

Quarterly Newsletter

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Increased House Rent Forced to Lessen Expenditure on Regular Needs



Study on State of Cities 2017: Housing in Dhaka

52 percent of the house rent is fixed by the landlords in the beginning and generally did undergo revisions from time to time. 67 percent tenants experienced revision of initial rent compared to 33 percent of households that experienced 'no change' annually. Meanwhile, 50 percent of households said that their rent increased annually followed by approximately 25 percent of households reporting that their rents were the same for the first two years and then increased annually. Excessive house rent is one of the foremost reasons for increased living costs in the capital as most of the dwellers have to pay the largest part of their monthly income for housing, a recent study has found. As a result, they are left with no other alternative but to reduce expenditure on essentials like food, clothing, education and entertainment in order to cope with the costs. These were some of the findings revealed at the press launching of a study on housing in Dhaka.

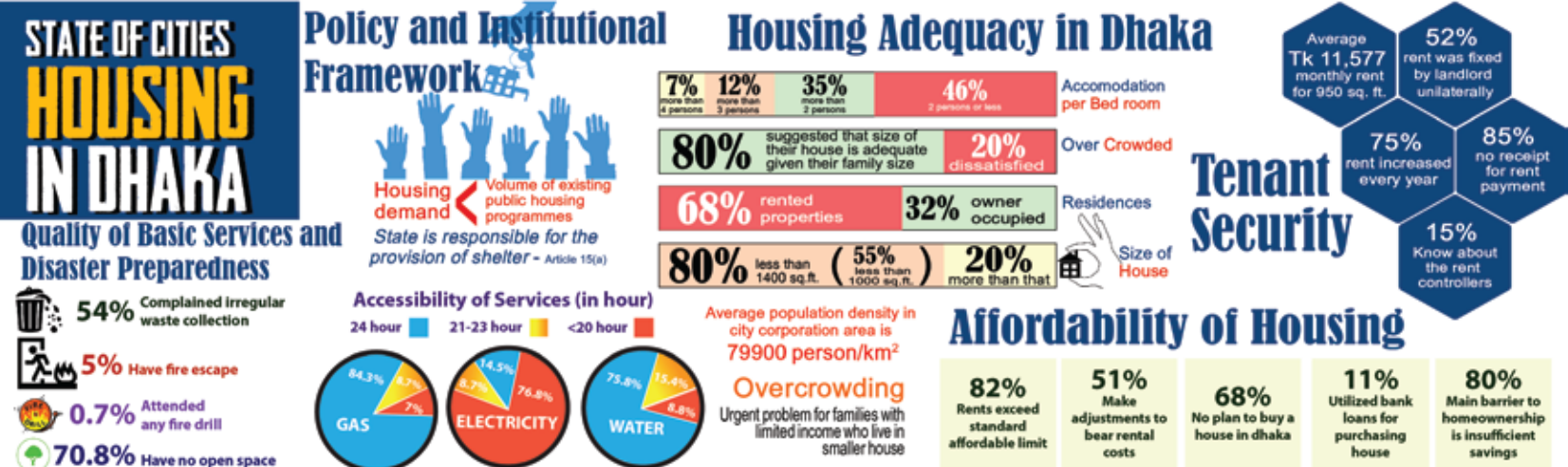
BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University launched its annual flagship research report titled the State of Cities 2017: Housing in Dhaka, through media on December 31, 2017 at the city. The research also conducted a survey on 401 households in four selected areas in

the capital city including old Dhaka, Mirpur, Rampura and Badda in the middle of this year.

The study showed that 82 percent of tenants surveyed spent more than 30 percent of their income in house rents. Among them 44 percent of the surveyed tenants spent as high as 45 percent of their income on renting a house and buying utility services.

Meanwhile, paying high price for accommodation, the tenants are unable to get well equipped residence to deal with disasters like breaking out of fire or earthquake. The study found that about 95 percent residential buildings have no fire escape and 99.3 percent tenants never attended a fire drill. It also showed that 70.8 percent tenants have no open space around their living area to take shelter during earthquake.

BIGD's Executive Director Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman said, the accommodation costs are squeezing middle and lower class people so hard that they plan to leave the city at every available opportunity. He added that Dhaka is becoming a polarized and a city of two classes- rich and poor.



Senior Research Associate and Lead Researcher of the study Syeda Salina Aziz said, 85 percent of the tenant did not receive any signed receipt for their rent payment and only 50 percent tenants know about the rent controllers. She added that the crisis was the result of a huge lack of supply of housing against the demand. She said that the supply meeting less than 20 percent of the demand. We see two types of development in Dhaka. One side is highly developed while the other is lagging behind. The government should work on reducing the discrimination, and provide the middle and low-income people with affordable housing facility, she said. If the dwellers can

own a house, a sense of ownership will grow among them, she added.

To overcome the situation, the study recommended that the government should increase monitoring on the housing sector, especially in terms of fixing and collecting rents, and setting up apartment price. It also recommended that a separate department within RAJUK is necessary to monitor the application of building codes. The study suggested paying rents through banks, renting through a formal agreement, creating ward level field controllers to handle tenancy-related issues, and easing home loan conditions and interest rates.

Proper Housing for the People Living in Urban Poverty is a Prerequisite to Achieve SDG-11 Experts say at the National Housing Convention

People's migrations towards urban settlement in search of a better livelihood are increasing day by day. Every year more than 5 lakh people come to live in the Dhaka city from all over the country. While the populations of the city are increasing, one in every three of its inhabitants live in the slums, deprived of basic

Urban Development Programme of BRAC, in partnership with the National Housing Authority (NHA), Urban Development Directorate (UDD), Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) and BIGD organised the convention.



facilities. In this context, proper housing for the people living in urban poverty has become a prerequisite to achieve sustainable development goal or SDG-11 (pertaining to shelter and settlement), and to ensure planned urbanisation and continued economic progress of the country.

Experts and public representatives expressed these views at a programme titled "National Convention on Housing Finance for People Living in Urban Poverty" held on October 15, 2017 at the city. The

Chief Guest of the convention Engineer Mosharraf Hossain MP, Minister, Ministry of Housing and Public Works said, 81 per cent of houses of the country are in the rural areas and 80 per cent of these are of low quality. The country is losing 235 hectares of farmland every day, which is transformed for making residence. He told that the government has already formulated a law titled "Urban and Regional Planning Act, 2016" for making a planned housing system not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas. "Under the law, rural people will have to take permission from union parishad chairman or municipality mayor or upazila nirbahi officer for constructing houses," he added.

Chaired by BRAC's Senior Director for Strategy, Communications and Empowerment Dr. Asif Saleh, the event were also attended by Secretary to the Housing and Public Works Ministry Md. Shahid Ullah Khandaker, Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Mr. Sayeed Khokon, Rajshahi City Mayor Mr. Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, Barisal City Mayor Mr. Ahsan Habib Kamal, BIP General Secretary Prof. Dr. Md. Akhtar Mahmud, BIGD Executive Director Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, MAB President Mr. Alhaj Md. Abdul Baten, UDD Director Dr. Khurshid Jabin Hossain Toufiq, and NHA Chairman and Additional Secretary Mr. Khandakar Akhtaruzzaman as Special Guests.

The aim of the convention was to establish

Country is losing 235 hectares of farmland every day, which is transformed for making residence.

multi-level partnerships for pro-poor city planning and housing financing to achieve the targets of National Housing Policy and SDG-11. A keynote and three evidence-based housing models: BRAC Jhenaidah community-led housing model, UNDP Sirajganj housing model and NHA low-income housing model were presented at the convention.

Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Head of Urban, Climate Change and Environment (UCCE) cluster of BIGD also attended the event as a panel discussant on the plenary session titled Partnership and

Collaboration on Housing Finance. Advocate Azmat Ullah Khan, Adviser, Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) presented the keynote paper, where Mohammad Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, Mayor, Rajshahi City Corporation chaired the session.

Around 75 mayors including five city mayors attended the event. The 300 guests included representatives and officials from UNDP, Policy makers, Government and Non-Government stakeholders discussed on pro-poor city planning and housing financing solutions at the convention.

Certificate Ceremony of 1st Batch Participants of the Academy of Work (AoW) Programme

The Certificates awarding ceremony of the first batch of the Academy of Work (AoW), a residential and academic programme of trade unionists, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, was held on October 28, 2017 at the capital. The



AoW is a joint collaboration of Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES), a non-profit German foundation funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, BIGD, BRAC University and Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), which endeavors to uphold the causes of working people and trade unions of Bangladesh. In an attempt to create an all-inclusive, constructive representation of workers' interests, a more effective social dialogue and a discussion about responsibilities along the global supply chain, the AoW concluded with this event after three months of residential training sessions.

The first cohort of AoW consisted of sixteen mid-level, active trade unionists from industries such as the readymade garments, construction, transport, as well as government service sectors like postal services and telecommunications.

The event was attended by former labour and employment Secretary Mr. Mikail Shipar as the chief guest, who handed over certificates to the successful fellows. The programme was also attended by Dr. Wajedul Islam Khan, Joint-coordinator of Sramik Karmochari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) and Mr. Amirul Haque Amin, former Chairman of IndustriALL Bangladesh Council (IBC) and Mr. Mesbahuddin Ahmed, member of Advisory Council of BILS.

Mr. Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmmed, Executive Director of BILS was present at the event as a moderator while Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD, BRAC University and Ms. Franziska Korn, Resident Representative of FES Bangladesh spoke on the occasion.

Dr. Rahman emphasized on upgrading the worker - employer - policymakers relationship and skills development of trade union leaders in the ceremony. Congratulating all 16 participants for successfully completing the course he said 'BIGD is proud to be a part of such an important and timely initiative'. He also emphasized that upgrading the worker-employer relationship will critically determine whether Bangladesh can continue to achieve the extraordinary success of the last few decades.

Addressing in the event Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow, BIGD and one of the resource person of AoW said, the program will ultimately help almost 2 million workers who join Bangladesh's labour force each year to be more aware of their rights, position in the global supply chain and roles and responsibilities of international brands. In this regard he emphasized the important role of the participants of the 1st batch to disseminate their acquired knowledge among others.

Next batch of this training is expected to commence from early 2018.

Talk on Community-Driven Development (CDD)

Ms. Serena Cocciolo, Researcher of the University of Stockholm delivered a talk on her recent project research on Community-Driven Development (CDD) programmes at BIGD on November 9, 2017. The study focuses on the effectiveness of CDD as assessed through the quality and level of community participation and on the fairness norms guiding societal decision-making.

Serena states, although CDD is believed to be the solution to information asymmetries and to correctly target the neediest members of society; findings from the study indicate the existence of two separate mechanisms behind the risk of elite capture. One is endogenous participation into public consultations often causes an unequal representation of the interest of all social groups since agents are observed to positively self-select themselves into group decision-making. The second one is that there is the risk of existing inequalities exacerbating when contribution requirements are introduced that bring along sub-optimal incentives for voluntary contributions to the public good.

BIGD's researchers and other staff members attended the talk which ended with Q & A session.



BIGD's delegation made a study visit to Beijing for establishment of University Industry Linkage in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh there are 200,000 foreign employees working in mid and higher level managerial positions of various garments industries. At the same time, Bangladeshi universities produce graduates who are not well-suited with the demand of the job market. In this perspective, The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) is implementing the Skills for Employment Investment Programme (SEIP) with an objective of up-skilling of workforce for productive and priority sectors, anchored in the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP), 2011 and for supporting government and private institutions, non-government organizations and industry associations achieve the above objective.

BIGD is going to establish Executive Development Centre collaborating with three other renowned public and private universities of Bangladesh with the support of SEIP and Ministry of Finance, GoB to produce world class manager in garments industry with the aim of gradual replacement of a large number of foreign nationals at top level of this sector and remitting USD 5 billion each year. One of the broad aims of the Executive Development Programme (EDP) is to successfully implement the University Linkage model in Bangladesh like China, India and Japan.

In order to have first-hand exposure on university-industry linkage a SEIP delegation comprising of SEIP team members, Chief Coordinators and Coordinators of four universities led by Mr. Md. Khairul Islam, Deputy Executive Project Director, SEIP project made a study visit to Beijing, China during 14-17 November 2017. BIGD's Research Fellow, Dr. Md Shanawez Hossain; Senior Research Associate, Mohammad Sirajul Islam; Senior Officer - Training, Jannatun Naim represented BIGD, BRAC University during the visit and attended the China Education Development Experience Sharing and Partnership Training Series I, University-Industry Linkage Training Programme.

A day-long Seminar with participation of Bangladesh delegation and faculty members of Graduate School of Education, Institute of Economics of Education, Peking University was held on 14 November. Along with other professors from different Universities, Dr. Md. Shanawez Hossain presented the Executive Development Plan for knitwear sub-sector. On the next day, another daylong seminar was held at Beijing Vocational College of Transportation followed by Industry inspection to get theoretical and practical experience about China's vocational education system. Bangladeshi delegate also visited an industry partner site.

The tour provided the opportunity to get the theoretical and practical knowledge about the University, Industry Linkage (UIL) programme and a well-rounded foundation upon which to build knowledge for successfully implementing the UIL in Executive Development Programme (EDP). This visit also focused on the educational experiences with industry related research and training programme. As well as learning about various programme's history, model and research on UIL model and opened up the opportunity to collaborate with the top ranking university of China for the EDP programme. BIGD delegation was awarded with certificates from Peking University for successfully contributing on "Education Development Experience Sharing and Partnership Series I" training.

As part of the degree 'Master of Arts in Governance and Development (MAGD)', 17 students along with a faculty member visited Vietnam and Malaysia from 26th November to 8th December 2017. The participants comprise of civil servants from different ministries and agencies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal who are pursuing the residential Master Degree Course under BIGD. The programme in Vietnam was facilitated by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), Vietnam and in Malaysia by the Institute of Professional Development (IPD) of Open University of Malaysia (OUM).

In the first part of the program from 26th November to 2nd December 2017, the team visited different Ministries and agencies of the Government of Vietnam and also had number of class room sessions regarding development policies and strategies of Vietnam from distinguished speakers and policy makers. The week long programme included sessions on administrative structure and public administration reform, the role of Vietnamese Government in economic development in the context of regional and international integration, anti corruption, local governance and promoting tourism and attracting foreign direct investment. Participants also visited Ministry of Home Affairs and Government Inspectorate of Vietnam in Hanoi, National Park in Hai Phong Province. In the closing ceremony NAPA President Dr. Dang Xhuan Hoan handed over certificates among participants. Congratulating participants for

The 12th Convocation of BRAC University took place on December 13, 2017 at the university's residential campus at Savar in Dhaka. Education Minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid attended the convocation as the Chief Guest and presided over the ceremony on behalf of the Honorable President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and University Chancellor Md. Abdul Hamid. The convocation speaker, Managing Director of Drik Picture Library Ltd., Dr. Shahidul Alam, spoke of his life in photography and of leaving behind a life of comforts in the UK to challenge the Western perception that Bengalis were poor. BRAC University Board of Trustee's Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed and University Grants Commission Chairman Professor Abdul Mannan also addressed at the convocation ceremony.



Students of MAGD Visited Vietnam and Malaysia

successful completion of the course he hoped that learning's from the training will be helpful for participants to contribute to their personal, national and regional development. Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Faculty and Research Fellow of BIGD thanked the NAPA officials and expressed that it will strengthen cooperative relationship between the two institutes. Among other Ms. Pham Hoa, General Director of NAPA, Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thi Hong Hai, Head of Faculty of Organizations and Personnel Management of NAPA, Ms. Le Thi Tuyet Head of the Planning and General Affairs Division Dr. Le Dong Doanh, Senior Advisor of Economic Development for the Vietnamese Government addressed in different sessions.

Later from 3rd to 8th December the team moved to Malaysia and participated in a training programme titled, 'Sustainable Policy Planning

and Governance' organized by the IPD, Open University Malaysia (OUM). Participants visited and participated in a number of lectures organized by different Ministries and Agencies of the Government of Malaysia. Addressing in the closing ceremony, Professor Dr. Ahmed Bin Hasem, Vice President of Business Development and Technology, OUM emphasized on the importance of sharing knowledge and experiences to promote sustainable economic growth and development in the Asia-Pacific region. Professor Dr. Richard Ng, Director of the Institute of Professional Development also highlighted the importance of sharing innovative technological knowledge for sustainable urban development in particular. BIGD Faculty Dr. Hossain thanked the OUM for hosting the visit and hoped to have more collaboration between BIGD and OUM in future.

Training on Best Procurement Practices

A short training on Best Procurement Practices was held on November 17-18, 2017 at BIGD. A number of 14 participants from different organisations have attended the training. Participants were trained on the issues like reviewing selected best practices and principles of procurement; examining organisational purchasing concepts and systematic overview of modern procurement practice; understanding the best procurement methods in both public and private sectors, examining steps of procurement for Open Tendering Method (OTM) including preparation of tender notice; ins and outs of tender documents; and preparing contract agreements, purchase orders and work orders. Professor Dr. Niaz Ahmed Khan, Senior Academic Adviser of BIGD awarded the participants with certificates at the closing ceremony.

BIGD Students at the BRACU Convocation



Around 1600 students from various academic disciplines joined the ranks of BRAC University graduates where 90 students were from BIGD. 47 students from Master of Development Studies (MDS), 32 were from Masters in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM), 09 from Master in Development Management and Practice (MDMP) and 02 students from Master of Arts in Governance and Development (MAGD) participated in the program and received the certificate of degree. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, ED; Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow; Mr. Mohammad Sirajul Islam, and Ms. Syeda Salina Aziz, Sr. Research Associate of BIGD also attended the convocation, where Dr. Rahman attended a discussion session with the students of MAGD at the end of the event.



IDRC's Monitoring Visit to BIGD

Dr. Samar Verma, Senior Programme Specialist of International Development Research Centre (IDRC) visited BIGD, BRAC University on October 25, 2017. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman welcomed him to BIGD and discussed vision, mission, objectives, targeted outputs and utilization of funds in Phase II. He also expressed sincere appreciation to IDRC for the grant under the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) phase II provided to BIGD over last three years which has enabled so many of the accomplishments including two annual flagship publications of

BIGD to be sustained by the IDRC grant. BIGD is receiving core funding from TTI as one of the two think tanks in Bangladesh.

Later, Dr. Verma participated in a number of meetings with Research team, Communications team and Finance, Administration, IT & HR team. Different teams made separate presentations on the responsibilities, activities, the ways of works, achievements, and the targets/plans of each team to be achieved in 2018 and further on.

Workshop on Women, Men and Labor Markets in Bangladesh: Constraints, Choices and Policy Challenges

Women have great opportunities to contribute to the national economy. Despite of the opportunities, one of the barriers to the women is having lack of confidence. Again, women are being harassed in different ways in the buses, markets, offices or in public places by the men who also led them to decrease the confidence. Besides these, the unpaid works of women are being ignored. These observations were made by the specialists at the daylong workshop titled "Women, Men and Labor Markets in Bangladesh: Constraints, Choices and Policy Challenges" organized by The Center for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST) of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University on December 2, 2017 at the city.

Prof. Naila Kabeer, Department of International Development and Gender Studies, London School of Economics and Political Science; Ms. Simeen Mahmud, Head, and Lopita Huq, Research Fellow of CGST presented the findings from the research project on "Choice, Constraint and Gender Dynamics of Labour Markets in Bangladesh." The papers discussed how choice and constraints interact to shape the labor market behavior of women and men using survey and qualitative data from 8 districts in Bangladesh.



Ms. Mahmud said that according to the latest survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS); only 36 percent women were involved in labor in the country. But in two surveys conducted in 2008 and 2015, the data revealed that 67 percent of women are involved in labor market.

Chare of the workshop Prof. Ashwini Deshpande, Department of Economics of Delhi School of Economics thinks that it would be helpful to know more about women involved in labor. She also urged to think about what we can do for these women who engaged in labor market.

Prof. Kabeer; Dr. Shahidur Rahman, BRAC University and Dr. Mahmudur Rahman, University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh (ULAB) presented preliminary findings from a collaborative research project on “Changes in the Governance of Garment Global Production Networks: Lead Firm, Supplier and Institutional Responses to the RANA Plaza Disaster” funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. The findings discussed how employers and workers in the Bangladesh RMG sector assess their experience with the Accord/Alliance agreements that were put in place in the aftermath of the Rana Plaza disaster.

Researcher's Other Activities

- Ms. Simeen Mahmud attended
 - as a panel member at the dialogue on Reimagining Sustainable Pathways for Women's Economic Empowerment in Rural Bangladesh and Project launch organized by iDE and The Asia Foundation on November 28, 2017 at the city.
 - as a panel discussant at the Launch of Policy Review Report on Women Economic Empowerment and Unpaid Care Work in South Asia, organized by ActionAid Bangladesh, held on December 23, 2017
- Ms. Maheen Sultan
 - moderated a session on Promoting Women's Voice and Leadership at a roundtable discussion as a pre-launching activity as this year's 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women Campaign. The discussion held on November 22, 2017 brought together organizations working on women's empowerment and combating Gender Based Violence across Bangladesh to share their challenges and experiences and to learn from each other.
 - chaired a session titled “The Role of Gender Policy and Administrative Process” at the International Conference

on Gender Mainstreaming in Politics, Administration and Development in South Asia and beyond organized by Public Policy and Governance Programme of North South University on November 18, 2017 at the city.

- was a panelist at a dialogue on Workplace Harassment Against Women organized by CARE Bangladesh in collaboration with UN Women

• Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow of BIGD

- attended a meeting with Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) on October 4, 2017 and have discussion on the collaboration among PKSF, BRAC-UDP and BIGD on research related to urban issues. Among others Dr. AKM Nuruzzaman, Deputy General Manager, PKSF and Ms. Hasina Musrofa, Head, BRAC UDP attended the meeting.

- attended a meeting with Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) on October 4, 2017 and have discussion on the collaboration among MAB, BRAC-UDP and BIGD on issues related to Urban Housing financing. Among others Mr. Md. Abdul Baten, President, and Advocate Azmat Ullah Khan, adviser of MAB, and Ms. Hasina Musrofa attended the meeting.

- attended a meeting with AGA Khan Foundation regarding MoU signing between BIGD and AGA KHAN Foundation. The meeting was also discussed about starting online training course related to public policy. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, ED, BIGD; Mr. Salimah Kassam, Chief Executive Officer, AGA Khan Foundation; Mr. Sujeet Sarker, Consultant AGA Khan Foundation also attended the meeting.

• Ms. Lopita Huq, Research Fellow and Ms. Sahida Khondaker, Research Associate of BIGD attended the National Consultation on Anti-Sexual Policy organized by ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) on October 29, 2017, where AAB shared the findings from their review of the anti-sexual harassment policy and

relevant laws in 2016 in Bangladesh as a part of their Safe City for Women Campaign.

• Ms. Lopita Huq, Mr. Mahabubur Rahman and Mr. Ziauddin Mohammed Nasrullah attended the Public Lecture on ‘Why Economics?’ organized by BRAC University on December 6, 2017. The lecture was given by Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, former Adviser, Ministry of Finance and Planning to the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh.

• Ms. Sahida and Ms. Nuzhat Sharmeen, Research Associates of BIGD attended the Policy Dialogue on Gender Diagnostics and Policy of Social Protection Issues of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) organized by Cabinet Division, Government of Bangladesh with technical support from the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Program, held on October 26, 2017 at the city.

• Ms. Maheen, Ms. Kabita Chowdhury, Ms. Sahida, Ms. Sanjida Parvin and Ms. Sufia Khatun attended a 10 day training on the tools and field testing of tools for the GAGE Urban Study at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health from Dec 3-13, 2017

• Dr. Mirza M Hassan, Adjunct Fellow and Ms. Sumaiya Kabir Talukdar, Research Associate attended a discussion meeting on Beyond Neo-Liberalism: Visions for Post-Capitalist Social Order in Bangladesh. Dr. Hassan delivered the opening remarks at the event on Dec 18, 2017 at Dhaka University.

• Ms. Farhana Razzaque, Research Associate of BIGD presented a paper titled “Exploring the role of citizen engagement in public service delivery in South Asia: Trends, Challenges and Prospects” at the International Conference on Managing Change for Better Public Service Delivery: South and South-East Asian Experience organized by Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) on 5-6 November, 2017 at Savar, Dhaka.

Executive Director's Activities

BIGD's ED Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman had several meetings in the last quarter of 2017 with a number of distinguished personalities such as prominent academics, policy makers and researchers regarding the research collaborations and other relevant issues of BIGD.

Dr. Rahman had meetings with Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Chairperson, BRAC; Dr. Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Commissioner, Anti Corruption Commission (ACC); Dr. Shah Md. Ahsan Habib, Director (training) Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management; Dr. Syed Mushfeque Rahman, Additional Commissioner (Customs) and Deputy Project Director, VAT Online Project, National Board of Revenue (NBR); Mr. Mohammad Anisur Rahman, Joint Director, Foreign Exchange Operation Department, Bangladesh Bank; and Mr. Golam Sarwar, Assistant Programmer, NBR regarding a project on money laundering. He also met with Mr. Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby, National Governance Assessment Framework - Expert at UNDP; Professor Dr. Syed

Saad Andaleeb, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University; Dr. Zeaul Alam, Secretary, Cabinet Division regarding a project collaboration; Mr. Robert Gallagher, Visiting Fellow, St. Cross College regarding research programme on Urban, Climate Change and Environment; Professor Frank Chaloupka, Director; Dr. Erika Siu, Deputy Director; Dr. Maryam Mirza, Economist of University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC); Mr. Mohammad Abdur Rab, Joint Director, Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit; Mr. Mohammad Anisur Rahman, Joint Director, Foreign Exchange Operation Department, Bangladesh Bank; Mr. Mohan Das Manandha, Executive Director, Niti Foundation, Nepal Administrative Staff College, Nepal; Ms. Nuzhat Jabin, Manager, Action Aid Bangladesh; Mr. Tim Dobermann of International Growth Centre; Dr. Malay Kanti Mridha, Associate Professor, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health regarding research programmes on Nutrition Governance; Professor Ramkumar Mishra, Director, and Dr. P Geeta, Associate Professor of Institute of Public Enterprise (IPE); Mr.

Shameran Abed, Director, Microfinance, BRAC; Mr. Hasanuzzaman Zaman, Outreach Manager, Copenhagen Consensus Center regarding PRAC Project; Professor Mushtaq Khan, SOAS University; Ms. Sylvia Borren, Member of Board of Trustee, BRAC and Professor Frans Geraedts regarding further training courses in the future; Mr. Vinay Sharma, Director, Governance Global Practice, the World Bank (WB) and Dr. Zafrul Islam, Lead Procurement Specialist and Task Team leader, PPRP-II, WB Dhaka office regarding BIGD's Role in Dimapp project.

Dr. Rahman also attended a Skype meeting on Developing Public Policy course with Dr. Samar Verma, Senior Programme Specialist, International Development Research Centre (IDRC). He attended the meeting of National Governance Assessment Framework (NGAF) with the senior government officials of different ministries and the launching meeting of SDC - LG Project SHARIQUE (Phase IV). He also attended the 12th convocation of BRAC University and the 50th Anniversary of Asian Development Bank.

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University is a centre of policy and academic excellence. BIGD is devoted to research on a range of governance and development concerns, as well as the nexus between the two. BIGD's research is aimed at contributing to public policy as well as supporting its academic and training programs. It does not limit knowledge creation to being an end itself but rather to advance the pursuit of a just and prosperous society. It also plays an advocacy role to give voice to contemporary governance, political and economic issues. As an institute of BRAC University, BIGD works closely with the university motivated by its motto: 'inspiring excellence'. BIGD also has the unique advantage of being associated with BRAC, the world's largest NGO through its work. It is inspired by BRAC's values in shaping its institutional work and professional standards.

Editor	: Sultan Hafeez Rahman, ED
Executive Editor	: Ekram Hossain, Senior Manager-Communications; Dr. Md Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow
Content Writer	: Mahmudul Alam Rasel, Communications Associate
Layout & Illustration	: Mamun Islam, Communications Officer



BRAC Institute of Governance and Development

BRAC University

SK Centre (Basement, 3rd - 7th & 9th Floor), GP, JA-4, TB Gate
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Tel +88 02 5881 0306, 5881 0320, 5881 0326, Fax: +88 02 883 2542

Email: info@bigd.bracu.ac.bd



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<http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd>



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