

Electronic tendering expanding rapidly at key government agencies

The four key government agencies namely, Roads and Highways Department (RHD), Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Bangladesh Rural Electrification Board (BREB), and Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) are rapidly expanding the use of electronic Government Procurement (e-GP), with LGED playing a leading and pivotal role. These four agencies together account for a major portion of government procurement. These four agencies have also rolled out an on-line procurement performance monitoring system. The number of electronic bid invitation grew to 2870 in November 2013 from 14 in June 2012. Similarly, the number of registered bidders for e-GP grew to 6676 in November 2013 from 294 in June 2012.

The electronic procurement and online monitoring make public contracting more accessible, secure, efficient and transparent which lead to cost savings. The World Bank is supporting the Government to implement e-GP in key procuring entities and improve procurement outcomes through the Public Procurement Reform Project II (PPRPII).

The project has already trained 10,000 personnel through international and local collaboration and aims to provide capacity development training to another 13,000 persons. To create a pool of procurement professionals, PPRP II continues to support "blue color" international procurement accreditation and Master program. As part of the demand for good governance, its public-private stakeholders committee (PPSC), with leading think-tank organization, is more active now and also efforts are ongoing to create a third party monitoring mechanism in public procurement to demystify procurement at the grass-roots level.

A World Bank team recently reviewed the status of PPRPII and noted Government's strong commitment in pursuing these challenging reform initiatives. The project has made satisfactory progress in contributing to improving transparency and competitiveness of the system. The World Bank recently approved an additional financing of US\$34.5 million interest free credit for the project.

The World Bank team highlighted the need for strengthening Central Procurement Technical Unit with continuity of skilled staff and enhancing efforts for further expansion of e-GP by the relatively slow performers.

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