

Editorial Engaging Women Entrepreneurs in Trade

Gender equality and empowerment of women is not only an explicit goal under the SDG 2030, but it is also an important driver for attaining sustainable development of an economy. A gendered approach to trade is undertaken as a vital factor for ensuring equal opportunity for women in trade related activities and their advancement.

The impact of trade can be very significant for women in terms of increasing their socioeconomic empowerment and employment opportunities. One of the important steps of empowering women in trade activities is the expansion of those sectors where women entrepreneurs have comparative advantages. Thus, a women entrepreneur can secure a competitive position in business.

According to economic census 2013, out of 7.8 million entrepreneurs women entrepreneurs are 0.56 million or 7.21 percent. In the advanced and some developing countries, the number is much higher - in Ghana it is 46.4 percent, in Russia it is 34.6 percent, Uganda 33.8 percent, New Zealand 33.0 percent, Australia 32.1 percent, Vietnam 31.3 percent, Poland 30.3 percent, Spain 29.4 percent, Romania 28.9 percent, Portugal 28.7 percent. From the above data, it is clearly visible that Bangladesh is still lagging behind in ensuring the participation of women entrepreneurs in business.

BUILD conducted a baseline survey to measure time, cost and process requirements related to export and import for women-owned enterprises (WOEs) from 28th April to 16th May 2019. The survey aimed to find out the specific barriers faced by women-owned enterprises (WOEs) compared to men-owned enterprises (MOEs) in the country in the processes of trade. With the objective of identifying the constraints faced by WOE in trade and compare these with the experiences of their male counterparts, BUILD organized five workshops engaging male and female entrepreneurs and C&F agents.

One of the main constraints of women entrepreneurs is access to finance. Women entrepreneurs face a lot of hassles to get credit facilities from banks and NBFIs. The main reasons behind this problem are lack of collateral and guarantors. The procedures of obtaining loans from banks & NBFIs are complex from women entrepreneurs. Therefore, they fail to meet the conditions, which are required by financial institutions.

One of the major problems for women entrepreneurs in performing trade activities is that they have inadequate knowledge regarding the documentation process related to international trade. This makes them incompatible to deal with the various official services required for conducting export and import procedures. Growing awareness among women entrepreneurs is needed in this aspect. Awareness is also needed for increasing their competitiveness in technological aspects in view of the increasing level of digitization taking place in service delivery mechanism for trading activities.

Fair and equitable trade opportunities for women are considered as an integral part of inclusive economic development of a country. It is a reflection of greater gender equality in the distribution of economic resources that has a positive multiplier effect on an economy's inclusive and sustainable growth of a country.

Ferdaus Ara Begum
CEO, BUILD

New BUILD Trustee Board Chairperson



Abul Kasem Khan, former President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) has taken over as the Chairperson of the Trustee Board of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) for the year 2020-21. He succeeds Mahbubul Alam, President of The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) who was the Chairperson of BUILD for 2018-19.

Abul Kasem Khan is the Director of AK Khan & Co Ltd, and Managing Director of AK Khan Telecom Ltd.

Asif Ibrahim, former Chairperson of BUILD and Syed Mohammad Tanvir, Director, CCCI have been nominated as new Trustee Board Members of BUILD respectively from Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI).

In addition to the new trustees, the Trustee Board for 2020 includes Shams Mahmud, President of DCCI, Nihad Kabir, President of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Mahbubul Alam, President of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), Farooq Ahmed, Secretary General of MCCI, Md. Joynal Abdin, Secretary of DCCI and Engr. Mohd. Faruque, Secretary of CCCI. Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of BUILD is in the Trustee Board as the Member Secretary.

BUILD is a Public Private Dialogue Platform supported by the three leading Chambers DCCI, MCCI and CCCI officially providing secretarial support to the Private Sector Development Policy Coordination Committee (PSDPCC) headed by the Principal Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) since 2011. PSDPCC is the only strategic public sector platform for the private sector related policy coordination, review, identification of investment barriers and fostering public-private cooperation. The high powered committee mainly reviews all related activities for private sector development initiated by both the public and private sectors and recommends with an objective for a coordinated effort and all the overall investment scenario in the private sector and sets out recommendations.

BUILD features public private dialogue on five thematic areas – Tax, SMEs, Financial Sector and Trade and Investment, Sustainability and Green Growth.

BUILD is Bangladesh's private sector-led business reform champion. It has been designed as a sustainable platform for action-oriented business reforms that simplifies the process of doing business in Bangladesh, by working closely with the Government.

BUILD Called on NBR Chairman to Introduce its Taxation Related Activities



Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) Trustee Board Members handed over a bouquet to Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem on the beginning of his term as the Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) during a call on at the NBR Office. The meeting discussed BUILD's activities including Private Sector Development Policy Coordination Committee.

The Trustee Board of BUILD congratulated Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem on the beginning of his term as the Chairman of NBR while having talks on various issues focusing on business policy reforms to attract more domestic and foreign investment on January 16, 2019 at NBR.

BUILD Trustee Board Member and President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry Shams Mahmud urged the NBR Chairman to resolve private sector development policy issues and carry forward the positive trend of NBR specially in revenue mobilisation.

BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum briefly presented the activities of BUILD highlighting a number of reforms already implemented under the Taxation Working Committee of BUILD which is co-chaired by the NBR Chairman and FBCCI President.

CEO, BUILD Ferdaus Ara Begum explained about BUILD-a national Public Private Dialogue Platform supporting private sector as a coordinated voice and working closely with the government on private sector issues. She informed that BUILD is working on five thematic issues on which Taxation working committee is very important one. She also informed that so far 133 reform recommendations were proposed through this committee of which 82 have been implemented and 51 is in the process of implementation.

Chairman, NBR appreciated the role of BUILD and expressed his interest to work together, in case of having a Taxation Working Committee meeting he replied positively and informed that the meeting can be held in the month of March, 2020.

Chairman referring some of his experiences of working in different organization and ministries of the government throughout his life informed that he is taking some time to understand his priorities in NBR and thanked BUILD for their points in the written paper handed over to him in the meeting which he would look soon and need be will have further discussion.

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dhaka Secretary General Farooq Ahmed and DCCI Secretary Md. Joynal Abdin attended the call on.

Meeting between the Ministry of Environment, Forests Climate Change and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)



MOEFCC Secretary Ziaul Hasan presides over the meeting with BUILD.

A meeting between the Ministry of Environment, Forests, Climate Change (MOEFCC) and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) took place on January 28, 2020 at the Secretariat in a bid to discuss agenda of the upcoming Sustainability and Green Growth Working Committee Meeting of BUILD due in March 2020.

BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum provided a brief and said that BUILD in association with MoEFCC and BGMEA has launched this platform to exchange views among all intending sectors of the economy about the environment and related policies, suggest research-backed reforms for bridging the implementation gaps and conduct dialogues with the concerned government organization to support the private sector in having safe investment and sustainable business by using announced policies of the Government. The platform would engage the government, the private sector and other stakeholders for creating awareness among private sector about climate change, environmental damage, disaster risk reduction for developing compliant and resource efficient entrepreneurship. She urged the Government to adopt policy measures to promote environmental sustainability in the plastic sector that cover areas like pollution reduction, recycling and reuse of plastic; better coordination among regulatory agencies and stakeholders.

MOEFCC Secretary Ziaul Hasan expressed concerns about the waste treatment issue and informed that the ministry has already started activities for the COP26 due in December 2020.

It was discussed that BUILD will be invited in the ministry's programs on preparing COP26 with an objective to bridge the gaps of information exchange in regard climate change issues and then build capacity of private sector to provide related input so that the Government can negotiate with the international community.

The date for a SGGWC meeting was tentatively scheduled in March 2020, for which BUILD would prepare working paper. It was discussed that in line with the direction for 13th PSDPCC, letter will be sent to the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) to form a working committee to develop the renewable energy and rooftop solar power. MOEFCC secretary agreed to appoint a focal point in PSDPCC to represent the ministry.

Along with them, MOEF Additional Secretary (Environment) Mahmud Hasan, Additional Secretary (Development) A. Shamim Al Razi, Deputy Chief of MOEFCC Zakia and Additional Research Director of BUILD Md. Tahmid al Zami, Sr. Communications and Advocacy Associate Moshaddek Alam were present at the meeting.

Women Traders Face More Challenges than Male Traders



Member of the Customs Audit, Modernization and International Trade of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Khondaker Muhammad Aminur Rahman speaks as the Chief Guest of the program while Private Sector Development Adviser of DFID Bangladesh Mashfique Ibne Akbar is present as the Special Guest.

Women traders face more challenges than their male counterparts. To find out the gender discrimination issues in trade process and specific challenges of women traders, a baseline survey was conducted by Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) in association with International Finance Corporation (IFC). Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BUILD presented the survey report titled 'Challenges of Trading across Borders Facing the Women Traders of Bangladesh: Recent Findings and Way Forward' on January 19, 2020 at Inter Continental Dhaka.

BUILD research said, Availing trade license and its renewal require woman entrepreneurs to pay more undocumented charge than male entrepreneurs do. Maximum women exporters and importers collect the general import related licenses by themselves or through employees. Men entrepreneurs prefer using intermediary where women entrepreneurs prefer lawyers or professional services firms to obtain licenses or certificates if they do not do so by themselves or through employees. Woman importers need more time to avail RJSC certificate, Industrial IRC, Coefficient Certificate and Bill of Lading while WOE exporters need more time to obtain LC, cash incentive, GSP certificate, certificate of origin.

To deal with the challenges, policies were recommended in the BUILD research. Some of these recommendations are: Certified and qualified lawyers or professionals to provide services to the Women Owned Enterprises (WOE) and SMEs, Simplification and time-bound L/C process from the Banks and Financial Institutions, simplification of Cash Incentive Providing Process, Chamber or Association Membership certificates, Reduction of additional time and costs for availing Government incentives, Capacity Building, Disaggregated Data of Women Exporters, Abolition of hidden charge, Reduction of lead-time, Acceleration of Seasonal Financing, Reducing the number of guarantor requirement for Woman Entrepreneur, Active Help Desk, Supporting behavior from the concerned officials, New HS Code to eliminate HS code related problems, Simplification of the process of acquiring Bond License and consideration of lack of knowledge of custom officials.



All of the workshop participants are seen with Member of the Customs Audit, Modernization and International Trade of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Khondaker Muhammad Aminur Rahman

In her inaugural speech, BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum Said, half of the total population of Bangladesh are women. Their contribution in the economy is needed to be increased. Formalization of women labor force is important to increase the contribution of women in the economy.

Nusrat Nahid Babi said in her introductory note, that the special help desks for the women traders in many government and non-government organization would need to provide updated information. BUILD and IFC are willing to work jointly with the government to find out and solve the challenges of women traders. In this regard, discussion can be arranged in the divisional level.

Chief Guest Khondaker Muhammad Aminur Rahman pays gratitude to BUILD and IFC for taking this initiative. He said that implementation of National Single Window (NSW) within 2 or three years will reduce many problems related to time, cost and process related to export and import of the women traders. 39 departments of government will be connected under NSW which will expedite the simplification of trade related issues. Implementation of Pre Arrival Processing (PAP) will reduce the unnecessary delay in trade process of women traders. However, he highlighted that small and medium traders being not interested in e-payment is an obstacle for traders to avail more simplified trade related services.

Private Sector Development Advisor of DFID Bangladesh Mashfique Ibne Akbar said that public private dialogues are necessary for specifying reinvigorating measures to be taken for easing the trade related process for traders. He also said that the standards and certification for the non-traditional sectors need to be given more focus.

In the panel discussion, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce Sharifa Khan said, according to our constitution there is no scope to differentiate man and woman. One of the reasons might be that they do not have updated information. She also said, RJSC goes full to automation and entrepreneurs can get its benefit easily.

Chief Controller of CCI&E Pranesh Ranjan Sutradhar said that there is no manual service under Online Licensing Module (OLM) system initiated from 1st July, 2019. This has resulted in little involvement of intermediaries, reduction in time requirements, decreasing of numbers and phases of documentation.

Joint Secretary (Port) of Ministry of Shipping Abdus Sattar Sheikh said that Ministry of Shipping is willing to cooperate the women traders regarding any issue on port handling.

Kohinoor Yasmin, CEO, Taranga said that friendly approach from the customs officials can encourage women entrepreneurs.

NBR Commissioner Hossain Ahmed said, BSTI laboratory is not enough to examine the products of the entrepreneurs. In some cases, different laboratories of different institutions provides different results creating difficulties for NBR to take decisions.

BUILD Organized 3rd Austrian Business Mission to Dhaka

Austrian Business Delegation headed by Matthias Radosztics, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Head of the Austrian Embassy New Delhi and Robert Luck, Commercial Counsellor of the Austrian Embassy, New Delhi visited Bangladesh from February 18-20th, 2020. Top Managers of six outstanding Austrian companies were part of this delegation.

Among them is VAMED Engineering GmbH and Odelga Med Engineering, known worldwide for offering services for every type of healthcare facility, e.g. Hospitals, specialist clinics and rehabilitation centers, thermal spas and health resorts. Further, the company M-U-T, a manufacturing company specialized in waste treatment, including municipal vehicles, the water and waste water treatment and for the materials handling technology as well as environmental technology, bit media e-solutions and the worldwide market leader for hearing implants including the Austrian company Med-El were the part of the delegation.

A good number of B2B (business-to-business) and B2G (business-to-government) meetings were arranged by BUILD during the visit. The Austrian delegation also had meetings with Ministry of Finance, Environment, Railway, Health and Bangladesh Bank.



BUILD Chairperson Abul Kasem Khan speaks at the Networking Reception attended by public and private sector stakeholders and Austrian Companies working in Bangladesh.

During the Reception Dinner on February 18, 2020, organized by BUILD and Advantage Austria, the Commercial Counsellor of Austrian embassy in New Delhi Robert Luck said that we are very much active in Bangladesh with BUILD that has been very instrumental. The Austrian companies were very enthusiastic about the dynamics of Bangladesh and we are looking forward to make investments here said he.

‘We are discussing with the Bangladesh government,’ Robert said, adding, ‘Full potential has not yet been explored, and this fund will be available for Bangladesh.’

Robert said that Bangladesh’s economic progress was tremendous and the country had been maintaining that for the last couple of years.

Austria is trying its best for working together to assist Bangladesh government in building up infrastructures, he added.

He said that they were giving emphasis on education and skills development and discussing to find the areas of skills where they could work with Bangladesh.

‘Skills is a vital issue that needs in every field of development and considering that, investment in skills is equally important,’ he mentioned.

‘For further development of infrastructure and heading towards higher growth, it also needs to invest in skills,’ he categorically mentioned.

Thanking the Austrian companies for visiting to Dhaka, BUILD Chairperson Abul Kasem Khan said that the Bangladesh economy, standing on an 8 percent plus GDP growth, was looking forward to become larger than Vietnam, South Africa and the Netherlands by 2030 and eyeing to be the 23rd by 2050, riding on its prospects of achieving double digit growth targets.

The outstanding projects focusing on energy efficiency, renewable energies and conservation of resources, the Energy Globe Award as the world’s most prominent environmental award given annually to ME SOLshare and Centre for Coastal Environmental Conservation (CCEC). Luck presented this award in the form of a certificate to both winners at the Reception Dinner.

Ease of Doing Business Trading Across Borders: Recent Reform Initiatives in Bangladesh



BUILD Chairperson Abul Kasem Khan and BUILD Trustee Board Member Asif Ibrahim are seen with Member of NBR Khondaker Muhammad Aminur Rahman

Speaking as the Special Guest at the Workshop titled Ease of Doing Business Trading Across Borders: Recent Reform Initiatives in Bangladesh, organised by National Board of Revenue (NBR) supported by International Finance Corporation (IFC), BUILD Chairperson, Abul Kasem Khan said that we must continue to address the Ease of Doing Business with effective strategies as Bangladesh needs to improve its ranking immediately from the present position. He said steps taken are in the right direction to improve the ranking for next year. He informed, Bangladesh today is the fastest growing country in the world and in order for Bangladesh to continue its growth targets it needs massive investments.

The NBR member (customs audit, modernization and international trade) Khondaker Muhammad Aminur Rahman was present in the programme as the chief guest.

Rahman said following instructions of the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), all the agencies involved in trade-related activities are working separately to make progress in the EODB’s trading across border indicator.

BUILD Chair said that in order to attract foreign investments, the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Index ranking is very important for investors. He said, Government and the policy planners are serious about facing challenges with the right reforms and actions, but these need to be time bound and result oriented.

Commissioner of Chattogram Customs House Md. Fakhrul Alam said they received several forged documents, submitted by some traders in recent months for clearance purposes.

Meeting between Comptroller & Auditor General of Bangladesh and BUILD



Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, CAG (R1) and Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD (R2) are seen after the meeting.

Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD introduced BUILD and its scope of work in the field of policy reform mechanism to the CAG. It has been mentioned that BUILD has taken up a survey to support a study on “Private Provident Fund Policy Reform Options in Bangladesh” backed by IFC-WBG.

It was also mentioned that a survey was already conducted on Private Provident Fund over the country. For the purpose of assessing PF in private sector BUILD Team visited the 16 Tax Commissionerates throughout the country who are supervising the Private Provident Funds (PPF) under the existing Income Tax Act 1984.

BUILD also studied the LTU taxpayers, Private Commercial Banks, NBFIs and Top DSE-30 companies for the purpose of the survey. It was also mentioned that estimated PPF is around \$2 billion.

Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, CAG appreciated the strive of BUILD to assess the PPF volume and its further investment potentials studied by BUILD. In the course of discussion, it was mentioned that;

There is no regulatory Framework for private provident fund and Public PF is maintained under the general provident fund rules, 1979 and the contributory provident fund rules, 1979. In case of local bodies, it follows the provident funds act, 1925. The private PF is maintained for income tax exemption (rebate).

There should be a regulatory framework under a separate authority where India and Pakistan have already established the authority.

There is a pension regulator authority in India that taps in capital market. This authority covers both public, private sector. The fund is managed by the fund manager under close supervision.

India has started mandatory PF for all under the authority since 2005 including the informal sector. It has set criteria for further investment.

All this future employee welfare funds (PF, Gratuity, and GPF) can be maintained under a separate and sovereign entity that would be the custody and fund manager for further investment of PF. It would need to be guided by a clear policy like universal pension Act.

Leather Sector Task-force Subcommittee Meeting by BUILD



Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD chairs the meeting at BUILD.

CEO, BUILD welcomed all the members of the sub-committee and shared the draft report prepared by BUILD for their opinion.

The representative from Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh (LFMEAB), said the value addition of leather sector is about 80% and raw hide collection is more than 300m sq.ft. But the representative from Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA) told that when the tanneries were in Hazaribagh, it was about 350m sq.ft. But after the shifting of tanneries from Hazaribagh to Tannary Industrial Estate Dhaka (TIED) it becomes 220m sq.ft.- 250m sq.ft. The women employment of this sector became increased from 53% to 60%.

Representative from the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) said that this sector should be more focused on research and development. He said one of the main reasons of falling export is lack of marketing skill as well as market analysis by the entrepreneurs. There is a huge sourcing gap between the exporters and buyers. Data published by Export Promotion Bureau is not enough. There should be a depth analysis by comparing with other countries export and import volume. A market research needs to be conducted by comparing the individual product line of leather sector with other countries.

BTA officials said that Govt. has established 6 Slaughter House in different places Dhaka & Chattagram people are not aware about it.

Moreover the transportation and other related cost from and to slaughter house is not well devised. She also said that in TIED, the establishment of individual Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) is not possible because of the shortage of land and as per the rule of industrial estate. Moreover, as per court order of December 14, 2017, a feasibility study was to be undertaken by the applicant company.

After that a number of meeting and decisions were taken but it remains still unclear. She also said that the BSCIC authority asked entrepreneurs to change the size of sedimentation tank in several time which is difficult for a tanner in terms of both time and cost.

The representative from Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leathergoods and Footwear Exporters' Association (BFLLEA) said that Bangladeshi leather products need more publicity through different advertising tools. He also said that the size of footwear of different brand is abstruse for the domestic people. There should be defined measurement of footwear size.

Representative from Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) informed that about 97% works of Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) has been done. Hopefully other works will be done within the project completion period. He informed that the establishment of separate line for chrome, desalting process and sedimentation tank is not included. He also informed that govt. take initiatives to establish a separate industrial park for leather goods and footwear sector.

Partner's Corner

DCCI Board of Directors Called on BB Governor



The newly elected Board of Directors of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) led by its President Shams Mahmud called on Governor of Bangladesh Bank Fazle Kabir on 14 January, 2020. Executive Directors of different departments and high official of Bangladesh Bank were present at that time.

During the meeting, DCCI President Shams Mahmud said though GDP growth of Bangladesh has achieved a new height crossing 8% growth trajectory but private investment is stagnant within 22%-23% of GDP. The stagnant private investment is aggravated by the slow-down in the private sector credit growth which was 9.87% in November 2019. Higher interest rate on bank loan is one of the reasons for slow-down of private investment. DCCI President requested to cut down lending rate to single digit. To reduce non-performing loan (NPL), he suggested to establish a mechanism in order to identify willful and unintentional defaulter.

Governor of Bangladesh Bank Fazle Kabir said the economy of Bangladesh mostly depends on banking financial system. Government is trying to bring down the lending interest rate to single digit for the betterment of economy, businessmen and mass people which may be implemented from April next, he said. Government has also taken various infrastructure development projects where private sector's intervention would be much appreciated. Regarding non-performing loan, he said there is a clear definition of willful and unintentional loan defaulter in the law but if any entrepreneur failed to repay the loan due to delayed connection of power, energy, gas or delayed loan approval process or some other reasons which have valid ground might get special consideration.

Banking Reform Adviser of Bangladesh Bank S K Sur Chowdhury said for the sake of overall banking eco-system, healthy money market and to achieve targeted economic growth Bangladesh Bank will amend its rules and regulations if necessary and this effort will also be continued.

First Quarterly Luncheon Meeting 2020



NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md. Rahmatul Muneem speaks.

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) organized its first Quarterly Luncheon Meeting of 2020 at its Gulshan office premises on 05 March 2020. Abu Hena Md. Rahmatul Muneem,

Senior Secretary, Internal Resources Division (IRD) and Chairman, National Board of Revenue (NBR) attended the event as the Chief Guest.

During the event, MCCI President Nihad Kabir pointed out that the minimum tax requirement was increasing business costs in Bangladesh. This was holding back businesses from reaching their full potential. She believed the corporate tax rate was still high in Bangladesh and could be lowered gradually during the next few years.

Chief Guest Muneem said that despite the prevailing challenges, he was trying to create a tax-friendly environment. He also believed that tax rates could be lowered, but before that, the tax net would have to be increased so that there was no risk of revenue shortfall. To do that, there was a need to have a research department, and his team was working hard to come up with a solution to that.

Meetings between CCCI and Austrian Delegation

Having welcomed the delegation from Austria, Mahbubul Alam, President, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI), said that we need to cope up with and survive in this rapidly changing world economic arena, and we shall have to vigorously launch a coordinated and collective move to foster our trade and investment and search for all possible ways and means for durable national economic development with Austria. He expressed keen interest to arrange a delegation visit from CCCI to Austria and sought support of Austrian Embassy New Delhi.



Mahbubul Alam, President, CCCI speaks with the delegation.

In reply, Luck requested him to write his office formally so that he can send the message to the concerned authority.

Syed Mohammad Tanvir, Director of CCCI said that the need of waste management in Chittagong city which is becoming more and more essential to maintain a healthy urban life. Every day we generate waste and throw them here and there. However, we are not conscious enough to put waste into dustbins.

Only the garbage collection process by van was implemented and none other actions were implemented over the last 10 years. However, this city is facing tremendous environmental impact because of unplanned waste-bins and dumping areas everywhere.

Moreover, in the rainy season, the exposed dustbins waste goes to open drain and creates tremendous water-logging problems. Sometimes, heavy storm-water washes away the waste and spreads them in surrounding places. To solve this problem, we need to build a waste disposal site far from the city area, he added.

BUILD Scope

Study on Payment through Telegraphic Transfer for the Benefits of the Private Sector

Telegraphic Transfer (TT) is a popular medium for payment in the international trade. Telegraphic Transfer, often abbreviated to TT, is a term used to refer to an electronic means of transferring funds. In Bangladesh telegraphic transfer is frequently used by the manufacturer-exporters and importers. The use of TT is very beneficial for both SME and large enterprises.

In the 7th FSDWC meeting of BUILD held on 7 August, 2019, it was stated that getting advance loan from banks against telegraphic transfer by the importers is sometimes troublesome for small and women exporters.

In order to explore these issues, BUILD has initiated a study on the Telegraphic Transfer for the Benefits of the Private Sector in Bangladesh. How policy reforms in the area of telegraphic transfer can be done to scale up the benefits of the private sector and the use of the formalized channels of international payment is the core objective of this study.

6th Business Start-Up Licenses: A Regulatory Guide

BUILD is going to publish 6th Business Start-Up Licenses: A Regulatory Guide- a flagship publication of BUILD. Approval of licenses, permits, recommendations are some of the reasons for increasing cost of doing business and delay in business start up in the country. Most of the new business entrepreneurs do not know how to approach for permissions because of absence of information on the procedures, steps, fees requirements and where to get and how to collect these permissions. Because of these complexities businesses remain informal.

To that end, the Business Start-up Licenses: A Regulatory Guide- researched, prepared and published by BUILD provides a critical source of information regarding License, Permit, Approval, Certificate, Registration etc. needed for business startups in Bangladesh. The guide works as a toolkit for any aspiring or veteran entrepreneurs alike. In today's diversified business environment, entrepreneurs depend on finding the 'right information at the right time', the Regulatory Guide is working as an answer book for them.

The 6th edition will contain information on business licenses of many sectors and gather 350 Licenses/Certificates/Approvals/Permits required for business and information from nearly 60 government organizations that provide these Licenses/Certificates/Approvals/Permits. The Guide will also cover renewal of licenses along with information of new sectors such as waste management and recycling industries etc..

Meeting with International Development Group

Elizabeth Scaife, Independent consultant/ Trainer/ Author, International Development Group met BUILD CEO on January 1, 2020 and discussed several issues trade and customs modernization. They requested to collaborate with them and suggested to work on organization like Better Business Bureau (BBB). Raich Uddin Khan, senior custom specialist USAID Bangladesh Improving Trade and Business Enabling Environment (TfBITBEE) of International Development Group LL was also present.

BUILD Reforms

Trading Ceiling for Bank Increased

Bangladesh Bank has issued a circular on September 5, 2019 where a definition of trading was given for micro and small entrepreneurs. The amount of replacement cost except land and building for micro business is 10 Lakh BDT, manpower 15 and those who have annual transaction not more than BDT two crore.

Previously, the fixed asset cost except land and building for micro industry was less than BDT 10 lac and the required manpower was maximum 5 persons.

In case of small industry allowed limit is BDT 10 lac to 2 crore for which manpower is 16-50 and those whose annual turnover / annual transaction is not more than BDT 2 crore to 20 crore.

In the earlier circular, for small industry the allowed limit for fixed asset was BDT 5 lacs to BDT 1 crore and the required manpower was 6-10 persons. This issue was also discussed in the 6th SMEDWC meeting held on 24th July, 2019 at MCCI.

Chamber/Associations/Trade Bodies/CMSME - Social Guarantors

In the 7th Financial Sector Development WC meeting BUILD proposed for including related chamber/associations/trade bodies/ CMSME trading organizations can be the recognized organization to provide social guarantee. This has been included in the SMESPD circular- 2 of Bangladesh Bank issued on September 5, 2019.

BUILD Article on National Dailies

Engaging women in trade: Policy and financial constraints

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/reviews/engaging-women-in-trade-policy-and-financial-constraints-1582035344>

Inclusion of cottage and micro enterprises into SME Policy

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/views/inclusion-of-cottage-and-micro-enterprises-into-sme-policy-1580482776>

Private sector needs to play a big role in SDGs implementation

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/views/private-sector-needs-to-play-a-big-role-in-sdgs-implementation-1579275141>

Participation of Bangladesh women in public procurement

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/reviews/participation-of-bangladesh-women-in-public-procurement-1578235789>

Thrust on biz-friendly atmosphere for women traders

<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/trade/thrust-on-biz-friendly-atmosphere-for-women-traders-1579504850>

BUILD Pictorial



BUILD CEO Ferdaus Ara Begum congratulated Shams Mahmud for being newly elected as the President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry for the year 2020. BUILD is delighted to welcome Mahmud to the Board of Trustee of BUILD in 2020. BUILD also congratulates to N K A Mobin, FCA, FCS and Mohammad Bashiruddin for being elected as the Senior Vice President and Vice President of DCCI respectively. DCCI President expressed interest to work together.



In order to celebrate the new decade, we at BUILD look back and take account of our achievements over the last decade.

BUILD celebrated the Happy New Year 2020 and Bangladesh's phenomenal progress that can be attributed to the indomitable spirit and resilience of our people. And we take the opportunity to congratulate our fellow Bangladeshis with the hope of scaling new heights as a nation in the coming year.



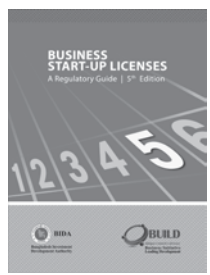
Trustee Board Member of BUILD (Former Chairman) Asif Ibrahim spoke in the program "Delivering SDGs in Bangladesh : Role of Non State Actors" held on February 20, 2020. The two reports, published by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, were launched on role and contribution of non-state actors as delivery partners and measuring progress and charting way forward in the fields of SDGs in Bangladesh. BUILD was the co-author of the SDG 8 working group report along with BRAC.



Paul Dodds, Senior Agriculture Policy Expert, USAID LEAP III - Bangladesh Policy and Regulatory Assessment met BUILD CEO on January 21, 2020 to discuss how to improve regulation, coordination and implementation and increase the diversity and productivity of Bangladesh agriculture.

While Bangladesh has made remarkable progress, the rate of reduction of rural poverty has recently shown signs of slowing down, he said.

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