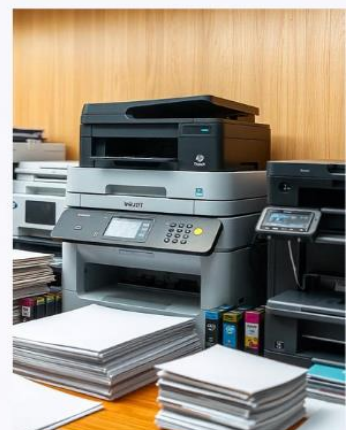


SURVEY REPORT

Supporting the Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation of Bangladesh's Sustainable Public Procurement Policy



Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)

February 2025

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Executive Summary

The Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) under the Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh announced the [Sustainable Public Procurement \(SPP\) Policy](#) on December 10, 2023, which has three specific pillars on sustainability, targeting environmental, social, and economic policies. For the first time, a public procurement policy in Bangladesh acknowledged the need to increase the participation of Women Owned Enterprises (WOEs) and SMEs (Clause 7.2.2) in public procurement processes. To increase the participation of women and SMEs in public procurement, the SPP Policy includes provisions to (Clause 7.2.3, page 27629) simplify tender documentation, divide contracts into smaller lots, set limits on the number of lots that can be awarded to a single bidder, allow for a longer duration for the submission of expression of interest (Eoi), and ensure that tenders can be awarded as per the approval of the appropriate authority.

On September 12, 2024, the BPPA released the [SPP Guide](#) to support procuring entities in implementing the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy. It aims to enhance procurement practices with a particular focus on inclusivity for women-owned businesses.

However, the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority is yet to implement the SPP policy.

This assessment was carried out to understand the current status of the SPP policy implementation, identify bottlenecks, and ensure the establishment of a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation framework from the start of the implementation process. The survey was conducted between November 2024 and January 2025 with respondents including policymakers from the BPPA and procuring entities in Bangladesh, as well as several women-owned businesses, many of whom have previously participated in the public procurement process in Bangladesh. In total, 40 interviews were conducted.

The results of the survey highlighted some key findings:

- **Awareness of SPP** – There is a significant lack of awareness among procuring entities and women-owned businesses on the SPP policy, the gender provisions, as well as the SPP Guide.
- **Action plan for implementation** – The BPPA has developed a roadmap for SPP implementation, however a clear action plan with concrete timelines is missing.
- **Implementation status and procurement practices** – The SPP has not yet been implemented leading to limited changes in public procurement processes since its announcement.
- **Gender-Disaggregated Data** – There is no standard definition of women-owned/led businesses in Bangladesh. There is no established mechanism for gender-disaggregated data collection in procurement. However, through the Electronic Government Procurement (E-GP) platform, the BPPA collects information on the gender of the supplier.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – A gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation framework does not exist. The BPPA is in the process of developing a monitoring and evaluation framework which will include gender indicators. Procuring entities do not have their own monitoring and evaluation frameworks for public procurement processes.

To operationalize the SPP policy and ensure its successful implementation, this report puts forward the following recommendations:

1. Structural changes for the BPPA and procuring entities
2. Capacity building for procuring entities
3. Capacity building for women-owned businesses

1. Introduction & Background

The Government of Bangladesh has spent about BDT 25 billion (about 230 million USD) annually on public procurement, which represents close to 40%¹ of the budget of the country. Effective public procurement is key to extend quality government services to the citizens of the country. At the same time, public procurement also offers significant opportunities for women-led businesses to engage in the economy. Despite contributing almost 25% to Bangladesh's GDP and representing 24.6% of all SMEs (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics [BBS]), women are significantly underrepresented in public procurement. According to the BPPA, they constitute a mere 3.38% of registered tenderers in Bangladesh. In 2021, the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) expressed its commitment to include more women in the country's public procurement processes. This led to technical cooperation activities between the BPPA, the Ministry of Planning, the Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), and the International Trade Centre, under the UK-funded SheTrades Commonwealth Programme.

These activities included a series of consultations and dialogues with stakeholders. The policy dialogues engaged government officials and women entrepreneurs to identify the specific challenges faced by women. The Bangladeshi government also conducted a baseline study to examine the participation of women in the bidding for public contracts. In 2023, the BPPA drafted the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) policy and integrated a gender mainstreaming into the policy, with ITC's support. In April 2023, ITC SheTrades, the Public Procurement Research Centre (PPRC), and BUILD reviewed the draft policy and provided specific recommendations based on the consultations and dialogues held with the stakeholders.

In December 2023, the SPP policy was approved by the cabinet and included most of the gender inclusive recommendations. On September 12, 2024, to support the implementation of the SPP policy, the BPPA released the [SPP Guide](#). It aims to enhance procurement practices with a particular focus on inclusivity for women-owned businesses.

The SPP policy is built on three specific pillars on sustainability, targeting environmental, social, and economic policies. The gender-responsive provisions in the SPP policy include simplifying tender documentation, dividing contracts into smaller lots, setting limits on the number of lots that can be awarded to a single bidder, allowing for a longer duration for the submission of expression of interest (Eoi), and ensuring that tenders can be awarded as per the approval of the appropriate authority.

To date, the BPPA has not yet operationalized the SPP policy since its adoption in December 2023. To support its operationalization, ITC, and BUILD, in coordination with the BPPA, have joined forces to assess needs and challenges, and support the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy.

Between November 2024 and January 2025, ITC and BUILD conducted a needs assessment survey. The objective of the survey was to understand the status of the SPP policy implementation, identify bottlenecks, and ensure the establishment of a gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation framework from the start of the implementation process, with the aim of increasing women's participation in public procurement.

BUILD led the interview process using tailored questionnaires for respondents from the BPPA, procuring entities, and businesswomen, many of whom have previously participated in the public procurement process in Bangladesh. In total, 40 interviews were conducted – 7 with BPPA representatives, 13 with procuring entities, and 20 with women-owned businesses.

This report presents the findings from the needs assessment and provides targeted recommendations for improvement. The report will be used as a guiding document for the policy dialogue on supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP policy on 24 April 2025.

2. Unpacking the Needs and Challenges to Implement, Monitor and Evaluate the SPP Policy

2.1 Awareness of the SPP Policy and Implementation Guidelines

Awareness of the SPP policy, its gender provisions, and the newly released SPP Guide is essential to ensure proper implementation, not just by the BPPA, but also the procuring entities. Moreover, to take advantage of the SPP, women-owned businesses need to be aware of the provisions most relevant to their participation.

Respondents from the BPPA were predominantly aware of the SPP policy, its provisions, as well as the SPP Guidelines, having worked on developing these policy documents. However, survey results point to a significant lack of awareness among procuring entities and women-owned businesses. Most procuring entities are aware of the adoption of a new public procurement policy. Yet, very few know about the provisions within the policy, and even fewer of the SPP Guide. Meanwhile, awareness among women-owned enterprises was even lower.

Procuring entities also indicated that they were not consulted in the development of the SPP Guide. This can have significant consequences on the adoption and implementation of the SPP policy by the procuring entities since implementation guidelines may not provide practical use relevant to their context.

The widespread lack of awareness can be attributed to insufficient dissemination efforts, limited access to information, and the absence of targeted awareness-raising programs. BPPA organized workshops to disseminate information on the SPP policy and its provisions. While some women-owned businesses confirmed participating in these workshops, most were unaware of these activities.

Procuring entities were not targeted by the workshops. They became aware of the policy and its provisions through the BPPA's online portal as well as through meetings with the BPPA. The survey results did not point to any dissemination activities on the SPP Guide.

BPPA is currently in the process of laying the groundwork for the implementation of the SPP policy, which includes identifying areas for capacity building and improving inclusivity.

Many respondents emphasized the need for improved communication, training, and capacity-building initiatives to ensure awareness and effective implementation of the SPP Policy. In this regard, it is imperative that the BPPA disseminate information about the policy and its provisions through widespread communication (newspaper, radio, online, etc.). Effective implementation of the SPP policy requires that procuring entities are aware of the SPP Guide. At the same time, to take advantage of the SPP and its provisions, women-owned businesses need to have the know-how to engage in public procurement.

BPPA can conduct awareness-raising workshops with procuring entities and women-owned businesses to provide a venue to clarify points and ask questions regarding the SPP policy and its implementation. BPPA can also create direct notification channels with women's business associations and procuring entities to easily disseminate information on any further changes to procurement rules and regulations, including updates on the SPP implementation.

2.2 Action Plan for Implementation

An action plan is essential for implementation. It should outline specific activities required to implement the policy, lead and partner institutions, feasible timelines and measurable and gender-responsive targets.

Currently, the BPPA does not have a clear action plan for the implementation of the SPP. Respondents from the BPPA mentioned an internal roadmap for the SPP, however no further details were provided. Some officials from the BPPA also mentioned ongoing work on the development of a concrete action plan which will be aligned with the SPP Guide.

Further clarity is needed on whether the BPPA has faced any challenges in the development of the action plan and why an action plan has not already been adopted to support implementation.

Due to a lack of guidance on the SPP, procuring entities also do not have individual action plans in place to operationalize the SPP and its provisions in their procurement processes. Several procuring entities have stressed the need for clearer government directives as well as a detailed action plan and procedural manuals to guide effective implementation.

In this regard, the BPPA needs to prioritize work on the SPP policy's action plan. The SPP Guide can work as the foundation for the action plan providing step-by-step guidance on its operationalization. Once established, the BPPA should also consider properly disseminating the action plan to all procuring entities and ensure that each procuring entity adopts the action plan and contributes to its timely and efficient operationalization. Policy dialogues can provide an opportunity for BPPA and procuring entities to co-create and operationalize the action plan.

2.3 Implementation Status and Procurement Practices

2.3.1 Implementation and challenges for the government

The BPPA has not yet implemented the SPP policy leading to limited changes in public procurement processes since its adoption in December 2023. Procuring entities have also not adopted the provisions set out by the SPP in their procurement practices. The BPPA and procuring entities have listed several factors that have limited the successful implementation of the policy.

First, changes in the government administration have delayed the SPP implementation. However, several representatives from the BPPA mentioned that the current government cabinet has included women's economic empowerment in its mandate, which can support the implementation of the SPP.

According to respondents from the BPPA, operationalizing the SPP policy requires including its provisions in tender documentation. However, more clarity is needed on what specific documents are needed to do this and how they can be revised.

BPPA has adopted an Electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) system to support the implementation of the SPP and ensure transparency by digitizing the procurement process. This includes publishing information on the digital platform, including the call for tenders, the list of vendors, and the application status. However, respondents have pointed to vulnerabilities of the e-GP system to political interference and corruption. More clarity is needed on the exact vulnerabilities of the e-GP system so that they can be properly addressed. Some concerns also related to the difficulties in digitalizing procurement processes through the e-GP. Procuring entities mentioned that they need government directives, gazette instructions, or binding regulations to start implementation. Moreover, procuring entities also cited the need for capacity building on adopting the SPP provisions in their procurement practices.

BPPA and procuring entities also cited a lack of human resources required for successful implementation. However, more information is needed on what role the additional human resources will fulfill in the implementation of the SPP.

In addition, they highlighted a lack of infrastructure preparedness and financial resources to implement the policy. However, more clarity is needed on the specific types of infrastructure and the financial resources required, whether for training, system upgrades or data collection, to effectively implement the SPP.

According to the survey, neither the BPPA nor procuring entities have any gender-specific targets in place to increase the number of women-owned businesses participating in public procurement under the SPP Policy. The BPPA has not set out any formal guidance on gender-inclusive practices. However, some procuring entities have been assisting women-owned businesses independently, such as purchasing services or handmade food from women-led firms.

To address these challenges, the BPPA needs to streamline the process of implementation by creating an action plan and increase the capacity of its own staff as well as procuring entities. Finally, the BPPA and procuring entities can adopt a standard definition that helps in the effective implementation of the provisions of the SPP.

2.3.2 Challenges for women-owned businesses in accessing public procurement

The surveyed women-owned businesses stated a variety of challenges that limit their participation in public procurement. These challenges include red-tape and gender-based discrimination.

For instance, several women-owned businesses stated that they were unable to participate in procurement processes due to lack of connections in the BPPA or within procuring entities. Some also mentioned, that due to gender biases, they were unable to form the networks needed to successfully engage in public procurement.

Some women also mentioned that red-tape and corruption also hinder them from participating in public procurement. For instance, small women-owned businesses do not have enough disposable finances to pay bribes to ensure their participation. Moreover, corruption practices also make it more difficult for women-owned businesses to win contracts through open tendering processes.

Women-owned businesses also mentioned administrative challenges in participating in public procurement. For instance, some respondents mentioned that there were significant delays in payments after the contract was fulfilled. For small women-owned businesses regular payments are important. Meanwhile, several respondents also highlighted that there are varying public procurement processes for different procuring entities, which make the process more complex and disjointed.

Procuring entities also noted that women-owned businesses might not have the business and soft skills, and the know-how on procurement processes to participate in public procurement.

Addressing these challenges and ensuring that women-owned businesses participate in public procurement is essential to the successful implementation of the SPP policy. To ensure that women have the capacity to engage in public procurement, procuring entities and the BPPA can consider providing practical training or materials to women-owned businesses on how to submit a bid and benefit from the SPP policy.

2.4 Gender-disaggregated data

2.4.1 Standard definition for women-owned/led businesses

A standard definition for women-owned or women-led businesses can help in the effective implementation of the policy by ensuring that women are benefitting from the targeted provisions. A standard definition can ensure that women-owned businesses are easily identifiable and subsequently prioritized in the procurement process. Moreover, it can also support gender-disaggregated data collection, which is key to monitor the impact of the SPP policy on women's participation in public procurement in Bangladesh.

The BPPA does not have a standard definition of women-owned businesses. Respondents cited that the BPPA follows two different definitions of women-owned businesses. The first is provided by the Industrial Policy, which defines women-owned businesses as those wherein one or more women own at least 51% of the shares of the company (Clause 3.4, page 15722). The Bangladesh Bank, through its SME Financing Policy, defines a women-owned business as one where a woman is the owner of a privately owned or proprietary firm, or holds at least 51% ownership in a partnership firm or a private company registered with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms (RJSC) (Bangladesh Bank, SMESPD Circular No.-2, September 05, 2019). However, it is important to note that the BPPA is not using a standard definition of women-owned businesses in its procurement processes. The BPPA can also consider the definition prescribed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) International Workshop Agreement 34: Women's entrepreneurship – Key definitions and general criteria^{1, 2}.

None of the procuring entities in the survey have adopted a definition of women-owned businesses. They highlighted that there is a lack of a definition for women-owned businesses in the current framework governing public procurement. They also pointed out that this makes it difficult to prioritize women in procurement processes.

Some procuring entities have been using broad definitions established in specific projects; however, these are not used for procurement processes. Overall, most procuring entities are committed to treating all bidders equally, without discrimination based on gender, as established by the previous public procurement framework.

In this context, the BPPA should consider adopting a standard definition of women-owned or women-led business to ensure that women-led businesses are effectively identified and benefit from the provisions of the SPP policy. It can also support the gender-disaggregated data collection for gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation of the SPP policy.

A standard definition should be institutionalized through the SPP Guide or the SPP action plan. It is crucial to mandate all procuring entities to use the standard definition of women-owned or women-led business across procurement processes. To do this, the BPPA should raise awareness among the procuring entities on the standard definition. One suggestion from procuring entities was to establish a certification body that can verify whether a business is women-owned or women-led, based on the criteria set in the adopted definition.

2.4.2 Gender-disaggregated data collection

Gender-disaggregated data collection can help track progress on the implementation of the SPP policy and its impact on women-owned businesses. It can attest to whether women are benefitting from the provisions of the SPP policy or not.

¹ Women-owned business – business that is more than 50% owned by one or more women, whose management and control lie with one or more women, where a woman is a signatory of the business's legal documents and financial accounts, and which is operated independently from businesses that are not owned by women.

² Women-led business – business that is at least 25% owned by one or more women, whose management and control lie with one or more women, which has at least one third of the board of directors comprised of women, where a board exists, where a woman is a signatory of the business's legal documents and financial accounts, and which is operated independently from businesses that are neither led nor owned by women.

So far, BPPA has made some progress on tracking women's participation in public procurement through the registration process on the e-GP system – tenderers now have to submit information on gender. The e-GP data shows that 4% of the suppliers registered are women. However, the BPPA should consider revising the information asked on gender during the registration process on the e-GP in alignment with the standard definition of a women-owned or women-led business it chooses to adopt. This can include requesting information on the percentage of women on the board or in managerial positions, or the percentage of the company's shares owned by women.

BPPA has not adopted a system to regularly collect gender-disaggregated data and use it to set targets or design targeted interventions. Many BPPA officials mentioned that there are plans to collect gender-disaggregated data. The data will then be used to make tender processes easier for women, provide targeted capacity building and training, set targets, and assist procuring entities with low rates of women suppliers.

Like the BPPA, procuring entities also do not have established procedures for collecting gender-disaggregated data in procurement processes. A primary reason for this is the lack of directives or legal provisions in the current framework to differentiate suppliers by gender.

BPPA has an opportunity to systematically collect gender-disaggregated data in public procurement. BPPA should also ensure that data collection is a bottom-up approach by encouraging procuring entities to also collect the relevant data on women's participation in public procurement and report regularly to the BPPA.

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

2.5.1 Monitoring and evaluation framework

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is essential because, if properly utilized, it can produce evidence and measure the effectiveness of policies. This allows for informed adjustments in the provisions or implementation activities, where needed. Demonstrating results also helps secure the buy-in of stakeholders and beneficiaries. It is crucial to establish and apply the monitoring and evaluation framework from the outset of policy implementation, in order to generate baseline data that can be compared with post-implementation results to effectively track progress.

The BPPA is planning to develop a M&E framework and has ongoing discussions on its creation. Respondents also mentioned that the monitoring and evaluation framework will include a gender indicator.

None of the surveyed procuring entities have adopted a monitoring and evaluation framework. The primary reason behind this was the lack of guidance from the BPPA on how to monitor progress and evaluate results.

The BPPA needs to prioritize the development of the M&E framework and ensure that it includes SMART gender indicators. SMART indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound indicators. The M&E framework should correspond to the action plan for SPP policy implementation, to be developed. Lastly, the M&E framework should be developed in consultation with procuring entities to ensure they fully understand and commit to their roles in regularly collecting and reporting data for effective monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Data collection and reporting is an essential part of the monitoring and evaluation process. The needs assessment survey showed that more clarity is required on how data flows from one entity to another. Understanding whether vendor data is collected centrally through the e-GP system or independently by procuring entities and then submitted to the BPPA is essential for ensuring an efficient and coherent monitoring process. If the former, it is important to clarify whether the BPPA acts as the custodian of the data collected via the e-GP, and how procuring entities access and utilize this information. If the latter, additional details are needed on the data collection methods employed by

procuring entities to ensure consistency and comparability, as well as how the bottom-up approach to data collection is operationalized.

BPPA should lead the regular and consistent collection of gender-disaggregated data on vendors. This will allow for a centralized tracking of progress on the different targets set within the monitoring and evaluation framework. Lastly, the BPPA should engage with the procuring entities and ensure they understand their role in data collection efforts to properly monitor and evaluate the SPP policy.

3. Summary of Key Findings

The results of the survey highlight some key findings:

- **Awareness of SPP** – There is a significant lack of awareness among procuring entities and women-owned businesses on the SPP policy, the gender provisions, as well as the SPP Guide.
- **Action plan for implementation** – The BPPA has developed an internal roadmap for SPP implementation, however a clear action plan with concrete timelines is missing. The BPPA is working on developing an action plan and aims to align it with the SPP Guide.
- **Implementation status and procurement practices** – The SPP has not yet been implemented leading to limited changes in public procurement processes since its announcement. Operationalization of the SPP policy requires including its provisions in the tender documentation. While the BPPA has done this, it is currently awaiting approval of the tender documentation. Moreover, the BPPA and procuring entities, both cite respective limitation in implementation, however, more clarity is needed on the exact ways in which these pose a challenge to implementation.
- **Gender-Disaggregated Data** – There is no standard definition of women-owned/led businesses in Bangladesh. The BPPA follows the definition set out by the Industrial Policy as well as the Bangladesh Bank, However, no standard policy is used for procurement purposes. Procuring entities and women-owned businesses are not aware of a standard definition. There is no established mechanism for gender-disaggregated data collection in procurement. However, through the Electronic Government Procurement (E-GP) platform, the BPPA collects information on the gender of the supplier.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – A gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation framework does not exist. The BPPA is planning to developing a monitoring and evaluation framework which will include gender indicators. Procuring entities do not have their own monitoring and evaluation frameworks for public procurement processes. There is lack of information from the surveys on how information is exchanged between the BPPA and the procuring entities, as well as if there is a single or multiples sources from which data on public procurement can be collected.

4. Recommendations

Based on the results of the needs assessment survey, this report puts forth several recommendations to support the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP policy. These are mentioned below:

4.1 Structural changes

Findings show that structural changes, such as adopting systematic mechanisms and frameworks, are essential for both the BPPA and procuring entities. It is recommended to:

- Create a taskforce, comprising the BPPA and procuring entities, and hold a series of inter-agency meetings or dialogues to:
 - Develop and adopt an action plan with concrete timelines and targets for the implementation of the SPP policy. The action plan should align with the SPP Guide.
- Develop and adopt a gender-responsive M&E framework, which includes SMART targets and indicators corresponding to the activities and outputs outlined in the action plan.
 - Adopt a standard definition of women-owned or women-led business for use in public procurement processes. This definition should be institutionalized through the SPP Guide, and its application by procuring entities should be made mandatory. The information required during registration through the e-GP system should be aligned with the criteria set out in the adopted definition of women-owned businesses.
 - Establish a clear system to collect gender-disaggregated data on vendors, in reference to the standard definition to be adopted, to monitor and evaluate the SPP policy. Roles and responsibilities of the BPPA and each procuring entity in the data collection should be discussed and agreed.

4.2 Awareness raising and capacity building for procuring entities

Survey results highlight the need to raise awareness and build the capacity of procuring entities to support effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the SPP policy. It is imperative that the BPPA:

- Adopt dissemination strategies, such as notifying procuring entities through a direct communications channel/platform (e.g. the taskforce) and organizing awareness-raising workshops and policy dialogues for procuring entities. This could ensure widespread awareness among procuring entities of the following:
 - SPP policy and its provisions
 - SPP Guide
 - Action plan for implementation
 - Monitoring and evaluation framework
 - Standard definition of women-owned or women-led business
 - System for collecting and reporting gender-disaggregated data on vendors and the role of the e-GP platform as well as the BPPA and procuring entities in monitoring and evaluation
- Organize trainings for officials from BPPA and procuring entities on:
 - Developing an action plan for gender-responsive public procurement
 - Collecting gender-disaggregated data in public procurement
 - Monitoring and evaluation in public procurement

4.3 Awareness raising and capacity building for women-owned businesses

Survey results from women-owned businesses point to a lack of awareness on the SPP policy and capacity to participate in and fulfil tendering. BPPA can:

- Organize awareness-raising workshops and trainings for women-owned businesses on:
 - SPP policy and its gender provisions
 - Navigating procurement processes (application, selection, contract fulfilment, and payments, etc.)
 - Business management, networking and soft skills

This can include notifying procuring entities and women's business associations, using various communication channels (newspaper, radio, online, etc.) and organizing awareness raising workshops and policy dialogues for procuring entities.

Annex 1: Charts and Figures

A.1.1 Awareness of SPP Policy

Figure 1: Awareness of SPP Policy among respondents from BPPA

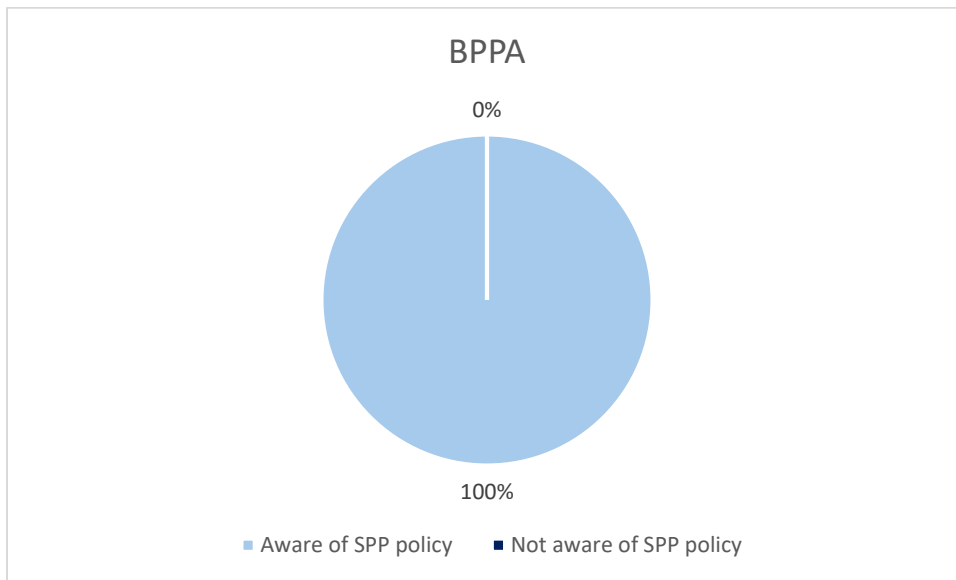


Figure 2: Awareness of SPP Policy among respondents from procuring entities

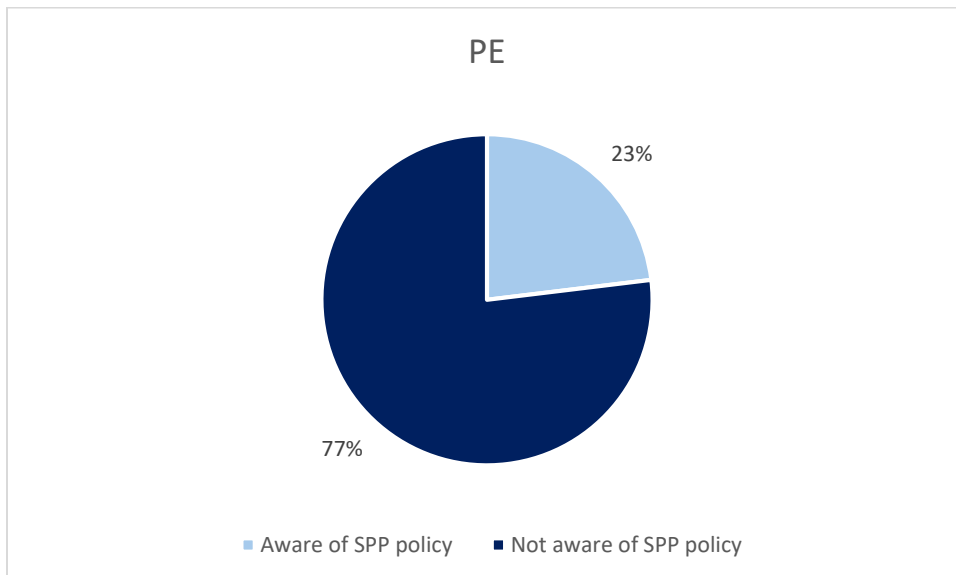
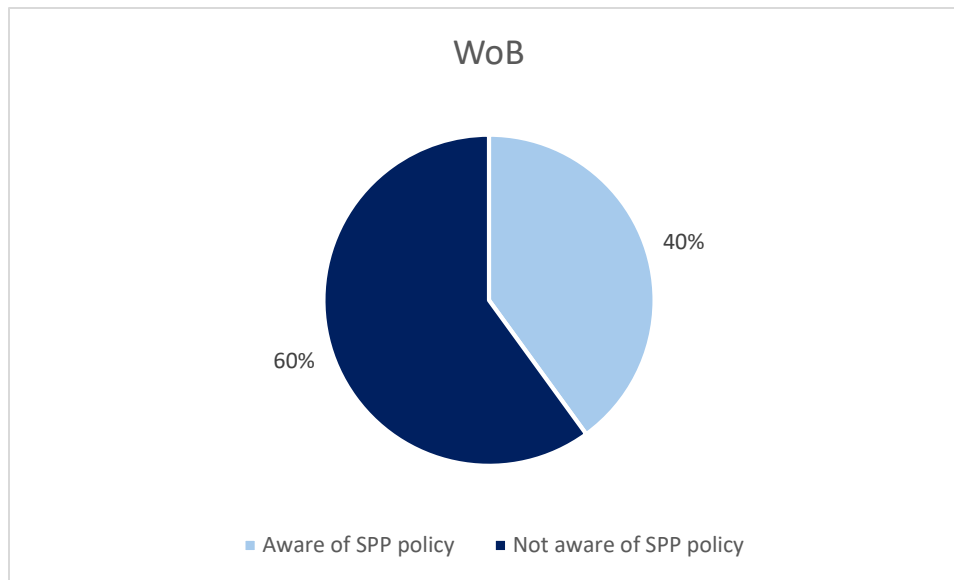


Figure 3: Awareness of SPP Policy among respondents from women-owned businesses



A.1.2 Awareness of SPP Guide

Figure 4: Awareness of SPP Guide among respondents from BPPA

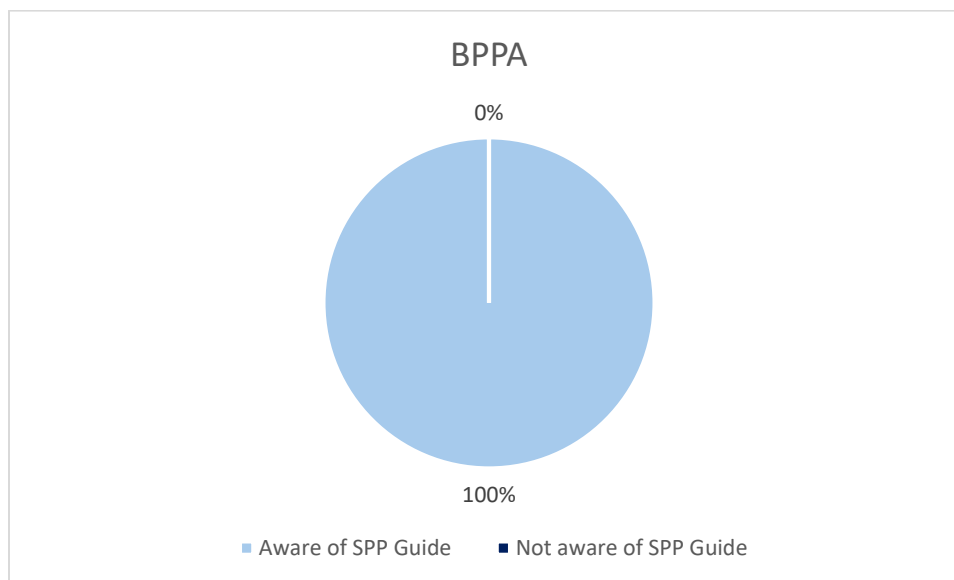
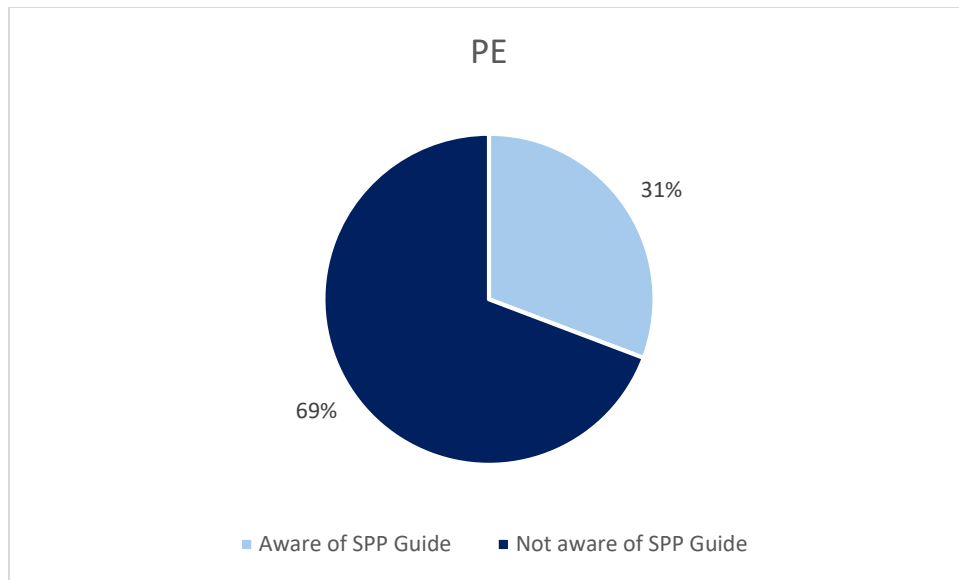


Figure 5: Awareness of SPP Guide among respondents from procuring entities



Annex 2: Questionnaires

A.2.1 Questionnaire for BPPA respondents



Supporting the Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Bangladesh's Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy

Questionnaire for Officials of the Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority

The Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) under the Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh announced the [Sustainable Public Procurement \(SPP\) Policy](#) on December 10, 2023, which has three specific pillars on sustainability targeting environmental, social, and economic policies. For the first time, a public procurement policy in Bangladesh has acknowledged the participation of Women Owned Enterprises (WOEs) and SMEs (Clause 7.2.2). To increase the participation of women and SMEs in public procurement, the SPP Policy includes provisions to (Clause 7.2.3, page 27629):

- Simplify tender documentation,
- Divide contracts into smaller lots,
- Set limits on the number of lots that can be awarded to a single bidder,
- Allow for a longer duration for the submission of expression of interest (Eoi), and
- Ensure that tenders can be awarded as per the approval of the appropriate authority.

On September 12, 2024, the BPPA released the [SPP Guide](#) to support procuring entities in implementing the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy. It aims to enhance procurement practices with a particular focus on inclusivity for women-owned businesses.

In this context, the International Trade Centre and Bangladesh Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), in coordination with the BPPA, are joining forces to assess and support the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy. This initiative is a continuation of the policy advocacy work by ITC and BUILD to promote gender-responsive public procurement in Bangladesh. It builds on past collaboration on the topic, including a baseline study to map women's participation in public procurement, consultations and awareness-raising workshops and review of the draft SPP Policy to provide specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming.

This questionnaire aims to gather insights on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that procurement processes become more inclusive and equitable for women-owned businesses.

Disclaimer: All responses will be kept confidential and used solely to improve policies and practices related to public procurement. The responses will be used for research and policy advocacy by ITC, BUILD and partners in the government and private sector. The information provided will not be shared with third parties outside the scope of this research without explicit consent from the respondents. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and respondents have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequence.

Date of Interview: _____

1. Respondent's Information:

1.1. Salutation:	Mr./Ms./Mrs./Prof./Dr./Others, specify
1.2. First name:	
1.3. Last name:	
1.4. Title/Position:	
1.5. Institution:	
1.6. Email:	
1.7. Phone number:	

2. Awareness of the Policy:

- 2.1. Can you describe the key provisions of the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy, particularly on enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

3. Awareness of Implementation Guidelines:

- 3.1. Can you describe the key guidelines in the new SPP Guide to implement the SPP Policy, particularly on enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

- 3.2. How does BPPA ensure that procuring entities are able to comply with the SPP Guide?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to implement the SPP Policy.]

4. Action Plan:

- 4.1. Is there an action plan with clear and specific timelines and targets to implement the SPP Policy? How does the action plan integrate with the SPP Guide?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the action plan, if it exists.]

- 4.2. Are there specific gender targets or indicators to ensure the SPP Policy leads to enhanced participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and success in winning contracts?

- 4.3. Is the BPPA collaborating with other national institutions or organizations to implement the SPP Policy? Can you provide details on these partnerships and their roles?

5. Implementation Status:

- 5.1. What is the status of the SPP Policy implementation? Have all procuring entities fully adopted the guidelines for implementation? When is the start of implementation?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

- 5.2. Since the announcement of the SPP Policy in December 2023, what achievements have been made? (E.g., increase in total number of women-owned businesses submitting bids, total value of public tenders won

by women-owned businesses or participation of women-owned businesses in the procurement of specific goods/services.)

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

5.3. Have there been any implementation challenges? How does the SPP Guide help address them?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

6. Definition of Women-owned or Women-led Business:

6.1. How does the BPPA and procuring entities define a “women-owned or women-led business” in the context of implementing the SPP Policy? Is this definition clearly stated in the SPP Policy or any official document?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the official document with the definition of women-owned/women-led business used to implement the SPP Policy.]

7. Gender-disaggregated Data:

7.1. What is the process for collecting gender-disaggregated data of suppliers in public procurement? Who collects, verifies and analyzes gender-disaggregated data? How often is data collected? What tools or methods are used? Does BPPA consolidate gender-disaggregated data from all procuring entities?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to collect gender-disaggregated data.]

7.2. How is gender-disaggregated data utilized (specific examples), particularly to enhance the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to use gender-disaggregated data.]

8. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:

8.1. Is there a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to measure and understand outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy? How does the M&E framework align with the SPP Guide and SPP Policy action plan?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the M&E framework, if it exists. Otherwise, ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to design an M&E framework.]

8.2. What specific gender indicators are included in the M&E framework, particularly related to enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts? (E.g., number of men and women bidders and contracts awarded to men- and women-owned businesses)

9. Monitoring and Evaluation Process:

- 9.1. Was a baseline assessment conducted before implementation of the SPP Policy to compare future outcomes? Can you describe the method, scope, sources of data and findings?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the baseline assessment, if it exists.]

- 9.2. If there was a baseline assessment, what method will be used to measure changes and evaluate progress against the baseline?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to monitor and evaluate outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy.]

- 9.3. Who are the internal and external stakeholders involved in the M&E process (overseeing the process, contributing and verifying data, reviewing M&E findings, communicating M&E findings, etc.)?

- 9.4. How will data and information be passed between internal and external stakeholders involved in the M&E process? Is there a central system for sharing information (database, regular meetings or reports)?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to monitor and evaluate outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy.]

10. Reporting and Policy Recalibration:

- 10.1. What is the process for providing feedback to procuring entities and BPPA and recommending possible changes to the SPP policy based on M&E findings? Who is responsible for making decisions on possible changes to the SPP Policy or its implementation?

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERVIEW.
WE WELCOME ANY COMMENTS, FEEDBACK OR RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW.**

A.2.2 Questionnaire for Procuring Entities



Supporting the Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Bangladesh's Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy

Questionnaire for Officials of Procuring Entities

The Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) under the Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh announced the [Sustainable Public Procurement \(SPP\) Policy](#) on December 10, 2023, which has three specific pillars on sustainability targeting environmental, social, and economic policies. For the first time, a public procurement policy in Bangladesh has acknowledged the participation of Women Owned Enterprises (WOEs) and SMEs (Clause 7.2.2). To increase the participation of women and SMEs in public procurement, the SPP Policy includes provisions to (Clause 7.2.3, page 27629):

- Simplify tender documentation,
- Divide contracts into smaller lots,
- Set limits on the number of lots that can be awarded to a single bidder,
- Allow for a longer duration for the submission of expression of interest (Eoi), and
- Ensure that tenders can be awarded as per the approval of the appropriate authority.

On September 12, 2024, the BPPA released the SPP Guide to support procuring entities in implementing the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy. It aims to enhance procurement practices with a particular focus on inclusivity for women-owned businesses.

In this context, the International Trade Centre and Bangladesh Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), in coordination with the BPPA, are joining forces to assess and support the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy. This initiative is a continuation of the policy advocacy work by ITC and BUILD to promote gender-responsive public procurement in Bangladesh. It builds on past collaboration on the topic, including the baseline study to map women's participation in public procurement, consultations and awareness-raising workshops and review of the draft SPP Policy to provide specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming.

This questionnaire aims to gather insights on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that procurement processes become more inclusive and equitable for women-owned businesses.

Disclaimer: All responses will be kept confidential and used solely to improve policies and practices related to public procurement. The responses will be used for research and policy advocacy by ITC, BUILD and partners in the government and private sector. The information provided will not be shared with third parties outside the scope of this research without explicit consent from the respondents. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and respondents have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequence.

Date of Interview: _____

1. Respondent's Information:

1.1. Salutation:	Mr./Ms./Mrs./Prof./Dr./Others, specify
1.2. First name:	
1.3. Last name:	
1.4. Title/Position:	
1.5. Institution:	
1.6. Email:	
1.7. Phone number:	

2. Awareness of the Policy:

- 2.1. Are you familiar with the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy? Can you describe the key provisions of the SPP Policy, particularly on enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

3. Awareness of Implementation Guidelines:

- 3.1. Are you familiar with the new SPP Guide released in September 2024? Can you describe the key guidelines in the new SPP Guide to implement the SPP Policy, particularly on enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

4. Action Plan:

- 4.1. Does your institution have an action plan with clear and specific timelines and targets to implement the SPP Policy in your procurement processes? How does your institution's action plan integrate with the SPP Guide?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the action plan, if it exists.]

- 4.2. Are there specific gender targets or indicators to ensure the SPP Policy leads to enhanced participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and success in winning contracts?

5. Implementation Status and Procurement Practices:

- 5.1. What is the status of the SPP Policy implementation? Has your institution fully adopted the guidelines for implementation? When is the start of implementation?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

- 5.2. Since the announcement of the SPP Policy in December 2023, what achievements have been made within your institution? (E.g., increase in total number of women-owned businesses submitting bids, total value of public tenders won by women-owned businesses or participation of women-owned businesses in the procurement of specific goods/services.)

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

- 5.3. Have there been any implementation challenges? How does the SPP Guide help address them?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on actions taken by procuring entities between December 2023 and September 2024 – following the announcement of the SPP Policy and before the release of the SPP Guide.]

- 5.4. How have the SPP Policy and the SPP Guide affected the way your institution procures goods and services compared to your previous approach? Cite specific changes in practices and processes. (E.g., criteria for awarding public tenders, announcement of public tenders via the e-Government Procurement system, procurement documentation, validating bidder's information, sub-contracting, etc.)

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to implement the SPP Policy and understand the institution's procurement practices and processes before and now.]

6. Definition of Women-owned or Women-led Business:

- 6.1. How does your institution define a “women-owned or women-led business” in the context of implementing the SPP Policy? Is this definition clearly stated in the SPP Policy or any official document?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the official document with the definition of women-owned/women-led business used to implement the SPP Policy.]

7. Gender-disaggregated Data:

- 7.1. What is your institution's process for collecting gender-disaggregated data of suppliers in public procurement? Who collects, verifies and analyzes gender-disaggregated data? How often is data collected? What tools or methods are used? Is gender-disaggregated data submitted to the BPPA for consolidation across all procuring entities?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to collect gender-disaggregated data.]

- 7.2. How is gender-disaggregated data utilized within your institution (specific examples), particularly to enhance the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to use gender-disaggregated data.]

8. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:

- 8.1. Is there a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to measure and understand outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy? How does the M&E framework align with the SPP Guide and SPP Policy action plan?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the M&E framework, if it exists. Otherwise, ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to design an M&E framework.]

- 8.2. What specific gender indicators are included in the M&E framework, particularly related to enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts? (E.g., number of men and women bidders and contracts awarded to men- and women-owned businesses)

9. Monitoring and Evaluation Process:

- 9.1. Did your institution participate in a baseline assessment prior to implementation of the SPP Policy to enable comparison with future outcomes? Can you describe the method, scope, sources of data and findings?

[Note to interviewer: Request for a copy of the baseline assessment, if it exists.]

- 9.2. If there was a baseline assessment, what method will be used to measure changes and evaluate progress against the baseline?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to monitor and evaluate outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy.]

- 9.3. How will data and information be passed between internal and external stakeholders involved in the M&E process? Is there a central system for sharing information (database, regular meetings or reports)?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess capacity building needs to monitor and evaluate outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy.]

10. Reporting and Policy Recalibration:

- 10.1. What is the process for providing feedback to BPPA and recommending possible changes to the SPP policy based on M&E findings? Who is responsible for making decisions on possible changes to the SPP Policy or its implementation?

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERVIEW.
WE WELCOME ANY COMMENTS, FEEDBACK OR RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW.**

A.2.3 Questionnaire for Women-Owned Businesses



Supporting the Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Bangladesh's Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy

Questionnaire for Women-Owned Businesses

The Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA) under the Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh announced the [Sustainable Public Procurement \(SPP\) Policy](#) on December 10, 2023, which has three specific pillars on sustainability targeting environmental, social, and economic policies. For the first time, a public procurement policy in Bangladesh has acknowledged the participation of Women Owned Enterprises (WOEs) and SMEs (Clause 7.2.2). To increase the participation of women and SMEs in public procurement, the SPP Policy includes provisions to (Clause 7.2.3, page 27629):

- Simplify tender documentation,
- Divide contracts into smaller lots,
- Set limits on the number of lots that can be awarded to a single bidder,
- Allow for a longer duration for the submission of expression of interest (Eoi), and
- Ensure that tenders can be awarded as per the approval of the appropriate authority.

On September 12, 2024, the BPPA released the SPP Guide to support procuring entities in implementing the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy. It aims to enhance procurement practices with a particular focus on inclusivity for women-owned businesses.

In this context, the International Trade Centre and Bangladesh Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), in coordination with the BPPA, are joining forces to assess and support the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy. This initiative is a continuation of the policy advocacy work by ITC and BUILD to promote gender-responsive public procurement in Bangladesh. It builds on past collaboration on the topic, including the baseline study to map women's participation in public procurement, consultations and awareness-raising workshops and review of the draft SPP Policy to provide specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming.

This questionnaire aims to gather insights on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SPP Policy, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that procurement processes become more inclusive and equitable for women-owned businesses.

Disclaimer: All responses will be kept confidential and used solely to improve policies and practices related to public procurement. The responses will be used for research and policy advocacy by ITC, BUILD and partners in the government and private sector. The information provided will not be shared with third parties outside the scope of this research without explicit consent from the respondents. Participation in this interview is voluntary, and respondents have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequence.

Date of Interview: _____

1. Respondent's Information:

1.1. Salutation:	Mr./Ms./Mrs./Prof./Dr./Others, specify
1.2. First name:	
1.3. Last name:	
1.4. Title/Position:	
1.5. Company:	
1.6. Industry/Sector:	
1.7. Email:	
1.8. Phone number:	

2. Awareness of the Policy and Implementation Guidelines:

- 2.1. Are you familiar with the Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Policy announced in December 2023 and the SPP Guide released in September 2024? Can you describe the key provisions of the SPP Policy and/or the SPP Guide related to enhancing the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement and their success in winning contracts?

- 2.2. How did you learn about the SPP Policy and/or Guide?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to assess if the government has conducted any outreach activities to inform women-owned businesses about the SPP Policy and Guide.]

3. Participation in Public Procurement:

- 3.1. Did your business participate in public procurement before the SPP Policy was announced (before December 2023)? If yes, please describe your experience with the entire process (E.g., searching for relevant tenders, understanding procedures, preparing and submitting bids, awarding tender, receiving payments, etc.). Please cite any challenges or successes (E.g., indicate if your business won the public tender).

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on the types of goods/services the business has bid to supply, participation in women's business association, whether they used e-GP, etc.]

- 3.2. Since the announcement of the SPP Policy, has your business participated in public procurement (between December 2023 and now)? If yes, please describe your experience with the entire process (E.g., searching for relevant tenders, understanding procedures, preparing and submitting bids, awarding tender, receiving payments, etc.). Please cite any challenges or successes (E.g., indicate if your business won the public tender).

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on the types of goods/services the business has bid to supply, participation in women's business association, whether they used e-GP, etc. If the business participated in public procurement both before and after the announcement of the SPP Policy, ask follow-up questions if they noticed any changes in procurement processes and practices.]

4. Definition of Women-owned or Women-led Business:

- 4.1. How did the government categorize your business as a “women-owned or women-led business” in the context of public procurement? Were the criteria for this definition clear to you and did they adequately inform you about those criteria?

5. Gender-disaggregated Data:

- 5.1. Are you aware of any processes for collecting gender-disaggregated data on suppliers in public procurement? If so, please describe how this data is collected and who is responsible.

6. Capacity Building Support:

- 6.1. Have you received any training or resources from the government to help you leverage the opportunities provided by the SPP Policy for women-owned businesses in public procurement? Please describe the capacity building support received.

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to gather information on when the capacity building support was received and how it has helped them.]

- 6.2. What specific training or resources do you think are necessary to help women-owned businesses better participate in public procurement and fully benefit from the SPP Policy?

[Note to interviewer: Ask follow-up questions to identify the capacity-building needs that will help women-owned businesses fully leverage the improved environment for participation in public procurement.]

- 6.3. What actions should the government take to ensure that women-owned businesses clearly understand the definition and criteria for their categorization in public procurement?

7. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- 7.1. Have you participated in any baseline assessment prior to implementation of the SPP Policy? If yes, please share your experience.

- 7.2. What indicators do you think are essential to measure and understand outcomes and impacts of the SPP Policy on women-owned businesses? (E.g., number of men and women bidders and contracts awarded to men- and women-owned businesses)

8. Reporting and Feedback:

- 8.1. Are you aware of any existing process for providing feedback to the BPPA and suggesting changes to the SPP Policy? If yes, could you describe the process? If not, what do you think would be an effective way for women-owned businesses to share feedback with policymakers regarding the SPP Policy?

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE INTERVIEW.
WE WELCOME ANY COMMENTS, FEEDBACK OR RECOMMENDATIONS BELOW.**