills:					
9.	Major compliance in procurement	i. APP Approval:					
		ii. Technical Specification-proper/not:					
		iii. Opening Committee Formation					
		iv. TEC/PEC Formation, When, & Activities:					
		v. Procurement Within DDP Provision:					
		vi. Free and Fair Competition:					
		vii. SHQTC Report:					

10.	Effectiveness of procurement	i. Value for Money:
		ii. Openness/ Well-known Advertisement:
		iii. Efficiency:
		iv. Free and Fair Competition:
		v. Lowered Costs and High Quality:
		vi. Freedom to Innovate:
		vii. Skilled Manpower:
		viii. Reduced Supplier Risk:
11.	Challenges in procurement	i. Process:
		ii. Supplier Management:
		iii. Risk Management:
		iv. Limited Transparency:
		v. Sustainability:
		vi. Lack of Benchmarking:
		vii. Data Inaccuracy:
		viii. Outdated Technology:
		ix. Lack of Strategy:
		x. Ineffective Contracts:
		xi. Dark Purchasing:
		xii. Global Crisis:
12.	Best practices	
13.	Comments on procurements	

Appendix 2. Project value, implementation period, source of fund and implementation agency in 15 GoB and 4 donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	Value (cr. tk.)	Project Imp. Period	Source of fund	Implementing Agency
	Innovation Design and Entrepreneurship Academy project (IDEA Project)	442.50	July 2016-June 2026	GoB	BCC
	Enhancement of Bangla Language in ICT through Research and Development (Bangla Language Project)	158.90	July 2016- June 2026	GoB	
	Digital Sylhet City	30.20	Nov. 2017- June 2014	GoB	
	Establishment of Broadband Connectivity in the Area of Underprivilege Telecommunication Facilities Project (Connectivity Project)	504.43	July 2018- June 2025	GoB	
	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	167.18	July 2019- June 2025	SOP	
	Enhancing Digital Government and Economy Project (EDGE Project)	2541.64	Jan. 2022- Dec. 2026	World Bank	
	Government VDO Conferencing Platform Strengthening Project (VDO Conferencing Project)	49.51	July 2021- June 2024	GoB	
	IT Training & Incubation Center project (11-IT Project)	837.00	July 2020- June 2025	GoB	BHTPA
	Establishment of IT/Hi-Tech Park at District Level (12-IT Project)	1846.00	July 2017- June 2025	GoB	
	Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation Eco-System Development Project (DEIED Project)	353.00	July 2021- Dec. 2025	World Bank	
	Establishment of Bangladesh-Bharat Digital Service and Employment Training Center Project (BDSET Project)	7457.59	Jan. 2021- Dec. 2025	GoB + India	
	Establishment of IT Training and Incubation Center Project (14-IT Project)	1114.00	July 2022- June 2027	GoB	
	Establishment of IT Training and Incubation Center Project (08-IT Project)	533.54	July 2020- June 2025	GoB	
	Establishment of Digital Labs in Educational Institutions (2nd Phase) Project (Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project)	927.00	July 2020 - June 2023	GoB	DoICT
	Establishing Digital Connectivity Project (EDC project)	5900.00	Nov. 2021- Nov. 2026	GoB	
	Empowerment of Women Through ICT Frontier Initiative (Her Power Project)	289.00	July 2022 - June 2025	GoB	
	Agency to Innovate (A2i)	855.00	Jan. 2020- Dec 2025	*	ICTD
	Capacity Development for Mobile Game and Application (Mobile Game Project)	330.08	July 2016- Dec 2024	GoB	
	Digital Interactive Knack for Knowledge Human Assets (DIKKHA project)	27.50	Jan. 2021- June 2025	GoB	

* GoB + UNICEF + FB + Melinda Gates Foundation

Appendix 3. Total number of packages of works, services and goods in 15 GoB and 4 donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No	Name of project	Work (package)			Service (package)			Goods			
		Number	Range	Average number	Number	Range	Average number	Number	Range	Average number	
1.	IDEA Project	03	00 - 15	2.86	18	01 - 27	13.00	44	07 - 44	23.00	BCC
2.	Bangla Language Project	00			25			36			
3.	Digital Sylhet City Project	00			01			08			
4.	Connectivity Project	15			04			07			
5.	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	00			27			44			
6.	EDGE Project	02			10			14			
7.	VDO Conferencing Project	00			06			08			
8.	11-IT Project	22	03 - 27	12.67	06	01 - 18	5.50	12	02 - 17	8.50	BHTPA
9.	12-IT Project	03			02			02			
10.	DEIED Project	07			18			17			
11.	BDSET Project	03			05			09			
12.	14-IT Project	14			01			04			
13.	08-IT Project	27			01			07			
14.	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	00	00 - 491	163.67	01	01 - 142	59.67	12	10 - 41	21.00	DoICT
15.	EDC project	491			142			41			
16.	Her Power Project	00			36			10			
17.	Aspire to Innovate (A2i)	00	00 - 00	0.00	70	01 - 70	37.33	20	01 - 20	12.67	ICTD
18.	Mobile Game Project	00			41			17			
19.	DIKKHA project	01			01			01			
	Grand total	588			415			313			

Appendix 4. Specification preparation, official cost estimation, TD preparation and approval in 15 GoB and 4 donor funded projects under ICT Division.

Sl. No.	Name of project	APP preparation	APP Approval	Specification preparation	Official cost estimation	Tender document preparation and approval
GoB funded						
	IDEA Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Bangla Language Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Digital Sylhet City Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Connectivity Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	BGD e-Govt CIRT Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	VDO Conferencing Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	11-IT Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	12-IT Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	14-IT Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	08-IT Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Digital Labs (2 nd phase) project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	EDC project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Her Power Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Mobile Game Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	DIKKHA project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Donor funded						
	EDGE Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	DEIED Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	BDSET Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Aspire to Innovate (A2i)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes