

Public-Private Partnership a New Avenue for Rural Development in Bangladesh:

Experience of Rural Development Academy, Bogura

MARUF AHMAD



Rural Development Academy (RDA), Bogura, Bangladesh

About the Author



Maruf Ahmad

Assistant Director

Rural Development Academy, Bogura, Bangladesh.

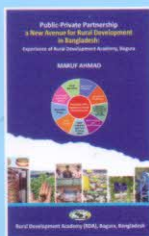
maruf@rda.gov.bd

Maruf Ahmad (1988) is a rural development practitioner. He was born into a Muslim family hailing from Chanchara, Jashore.

At present, he is a Ph.D. fellow in 'Public Administration' of Xi'an Jiaotong University, China, under CSC Scholarship. He obtained an M.Phil degree, titled on *Role of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Infrastructure Development: Bangladesh Experience*. Prior he achieved an MSS and BSS (Hon's) in Public Administration from the University of Dhaka. He has ten scholarly research articles (till Sept. 2021) related to different development aspects.

In this study, the author trying to explore the opportunities, challenges, and potential PPP sectors particularly in rural development. He has always strived to thrive in his profession. His research interest areas are Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Local Government, Public Policy, Human Resource Management (HRM), Governance and Empowerment.

Maruf Ahmad maintains a strong professional network at home and abroad, which helps him remain up-to-date in his discipline.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study aims to assess the present scenario of PPP projects, analyze the opportunities and challenges, especially for rural development in Bangladesh, and explore the PPP implemented by RDA, Bogura for rural development. This study's aims were attained by extensive literature review, in-depth expert interviews, case analysis of RDA partnerships. Finally, data collection was conducted via a questionnaire survey with respondents who had PPP knowledge. The PPP projects implemented in Bangladesh are mostly related to infrastructure development. Few are related to health and sanitation, ICT, and the social sector, but rural development sectors are ignored.

However, the Agricultural sector is indeed a potential sector for PPP in rural development, which includes cattle and fisheries (production, research, marketing), housing and infrastructures, transport, sanitation and drinking water, tourism, renewable energy, management of natural resources, health and family welfare, and education.

The study also identifies expected opportunities to privatize government facilities and services, improve food safety and quality, develop niche markets, improve industry-specific infrastructure services, develop technology and research, improve physical and technological infrastructure, and enhance capacity building and enhancement, improve access to domestic and domestic services.

On the other hand, lack of clear PPP policies and guidelines, lack of the proper institutional framework, lack of incentives given by governments to private actors in rural areas, emerging new risks for small-scale actors, and incompatible attitudes and understanding of public and private partners are the challenges for implementing PPP for rural development sectors in Bangladesh. The partnership agreements executed by RDA, Bogura, with other private partners, were MoU and followed the characteristics of the "Service contract and Management

contract" type PPP model with a bit of deviation in investment. Besides, the partnerships initiative of RDA fulfilled seven screening conditions followed by one (condition partly satisfied, and the other two requirements are not fulfilled yet. Therefore, these initiatives need to be redesigned and the line ministry endorsement for PPP in the rural development sector. Subsequently, PPP in rural development would be an avenue for achieving sustainable economic growth and development for Bangladesh.

Keywords: Public-Private Partnership, Public sector, Private Sector, Screening Conditions, Rural Development