



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

ANNEX V

Request for Payment for PAGODA

August 30, 2017

For the attention of Mr Joseph Buckley
Counsellor and Head of Section
Finance & Contracts Section
Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh
Plot 7, Road 84, Gulshan - 2, Dhaka-1212

Reference number of the Agreement: **DCI-ASIE/2015/372-228**
Title of the Agreement: **Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II**
Name and address of the Organization: **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)**
Request for payment number: **Second pre-financing installment**
Period covered by the request for payment: **1st July 2017 – 30th June 2018.**

Dear Sir,

I hereby request payment of interim payment under the Agreement mentioned above.

The amount requested is **EUR 8,227,764** [as indicated in Article 4 of the Special Conditions of the Agreement].

Please find attached the following supporting documents:

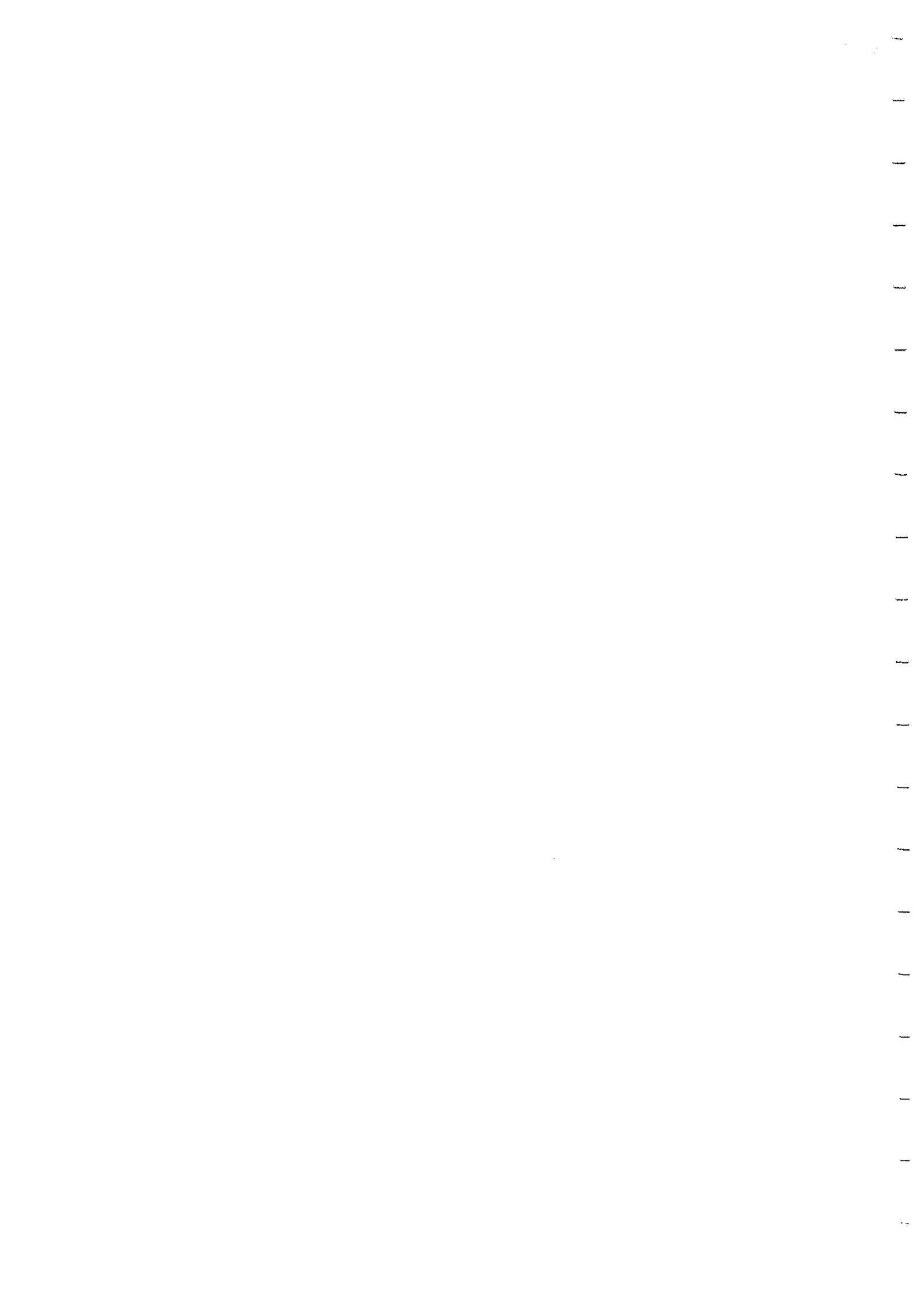
- Narrative Report and financial progress report (for interim payments).

The payment should be made to the following bank account:

Name of the Bank: **ING Belgium S.A./ N.V.**
Address of branch: **60 Cours St Michel, 1040 Brussels**
IBAN: **BE80301018613977**
Swift Code: **BBRUBEBB010**
Account no. **301-0186139-77**
Country: **Belgium**



Please when making the payment indicate the following communication:
Bangladesh AVC Ph-II, EU payment.



United Nations Development Programme

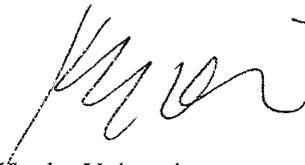
জাতিসংঘ উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

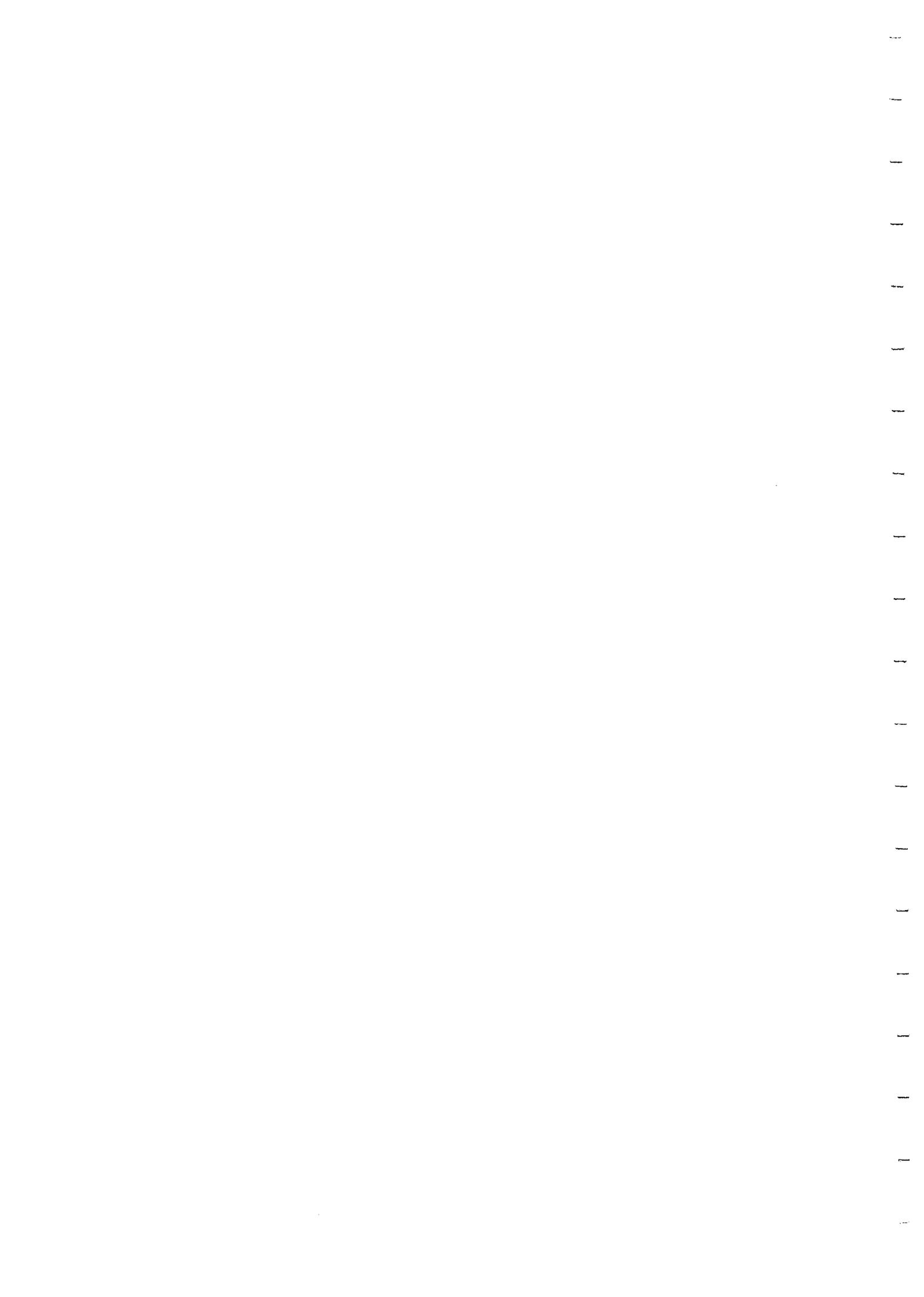
I hereby certify on honor that the information contained in this request for payment is full, reliable and true, that the costs incurred can be considered eligible in accordance with the Agreement, and that this request for payment is substantiated by adequate supporting documents that can be checked.

Yours faithfully,


Kyoko Yokosuka
Country Director, a.i

CC:

Mr Mario Ronconi
Minister Counsellor, Head of Unit-Head of Cooperation
Delegation of European Union to Bangladesh
For the attention of Head of Operations Section I
Plot 7, Road 84, Gulshan- 2, Dhaka-1212 Bangladesh





Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II Project

Interim Report

(January 2016 – June 2017)

DCI-ASIE/2015/372-228



European Union

Local Government Division
Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

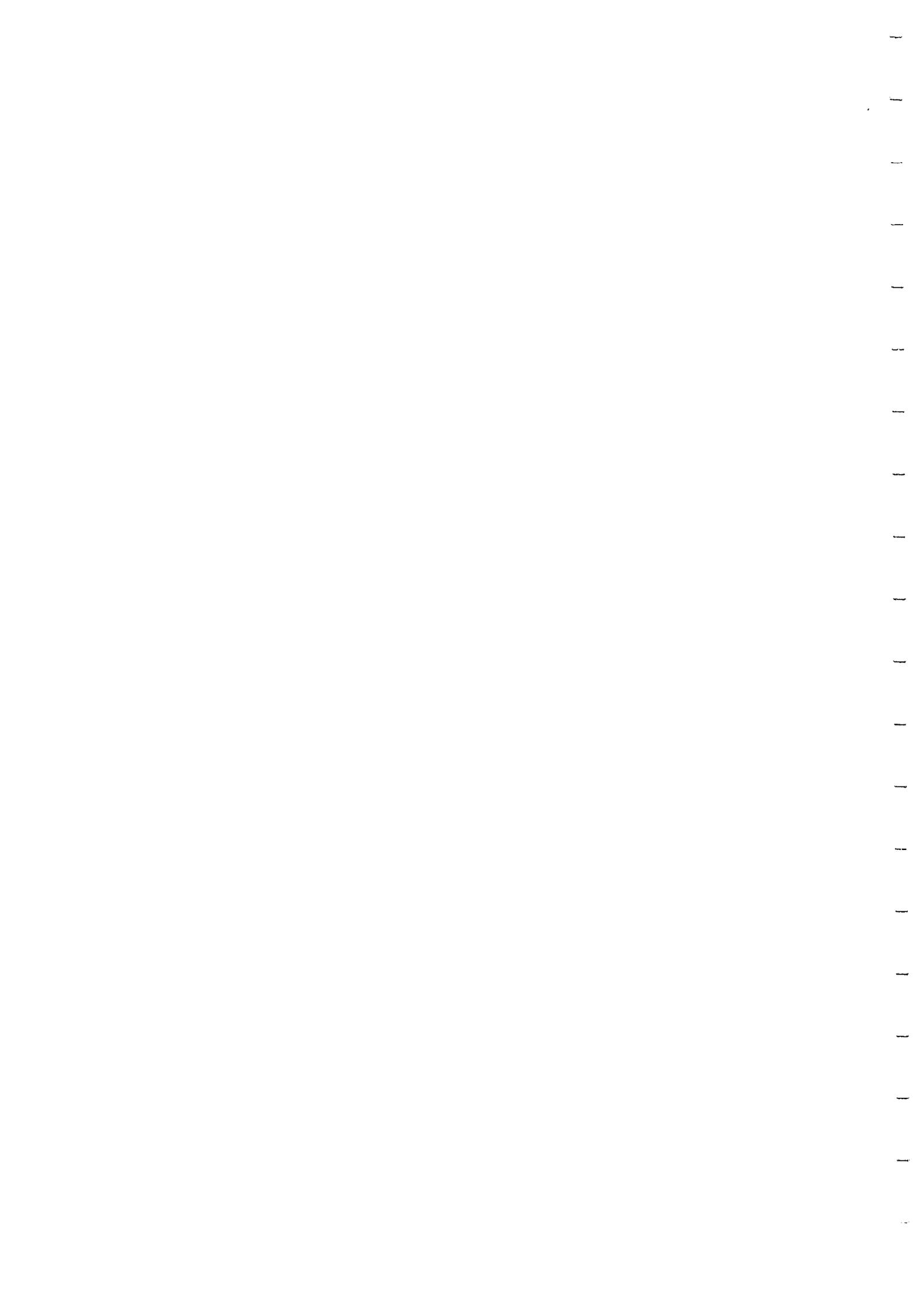
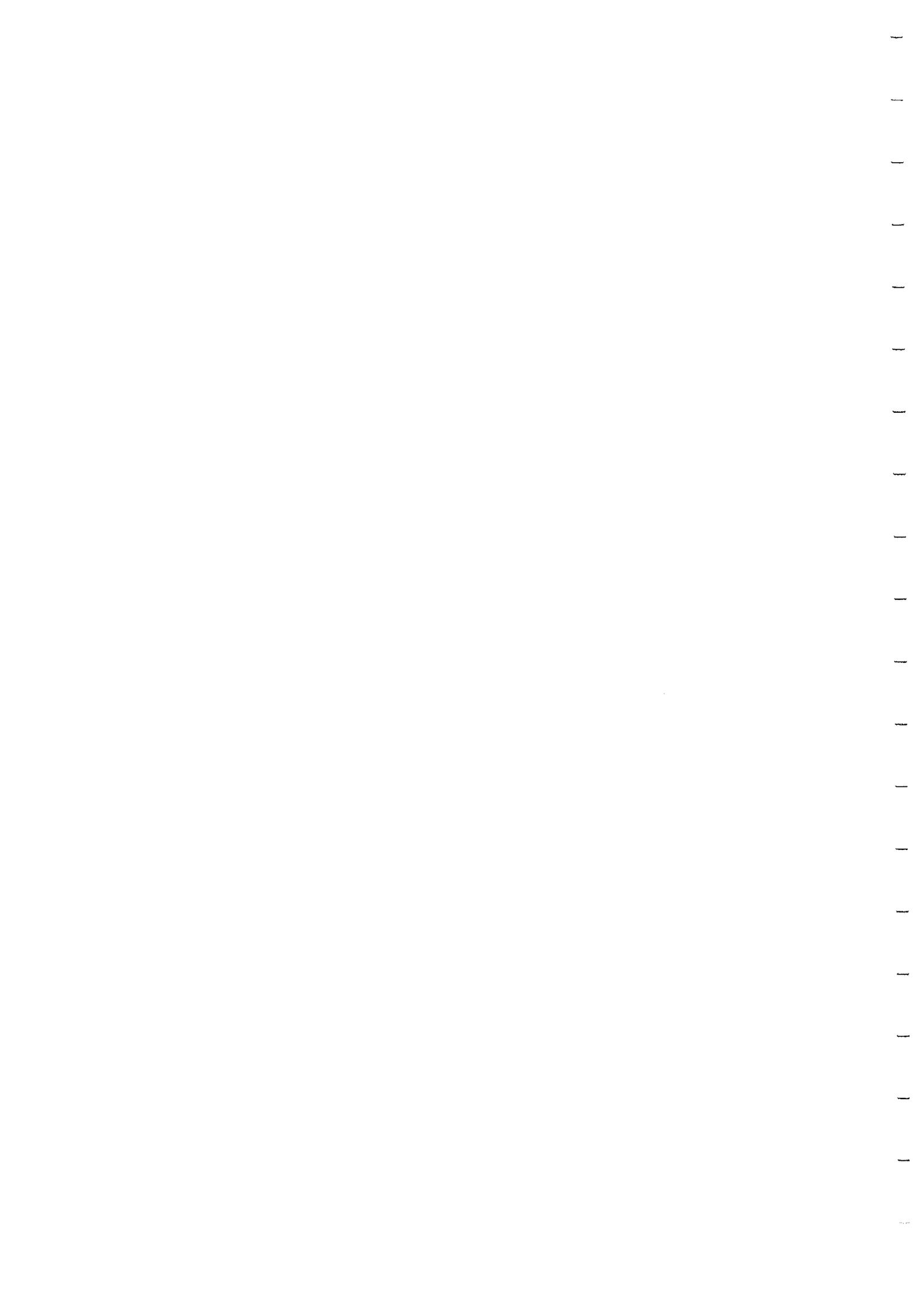


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page No.
1. Summary and context of the action	04
1.1 Description	04
1.2 Background and area of the project	05
Executive summary	08
2. Activities carried out during the reporting period	10
Activity Result 1.1 Capacity of relevant stakeholders at national and local level improved and key skills strengthened to enable Village Courts in new target Unions to function effectively by the end of project implementation.	10
Activity Result 1.2 Legal and policy framework revised to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of VCs	21
Activity Result 1.3 GoB monitoring capacity for evaluating Village Courts performance is strengthened and systematised	22
Activity Result 2.1 Beneficiaries in project areas understand the roles and functions of the Village Courts and are able to access their services when required	23
Activity Result 2.2 Evidence-base and knowledge-management on Village Courts increased	26
3. Other activities accomplished during this reporting period:	32
4. Challenges and Lessons Learned	33
5. Updated action plan (01 January 2017 to 31 December 2017)	35
6. Communication and visibility	37
7. Cross cutting issue - Gender	38
8. Monitoring and Evaluation	38
9. Way forward	38
10. Visibility Report	39
11. Financial report	44



Acronyms & Abbreviations

AACO	Assistant Account Cum Computer Operators
AVCB	Activating Village Court in Bangladesh
BCSAA	Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy
BLAST	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust
CA	Court Assistant
CHTDF	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility
CLS	Community Legal Aid Services
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DDLG	Deputy Director Local Government
DTP	District Training Pool
ESDO	Eco-Social Development Organization
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
IPA	Innovations for Poverty Action
JATI	Judicial Administration Training Institute
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
LGD	Local Government Division
MLAA	Madaripur Legal Aid Association
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MIE	Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation
MoCHTA	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
MoLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development & Cooperatives
MoLJPA	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
MT	Master Trainers
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NLASO	National Legal Aid Services Organization
NPD	National Project Director
NILG	National Institution of local Government
PAGoDA	Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement
PMU	Project Management Unit
RC	Regional Council
RFI	Request for Information
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training-of-Trainers

TPP	Technical Assistance Project Proposal
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
VC	Village Court
VCA	Village Court Assistant
VCMC	Village Courts Management Committee
VCMIS	VC Management Information System

1. Summary and context of the action

1.1 Description

- i. Name of the beneficiaries of grant contract: The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- ii. Name and title of the contact person for the Project: Sudipto Mukerjee, Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh
- iii. Name of partners in the Action: Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development & Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C)
- iv. Title of the Action: Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II
- v. Contract number: DCI-ASIE/2015/372-228
- vi. Start date and end date of the reporting period: 01 January 2016 –June 2017
- vii. Target country(ies) or region(s): Bangladesh
- viii. Final beneficiaries /or target groups (including numbers of women and men):

Target group(s):

15,120 local elected representatives and officials in 1,080 Union Parishads, 10,800 Village Police in 1,080 Union Parishads, 27 Deputy Directors, LGD and 128 Upazila Nirbahi Officers(UNOs).

Final Beneficiaries: The final beneficiaries will be the peoples of 1,080 unions of Bangladesh, they will be directly benefited from an easily accessible, efficient, speedy and accountable justice delivery system at the local level.

1.2 Background and area of the project

1.2.1 Brief description of context in which the action was formulated

Extensive case backlogs in the lower (formal) courts and complex, long and cumbersome procedural requirements is excluding large proportions of the population of Bangladesh, particularly the citizens living in poverty and makes them vulnerable to access to justice. To address these issues the Government of Bangladesh passed Village Courts Act 2006. For some reason, the Act was not functional and the local citizenry had limited incentives or confidence in taking disputes to the village courts.

To overcome these challenges, the Local Government Division (LGD) under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) implemented a pilot project Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) Project (2009-2015) in 351 unions of Bangladesh with financial and technical supports of EU and UNDP. The aim of the project was to improve access to justice by establishing village courts in 351 unions of Bangladesh. In this regard, the pilot project provided supports for building the capacity of service providers, creating demand of village courts through its awareness raising initiatives, policy reform actions and strengthening institutional monitoring system.

The success of the pilot AVCB project has motivated the UNDP, EU, and GOB to increase the scale of the project in Bangladesh and launched the follow up phase of AVCB project (2016-2019) in January 2016 targeting 22 million people of 1,080 unions of Bangladesh. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to improving access to justice for disadvantaged and marginalised groups through establishing village courts in 1,080 unions of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the new phase are to make local authorities more responsive to local justice needs and offer appropriate legal services in the form of well-functioning village courts and to empower local people, especially women, the poor and vulnerable groups to seek remedies for injustices and to resolve their disputes at the local level in an expeditious, transparent and affordable manner.

1.2.2 Implementation modality of the project

This project is implementing under the National Implementation Modality (NIM) and there is a Project Management Unit (PMU) headed by National Project Coordinator. The day-to-day activities of the project are being implemented with the support of three components, namely, the Programme Components, M&E and Knowledge Management Component and Operations Component. In addition, four NGOs who have experience in dispute resolution and/or supporting Village Courts are hired by UNDP under Responsible Party Agreement to implement a number of activities of the project. They are mainly responsible for providing supports to UPs in running village courts and mobilising community towards village courts through grass roots level outreach activities.

The National Project Director (NPD) appointed by the LGD is administering the day-to-day implementation and management of the project activities. In addition, two committees- the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and the Project Implementation Committee (PIC) – has been formed during reporting period following approved TPP.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC)

The PSC provides policy guidelines for project implementation and approval of implementation decisions. The Secretary, LGD, MoLGRD&C Chairs the PSC. One PSC meeting was held during this project period.

Project Implementation Committee (PIC)

The PIC is chaired by National Project Director (NPD). The Chair is responsible for supervising the day-to-day implementation and management of project activities. The PIC monitor and evaluate the progress of the programme, and guide Project personnel in the preparation of the annual work plan, etc. One PIC meeting was held during this reporting period.



PSC meeting



PIC meeting

1.2.3 Geographical coverage of the project

The project is working with 1,080 unions in 128 upazilas under 27 districts of 8 divisions. The distribution of unions by division and districts is given in the table below:

Sl. #	Division	District	No. of Upazilla	No. of UP
1	Barisal	Bhola	5	48
		Barguna	4	25
		Patuakhali	4	45
	Subtotal	3	13	118
2	Chittagong	Chandpur	5	44
		Chittagong	5	46
		Cox'sbazar	6	36
		Noakhali	6	46
	Subtotal	4	22	172
3	Dhaka	Faridpur	6	35
		Gazipur	5	26
		Gopalganj	3	32
		Madaripur	4	43
	Subtotal	4	18	136
4	Khulna	Bagerhat	6	42

Table-01 Distribution of working unions by Divisions, Districts and Upazilla				
Sl. #	Division	District	No. of Upazilla	No. of UP
		Khulna	6	41
		Satkhira	4	47
	Subtotal	3	16	130
5	Mymensingh	Jamalpur	4	38
		Mymensingh	3	33
		Netrokona	3	28
	Subtotal	3	10	99
6	Rajshahi	Naogaon	6	49
		Pabna	5	37
		Sirajganj	5	45
	Subtotal	3	16	131
7	Rangpur	Gaibandha	4	52
		Kurigram	6	47
		Panchagarh	5	43
		Rangpur	5	41
	Subtotal	4	20	183
8	Sylhet	Moulvibazar	4	41
		Sunamganj	3	20
		Sylhet	6	50
	Subtotal	3	13	111
	Grand Total	27	128	1080

Executive Summary

Based on the success and lessons learnt from the pilot project, a new phase of the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh project was launched in January 2016 (2016 - 2019) with financial support from EU, UNDP and GOB. The new phase of the project aims to improve access to justice for disadvantaged and marginalised groups in Bangladesh through the establishment of village courts (VCs) in 1,080 unions. The specific objectives of the project are to make local authorities more responsive to local justice needs and offer appropriate legal services in the form of well-functioning village courts, and to empower local people, especially women, the poor and vulnerable groups to seek remedies for injustices and to resolve their disputes at the local level in an expeditious, transparent and affordable manner.

The Village Courts Rules approved by Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJ&PA) on 15th February 2016 followed extensive policy advocacy of the AVCB Phase-II Project. The amended Rules will further effectively guide both the VC service providers and service-recipients following amended Village Courts Act. The approved Rules includes tools for performance monitoring of village courts by union, upazilla, district administration as well as LGD that will contribute increasing efficiency and effectiveness of village courts. The amendment also includes District Judge as one of the reporting channels, in addition to District Administration, making sure lower judiciary is informed about village courts progress and performance. Extensive policy discussion, follow up and coordination with Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and Local Government Division were required from the Project to realize the approval of these Rules.

The level of ownership of the Government towards the role and functions of the village courts is evidently high. This has been demonstrated through budgetary allocation to activate village courts in UPs beyond project target areas, for setting up and making village courts functional. Government has disbursed BDT 70 million (USD 0.89 million) from their own resources to establish village courts in 666 unions (beyond 1,080 project unions) only in 2016. LGD also started the process of appointing Assistant Account-Cum-Computer Operators (AACOs) for each union of Bangladesh who, in addition to other responsibilities, will administer village courts issues. Government Order (GO) on this regard is issued on 3rd October 2016 for appointing 2,000 AACOs for 2,000 unions (out of total 4,545 Unions) across the country. Of the 2,000 unions, it is found that 485 unions are common for AVCB Phase II project areas and 173 from AVCB Phase I project areas. District Magistracy Monitoring Wing, Cabinet Division issued a GO instructing local administration (District Magistrate and Upazila Nirbahi Officers) to activate and strengthen village courts in their working areas.

The Training Manual and Flipchart on the village courts were reviewed and revised by the Project during this reporting period and has been endorsed by the National Institute of Local Government (NILG). It exhibits NILG's commitment of using this manual in future trainings for the UP functionaries. Being sensitised and capacitated, members of 27 District Training Pools (DTP¹) got engaged in capacity building training of VC's service providers. They provided capacity building training to 6,748 service providers on VCs and its function.

¹District Training Pool (DTP) is comprised of GoB and project officials and experienced staffs from partner NGOs and are responsible for training of all Union Parishad (UP) functionaries and representatives about Village Courts. The Deputy Director Local Government (DDLG) in coordination with respective Upazilla Nirbahi Officers (UNO) is responsible for managing DTP with the assistance from the project staffs.

Judicial officers also authorized to participate in village courts training and become part of District Training Pool based on GOs issued by NLASO and MoLJ&PA with the necessary guidance of Bangladesh Supreme Court. A total of 25 Judiciary Officers (District Legal Aid Officers) from 25 districts of project area received ToT as DTP members and provided capacity building training to service providers on VCs and its function. Out of 1080 project unions, 378 unions are now equipped with *ejlas* (court bench), furniture and skilled services providers though VCA has already appointed in 1077 unions.

Four partner NGOs have been contracted in December 2016, following UNDP procurement process, to assist 1,080 unions parishads in establishing village courts through grassroots level awareness raising and capacity building initiatives. Meanwhile in a total 589,510 (Female: 391,199 and Male: 198,311) community were mobilized through CYMs and Community meetings. District Coordinators and Upazila Coordinators hired by the partner organization worked as members of DTP and has been providing supports to the local administration in organizing capacity building trainings for key VCs players (UP Chair, Panel chair and UP Secretary).

However, the Project could not fully start the field level activities during this reporting period as it planned due to delay in approval of Technical Project Proposal (TPP), which is an essential part of the Government's approval process and due to the delay in the disbursement of GoB funds. The TPP was approved in December 2016 and then received GOB fund in May 2017 following concerted efforts of UNDP's senior management, National Project Director (NPD) and project team. Now, the Project is ready to generate results by implementing planned actions mentioned in Section 5 (updated action plan). Offering localized justice to approximately 22 million people of Bangladesh by establishing village courts in 1080 unions, increasing the capacity of service providers focusing on high quality service delivery, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of village courts by reviewing legal framework, and building awareness of community people about village courts will be the priorities for the remaining period of the project.

Additionally, a process has commenced to develop a strategy to roll-out local dispute resolution efforts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area. This process is being undertaken in consultation with different stakeholders including Chairperson, Regional Council, LGD, MoCHTA and local leaders of CHT. Meanwhile, the revised PAGOda highlighting the need to strengthen the local traditional system and to explore the possibility of activation of VCs in CHT areas has been submitted to EU.

In the coming months the Project will need to address the inconsistency that exists between the number of target project unions stated in the PAGOda and ProDoc. The signed PAGOda reflects 1,000 UPs as project areas while ProDoc targets 1,080 UPs. The pertinent background reveals, initially, the project was designed for 5 years targeting 1,000 UPs while following EU's request, the duration was lately reduced and revised as 4 years keeping the total budget same. Accordingly, Prodoc was adjusted targeting 1,080 UPs and signed by ERD, UNDP and LGD but PAGOda was not adjusted. Additional 80 UPs were accommodated from the saving of the fifth year budget. Therefore the PAGOda will need to be updated to reflect these changes.

2. Activities carried out during the reporting period

Activity Result 1.1 Capacity of relevant stakeholders at national and local level improved and key skills strengthened to enable Village Courts in new target Unions to function effectively by the end of project implementation.

1.1.1 Equip 1,000 UPs with all necessary forms, furniture, *ejlas* (court bench), VCAs and others

Selection of working areas:

A total of 1,080 UPs were selected from eight divisions based on the selection criteria outlined in the PAGoDA and Project Document. To select the working areas, the project initially collected information against each of the selection criteria, and then conducted an in-depth analysis. A proposed list of 1,080 UPs in 128 upazillas across 27 districts was shared with the LGD for their critical review. Consequently, LGD has approved the proposed working areas and issued the Government Order (GO) on 15th June 2016.

The criteria for selection of working areas was as follows:

- Geographical remoteness
- Union Parishad has building complex (i.e. a place where the VC can take place)
- Presence of ethnic minorities
- Newly incorporated enclave areas
- Priority districts listed in the UNDAF (UN Development Assistance framework) 2012-2016 as especially vulnerable.

Equip UPs with all necessary forms, furniture, *ejlas* (court bench), VCAs and others:

Prescribed forms, necessary furniture, *Ejlas* (Court bench), and personnel (i.e. Village Courts Assistants (VCAs)) are required to smooth delivery of justice services by the village courts.

Prescribed forms are required to document the village courts proceedings. The Village Courts Rule, 2016 describes 21 different types of forms and registers for recording cases, registering judgments, issuing enforcement orders, collecting court fees, issuing summons, etc. This will allow Unions Parishads to provide and document dispute resolution services consistently and with accountability. During the reporting period, the project has projected the demand (Table-02) of each form by reviewing case flows and working areas and completed printing by a vendor hired for designing and printing of these forms and registers. Also, a vendor has been hired to deliver the forms to the fields following approved delivery schedule.

SI #	Name of the form	Quantity to be printed (set)	No. of leaves/pages in a set	Use of the form
1	Form-1 (Application form)	1125	150	Filing of a case
2	Form-2 (Case Register)	1165	72	Recording of a case
3	Form-3 (Order Sheet of the case)	2215	120	Recording the order of the case
4	Form-4 (Summon to the defendant)	3295	120	Issuing of a summons to the defendant
5	Form-5 (Summon to the witness)	4375	120	Issuing a summon to the witness

Table-02 Brief information about types of VC forms and quantity to be printed				
Sl #	Name of the form	Quantity to be printed (set)	No. of leaves/ pages in a set	Use of the form
6	Form-6 (Instruction to nominate panel member)	2215	120	Instruction to nominate VC panel member
7	Form-7 (VC panel member nomination form)	2215	120	Nominating VC panel member
8	Form-8 (Request letter to the panel member asking attend VC session)	3295	120	Recording of the attendance of the VC panel members
9	Form-9 (Solemn-nama)	1135	120	Keeping record of dispute resolution through Solemn-nama
10	Form-10 (Attendance sheet)	2205	150	Recording the attendance of the applicant, defendant and the witness.
11	Form-11 (Case Slip)	25965	120	Providing information about following hearing date of the case
12 A	Form-12 (A- Decree or Order form)	1125	120	Issuance of a decree or order of the case
12 B	Form-12 (B- Decree and Order Register)	1125	120	Maintain documentation about decree or order of the case
13	Form-13 (Compensation Register)	1195	50	Maintain a registration of the VC compensated money
14	Form-14 (Fees/ Fine receipt)	1135	120	Provision of receipt of payment of fees/ fine
15	Form-15 (Fees / Fine Register)	1195	48	Maintain documentation about fees / fine
16	Form-16 (Dispatch Register)	1135	108	Registration of the UP letter dispatch
17	Form-17 (Quarterly report of dispute received and resolved)	1195	48	Monitoring of progress of VC performance
18	Form-18 (Quarterly report of dispute received and resolved under Upazila level)	243	48	
19	Form-19 (Quarterly report of dispute received and resolved under District level)	142	48	
20	Form-20 (Recovery of compensation/ fine)	1135	100	Maintaining recovery of compensation/fine
21	Form-21 (Transferring the case to the Criminal Court)	1135	100	Transfer of case to the criminal court

Ejlas (court bench) and furniture are needed to run village courts sessions. A rigorous desk review was done to avoid the duplication of *Ejlas* (court bench) distribution. After the desk review, it was found that in a several situation *ejlas* (Court bench) that were given through government's Annual Develop Programme (ADP) coincide with project working unions. Out of 1,080 project's unions, GOB already has distributed *ejlas* (Court bench) to 443 UPs. Considering this situation, the project has planned to install *ejlas* (Court bench) to remaining 637 UPs. In a total 378 *ejlas* has already been installed in 378 unions during this reporting period and remaining are under installation. Four partner NGOs hired for field level implementation was responsible to setting up *ejlas* (court bench) and furniture following the specification provided by the project. They are setting up *ejlas*



Ejlas (Court bench) and furniture

(court bench) and furniture by the vendors hired following the organisation policy and procedure. The UP chairmen and community members expressed satisfaction receiving the *ejlas* as it will add value of the village court. Md. Abdul Halim, Chairman, Tarundia Union Parishad, Ishwarganj, Mymensingh told, '*the Chair of the ejlas does lead the Village Court's chairman to pass decision neutrally and transparently*'.

Village Courts Assistant (VCAs) are required to provide administrative support to the running of the village courts and to create demand of the VCs through awareness raising initiatives. During reporting period, the project appointed 1,077 (Male: 539 and Female: 538) VCs Assistants in 1,077 unions to assist union Parishads to run VCs with proper documentation. Among them 117 were recruited for Barisal division, 130 were recruited for Khulna Division, 171 recruited for Chittagong, 111 recruited for Sylhet, 135 recruited for Dhaka, 99 for Mymensingh, 131 for Rajshahi and 183 for Rangpur division. Knowledge and skills of the 882 VCAs were developed through training.

Division	Number of VCA planned to be recruited	# of VCA recruited		
		Male	Female	Total
Barisal	118	65	52	117
Khulna	130	77	53	130
Chittagong	172	103	68	171
Sylhet	111	61	50	111
Dhaka	136	47	88	135
Mymensingh	99	49	50	99
Rajshahi	131	73	58	131
Rangpur	183	64	119	183
Grand Total	1080	539	538	1077

1.1.2 Develop, update and print training materials (mainstreaming gender and vulnerability issues)

Review and reprint Training Manual on VC:

During the project period, AVCB Project printed 450 pieces revised Training Manual on VCs, of which 240 pieces already has distributed to DDLGs, DFs and four partner NGOs and remaining will be distributed to different GOB's training institutes, Police Staff College, Police Academy(Sarda, Rajshahi), JATI, NGO Affairs bureau, EU, LGD, Police HQ, etc. VC Training Manual is a very important knowledge product to build the capacity of the relevant stakeholders. It was printed in collaboration with NILG in line with VC Act, 2006 (amended in 2013), VC Rules 2016 to enhance the knowledge of the stakeholders on judicial system, judicial values, Act and Rules of VCs and its procedure. The project adopted the following steps in revising the training manual:

a. Assessment of the existing training manual and need assessment:

Intensive documents review and series of consultations with relevant stakeholders were carried out during the assessment.

Documents review: Training Manual of VC, training materials, Village Courts Act 2006, Village Courts (amended) Act 2013, Village Courts Rule 1967 and Village Courts Rule, 2016, different VCs forms and formats were reviewed in drafting the revised Training Manual.

Consultation with key stakeholders: Consultations with different stakeholders (GOB, UP functionaries and NGOs etc.) was central to revision of the contents, methods and materials. In total, 12 Key Informant Interviews (KII), six Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and six Community Group Interviews (CGIs) were carried out to allow for a needs-based training manual and to establish ownership of the resource among relevant stakeholders.

Focus Group Discussions(FGDs): The project conducted six FGDs with UP representatives and Village Police at Mohadan UP of Sharishabari upazilla of Jamalpur district, Jongra UP of Patgram upazilla under Lalmonirhat district and Narandi Union of Pakundia upazilla under Kishoreganj district. The FGDs had a total of 68 participants, including 44 UP representatives and 24 village police. During the discussions village police recommended discussing the responsibility of village police and relevant law regarding VC during the training session through a video demonstration. UP representatives mentioned that training for UP Chairmen, Members and Secretaries should be organised twice in a year.

Community Group Interview (CGI): The project conducted six CGIs, of which three were with community peoples in Jamalpur, Lalmonirhat and Kishoreganj districts; two with former field level project staffs in Rangpur and Madaripur districts, and one with AVCB Phase II Project team. The CGIs had a total 71 participants, including 39 community representatives, 21 former field level staffs of AVCB project, and 11 staff of AVCB II project. A key finding of these interviews was the need to develop the VC training manual as a national and universal document that is accessible by all for all related activities.

Key Informant Interview (KII): The project conducted 12 KIIs, of which four were conducted with Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs), two with district judiciaries, two with Deputy Commissioners (DCs), two with Deputy Directors Local Government (DDLGs), one with Superintendents of Police (SP) and one with Restorative Justice Experts. During the consultation, the District Judge of Lalmonirhat said: “*Judges of District and Session Court need to be engaged in the training as a resource person and laws and rules should be detailed and deeply analysed in the training*”.

Findings of consultations:

- The contents of the training manual should be focused on all sections of Village Courts Act, Village Courts Rules, jurisdiction, role and responsibility of UP etc.
- A separate module needs to be added in the training manual for Village Police;
- Human rights, gender, good governance, ethics and arbitration should be well-defined and added in the manual as a cross-cutting issue;
- All forms related to Village Court should be included in the training manual;
- Manual should be adopted with participatory methodology e.g. mock trial, case studies, role play, audio-visual presentation, and other participatory methods;
- Individual course outline should be designed for each stakeholder (one for Chairmen and Panel Chairmen, one for UP members, one for Village Police and another for VCA and UP Secretaries);
- The training manual should be a universal manual that can be followed and used by all relevant stakeholders;
- The manual must be a standard and qualitative document which could be used countrywide and is endorsed by the relevant authority/department;
- The write-up of the module should be easy and simple to understand;

Most of the findings have been incorporated into the revised Village Court training manual.

b. Field test of the training Manual

The Village Courts Training Manual was drafted to incorporate assessment findings and the feedback of Project Management Unit (PMU) members. Following this, the draft manual was tested at field level through conducting two training courses with the relevant stakeholders. The main objective of the field test of the draft Training Manual was to examine its usefulness, appropriateness of the contents, methods, and materials described, along with its overall effectiveness and the comfortability of participants in following the manual.



Field test of VCs training manual

Between two field test courses - one was carried out in Kachua Upazilla of Bagerhat district and other in Jamalpur Sadar Upazilla of Jamalpur district. Both of the field test training were carried out following the training schedule developed in the proposed manual and covering the major contents of: Restorative Justice; Village Courts Act 2006 (Amended in 2013), Village Courts Rules 2016; and engagement of stakeholders in the village court activities. A total of 56 participants (28 from Bagerhat and 28 from Jamalpur districts) participated in the

field test. Among the participants four were UP Chairmen, 48 UP Members (12 female and 36 males), and four were UP Secretaries.

The facilitation team used a participant-centered approach to encourage reciprocal learning through an exchange of experiences among participants and facilitators. The team stimulated participants to share their views and opinion on the village court training manual through presentation, brainstorming, large group discussion, question-answer and role play methods.

The field test produced the following recommendations:

- Duration of the training course should be increased to five days to allow more learning on village courts law and related procedures;
- The training should be residential to allow the training to be more effective for UP functionaries and so participants are not otherwise distracted;
- Copy of the Village Courts Act 2006 (amended in 2013) and Village Courts Rules 2016 should be given to each participant;
- Use participatory methods such as mock trial, role play, practices etc. as much as possible to make the training course more effective for the participants;
- Icebreakers/energizers in the training course are useful to boost-up participants' energy and interest to learn.
- Presentation slides (as aid to the Trainer) needs to be synchronised as per session and discussion;
- At least 2 trainers are required to conduct of the training session;
- The steps of the village court need to be made visually available in the training room so the trainer can connect with or refer to it during the session and to make the discussion lively and exciting;
- Training session plans should be organized by content instead of following the structure of sections and rules of VC laws only;
- Needs to develop session wise flipchart as alternative material of slides as power supply may hamper to operate multimedia during the session at local level;
- Content-wise specific photographs of VC need to be illustrated in the slides and module.

c. Reviewed legal compliance by Legal Expert

Incorporating findings and recommendations of field tests, the Training Manual was further re-drafted, with support from a National Consultant to ensure legal compliance. The project subsequently prepared the final draft of the Training Manual addressing all compliance issues and submitted to National Institute of Local Government (NILG) for their final review and endorsement.

d. Endorsement of Training Manual by NILG

The National Institute of Local Government (NILG) organised a Validation workshop on Village Courts Training Manual in December 2016 to validate the Manual. The workshop

was attended by 25 Village Court experts, including Officials from NILG, representatives from BLAST, JICA, MAAA, CLS programme, and AVCB phase II. The Additional Secretary, LGD and National Project Director of AVCB II project, and Director General a.i., NILG, said, "*Activating Village Courts in*



Validation workshop on VCs Training Manual

Bangladesh Project is one of those Projects which directly reaches to the mass people and this Manual will be a guiding document for all future capacity development actions”.

On 12th December 2016, the National Institute of Local Government (NILG) endorsed the Training Manual and Training Flipchart.

Develop, review and reprint Training Flip Chart on VC:

During this reporting period, the project printed 250 sets of Training Flip chart on VC and distributed 213 to DDLGs, DFs and four partner NGOs and remaining will be distributed to different GoB's training institutes, JATI, LGD, EU, UNDP, Police HQ, Police Academy(Sarda, Rajshahi), NGO Affairs Bureau. The flipchart is a supplementary tool of the training manual. It includes clear and visualized information on the village courts and is targeted to the community people. As a part of the training manual, the flip chart has been reviewed and drafted following the same process used to develop the Training Manual: Intensive documents review, consultation with relevant stakeholders and field testing of the content. It is also ensured of its legal compliance through vetting by a National Consultant and has been endorsed by NILG.

1.1.3 Form Master Trainer (MT) and District Trainers Pools (DTP) and provide Training of Trainers (ToT) for both.

a. Provide Orientation to Master Trainers at NILG (3 days long)

As per the plan each project district is supposed to establish a District Training Pool (DTP), who will lead all Village Courts training within the District. The DTP will first be trained by a national training pool of approximately 16 ‘Master Trainers’ composed of both NGO specialists in Village Courts (PNGOs from Phase I and/or others), and government officials.

The National Institute of Local Government (NILG) is assigned for forming and developing the capacity of the members of Master Trainers (MTs). Accordingly, during this reporting period, the NILG formed a Master Trainers (MT) group with the officials of LGD, NILG, Project Management Unit (PMU) and individual experts on village courts and provided a three (03) days training to them from 10 to 12 February 2017 at NILG. Mr Zakir Hossain, Registrar (District Judge), Bangladesh Supreme Court, Mr Iqramul Haque, Additional Secretary, LGD & National Project Director, AVCB Phase II; Dr Kha Mohid Uddin BPM, Additional DIG (Training & Sports), PHQ, Bangladesh Police; Mr Abu Taher Mohammad Jaber, Deputy Secretary, MoPA and Mr Md. Abdullah Zafar, Team Leader, Protikriti Communications were the resource persons provided training to the member of Master Trainers.

The training course was attended by 16 participants in which 2 from LGD, 7 from NILG, 5 from AVCB Project Phase II and 2 village court experts from NGOs. Major contents covered in the orientation were, Approach of Andragogy, Participatory Training Methodologies, Restorative Justice, Village Court Act, 2006, Village Court Rules, 2016, creating the opportunity to translate ideas and concepts of participatory training into practice and responding to issues of immediate concern to participants raised by them during the course. Following critical issues raised during the MT training Course

- The Village Courts Act, 2006 is a tailored made law to reduces the burden of cases in formal courts.
- If one wants to learn the law, needs to read law frequently, again and again.
- The Higher Court usually discourages lower courts to take village court triable cases.

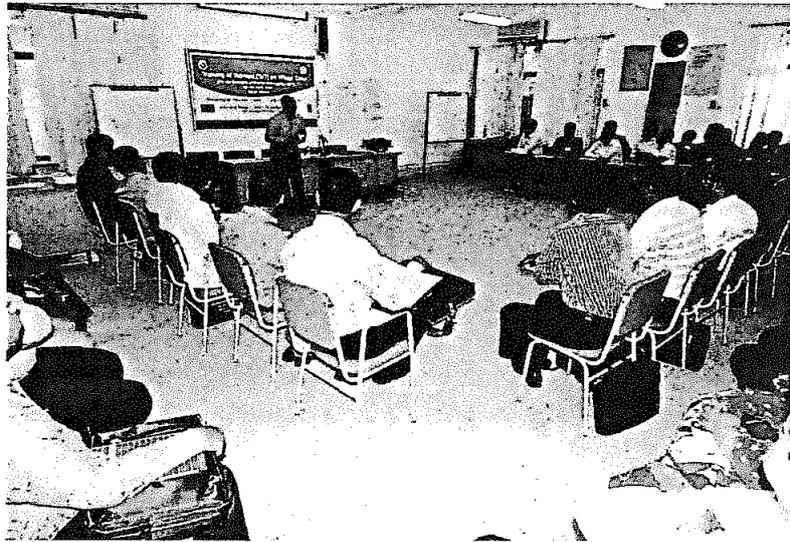
- Needs to work to get a “practice direction” from Chief Justice for all courts so that they do not receive village court triable cases.
- UP Chair have the power to attach the property as per Section 68 of Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009 that can assist the village court to execute its decision.

The Master Trainers has already provided ToT to all DTP’s member after the training course.

b. Develop and train District Training Pools (DTPs) in all project districts through TOT at NILG (8 days long per T0T)

During reporting period 27 District Training Pools (DTPs) were formed in 27 project working districts where each DTP is comprised of 12 members from the officials of National Legal Aid Services Organization (District Legal Aid Officer), Bangladesh Police (Additional/Assistant

Superintend of Police), Department of Social Services (Deputy Director), Department of Youth Development (Deputy Director), Department of Women Affairs (District Women Affairs Officer), Partner NGOs and AVCB II Project. Knowledge and skill of members of each DTP have been developed through eight days (Training of Trainer) ToT in partnership with NILG so that they can provide training to the UP representatives, Officials, Village Courts Assistants and Village Police. In a total 315 DTP members received ToT through 15 batches of training. Among the DTP members 25 were from Department of Social Service, 26 from Bangladesh Police, 26 from Department of Youth Development, 23 were from Department of Women Affairs, 25 from NLASO, 27 from AVCB Phase II, 37 from Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA), 45 from Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO), 37 from WAVE foundation and 44 from BLAST. Considering sustainability of the village courts for ensuring legal services to the women and marginalized people of the rural areas, the DTP was formed so that the DTP members can provide capacity development training to the key actors of village courts like UP chairman, UP Secretary, Assistant Accounts cum Computer Operator on Village Courts after phasing out of the project.



Additional Secretary, District & Field Admin Wing, Cabinet Division is facilitating DTP training

The resource team used a participant-centered approach that encourages reciprocal learning through an exchange of experiences among participants and resource persons. The resource person team stimulated participants to share their views, opinion and thinking about the village court candidly. They used different participatory methods like presentation-discussion, brainstorming, large group discussion, small group discussion, role play, simulation, fish-bowl, question-answer etc. to ensure a congenial atmosphere in the sessions for guaranteeing mutual learning. Participants and facilitators dedicated themselves to engage

in a process of mutual teaching and learning. Continued reflection and evaluation were central to the learning process. Transformative learning theory underpins the content and process. Participants gathered hands on knowledge and skill on facilitation and Village Court (Amendment) Act, 2013 and Village Court Rules, 2016 as well as its procedure, documentation etc. through ToT. Participants of the training already got engaged in capacity building training of VC's service providers.

1.1.4 Train all key VC actors (AACO, VCA; UP Secretary; UP Chair, Panel Chair, UP members, Village Police etc.) in project area on role and functions of village courts, mainstreaming gender issues

The members of DTP who received ToT provided capacity building training to 997 UP Chair, 1059 Panel Chair, 810 UP Secretaries and 882 Village Courts Assistants (VCAs). The DDLG of the respective district was responsible for coordinating and managing the training with the assistance from the District Facilitators (DFs), NGO's District Coordinators, and NGO's Upazila Coordinators. Training of UP Chair and Panel chair was three days and UP Secretaries and VCAs was five days. All of the trainings were residential and hold at district level under the guidance of DDLGs. In a total 282 DTM members were engaged in the training programme to provide training to 3,748 key VC actors. It is mentioned that with a view to mainstreaming gender issues, some gender related contents like how can more women be involved in running village courts, how can the hearing sessions be woman-friendly etc. are included in the training schedule. It is expected that if such type of congenial atmosphere can be created, obviously, the more village women will approach to the village courts to receive judicial services as well as participate in VC's decision making process.



Join District Judge, Bagerhat is facilitating Training for UP Chair and Panel Chair

1.1.5 Establish clear and systematic coordination mechanisms with Upazila and District level government authorities

Meeting with DDLGs:

On March, a day-long session held with all project areas' Deputy Director, Local Government (DDLG). The session was chaired by the National Project Director, AVCB Phase II and facilitated by Md. Golam Yahya, Director, Training and Consultancy of NILG with Dr. Syed Naushin Parnini, Senior Assistant Secretary, LGD and Sarder M Asaduzzaman, National Project Coordinator, AVCB Phase II. During the day, an introduction to the project along with its key aims and planned outputs were discussed.

The roles and responsibilities of the DDLG along with local administration were shared, discussed and agreed on. The DDLGs with DFs sat together to discuss and come up with the draft proposal of field training in the 2nd quarter. This event enabled the DDLGs to be on board with common understanding and clarity about project design, implementation strategy,

timeline, funding flow, expenditure modality, reporting etc. Because of carrying out of these activities jointly, a strong ownership has been developed among the concern DDLGs in implementing the project.

Scaling up of AVCB (project launching workshop):

Project with the assistance of Local Government Division organized the event Scaling up of Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Project on 9th April 2017 at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel with 180 participants from all relevant government and non-government stakeholders from AVCB Pilot and AVCB Phase II areas, government officials from central, division and district administration, representatives from local government institution- mostly UPs, NGO Officials, media professionals and the community peoples who were directly benefited by village courts steered by AVCB Project.

The aim of the event was to acknowledge the achievements treasured in Pilot phase, share reflections, experience, and learning of the AVCB Project with a view to encouraging all relevant stakeholders in making the AVCB Phase II successful following the pilot phase.

The Celebration was graced by the participation of Mr. Abdul Malek, Secretary, LGD as the Chief Guest while Mr. Mario Ronconi, Minister-Counsellor, Head of Cooperation, Head of Unit, European Union Delegation to Bangladesh, and Mr. Sudipto Mukerjee, Country Director, UNDP Bangladesh as Special Guests. Mr. Iqramul Haque, Additional Secretary, Local Government Division and National Project Director, AVCB Phase II Project chaired the event.

After screening of the TV spot (60 seconds) on Village Courts process the guests along with the participants had an opportunity to listen to two real stories by two of the beneficiaries from the community took part in the Celebration. On the behalf of thousands of village courts service-seekers, the two marginalized beneficiaries including one vulnerable woman stated how they were victimized, suffered a lot and finally received justice through village courts within a very short period at a very low cost.

The one minute spot briefly oriented the audiences on how and where village courts session takes place, what type of disputes village courts can attend together with basic information on village courts legal framework. After that participant shared their following opinion, feedback, and recommendations to enrich the project target.



Findings/recommendation of the workshop:

- Separate budget for village court activities is needed at UP;
- Award /reward could be given to the UP for their outstanding performance in village courts;
- Linkage with the Legal Aid Committee should be established for increasing efficiency of village courts;
- Police should refer the case to the Village Court which could be tried under its jurisdiction instead of sending it to the magistrate or higher court and rules should be changed in this regard;
- Separate human resources are required for the Village Courts;
- UPs outside of the project areas does not resolve the disputes following the village courts Act. They resolve the disputes which are out of village court's jurisdiction. A Government Order (GO) should be issued to all UPs instructing to resolve the disputes following the village courts Act;
- Proper monitoring is required to see if the village courts are functioning properly or not. In this regard a monitoring mechanism need to be developed to ensure monitoring of village courts by DDLGs and DLGs. An app could be developed to monitor village courts by DDLGs and DLGs;
- The name of the village court should be changed to Union Court as it functions at the union level;
- UPs allocation should be based on village courts performance;
- A GO need to be issued for setting up ejlas in all UPs outside of the project areas from UP's budget;
- Fees of VC should be increased for increasing the faith of people on VC;
- There should be separate budget for the Village Courts at GoB mechanism;
- Jurisdiction of Village Court should be increased to minimize the case backlog in formal courts;

- Intensive promotional campaigns are required to aware community people about village courts and its function.

1.1.7 Develop capacity of field level staff

Two days' orientation was provided to newly recruited District Facilitators (DFs). The orientation was focused on basic understanding of the project, the project's M&E-Finance-Operation and other necessary UNDP and LGD's policy issues.

Activity Result 1.2 Legal and policy framework revised to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of VCs

1.2.1 Draft proposed amendments to the Village Court Act based on consultation with stakeholders

Enactment of Village Court Rules-2016: The Village Court Act was enacted in 2006 which was later amended in 2013 as a result of AVCB project's persistent lobby and advocacy. However, the enactment of Village Court Rules was long due and the project was consistently lobbying for framing of Village Court Rules according to the VC Act 2006 (Amended in 2013). Finally, the MoLJ&PA has passed the Village Court Rules on 15th February 2016 which detailed out the procedures regarding formation, jurisdiction and functioning of VCs. It has increased the case filing fee as Tk. 20 for a civil matter and Tk. 10 for criminal cases which were previously as Tk. 4 and 2 respectively. Section 13 of this rules has also described the procedures of pre-trial (mediation between parties during first hearing of VC session) which was incorporated in the amended VC Act 2013(section 6b) to reaffirm the principle of restorative justice in VC Legal Framework. Enactment of this Rules is critical for effective functioning of VCs and ensuring compliance. The approved Rules includes tools for performance monitoring of village courts by union, upazilla, district administration as well as LGD that will contribute increasing efficiency and effectiveness of village courts. The project has already in process to print out the forms prescribed under this Rules for VCs. Nonetheless, there are still some gaps in the rules which have been identified and compiled through different training and workshops, thus the project will search for further areas for amendment during the operation period of AVCB II and will lobby with the policy makers for further amendment to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and quality.

1.2.2 Print and distribute necessary VC materials and guideline

VC booklet: VC booklet is used as a ready reference on VC law and procedure for VC officials, judicial and administrative officers as well as other stakeholders and facilitates the adjudication in VC. It contains The VCs Act, the relevant sections of the Penal Code, 1860, The Cattle-trespass Act, 1871 and Oaths Act, 1873, the VC Rules, 1976 and a guideline regarding the procedure of Village Courts.

During this reporting period, the project reviewed the content of the VC Bangla booklet developed during the first phase of the project. Already the content of the VC booklet has been vetted by Local Government Division (LGD) and now it is under printing process. In a total 20,000 copies will be printed and distributed to UP functionaries, local administration and other key stakeholders. It is supposed that the UP chairmen and other key personnel will be able to run the village courts, document the VC's proceedings and pass the VC's decision following VC Act and Rules properly after getting the VC booklet.

Activity Result 1.3 GoB monitoring capacity for evaluating Village Courts performance is strengthened and systematised

1.3.1 Support LGD to take over village courts performance monitoring of 351 UPs in pilot phase

A meeting- presided over by Mr ASM Mahbubul Alam, Director General (Additional Secretary), MIE Wing, Local Government Division- was held on 15th March 2017 on strengthening GoB's monitoring for evaluating Village Court's performance with MIE Wing of LGD. Mr Iqramul Haque, National Project Director, AVCB II Project and Additional Secretary, Local Government Division; Mashud Ahamed, Joint Secretary (Monitoring), Local Government Division; Ms Luthfun Nahar, Senior Assistant Secretary, LGD; Sarder M. Asaduzzaman, National Project Coordinator, AVCB II project; and Md. Sirazul Haq, Research & Evaluation Manager, AVCB II project were present in the meeting. With other agenda, it was discussed in the meeting that the project has a plan to provide technical support (reporting forms/formats) to LGD to take over the monitoring of Village Court's performance of 351 UPs which were handed over to local administration following the successful implementation of the pilot phase. Following decisions were made in the meeting:

- Mr. Mashud Ahmed, Joint Secretary (Monitoring), Local Government Division will be the focal point for Decentralized Monitoring Inspection and Evaluation (DMIE) System to be replicated under AVCB II project and he will provide necessary supports in the regards;
- An Individual Consultant (Monitoring Associate) will be hired under the project to assist the focal point of MIE Wing in implementing the DMIE System. National Project Coordinator (NPC), AVCB II project shared a draft ToR of the Consultant. Joint Secretary (Monitoring), Local Government Division is assigned to review the draft TOR and forward official comment to AVCB II project as soon as possible;
- A revised guideline of DMIE system was shared with MIE Wing for their feedback. Joint Secretary (Monitoring) is assigned to review and comments on the same;
- The AVCB II project will send the proposed activities listed in the TPP to MIE wing, LGD;
- The National Project Coordinator (NPC), AVCB II project shared the reporting mechanism of DMIE system where DDLG will send the report to MIE wing with a copy to DC and District Judge. It has been decided that a copy of the report will be sent to DLG also. DLG will also participate in different activities implemented by DDLGs regarding DMIE system.

Meanwhile ToR of an Individual Consultant (Monitoring Associate) has been finalized incorporating the feedback of MIE Wing.

1.3.2 Further strengthen institutional capacity of MIE Wing of LGD, and district and Upazila officials to manage performance of UPs and oversee Village Courts through DMIE system

According to the approved TPP and Project Document, DMIE² system piloted/tested during the pilot phase of the project would be replicated in AVCB phase II project areas. The project has reviewed the village courts Rules 2016 and DMIE system and found that existing DMIE

²Decentralized Monitoring Inspection and Evaluation (DMIE) system describe role and responsibilities of UP, Upazila and District regarding monitoring of Village courts including reporting mechanism

system is almost aligned with the Rule 27³ of the VC Rule 2016. The draft revised guideline of DMIE system has been prepared.

The project is supposed to provide human resources supports to MIE wing of LGD to assist focal point of DMIE in implementing the Decentralised Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation (DMIE) System. During reporting period, a ToR of an Individual Consultant (Monitoring Associate) is developed and it has been reviewed by Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation (MIE) wing of LGD.

1.3.3 Strengthen Village Courts Management Committee (VCMCs) across the project areas and lobby for increased balance in gender representation

Twenty-six (26) District level VCMCs and one hundred twenty-six (126) Upazila level VCMCs were formed in project areas following the GO and started functioning. Both committees are required to meet quarterly to monitor the village courts performance and provide strategic direction. The decision of VCMC meeting will contribute to take necessary initiatives for LGD in providing technical supports and instructions to the concerns for running village courts smoothly as well as increase balance in gender representation. During this reporting period the project provided technical and financial supports for holding 26 District and 126 Upazila VCMC meetings.

1.3.4 Advocate for the inclusion of the monitoring system into the updated Village Courts Rules

Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA) has already included policy recommendation made by the Project regarding monitoring and reporting mechanism of village courts in the updated Village Courts Rules 2016. According to the VC Rules, 2016, the UP Chairman will prepare a quarterly progress report on receiving and resolving the dispute of his/her union using form No. 17 and send to the concern UNO within the 10 days of the following month. Similarly, the UNO will prepare a quarterly VCs performance report on receiving and resolving the dispute of all unions under his/her jurisdiction using form No. 18 and send to the concern Deputy Director Local Government (DDLG) within the 20 days of the following month. Later, compiling Upazilla reports, the DDLG will prepare a quarterly VC performance report of the concerned district using form No. 19 and send to the Local Government Division (LGD) with a copy to Deputy Commissioner (DC) and District Judge within the 30 days of the following month.

Activity Result 2.1 Beneficiaries in project areas understand the roles and functions of the Village Courts and are able to access their services when required

2.1.1 Develop outreach strategy and implement community mobilisation initiatives for local citizens about VCs in each project union

Develop outreach strategy: The project has planned to develop an outreach strategy that builds links with the social development/legal aid NGOs already active at the local level, and create a network to disseminate VCs information. A concept paper has been drafted and shared internally with member of PMU for developing outreach strategy. According to the plan, intensive consultation (KIIs with DC, DDLGGs, UNOs and other GOB agencies and FGDs

³VC Rule 27 describe the role and responsibilities of UP Chair, UNO and DDLG regarding monitoring of Village courts including reporting mechanism

with community, UP representatives, etc.) with community people and relevant stakeholders will be carried out.

Grassroots level awareness activities by partner NGOs: Four NGOs (Bangladesh Legal Aid & Services Trust (BLAST), Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA), Wave Foundation and Eco Social Development Organization (ESDO) were hired following UNDP's procurement procedure to assist unions to activate village courts in 1,080 unions and raising awareness of community people about village courts and its function. The specific objectives of hiring the partner NGOs are:

- To assist local administration in organising and conducting training and other capacity development interventions for the stakeholders especially UP elected representatives, UP Secretaries, women leaders and village police;
- To provide technical and logistic supports to UPs in order to activate village courts;
- To implement outreach activities through local NGOs and awareness raising of community people;
- To provide supports in strengthening institutional monitoring system.

The selection of NGOs went through a rigorous process. Initially, interested NGOs submitted information using prescribed RFI (Request for Information) template, before being selected to submit further information using prescribed Capacity Assessment Checklist (CACHE). Finally selected NGOs who passed the CACHE stage submitted proposal using prescribed Call for Proposal (CFP) template. In addition, two firms were hired to conduct Harmonize Assessment of NGOs for Cash Transfer (HACT). A final selection of four NGOs to support the project was made based on the HACT assessment reports and evaluation report of the proposals. Distribution of working areas by NGOs is given below:

Name of the NGO	Division covered	No. of District	No. of Upazilla	No. of Union
Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)	Dhaka & Mymensingh	7	28	235
Bangladesh Legal Aid & Services Trust (BLAST)	Chittagong & Sylhet	7	35	283
Eco Social Development Organization (ESDO)	Rajshahi & Rangpur	7	36	314
Wave Foundation	Barisal & Khulna	6	29	248
Total		27	128	1080

Community mobilisation initiatives for local citizens about VCs : Awareness of community members, service providers and other relevant stakeholders about village courts and its function will be increased through community mobilization initiatives to be conducted both at national and local level. During this reporting period, the project has delivered VC related message to 589,510 community people (71% female) through 32,644



Courtyard meeting (CYM)

courtyard meetings and 654 community meeting through its four partner NGOs. Attending courtyard meeting, the villagers specially the village women are receiving village courts related knowledge like what type of disputes to be resolved through village courts, procedures, fees for case, financial jurisdiction, representative nomination, decision making process etc. They stated their feelings that they would approach to the village courts instead of district courts to resolve the petty disputes from that time.

Table-05 Number of community people mobilized by type of activities				
Activities	# of activities	Total number of community participated		
		Male	Female	Total
Courtyard meeting	32,644	178642	387982	566624
Community meeting	654	19669	3217	22886
Total		198,311	391,199	589,510

Assist local administration in organising and conducting training: District Coordinators and Upazila Coordinators hired by partners NGOs are the members of District Training Pools (DTPs) and are equipped with knowledge and skilled by the project to provide supports to local administration in organising and conducting training for key village courts players. During this reporting period they have provided supports in organizing and conducting training for 3,748 key VC actors.

Attend District and Upazila level GO-NGOs Coordination meeting: As mentioned earlier that the project has planned to develop an outreach approach that builds links with the social development/legal aid NGOs already active at the local level, and create a network to disseminate VCs information. In this regards partner organizations are supposed to use Upazila and District level NGOs coordination meeting as vehicle to influence local NGOs to disseminate VCs issues. Meanwhile partner organizations have participated 390 number of district and Upazila level GO-NGO coordination meetings during this reporting period. In the GO-NGO Coordination meetings, they have highlighted the village courts and its functions and sought cooperation of other NGOs to deliver message about village courts through their different programs.

2.1.2 Develop and implement gender awareness raising strategy aimed at improving the ability of women to make use of village courts

Comments: The project could not initiate this activity due to the delay in approval of the TPP. Meanwhile the project has hired Gender Specialist who have started working on this.

2.1.3 Develop, update and print public education and awareness materials and distribute to project areas

Place VC signboard for 1,080 new unions: The project has planned to developed and placed 1080 signboards in 1080 unions to promote the VCs and its function. Vendors, hired following GOB's procurement procedure have started works to design, print and set village courts signboards in 1,080 unions. Meanwhile they have designed signboards inserting the name of 1080 unions.

Develop and print IEC/BCC/outreach materials: During this reporting period, the project has planned to produce and disseminate 30,000 copies of English and Bangla version AVCB Phase II Project's brochure, 109,600 of poster, 308,000 copies of sticker, 1,130 copies of

courtyard meeting flipchart, 35,000 copies of pen, 32,000 copies of folder, and 3,0000 copies of notebook to boost the knowledge of the target audience on VCs. All materials will be used mainly for outreach campaigns, training, and meetings. In these materials services of the village courts will be focused apart from promoting the partnership of EU, UNDP, and GOB for effective implementation of the projects. Vendors, hired following GOB's procurement process has started to produce and print these materials.

Develop and print materials for primary counselling on dispute resolution: Through a series of consultation with the AVCB Phase II team, the project drafted the VC counselling material and then National Consultant (Legal Compliance) has reviewed the draft. The materials have covered basic information on the village courts that is important to know during the process of filing a case and seeking a court decision. Village Courts Assistants (VCAs) will use this material during counselling sessions to be held at UP level while a justice seeker will visit village courts.

Develop and print Flip Chart of CYM: Flipchart of Courtyards Meeting (CYM) is an education and awareness raising material to be used by Village Court Assistants (VCA) during conducting CYM at village level and building awareness of community people about the village court services and their functions. The draft content of the Flip Chart of Courtyard Meeting (CYM) has been prepared through reviewing the existing Flip Chart and ensuring alignment with the amended legal framework. The flip chart is consist of different pages reflecting key themes and most useful information about the court. The language of the flipchart is simple and precise. It has illustrated the information in the form of picture or photos so that community people can easily understand the information related to village courts.

2.1.4 Raise awareness of network NGOs on village courts and supports their capacity to do outreach

As mention earlier that the project will develop an outreach approach that builds links with the local level NGOs already active at the local, and create a network which can maximise the available resources to the project. In this regard, a mapping of local NGOs who are working in the similar field in AVCB Phase II working areas has been completed.

2.1.5 Update and maintain the village courts website and other social media

Website (<http://www.villagecourts.org>) developed during pilot has been updated with information of AVCB Phase II. Apart from this messages of village courts and AVCB Phase II project were spread through 16 national media including 3 TV channels in April 2017 during project launching. More than 40 local media published news of village courts' training that hold at district level. VC's training news also disseminated through Facebook which has reached by over 5,000 audience.

Activity Result 2.2 Evidence-base and knowledge-management on Village Courts increased

2.2.1 Develop and implement detailed M&E and research plan

The project has developed Monitoring and Evaluation plan following UNDP's template and with updates semi-annually highlighting the progress of the indicators. Data collection tools have been developed incorporating lessons learned during the pilot phase and feedbacks of PMU members.

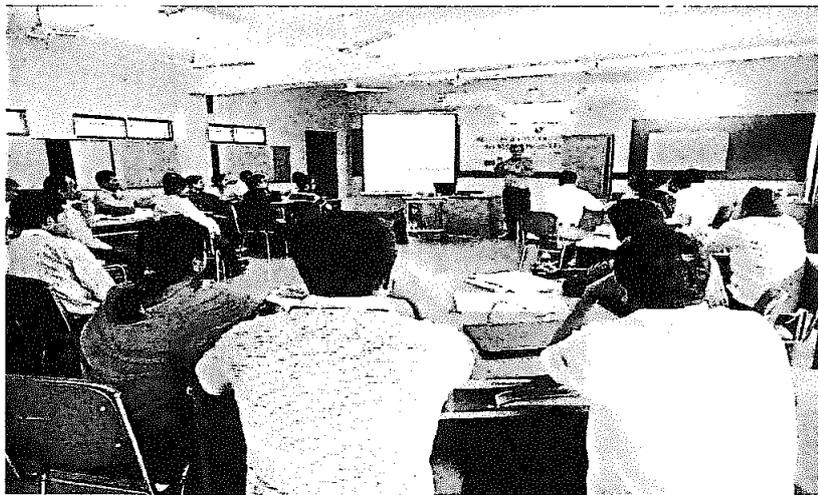
Monthly and quarterly village courts performance reporting format: Four formats- one for the union, one for upazilla, one for the district and one for NGOs' coordination office were developed to collect data on village courts performance from different levels. At the end of each month and quarter, Village Court Assistants (VCA) located at union will send the village courts performance report of his/her union to Upazila Coordinators using union format. Upazila Coordinator will send Upazilla's VC performance report to District Coordinator compiling all union reports. Similarly, District Coordinator will send village courts performance report of his/her district compiling all Upazilla's reports under his/her jurisdiction. In this way, at the end of each month or quarter, each NGO will send district wise VC performance report compiling all district reports to PMU through NGOs' coordination office format. Compiling NGOs report, the PMU will generate result report of AVCB phase II project.

Monthly capacity building and awareness raising initiatives: This format will be used to collect the information on the progress of capacity building and awareness raising initiatives that are made by NGOs. At the end of each month, NGOs will send the progress status report to PMU through this format and will compile NGO reports. The PMU will generate result report of AVCB phase II. Based on this format, NGOs will develop a necessary format to collect information from unions, upazillas, and districts.

Provide training on M&E system for field staff including DFs (2 days)

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II Project organized a total of four two-day

residential training on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System of AVCB II Project for the Field Level Staff including District Facilitators. The main objective of the training was to make DFs and NGOs' field staffs familiar on M&E system and reporting mechanism of AVCB II project so that they can monitor the village courts performance at field level perfectly and



M&E training for field staff

provide VC performance report as per UNDP's requirement. In a total, 128 (Male-109 and Male-19) field level staffs including 18 District Facilitators, 4 Project Coordinators, 4 Monitoring & Documentation Officers, 17 District Coordinators and 85 Upazila Coordinators participated in the training. Among the trainings two held in Rangpur, two in Khulna, one in Chittagong and one in Mymensingh. The major contents of the training were Basic Monitoring and Evaluation, Logical Framework, Monitoring & Evaluation plan of the project, Quarterly and Monthly Reporting mechanism, information flow etc. The trainings were interactive and participatory where massive interaction within the participants was ensured through group exercises. Technical Assistance was provided in each group during group works.

Monitoring of Village Courts by Secretary, LGD, Country Director, UNDP; and Minister Counsel and Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Bangladesh:

On the first week of May a high-level delegation with Secretary, LGD; the Additional Secretary and National Project Director of AVCB phase II; Country Director, UNDP; and Minister Counselor and Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Bangladesh visited two



Opinion sharing dialogues with community

unions i.e. Haridebpur and Chandanpat (pilot project working area) of Rangpur Sadar, Rangpur. The team observed a hearing session at Haridebpur union where more than 200 people inside and outside the hearing room attended. During their visit, the hearing of a criminal case was ongoing.

The team interacted in two opinion sharing dialogues - one at Haridebpur and other at Chandanpat union with community people, held with the participation of more than 200 people in each meeting including UP representatives, women UP members, community people. The DDLG of Rangpur facilitated both the meetings where community people shared their experiences with the village courts. In both unions, community people emphasized on two issues: 1) the continuation of AVCB phase II project; 2) and the requirement of a staff to run the village courts. The visit ended with an experience-sharing meeting among the representatives of EU, UNDP and Secretary, LGD, followed by a cultural programme. The high-level delegation praised the village courts performance and expressed satisfaction towards the enthusiasm and participation of the community people in village court process.

Provide technical assistance through field visits:

The PMU members of AVCB Phase II Project made a number of monitoring visits in different project districts aiming to provide technical supports to the fields to ensure quality of interventions. Monitoring visits carried out in three phases- during recruitment of field staff by partner NGOs to ensure quality recruitment, during field level trainings provided by 27 DTPs to ensure quality capacity building supports and during installation of *ejlas* (court

bench). Apart from these, District Facilitators (DFs) deployed in 27 districts were engaged in the following activities in consultation with the respective DDLG and in coordination with the PNGO colleagues’.

- Building and strengthening the relationship with DDLGs to ensure their support to start project activities smoothly;
- Introducing AVCB Phase II with local administration such as District Legal Aid Officer, ASP, UNO, UP members and local journalist to extend their support as required;
- Communicating with local level government officers to form DTP in each district as per guideline from the PMU, and ensured their presence in TOT training in NILG as scheduled;
- Providing supports to local administration in forming and activating Upazila and District Village Court Management Committees;
- Collecting and analyzing relevant information (baseline information) on *ejlas* (court bench) set up to avoid duplication of its allocation;
- Collecting information of NGOs working in the project working areas for NGO mapping;
- Providing supports to respective DDLGs to prepare training and VCMC meeting plan and budget and ensure timely submission to NPD for it’s approval;
- Assisting local administration during providing capacity building supports to key village courts players (UP Chair, Panel Chair, Secretaries and VCAs);
- Monitoring *ejlas* (court bench) installation done by partner NGOs to ensure its quality;
- Monitoring and providing supports to partner NGOs to recruit 1,077 VCAs in 1077 unions ensuring engagement of local administration to complete the recruitment;

2.2.2 Undertake baseline survey, independent evaluations, surveys of beneficiaries, and officials and others need-based assessments including explanatory study for possible rolling out in CHT

Impact Study of AVCB phase II project:

The project hired the internationally reputed firm, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) to conduct an impact study of AVCB phase II project. The impact study includes two rounds of surveys. The first round survey (Baseline Survey) has been carried out between January to May 2017 in order to collect the baseline information of the indicators mentioned in the logical frameworks focusing on the following key areas: Knowledge, attitude and perception of community and service providers about village courts and its function; efficient and effectiveness of village courts; and trust & communal harmony. Meanwhile IPA has submitted 2nd draft report incorporating feedback of AVCB II. The second round survey will be conducted after two years of programme implementation to measure the impact of the project.

Roll-out of local dispute resolution efforts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT):

Conducted exploratory study for possible rolling out in CHT:

AVCB Phase II project initiated a process to strategize the roll-out of local dispute resolution efforts in the CHT area in line with the Peace Accord signed in 1997 and with the Joint UN Programmatic Framework for support to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (2015-2020) endorsed by the Government of Bangladesh. The CHT Programmatic Framework specifically envisages strengthening the traditional justice system in CHT through focusing on the constitution and statutory laws and by working with members of the traditional institutions to ensure that customary dispute resolution processes are in conformity with the constitution and legal framework and respect for fundamental rights. The possibility to activate the Village Court

model, already functioning in plain land Bangladesh, is foreseen to be explored to understand its feasibility and relevance in the context of CHT. In this context, objectives of the process of the strategy are being formulated, as follows:

- Exploring options that may strengthen CHT local authorities and CHT traditional institutions to be more responsive to local justice needs and able to offer appropriate legal services; and
- Empowering local people, especially women, the poor and vulnerable groups in CHT to seek remedies for injustices and to resolve their disputes at the local level in an expeditious, transparent and affordable manner.

The process mentioned above has been segmented into 2 stages – i) preliminary consultation with key stakeholders, and based on the primary observations and recommendations – ii) assigning a local expert to formulate a roll-out strategy.



During the preliminary consultation held on 28th April 2016, it was acknowledged by local leaders that *CHT is different* unlike other parts of the country. Clearly, two different systems, traditional and state-owned, are coexisting there. CHT Regulations of 1900 is the mother law for the region which specifically denoted which state laws are permissible and which are not – up to what extent. This has now been supplemented by the Peace Accord of 1997. In parallel, two different governance and accountability mechanisms are also in existence – similarly – traditional and state-owned. In the result, the scenario is multi-faceted, complex and highly sensitive.

Following the Consultation Workshop mentioned above, a national consultant was hired to develop the strategy to explore dispute resolution efforts in the CHT. The key objective of the study was to explore options that may strengthen CHT local authorities and traditional institutions to be more responsive to local justice needs and able to offer appropriate legal services.

In a brief mission in June 2016, the Consultant with the NPC and Programme Specialist visited all three districts of the region. They met with the Circle Chiefs, Chairperson – Hill District Regional Council, District Councils, District Administrations, District Judiciaries, Local Customary Leaders and other relevant stakeholders. Based on secondary documents and findings during the mission, the consultant prepared an overview with recommendations for future steps which are given below:

- CHT is lawfully recognised as Tribal Area of Bangladesh with three parallel systems – traditional, elected (nominated) and administrative. Their chains of accountability are conflicting. DC is accountable to the government not to the RC/ HDC/ Circle Chiefs. In

another case, all the local government (administrative and elected both) agencies are reportable to the government in operation.

- The formalisation of the justice system of CHT started with the rules (on 1884) for territorial circles divided the area into three circles; Chakma (Rangamati), Bohmong (Bandarban) and Mong (Khagrachari) Circle. Each circle is governed by a local chief and each circle is divided into Mouza conventionally administrated by the Headman under the Circle Chief and each Mouza is divided into villages/ para administrated by the Karbaris under the Headman.
- CHT Gazetteer report from the very beginning referred that UPs of the CHT have not been granted the same power like in other Districts, the most important exception is being that the UPs have not been authorised to function as conciliation courts.
- There is a clear overlap among geographic jurisdictions – mouza and unions, para/ villages and wards. A Mouza (Headmen) may crisscross jurisdiction with several UPs (Chairmen) while an UP may also touch several mouzas.
- Rule 40 of the CHT Regulation 1900 recognises the authority of the three traditional chiefs and about Mouzas Headmen would apply statute and customary law to dispense justice, besides being responsible for land and resource management and collection of land revenue.
- It is to be noted that as per the regulation and as a tribal area of Bangladesh there are a number of laws that are not applicable in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. For example, Civil Procedure Code. On the other hand, some laws are only applicable in the CHT. For example, Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation 1900. On the other hand, some laws are applicable for the Bangalis of CHT like other part of Bangladesh but not applicable for the tribal people of CHT. For example, Income Tax Ordinance of 1984.

The study recommended that as and when the Circle Chiefs and Regional Council are on board with an initiative, building responsive local dispute mechanisms, the next stage should bring in multi-stakeholders' for consultations. This process will create ownership among all stakeholders and also will enable the environment to move towards the next level – harmonising customary/ traditional and state-owned mechanisms.

The LGD called for a dialogue with Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) along with UNDP CO, Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) and AVCB phase II projects discussing next course of actions engaging local stakeholders in the process. The EU approached Ministry of Planning for their comments on the revised PAGO DA. Detailed activity plan and budget with narratives were submitted by the project to the EU for necessary amendments of PAGO DA.

The Project in coordination with the CO and the CHTDF project facilitated inter-ministry coordination, as required, along with negotiation with the Regional Council in parallel. Deputy Country Director along with CO colleagues, AVCB phase II and CHTDF had fruitful meetings with the Chairperson – Regional Council, Secretary – LGD and Secretary – MoCHTA. All leadership duly considered the need and importance – showed interest and agreed in principle to proceed. Notably, everyone stressed upon the need, of being sensitive to local customary norms and practices.

On January, a dialogue was held between local (CHT) leadership with MoCHTA and LGD discussing their position with the proposed planned of actions by the project. Representatives from EU and UNDP were also present. During the meeting the Secretary, LGD proposed to visit Rangamati in February 2017 to meet with local leaders from different levels vetting the proposal and getting their endorsement as forwarded to the by the ERD. The local (CHT) leadership included a representative from Hill Districts Regional Council (HDRC) and traditional leaders i.e. Headmen and Karbaris. They welcomed the proposal and suggested to bring that to the broader local (CHT) leadership.



Meeting with local leadership in CHT

On February, the Secretary, LGD and Secretary, MoCHTA along with senior officials from the MoCHTA and LGD visited Rangamati and met with local leadership in CHT. The meeting participated by Circle Chiefs, representatives from HDRC, Headmen, Karbaris, UP Chairmen, local administration and civil society organisations. Everyone unanimously appreciated the proposal with a clear note of the fact that traditional norms and practices should be recognised in all course of actions as proposed and when implemented. The Secretary, LGD assured that the CHT and interest of its citizens is a high priority to the Prime Minister. And as she suggested no action would be taken in the region with appropriate consultation with local leadership.

2.2.3 Undertake and organize South-South Cooperation activities for mutual learning and exchanging

Comments: The project could not initiate this activity due to the delay in approval of the TPP.

2.2.4 Produce and print knowledge products

Comments: The project could not initiate this activity in 1016 due to the delay in approval of the TPP but have a plan to produce in 2017.

3. Other activities accomplished during this reporting period

Closure of project pilot phase (2009-2015): During this reporting period, the project was involved in closing – operationally and financially – related tasks of AVCB pilot phase. Necessary actions in ATLAS for making the due payments, closing the unsettled payment

order as per IPSAS policy, the closer of NEX advance and other essential steps for project financial closing has been completed during this reporting period.

Project Completion Report (2009-2015): During this inception period the project has prepared Project Completion Report (PCR) for the Pilot phase (2009 – 2015) of AVCB project following GOB and EU's separate templates and guidelines.

FAPAD Audit (2009-2015): Government audit (FAPAD- Foreign Aided Project Audit Directorate) for the year 2015, the last year of the pilot phase, has been accomplished during this reporting period of AVCB Phase II with no observation. With this finding, the AVCB Phase I project confirmed 'clean' report from government audit directorate.

Assets handing over of pilot phase: First round of assets handing over to the government, as per the PSC approval under Phase I period, is done during this reporting period. However, the second round of handing over- as planned- will take place shortly as soon as AVCB Phase II project procures required ICT equipment, vehicles, furniture etc.

Preparation and approval of TPP of AVCB Phase II: The project provided extensive supports to LGD in preparing the TPP, which was approved on 06 December 2016 through the intervention of Senior Management team of UNDP and close follow up with relevant ministry from the project.

Revision of PAGODA budget of AVCB Phase II: During this reporting period, the project has revised PAGODA. In doing so, several backs and forth correspondences are made including a meeting held together with UNDP Governance Cluster colleague. The revision predominantly dealt with revisiting several line items, reducing few item wise costs, finding out the cost of an international legal expert on a retainer contract following EU's requirement. The number of project staff and some project administrative and program areas budget have been reduced from the previous version and budgets.

Office set up, initial recruitment and procurement: New project office set up at Level 12 of IDB Bhaban, Agargaon has been completed, following renovation. In close coordination with the UNDP HR unit, the recruitment of key positions has been completed as per approved Project Document (ProDoc) and the Recruitment Plan 2016. In total, recruitment of 46 staff including 27 District Facilitators (DFs) were processed during this reporting period. Furniture for District Facilitators has been delivered in the respective 27 District DDLG's Offices. Also, the project has procured 15 new Motorcycles to support mobility of District Facilitators.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learned

The types of difficulties encountered during the reporting period and potentially be encountered in coming days are given as follows with mitigating measures:

Challenges encountered:

1. Getting approval of TPP as per the plan. Unexpected delayed happened in obtaining government approval for the TPP which hampered field level activities implementation as planned.

Mitigating measures adopted: The TPP was finally approved in early December 2016 following the concerted efforts of UNDP senior management and project team in engaging with relevant ministries in order to facilitate the process.

2. Fluctuations in exchange rates leads to continuing decrease in total resources

Mitigating measures adopted: Project is maintaining continuous fluctuation records and close monitoring through periodic resource analysis.

3. Delay in the disbursement of GoB funds (parallel financing) cause delay in capacity building activities targeting the UP representatives, printing and distribution of VC forms and placement of signboards in 1,080 unions.

Possible measures adopted: It was possible to start the training through NILG on credit modality and to release GoB fund in May 2017 through extensive cooperation of the NPD and close follow up from the PMU with LGD and NILG. Project with its field team members planned efficiently taking extra workload holding all planned training events within the deadline. Ministry level officials supported fully to negotiate the issue with local administration maintaining all related compliances.

4. Recruitment of VCAs in some project areas (e.g. Chittagong and Sylhet divisions) had been challenging.

Possible measures adopted: Had to run repeated rounds of the recruitment process in these areas due to insufficient and ineligible application submissions. In general, local administration, except few, immensely supported the VCA recruitments process. PNGOs maintained closer coordination with PMU and with its guidance above challenges were overcome.

Potential challenges:

5. The project envisages challenges in rolling out village courts activities in CHT region in terms of implementation modality. Furthermore, concerns may persist related to effective coordination among Regional Council(RC), LGD and MoCHTA raised, particularly by the Regional Council.

Possible mitigating measures: An agreed modality would be developed in consultation with Regional Council, LGD and MoCHTA.

6. Due to the delay in the disbursement of GoB funds (parallel financing) for FY 2017-2018 might cause delay in capacity building activities targeting the UP members and village police.

Possible mitigating measures: Closer liaison and coordination would be maintained with LGD and Finance Division for disbursing the fund as early as possible. On the other hand, all preparatory works will be completed so that implementation kicks off immediately after the GOB fund is disbursed.

7. Achieving the results and objectives within 2.5 years remains a formidable challenge. Initially, the project was designed as a 5-year project. At the request of the EU, the project was then revised as a 4-year project. The implementation period is further curtailed due to the long delay in the getting GoB approval for the TPP. As a result, ensuring the success of the project, including the quality of the services, adequate capacity building and sustainability of the interventions, might be of a major concern to UNDP as the implementation continues.

Possible mitigating measures: UNDP wishes to engage with the EU on this issue in the coming months, to find a mutually agreeable solution.

Lessons learned

- Continuous follow up, coordination with government counterparts is essential to progress the TPP approval process within reasonable time. High level engagement throughout the project development phase (ProDoc and TPP) is necessary to support a fast-tracking of the approval process. Further, one possible time minimizing option that could be employed in future is to develop the ProDoc and TPP simultaneously.
- Allocating time for preparatory work for the project allows activities to commence immediately upon approval of the TPP. While the significant delay in obtaining TPP approval was not planned, the project team has used this period to undertake preparatory works that will be beneficial throughout the remainder of the project, particularly in developing knowledge products.
- Securing ownership of the government in the project will have a multiplier effect. The success in activating the Village Courts that was achieved through the pilot phase is now being replicated to the neighboring unions. The ministry has disbursed BDT 70 million (USD 0.89 million) to 666 unions (beyond 1080 project areas) for establishing VCs in 2016. Together with the above amount, in total, government has disbursed BDT 220 million (USD 2.75 million) to activate VCs functions in 1,874 unions beyond the AVCB project areas. High level field visits of government counterparts have been instrumental to strengthening this government ownership.

5. Updated action plan (01 July 2017 to 30 June 2018)

Activity Result	Activity	Quarter			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.1 Capacity of relevant stakeholders at national and local level improved and key skills strengthened to enable Village Courts in new target UPs to function effectively by the end of project implementation.	1.1.1 Equip 1,000 UPs with all necessary forms, furniture, <i>ejlas</i> (court bench), VCAs and others				
	1.1.2 Develop, update and print training materials (mainstreaming gender and vulnerability issues)				
	1.1.3 Form Master Trainer (MT) and District Trainers Pools (DTP) and provide ToT for both.				
	1.1.4 Train all key VC actors (AACO, VCA; UP Secretary; UP Chair, Panel Chair, UP members, Village Police etc.) in project area on role and functions of village courts, mainstreaming gender issues				
	1.1.5 Sensitize key stakeholders (UNOs; DDLGs; judges; police; Women's Development Forum etc.) in project area on gender and village courts.				
	1.1.6 Establish clear and systematic coordination mechanisms with Upazila and District level government authorities				
	1.1.7 Develop capacity of field level staff				

Table-06 Annual Work Plan (July 2017-June 2018)					
Activity Result	Activity	Quarter			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	1.1.8 Provide support to National Training Institutes (NILG, BCSAA, JATI etc.) to update and develop training materials and ensure VC is integrated into regular curricula/syllabus ensuring gender and vulnerability issues are mainstreamed				
1.2 Legal and policy framework revised to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of VCs	1.2.1 Engage in advocacy and sensitization with judiciary and police to enable early case screening within current framework				
	1.2.2 Lobby for Practice Note from Chief Justice and Directive from IG Police on screening and referral of cases to Village Courts				
	1.2.3 Draft proposed amendments to the Village Court Act based on consultation with stakeholders				
	1.2.4 Print and distribute necessary VC materials and guideline				
	1.2.5 Undertake field monitoring to ensure legal compliance and quality of decision making				
1.3 GoB monitoring capacity for evaluating Village Courts performance and systematised	1.3.1 Support LGD to take over village courts performance monitoring of 351 UPs in pilot phase				
	1.3.2 Further strengthen institutional capacity of MIE Wing of LGD, and district and Upazila officials to manage performance of UPs and oversee Village Courts through DMIE system				
	1.3.3 Strengthen Village Courts Management Committees (VCMCs) across the project areas and lobby for increased balance in gender representation				
2.1 Beneficiaries in project areas understand the roles and functions of the Village Courts and are able to access their services when required	2.1.1 Develop outreach strategy and implement community mobilisation initiatives for local citizens about VCs in each project Union				
	2.1.2 Develop and implement gender awareness-raising strategy aimed at improving the ability of women to make use of Village Courts				
	2.1.3 Develop, update and print public education and awareness materials and distribute to project areas				
	2.1.4 Raise awareness of network NGOs on village courts and support their capacity to do outreach				
	2.1.5 Organize workshop/seminars with journalists at national and local level to increase coverage of village courts				
	2.1.6 Update and maintain the village courts website and other social media				
2.2 Evidence-based and knowledge-management on VCs increased	2.2.1 Develop and implement detailed M&E and Research plan				
	2.2.2 Undertake baseline survey, independent evaluations, surveys of beneficiaries and officials and other needs-based assessments including exploratory study for possible rolling out in CHT				
	2.2.3 Undertake and organise South-South Cooperation activities for mutual learning and exchanging				

Table-06 Annual Work Plan (July 2017-June 2018)					
Activity Result	Activity	Quarter			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	2.2.4 Produce and print knowledge products				

6. Communication and visibility

The overall objective of the Communication and Visibility Plan was to increase awareness among the beneficiaries, stakeholders and the wider public in Bangladesh on Village courts and its function. During this reporting period strong visibility were ensured through different events, trainings and producing knowledge products and IEC materials (Training Manual, Training Flip Chart, Fact Sheet, Banner etc.). Also, the project will ensure visibility through upcoming events and knowledge products and IEC materials which are under printing process. All the visibility items and knowledge products included the EU Logo and been attributed to EU funding supports. The following table shows the status of different awareness materials:

Table-07 Progress of Communication and visibility materials	
Items	Progress Status
Fact Sheet	English and Bangla version of Fact Sheets highlighting AVCB Phase-II has been developed and disseminated with various stakeholders
Training Manual	Printed 450 pieces revised Training Manual on VCs, of which 240 pieces already has distributed.
Training Flip Chart	Printed 250 sets of Training Flip chart on VC and distributed 213 sets
Flip Chart on Courtyard meeting	The draft content of the Flip Chart has been prepared.
Folder	Branded folders of the project has been printed using EU, GoB and UNDP's logo and use in different external meetings and trainings
Notepad	Notepads with messages of village courts along with EU, GoB and UNDP's logo has been printed and use in different external events
VC flowchart	Draft content for VC flowchart has been developed
Community video for awareness raising	Video Learning Aid developed in first phase has been edited with updated information, and shortened for raising community awareness. This video will be used by PNGOs to demonstrate at public places for making people more aware about services of village courts. A relevant video show guideline has also been developed which included quiz competitions among audience for their spontaneous participation and internalization of VC services.
Banners	Produced branded banners with EU logo for various training events
Place VC signboard for 1,080 new unions	1080 signboards will be placed in 1080 unions. Meanwhile design of the signboards inserting the name of 1080 unions, EU, GoB and UNDP logo has been completed .

Samples are attached in Annex-II.

7. Cross cutting issue - Gender

Women from poor and disadvantaged population groups face double barriers in accessing equal access to different benefits and opportunities. Some of the barriers are related to the generic context of marginalization which are common to both women and men, whereas women face additional socio economic and cultural barriers due to their unequal gender identity. In this context, increasing women's participation as both justice seekers and service providers is an explicit consideration of the project.

The project has specific objective of empowering local people, especially women, the poor and vulnerable groups to enabling them to seek remedies for injustices and to resolve their disputes at the local level. The project applies gender mainstreaming as the strategy to promote gender equality in accessing rural justice services. Accordingly, all the project interventions include gender mainstreaming aspects, such as involving both women and men in planned activities, including specific content on gender equality and women's participation in training manual, gender responsive language and images in awareness raising materials, maintaining gender disaggregated data, using gender disaggregated indicators to measure the progress.

For instance, during the reporting period the project has developed and printed training manual on village court which contains specific session on women's participation in village court and how to run the function of the village courts in a gender responsive way. During the reporting period, VCs message has been delivered to 589,510 community people (71% female) through 32,644 courtyard meetings and 654 community meetings.

Project has also plan for gender specific targeted interventions, such as capacity building events for the women UP representatives to enable them to act as VC panel member, developing and implementation of gender awareness-raising strategy aimed at improving the ability of women to make use of Village Courts, sensitization of the key stakeholders in project area on gender equality in context of village courts.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation efforts under the project have been described under Activity Result 2.2 Evidence-base and knowledge-management on Village Courts increased

9. Way forward

Following the TPP approval in December 2016, the project has started its field level implementation in full swing and in generating results. In coming months, the project will offer localised justice to approximately 22 million of rural people of Bangladesh by establishing village courts in 1,080 unions of Bangladesh. Increasing knowledge and awareness of service providers and community people about village courts and its function, increasing the involvement of the Government in carrying out of capacity development and monitoring of village courts performance, review Legal and policy framework to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of VCs and rolling out of AVCB phase II project in CHT region will be the priority areas during the remaining period of the project.

10. Visibility Report

Visibility at a glance:

(a) Selected Media Coverages (out of 72 during April-June 2017)



The Daily Sun:

Activating village courts a must for good governance'

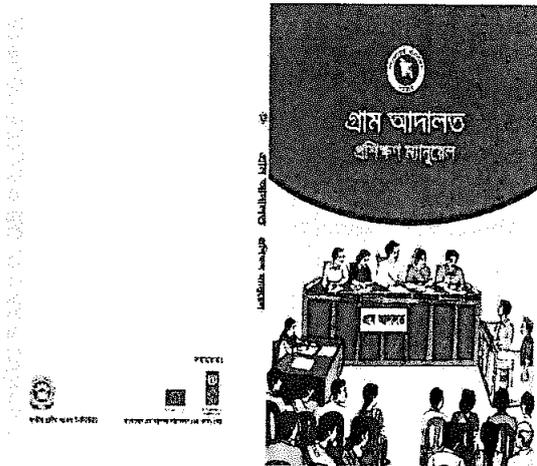
Staff Correspondent 10 April, 2017 12:00 AM



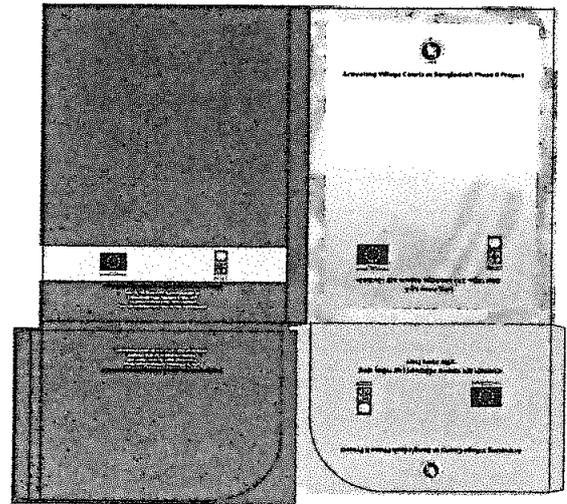
Guests attend a dissemination meeting titled 'Celebrating the Scaling Up of Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Project' at a city hotel on Sunday. - SUN photo



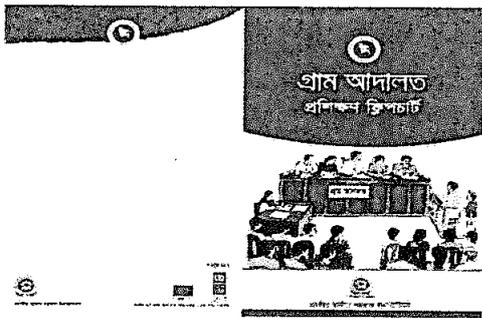
(b) Print materials for promoting visibility:



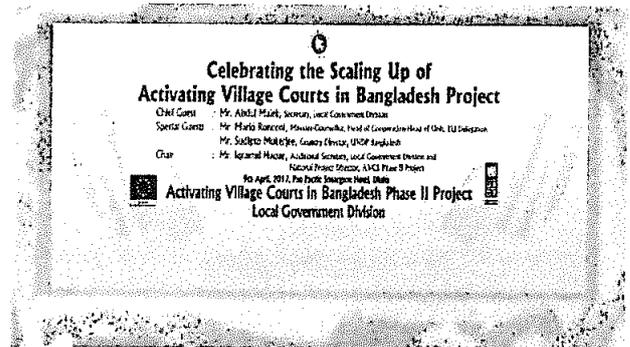
Considering suitability of all VC stakeholders AVCB Phase II Project uses this training manual endorsed and published by NILG



AVCB Phase II Project uses branded folder and note pad during external events



Visualization of VC contents makes this training flipchart more effective to field level participants



A banner of scaling up program showcases partnership of GOB, EU and UNDP



A local government personnel discusses about VC during a training session. Like this training, project promotes uniform banners in all VC trainings for prompt recognition of visibility issues by stakeholders.

(c) Media coverage in detail (April 2017)

News Coverage

Celebrating the Scaling-Up of Activating the village Courts in Bangladesh Project
9 April 2017, Sonargoan Hotel, Dhaka

So far 14 print, electronic and online media published/aired news about the “Celebrating the Scaling-Up of Activating the village Courts in Bangladesh Project” event held on 9 April 2017 in Dhaka. All media stated the partnership between the European Union, the Government of Bangladesh and UNDP towards improving access to justice for people in rural areas.

List of media

1. TV (2)
 - Channel I
 - News 24
2. News Agency (1)
 - BSS
3. Newspapers (11)
 - The Asian Age
 - The Daily Observer
 - The Daily Sun
 - News Today
 - The Bangladesh Today
 - Samakal
 - Daily Sangbad
 - Daily Jugantor
 - Dainik Bartaman
 - Daily Janakantho
 - Daily Borer Pata

(d) Media coverage in detail (May 2017)

Media Coverage

May 2017

Activating Village Courts Project Phase II

During May 2017, Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II Project (AVCB) organized 65 trainings on village courts in 24 districts for Union Parishad chairmen and panel chairmen to strengthen their functional capacity for operating village courts successfully towards improving access to justice for rural people. Approximately, 1,700 UP chairmen and panel chairmen including 83 females participated in these district level trainings led by Deputy Directors Local Government (DDLGs). The media covered the news about the trainings sessions in 31 news reports, including three in national newspapers, clearly mentioning partnership and support of EU, UNDP and government of Bangladesh for implementing the project. Also, on 27 April (after our previous visibility report) there was another article in national daily Manabkontha that wrote about the project.

In addition, the EU logo was clearly visible in all training material including on the banners (please see attached photos).

News Coverage on village courts trainings in May 2017:

National media:

1. KalerKantho [link](#)
2. Sangbad
3. Borer Pata

Local media:

4. Protidiner Sangbad [link](#)
5. [Eajkalerkhorbor link](#)
6. Shobujalo [link](#)
7. Shobujalo [link](#)
8. Dainik Dristipat (Satkhira) [link](#)
9. Pollir Alo (Jamalpur)
10. Jamalpur Dinkal
11. Ajker Jamalpur
12. Pollikontha Jamalpur
13. Protidin Jamalpur
14. Loklokantor [link](#)
15. Borer Patrasha
16. Chadpur Khabor (Scan copy)
17. Chadpur Protidin (Scan copy)
18. The Daily IIshepar (Scan copy)
19. Alokito Chadpur (Scan copy)
20. Chadpur Prabaho (Scan copy)
21. Chadpur Khabor (Scan copy)
22. Chadpur Jamin (Scan copy)
23. Chadpur Barta (Scan copy)
24. Chadpur Diganto (Scan copy)
25. Chadpur Kontha (Scan copy)
26. Chadpur Dorpon (Scan copy)
27. Chadpur Prabaho (Scan copy)
28. Alokoto Chadpur (Scan copy)
29. Sachitro Noakhali (Scan copy)
30. Daily Purbanchal (Scan copy)
31. Bagerhat Info DotCom (Scan copy)

Additional coverage in national media at the end of April (after the previous visibility report)

32. Daily Manabkontha (*published in April 2017*) [link](#)

(e) Media coverage in detail (June 2017)

Media Coverage

June 2017

Activating Village Courts Project Phase II

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II Project (AVCB) received 24 coverages in local dailies of Pabna, Chadpur and Khulna in June 2017, focusing on trainings of Union Parishad Secretaries and Village Courts Assistants. These reports also highlight partnership and support of EU, UNDP and government of Bangladesh for implementing the project for ensuring hassle free legal services to the rural poor through village courts. Local administration of various districts recognized importance of these trainings. Like, Deputy Commission of Pabna, Rekha Rani Balo remarked, “Village courts mainly works for resolving small disputes at rural level with minimum cost. It will decrease pressure of cases to higher courts apart from providing easy access to justice to the rural people”. Deputy Director Local Government of Chadpur Mohammad Abdul Hai shared, “Deputy Commissioner of Chadpur will ensure all necessary supports for making village courts active.”

In June 2017, a total of 1700 (556 females) Union Parishad Secretaries and Village Courts Assistants were trained on village courts in 24 districts to develop their functional capacity for supporting effective operations of village courts.

Also, in this month, Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Phase II Project (AVCB) was highlighted in a website report of UNDP Brussels mentioning partnerships.

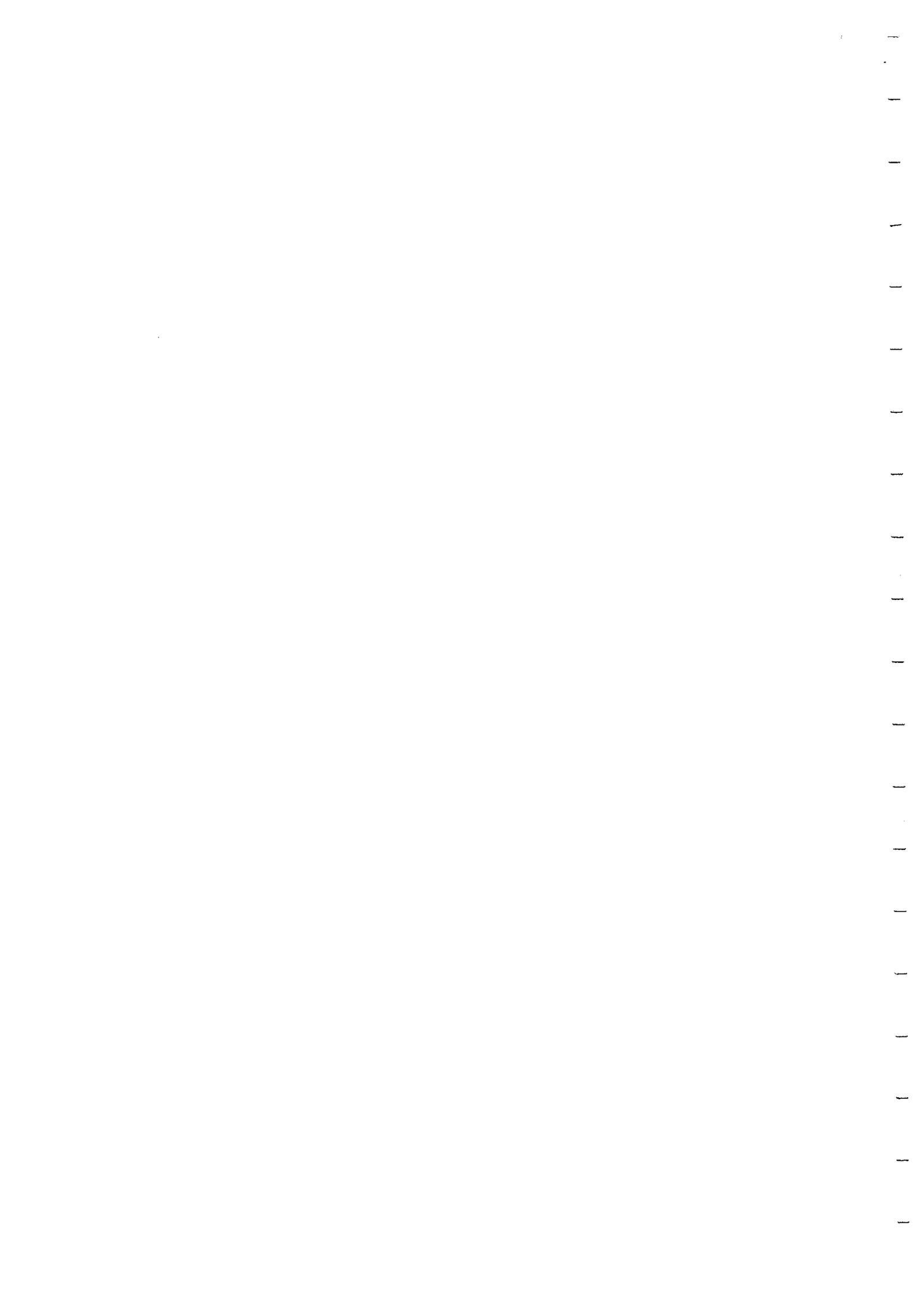
In addition, the EU logo was clearly visible in all training material including on the banners (please see attached photos).

1. Shobujalo Pabna: June 1, 2017 [Link](#)
2. Shobujalo Pabna: June 6, 2017 [Link](#)
3. Dainik Purbanchal : June 6, 2017-Scan copy
4. The Daily Chandpur Khabar: June 8, 2017 [Link](#)
5. Dainik Ajker Desh Bidesh- June 13, 2017-Scan copy
6. Dainik Ajker Cox’s Bazar: June 13, 2017-Scan copy
7. Daily Sakaler Cox’s Bazar: June 13, 2017-Scan copy
8. Dainik Rupali Saikat : June 13, 2017-Scan copy
9. Dainik Himchory : June 13, 2017-Scan copy
10. Bagerhatinfo.com: June 15, 2017-Scan copy
11. Dainik Purbanchal : June 16, 2017-Scan copy
12. Dainik Cox’s Bazar Bani : June 16, 2017-Scan copy
13. Cox’s Bazar Mail: June 18, 2017 [Link](#)
14. Cox’s Bazar News: June 18, 2017 [Link](#)
15. Aamar Akush, Khulna : June 21, 2017-PDF copy
16. Dainik Purbanchal, Khulna: June 21, 2017-PDF copy
17. The Daily Bhorer Dak, Khulna: June 21, 2017-PDF copy
18. The Daily Somoyer Khabor, Khulna: June 21, 2017-PDF copy
19. Dainik Khulnanchal, Khulna: June 21, 2017-PDF copy
20. Chadpurer Khabor: June 21, 2017-Scan copy
21. The daily Chandpur Kantho: June 23, 2017 [Link](#)
22. The Daily Sudipto Chadpur: June 23, 2017-Scan copy

23. Chadpur Protidin: June 23, 2017-Scan copy
24. Chadpur Probaho: June 23, 2017-Scan copy
25. UNDP Brussels' website: <http://www.undp.org/content/brussels/en/home.html>

11. Financial Report

Annex-I



Heads of budget	TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE ACTION						EXPENDITURES				FOLLOWING PERIOD (01/07/2017-30/06/2018)				
	Unit	Quantity	Unit value (in EUR)	Total Cost (in EUR) ¹	Expenditures incurred (01/01/2017-30/06/2017)		Total Cost (in EUR)	Cumulated costs (before current report) (in EUR)	Cumulated costs (from start of implementation to present report)	Forecast					
					Quantity	Unit value (in USD)				Quantity	Unit value (in EUR)	Quantity	Unit value (in EUR)	Total Costs (in EUR)	
3. Equipment and supplies															
3.1 Purchase or rent of vehicles (4 vehicles, 1 from Phase I) (including registration, C&F agent)	Number	3	30,000	90,000				688.50		688.50	2	30,000	60,000.00		
3.2 Motor Cycle- 125 CC (for 25 DFs, 12 Motor Cycle from Phase I) (including one time registration fee, fitness and token)	Number	13	1,800	23,400					23,677.56	23,677.56					
3.3 Computer equipment including server, software, printer etc.	Number	189	1,615	305,246				96,148.66	59,354.19	155,502.85	55	2,723	149,743.33		
3.4 Furniture	Person	40	891	35,640				618.84	19,703.73	20,322.57	10	1,532	15,317.43		
3.5 Machines, tools, Office equipment etc.	Number	36	2,215.36	79,753				14,125.88	25,802.65	39,928.53	6	6,637	39,824.47		
3.6 Spare parts/equipment for machines, tools	month	48	722	34,656				379.68	126.49	506.17	12	722	8,664.00		
3.7 Other (Internet device and other equipments)	month	48	1,782	85,536				361.53	8,122.97	8,484.50	12	1,782	21,364.00		
Subtotal Equipment and supplies				654,231				122,757.48	136,987.69	249,310.68			294,933.23		
4. Local office															
4.1 Vehicle, Motor cycle fuel, maintenance etc.	month	48	4,334	208,009				3,684.61	6,016.19	9,690.80	12	4,334	52,002.25		
4.2 Office rent & maintenance	month	48	10,094	484,512				80,544.17	69,109.49	149,653.67	12	10,094	121,128.00		
4.3 Stationary and other expendable office supplies	month	48	2,512	120,576				5,333.85	10,771.16	16,105.01	12	2,512	30,144.00		
4.4 Other services (tel/fax, electricity, network charge and maintenance)	month	48	4,574	219,852				16,359.76	16,099.44	32,459.20	12	4,574	54,888.00		
Subtotal Local office				1,032,649				115,740.32	101,996.29	207,898.68			258,152.25		
5. Other costs, services															
5.1 NGO Costs for providing training, outreach and personnel support to VCs	month	33	402,878	13,294,974				1,354,762.04	759,436.80	2,114,198.84	12	402,878	4,834,536.00		
5.2 Publications and printing	Number	10	8,398.00	83,990				18,657.95	35,153.15	53,811.10	5	6,034	30,166.90		
5.3 Studies, researchs, reports etc.	Number	10	36,876.00	368,760				17,720.57	17,720.57	17,720.57	4	36,876	147,504.00		
5.4 International Legal Expert	person/day	440	1,013	445,720							220	1,013	222,860.00		
5.5 Expenditure verification/Audit	Annually	4	10,692	42,768							1	10,692	10,692.00		
5.6 Evaluation and Monitoring visit costs															
5.6.1 Travel cost	Visit	180	368.80	59,008				601.28		601.28	80	369	29,504.00		
5.6.2 Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)	Visit	160	581.00	92,960							80	581	46,480.00		
5.7 Costs of National conferences/seminars	Number	1	146,000.00	146,000							1	146,000	146,000.00		
5.8 Learning Cost (conference, seminar, consultation, meeting etc.)	Number	404	661	266,983				39,174.76	1,318.04	40,492.80	144	863	127,192.00		
5.9 Visibility actions	Number	4	13,918.50	55,674							4	13,919	55,674.00		
Subtotal Other costs, services				14,856,827				1,544,476.53	813,628.65	2,226,824.58			5,650,810.90		
6. Subtotal direct eligible costs of the Action (1-5)				21,966,561				2,496,940.64	1,510,257.60	3,794,958.09			7,686,159.14		
7. Provision for contingency reserve				391,117											
8. Total direct eligible costs of the Action (6+7)				22,357,678				2,496,940.64	1,510,257.60	3,794,958.09			7,686,159.14		
9. Indirect costs (average 7% of 6, subtotal of direct eligible costs of the Action)				1,531,422				174,958.19	99,002.74	259,089.49			538,031.14		
10. Total eligible costs of the Action(8+9)				23,889,100				2,671,898.74	1,609,260.24	4,054,047.58			8,224,190.28		

