



Integrity Pledge: Participatory Governance through Social Accountability¹

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I. Introduction

Bangladesh has achieved commendable progress in recent times in terms of social and economic indicators. It has maintained a steady economic growth in the range of 5-6 % since 1990s. Even against the backdrop of the global financial crisis when most countries have struggled to achieve any positive growth, Bangladesh has maintained its GDP growth rate at nearly 6 percent³. The country's Human Development Index rating has increased from 0.365 in 1980 to 0.543 in 2009⁴; population growth rate has come down from 2.5 percent per annum in 1980s to 1.29 by 2009⁵; gross primary enrolment rose from 72% in 1980 to 97.6 percent in 2008⁶; child mortality has decreased from 239 per thousand live births in 1970 to 69 per 1000 in 2008⁷; ratio of population below poverty has fallen down from 59 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 2009⁸.

More indicators of similar nature could be cited. Needless to say, all these have been possible thanks to efforts of the Government complimented by an expanding private sector and a vibrant non-government sector. However, it can be hardly disputed that Bangladesh's performance could have been much better if not for the pervasive corruption and persistent deficit in promoting good governance. Governance deficit leads to corruption, which in turn contributes to greater failures in governance. As a result corruption and governance deficit are viewed as two sides of the same coin, if

¹ Paper presented at the International Seminar on "Integrity Pledge: Participatory Governance through Social Accountability", organized by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) in Dhaka, on April 11, 2010.

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³ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, http://www.bbs.gov.bd/na_wing/GDP_2008_09.pdf

⁴ UNDP, *Country Fact Sheet – Bangladesh, Human Development Report 2009*

⁵ http://www.indexmundi.com/bangladesh/population_growth_rate.html

⁶ Directorate of Primary Education, http://www.banbeis.gov.bd/db_bb/primary_education_1.html

⁷ The State of the World Children Report 2008, Quoted in *The Daily Star*, 17 August 2008.

⁸ UNDP, *op.cit.*

not often synonymously, especially when corruption becomes pervasive and deep. A crucial feature of good governance⁹ is accountability, which demands effective functioning of institutions and processes to hold individuals and organizations in positions of power responsible for their performance at various levels of governance including public offices and other institutions that deliver services drawing upon public funds.

This paper introduces the Integrity Pledge (IP), a micro level social accountability process introduced by Transparency International Bangladesh to promote participatory and accountable governance at the level of service delivery by a voluntary engagement of stakeholders. As a legally non-binding social contract, the IP contributes to accountability and transparency in a process that involves a series of collective efforts which eventually lead to a public commitment by all stakeholders to promote governance quality and reduce corruption. Introduced by TIB in eighteen local level institutions of public service delivery till date¹⁰, the IP has built-in process of application, and monitoring. The paper also highlights expected results of the instrument and challenges in its enforcement.

II. Corruption – Bias against the Poor

Corruption, defined as abuse of power for private gain¹¹, is a key impediment to development and democratic institutionalization. It weakens the institutions of democracy and the national integrity system. It prevents rule of law, erodes public trust in government, and breeds injustice. By distorting the political and economic structures and weakening the social fabric, worst forms of corruption can also be a potential source of insecurity of the state. Corruption is increasingly linked to violation of human rights and spread of the culture of impunity.¹²

While corruption affects everyone, the poor are more vulnerable especially because they are easy victims of bribery, extortion and intimidation.¹³ Corruption affects the poor both directly and

⁹ According to UNESCAP “Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. Accountability ensures corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the future needs of the society.”
www.unescap.org

¹⁰ See annex for list.

¹¹ For a detailed discussion on the concept of corruption and its implications for Bangladesh, see, Iftekharuzzaman, “Corruption and Human Insecurity in Bangladesh”, paper presented at the International Seminar on Non-traditional Security in Asia Annual Convention, Singapore, November 3-4, 2009. www.ti-bangladesh.org

¹² International Council on Human Rights Policy & Transparency International, *Corruption and Human Rights: Making the Connection*, Versoix, Switzerland, 2009.

¹³ Among many materials on corruption and poverty linkage, see for example, Sanjeev Gupta, Hamid Davoodi and Rosa Alonso-Terme, “Does Corruption Affect Income Inequality and Poverty?” IMF working paper, 1998; World Bank,

indirectly. Directly through increasing the cost of key public services targeted to them, lowering quality of such services and limiting or even preventing the poor's access to essential services such as education, health and justice as shown below in case of Bangladesh. Indirect implications of corruption on the poor include diverting Government resources away at the expense of social sectors. By limiting growth and development corruption also reduces the scope and prospect of poverty reduction.

The poor in Bangladesh are directly affected by the increasing cost of key public services by way of unauthorized payments, low quality of such services and limiting or even preventing the poor's access to essential services such as education, health and justice. Access to such services has become to a great extent a function of the capacity to make unauthorized payments.

The National Household Survey 2007¹⁴ on corruption conducted by TIB showed that 25.9 percent of students had to make unauthorized payments for admission into public schools, which is supposed to be provided free. It also showed that 22 percent of students who were entitled to various stipends were forced to make unauthorized payments in collecting the stipend amount. One-fourth of the primary school children who are entitled to *upabrittty* (special stipends for the ultra poor) were victims of such corruption. In the health sector, 26.7 percent of the surveyed households who received indoor/outdoor services in public hospitals were victims of corruption, whereas 30.8 percent of those who needed pathological tests were victims of forced unauthorized payments.

The survey further revealed that 96.6% of the households that had any interactions with the law enforcement agencies experienced harassment and corruption for receiving services. 41.7% of the households who interacted with the judiciary had to pay bribe to court officials, middlemen, lawyers, public prosecutors and judges.

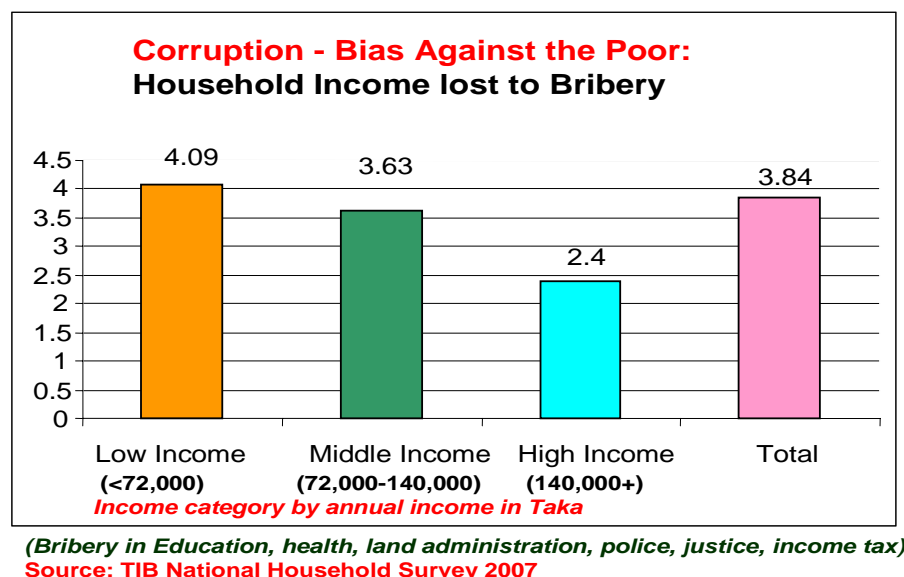
The survey showed that 53.4 percent of households who had interactions with local government bodies had experienced one or other form of corruption. The delivery of services for which people were victims of corruption include safety net deliveries like VGD/VGF, senior-citizens allowance, humanitarian relief, birth/death registration, fertilizer delivery, trade license issuance and renewal, installation of tube-wells for drinking water, Shalish (arbitration) and holding tax.

Estimates from the same survey show that about 3.84 percent of the annual household income was eaten up by corruption in six selected sectors (education, health, land administration, police,

“Voices of the Poor Programme”; Transparency International, *Global Corruption Barometer 2003*. Berlin, 2003. Deepa Narajan, Raj Patel et al, “State Institutions in Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us?” World Bank, Oxford University Press, 2000.

¹⁴ Transparency International Bangladesh, National Household Survey 2007, released on www.ti-bangladesh.org

justice and income tax). Disaggregated by income categories, the bias against the poor is more evident. As the chart below shows, households in the low income category of Taka 72,000 per year lost 4.09 percent, whereas middle income group (Tk. 72,000-140,000) lost 3.63 percent and high income group (Taka 140,000+) lost 2.4 percent of their annual income.



Corruption is nothing new, nor is it peculiar to any particular context. It exists in greater or lesser degree in all countries of the world, irrespective of political and economic system, big or small, developed or developing. What is striking about Bangladesh is that it affects the daily lives of common people. Corruption must be fought comprehensively and strategically.

III. Fighting corruption

Corruption occupies a prominent place in public discourse in Bangladesh. Widespread corruption and its debilitating impact in the society, polity and economy are acknowledged by all major political parties - in the Government or outside. At the same time political leaders, from the highest to the lowest levels both in the government and outside, in their public pronouncements commit themselves to fighting corruption and to establishing a corruption free Bangladesh. The annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International ranked Bangladesh for five years in a row from 2001-5 at the top of the list of countries perceived to be

worst affected by corruption and in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 in the 3rd, 7th, 10th and 13th position respectively¹⁵.

Bangladesh's progress in terms of score in CPI 2009 from 2.1 to 2.4 was attributed to a number of recent institutional and legal reforms perceived to have created the opportunity to strengthen the capacity to control corruption effectively. A strong political commitment by the present Government was also perceived to have contributed to the improvement, though the score being below 3 in a scale of 0-10 is considered to be in a state of pervasive corruption¹⁶. In the context of the December 2008 elections, the anti-corruption stance occupied the centre-stage of the election campaign by all political parties across the board. It also formed the core of public discourse, media reports and commentaries, and above all voters' choice. A close look at the election manifesto of the Bangladesh Awami League, which got a sweeping public mandate, makes it easy to realize how it gave pre-eminence to the issue of anti-corruption.¹⁷ After forming the Government, the commitments have continued to be reiterated, especially at the top level, which helps retain the optimism, though it remains to be seen to what extent the Government will be able to deliver the expectations raised.

The most important element in an effective anti-corruption strategy is the political commitment at all levels, especially at the top. In this sense if the electoral commitment deserves to be taken with a sense of seriousness, the first step in controlling corruption in Bangladesh seems to have been taken. The next two major preconditions are sending an effective signal that corruption is a punishable offence and establishing the rule of law, which can be ensured only by effective functioning of the key institutions of democracy and national integrity system. The other important element is the anti-corruption demand from the people which has been loudly voiced, but must be sustained in the form of a social movement.

¹⁵ The Corruption Perception Index (CPI), published annually by Transparency International, is a composite index worked out drawing upon corruption related data generated by more than a dozen surveys conducted by reputed international institutions. The index reflects views of analysts and businesspeople including experts who are locals in the countries concerned. Sources from which information went into the index for Bangladesh in 2009 included surveys conducted by Economic Intelligence Unit of the Economist magazine of London, Global Insights, World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and Bertelsmann Transformation Index. For more on CPI including its methodology, see, www.transparency.org and www.ti-bangladesh.org. For a critical review of the CPI, see, Nurul Islam, *Looking Outward: Bangladesh in the World Economy*, UPL, Dhaka, 2004, pp. 62-74, and Iftekharuzzaman, "Opening Statement at the Global Launch of CPI, London, 18 October, 2005, "Bangladesh improves in CPI: Can we keep it up?" *The Daily Star*, 20 November, 2009.

¹⁶ See for details, Iftekharuzzaman, "Bangladesh improves in CPI: Can we keep it up?" *The Daily Star*, 20 November, 2009.

¹⁷ The election manifesto of the Bangladesh Awami League contained more than a dozen specific commitments which, if properly implemented, could significantly contribute to the strengthening of the institutional and policy structure to effectively control corruption in Bangladesh. See for details: Iftekharuzzaman, "From Consensus to Crossroads", *The Daily Star Anniversary Issue 2009*, February 17, 2009.

The National Integrity System (NIS) is the sum total of the institutions and practices within a given country that promotes accountability and related aspects of ensuring honesty and integrity in all spheres of life. The level of national integrity is determined by the strength and capacity of a series of mutually reinforcing pillars. These are the Parliament including its oversight role on the Government, Judiciary, Executive, Auditor General, specialized watchdog bodies like the Anti-Corruption Commission and Ombudsman, the Election Commission, law-enforcing bodies, public service, media, private sector, procurement regime, etc. Effectiveness of each pillar is determined by the legal structures and practices, e.g., the Parliament must be formed on the basis of free and Fair Elections; it's Committees must function with integrity and effectiveness; and other institutions like judiciary, law enforcement agencies, public service, election commission, Auditor General, and media must be independent, highly professional, merit-based, non-partisan, and uphold highest ethical and moral standards. Free flow of information backed by freedom of information law is indispensable, so is the space for civil society and citizens at large to organize themselves and articulate demand.¹⁸

IV. Why Social Accountability

A hugely important component in the anti-corruption infrastructure is the awareness, engagement and participation of the people in demanding the political will and strengthening the institutions of accountability. Fighting corruption, especially where conventional institutions and processes of accountability fail to deliver effectively, requires non-conventional tools of social accountability - voice and demand for change. Social accountability is about strengthening the demand side of good governance, to build capacities of the citizens to raise voice and demand for accountable, transparent and pro-people governance. It is also essentially a set of tools and processes for building effective bridges of the public officials and public representatives with citizens. It is a non-conventional process of holding the power-holders accountable and responsive to the people on whose mandate they exercise the power.¹⁹

As discussed above, to promote and institutionalize accountability of governance at the national level there are a number of conventional institutions and processes which are also the key prerequisites for promoting democratic institutionalization. While periodic elections are the means in the hands of the public to give the judgement on how a government or public representatives have

¹⁸ For a detailed discussion on the National Integrity System, see, Iftekharuzzaman, "Corruption and Human Insecurity in Bangladesh", updated version (as on 30.03.10) of a paper presented at the NTS-Asia, www.ti-bangladesh.org

¹⁹ For Further discussion on social accountability see, Samuel Paul, "Strengthening Public Accountability: New Approaches and Mechanisms", Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore, 1995; Carmen Malena, et al, Social Accountability: An Introduction to the Concept and Emerging Practice", The World Bank Paper No 76, December 2004.

functioned, the degree of independence and effectiveness of the institutions determine the extent to which the functions of the government are delivered accountably.

In order to increase the prospect of these conventional institutions of accountability, there is a growing recognition of the need to innovate and adopt new tools and processes that reinforce the element of participation in democratic governance. In addition to being a government of the people, by the people and for the people, democracy needs to be a government *with* the people. This is particularly important in public sector efforts, especially service deliveries that are aimed to benefit the poor and the disadvantaged.

Involving the people as stakeholders – in design, delivery, monitoring and assessment of the quality of services - can effectively reinforce and strengthen the conventional accountability systems. This approach to accountability requires taking the people as stakeholders rather than simple beneficiaries, service recipients or objects of development. Recognizing the people as stakeholders at various levels and institutions of development especially at the delivery level ensures that their participation and their voice and demand are counted.

This participatory approach ensures higher degrees of accountability by using innovative tools and processes of accountability because those at the operational and receiving end are best placed to raise questions about any possible erosion of integrity in the process of delivering development and services.

While much of the attention in the discourse on accountability is focused to the macro level like the elections, legislature including parliamentary oversight, judiciary, law enforcement, public auditing and other watchdog institutions and processes, much less attention has been given on the issue of accountability at the micro level with the benefit of stakeholder participation especially at the level of service delivery.

Macro level accountability creates the legal, institutional and organizational environment and strength needed for accountability. On the other hand micro level accountability, if effectively designed and implemented can significantly complement the macro efforts and reduce the burden on the macro accountability system. The best advantage of such micro level accountability is that it brings the service providers and recipients close to each other as co-stakeholders, reduces the communication gap, builds trust and creates conditions for win-win game for all parties.

V. The Integrity Pledge

It is in this context, and against the backdrop of widespread corruption at the service delivery level as mentioned above, that Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has introduced the Integrity Pledge (IP). It is an innovation that involves voluntary engagement of the local level public representatives, officials and service providers with the service recipients and other citizens to promote transparency and accountability at the delivery of services in vital sectors such as education, health and local government.

As a legally non-binding social contract, the IP contributes to accountability and transparency in a process that involves such non-conventional tools as Citizens Report Card, Advice & Information, Open Budget, Face the Public, which eventually lead to an Integrity Pledge. Introduced by TIB in 18 local level institutions of public service delivery, the IP has built-in process of application and monitoring.

It should be added that the “Integrity Pact”, the generic version of the Integrity Pledge has been working in different variations with varying degrees of success in many other countries around the world since it was introduced by Transparency International to promote accountability primarily in public procurement²⁰. TIB is the first to introduce it in selected institutions of public service delivery engaging various stakeholders at the service delivery end. At the heart of IP is the concept of public accountability through voice, demand and participation of stakeholders.

The IP, as introduced by TIB is a social accountability tool that involves a written but voluntary commitment signed by stakeholders – public representatives, officials and other service providers, informal groups of people as service recipients and citizens’ committees - where all parties make a pledge to work together and help each other to:

- prevent and control abuse of power for private gain;
- eliminate all forms of unauthorized payments, including bribery for services rendered;
- ensure and promote participation of service recipients in decisions that affect the content and quality of services provided;
- ensure transparency in public contracts and in implementing work under such contracts; and
- promote disclosure and transparency to ensure accountability in all related actions.

²⁰ The Integrity Pact was developed during the 1990s by Transparency International (TI) to help governments, businesses and civil society intent on fighting corruption in the field of public contracting. It consists of a process that includes an agreement between a government or government department and all bidders for a public sector contract where all parties agree to refrain from bribing and uphold other mutually agreed standards of integrity. Countries where this generic version is being used to promote transparency mainly in the field of public procurement with varying degrees of success, include: China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, Taiwan, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru. Several other countries, Poland, Malaysia, Uganda, Nigeria, are in the process of introducing the same. For details, see www.transparency.org

The IP is built on the premise that ensuring people's participation in planning, design, budgeting, implementation and monitoring process of service delivery can significantly improve integrity, transparency and accountability, and thereby reduce corruption. It is a micro-level social accountability tool for partnership between all stakeholders, especially service providers and service recipients from the perspective of the latter as a stakeholder rather than only beneficiary. It involves empowerment of people through raising voice, asking questions and raising demand – all leading to accountability in a participatory process. It is also a process that mobilizes the community to participate in monitoring the quality of delivery of public services.

VI. The Process Leading to IP

The IP is essentially a stage of social accountability reached in a process built through a number of steps and tools. These are:

Citizens Report Cards (CRC)

The CRC is a tool to measure the degree of satisfaction of service recipients about the content and quality of service provided by a selected institution, particularly in education, health and local government. Service recipients' response collected through a sample survey are triangulated with information collected through interviews and consultations with the authority, focused group discussions and/or key informant interviews. The findings of the CRC are released usually with the participation of the authority which serves the twin purpose of wider public information and awareness as well as engagement with the authority in efforts for follow-up initiatives. CRCs are an advocacy tool for improving the service quality at the delivery end within given resources and capacities. It also functions as a medium of building a working relationship between the service providers and recipients.

Advice & Information

Access to information is considered as the touchstone of empowerment. Those who are in possession of information are powerful, while those who do not have the information are powerless. People are often victims of corruption because of lack of information and knowledge about their rights and entitlements as well as the range of services, rates of payment where applicable, grievance mechanisms, etc. From this perspective TIB has introduced a mobile advice and information service titled AI-Desk, usually provided to the service recipients in the premises of the relevant institution.

Another complementary process in this connection is the street theatre and other cultural tools. The primary objective is to equip the service recipients with the information that helps challenge the prospect that corruption can be taken as a way of life.

Participatory Budget

There are growing evidences and recognition worldwide that increased budget transparency can yield better governance standards and improved economic and social outcomes. Equally, it is widely recognized that by opening budget processes to citizens and engaging them in budget preparation, tracking and monitoring can promote improvements in governance accountability and effective delivery of pro-poor services and expenses. Wider and freer disclosure of budgetary information helps higher levels of accountability, which, in turn, can help expedite the poverty reduction process. Participation of the beneficiaries of development efforts as stakeholders makes the budget more appropriate, transparent, accountable and effective. Participatory and open budget, budget tracking and monitoring with the participation of the service recipients are key element in the build up as well as follow-up on the IP.

Face the Public (FtP)

The FtP is a forum for the public representatives, officials and other service providers to respond to questions and demand directly raised by the members of the public in general and service recipients in particular, especially with respect to the commitments made as well as the content and quality of the range of services provided by the selected institution. Depending on the institution FtPs vary in modes, processes and participation. In schools, for instance, mothers are the key participants in the forum called Mothers Gathering whereas in the local government body members of the general public take part as stakeholders.

Signing the Integrity Pledge

It is in a process of build up through the above process complemented by a series of consultations and engagements between the stakeholders that eventually the IP is signed. The whole process is catalyzed by the Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCC) set up by TIB as local level citizens' watchdog forums as a part of its civic engagement in the social movement against corruption. Working on a fully voluntary basis, the CCCs are assisted by the YES (Youth Engagement and Support) groups, who also work on a fully voluntary basis.

VII. Substantive Elements of the IP

As already mentioned, IPs have so far been achieved in 18 selected institutions of local government and primary education. In addition the Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Rajshahi has also signed the IP. The salient features of these IPs are given below.

a) IPs in Local Government

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

By signing the IP, the authority (the first party) commits to:

- a. Abide by the laws and regulations (especially the Union Parishad Act 2009), be sincere in fulfilling the election commitments;
- b. Refrain from corruption and bribery and take all measures to reduce the same in the relevant jurisdiction;
- c. Ensure people's access to information and to proactively disclose information.
- d. Assess and acknowledge the fundamental development requirements of the community and make efforts to meet the same.
- e. Ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in all development efforts it will undertake.
- f. Engage the community in the planning process of development activities and take into account their suggestions and disclose all information related to such activities.
- g. Maintain highest level of integrity and transparency in all its financial transactions and will proactively share all information with the community members.
- h. Arrange open budget sharing programmes and maintain highest level of transparency in this regard. The budget will take into account suggestions of the community members and due importance will be given to their needs and priorities.
- i. Facilitate periodic budget tracking and regular social audit of all financial transactions.
- j. Observe existing rules and regulations to ensure highest level of transparency in all procurements. Arrange monitoring of the procurement process by citizens committee members.
- k. Ensure honesty, transparency and accountability in the distribution of VGF, VGD, Senior Citizen Allowance, Freedom Fighters Allowance, humanitarian relief and other safety net allowances provided by the government. Eliminate all forms of unethical practices including nepotism, favouritism and partisan political consideration in the management and distribution of such services.
- l. Create conducive conditions for better coordination among all departments/offices within the jurisdiction and to ensure all offices, both government and non-government are run with efficiency and integrity without any partisan political bias.
- m. *Shalish* (arbitrations) will be done transparently, fairly, objectively and without any bias for or against any one.
- n. Take all possible measures to facilitate improved health service for the community with special attention to the poor and disadvantaged.
- o. Make best efforts to tackle social problems such as child marriage, dowry system and also strictly deal with theft, robbery and other social crimes.

- p. Regularly organize Face the Public programs to monitor and review the progress of implementation of the IP and to ensure their accountability.
2. By signing the IP the service recipients/citizens (the second party) commit to:
 - a. Assist the authority (first party) in all its activities and will provide them with advice and suggestion.
 - b. Actively engage and work with the authority with the spirit of cooperation to implement the IP.
 3. By signing the IP the CCC (the third party) commits to:
 - a. Provide technical support to the first party and help them to build their capacity.
 - b. Help the first party to ensure transparency, accountability and thus reduce corruption in the community.
 - c. Coordinate activities of all parties and advise to improve the quality of enforcement of the IP.

b) The IP in Primary Education

1. By signing the IP the School Management Committee (First Party) commits to:
 - a. Make sure that all children over the age of 6 in their catchment area attend the school. A list of the students will be maintained and regularly updated.
 - b. Refrain from corruption and bribery and take all measures to reduce the same in the relevant jurisdiction;
 - c. Maintain the highest possible standard of education in the school within the given resources.
 - d. Ensure transparency in any procurements including all development work of the school and engage/inform the community members about it on a regular basis
 - e. Disclose and display all information about stipend and other financial provisions make these readily available for all.
 - f. Engage the community members in all activities of the school.
 - g. Mobilize all necessary support and help form the relevant governmental bodies e.g., the Thana Education Office, Union Parishod etc.
 - h. Take all measures to ensure regular attendance of students and good results in examinations.
 - i. Regularly consult with the students and their parents regularly to improve the standard of education.
 - j. Arrange proper sanitation and drinking water facilities for the students.
 - k. Arrange regular ‘Mothers Gathering’ to ensure transparency, responsiveness and accountability.
2. By signing the IP the guardians and the community (the second party) commit to:
 - a. Work with the SMC in the spirit of cooperation and provide them with support and advice to ensure quality education and transparency and accountability in the management of the affairs of the school.
 - b. Remain vigilant about all expenditures and make sure that school resources are used and managed properly.

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

- a. Provide technical support to the first and second party and help them to build capacity and ensure integrity, transparency and accountability of the school management system.
- b. Coordinate activities of all parties and advise to improve the quality of implementation of the IP.

c) Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Rajshahi:

Parties to the Pledge: a) the Board authority; b) the service recipients, bidders and contractors; c) Committee of Concerned citizens, Rajshahi²¹.

1. By signing the IP the Board authority (the first party) has committed to:

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

2. By signing the IP the Service recipients, Bidders, Contractors (the third party) have committed to;

- a. Ensure that while receiving services from the first party no corrupt practices are resorted to;
- b. Assist the Board in ensuring services according to the Citizens Charter.
- c. Bidders and Contractors will not pay bribe to the Board authority (or any of the family members/friends of any of the Board's employee) while taking part in any procurement process.

3. By signing the IP the CCC, Rajshahi (the third party) has committed to:

- a. Advise the first party on a regular basis in improving its services and the quality of education of the divisional area.

²¹ All signing parties have agreed that complaints, objections, grievances have to be placed before the Board first and can be made public if they are not addressed by them.

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

All parties agreed that complaints/objections/grievances have to be placed before the Board first and can only be made public if they are not addressed by them.

Enforcement & Monitoring

All parties agree on the following to ensure enforcement and monitoring of the IP:

- Collectively develop action plan to implement commitments;
- Hold regular meetings between the parties to assess and monitor progress;
- Set up information boards (services delivered, rates of payment, progress on development work etc.);
- Activate all standing committees in LG/School Management Committees;
- Continue with the open and participatory budget and budget tracking;
- Regular holding of the Face the Public/Mothers' Gathering;
- Disclose all information in accordance with the Right to Information Act; and
- Work in partnership with other local relevant stakeholders, especially in close engagement with the administration.

VIII. Indicators of Results

Local Government

- Unauthorized payments for services controlled
- Improved quality of services
- Fair, transparent and unbiased distribution of safety nets - VGD/VGF, humanitarian relief, senior-citizens allowance, birth/death registration, fertilizer delivery, trade license issue and renewal, drinking water supply and Shalish
- Corruption in procurement, construction reduced
- Standing Committees activated
- Accountable use of budget
- People are empowered & demand change
- Public representatives and officials commit to engage, stakes and ownership developed

Primary Schools

- Unauthorized payments stopped
- Scholarship distribution fair and transparent
- Fair and transparent text book distribution
- SMCs reformed and activated
- Improved rights awareness, especially mothers
- Authorities more aware of anomalies, and committed to act
- Teachers' performance improved - time-keeping, discipline
- Drop-out reduced, enrolment increased
- Improved results in examinations
- Private tuition reduced
- Teachers, SMCs, officials and guardians engaged

IX. The Integrity Pledge: Challenges

All parties to the IP believe that successful implementation will generate further interest, ownership and thereby more effective enforcement with the scope of further replication and up-scaling. On the other hand failure in proper implementation and monitoring leading to lower than expected level of results will jeopardize the whole process. The main challenges of the IP are:

- a) Limits to possible changes are determined by the level of the given resources and capacities at the level of the concerned institution. Higher levels of success will depend on supportive policy and institutional change as well as necessary resource allocation from the national level.
- b) The IP being conceptually built on participation, any shortfall in ensuring it, especially of the service recipients, mainly poor and disadvantaged, will be severely damaging.
- c) The instrument and the process are built on voluntary participation of all stakeholders. Hence erosion of volunteerism will jeopardize the prospect of its success.
- d) The process through which the IPs have come into being is a learning by doing. Much would depend therefore on the skills and capacities of the stakeholders to successfully enforce it.
- e) Like any other social accountability tool, the IP is a legally non-binding instrument with no scope of legal redress in case of violation by any of the parties involved. Therefore, the key to its success is the continued commitment and ownership of all stakeholders supported by favourable political will and administrative support.

Annex: List of Integrity Pledges²²

Sector	Institution	Location
Education	Phoolgach Primary School	Lalmonirhat
	Alokdia Govt. Primary School	Madhupur
	28 No Garaikuti Government Primary school	Muktagachha
	Taraganj Charu Government Primary School	Nalitabari
	Ganda Government Primary School	Savar
	Dema Keramotia Govt. Primary school	Bagerhat
	103 No Digarkanda Govt. Primary School	Mymensingh
	99 No. Haidgaon Kazipara Govt. Primary school	Potiya
	Rajshahi Education Board	Rajshahi
Local Government	Kaiyerbill Union Parishad	Chokoria
	Jhenaidah Pourshava	Jhenaidah
	Boulai Union Parishad	Kishoreganj
	Hajiganj Upazila Parisahd	Chandpur
	Charbaria Union Parishad	Barisal
	Mogolhat Union Parishad	Lalmonirhat
	Boira Union Parishad	Mymensingh
	3 No. Sreemongal Union Parishad	Srimongal
	1 no. Karapara Union Parishad	Bagerhat
Total		18

²² As on April 6, 2010.