


**EFFICIENT
AND
ACCOUNTABLE
LOCAL
GOVERNANCE
(EALG) PROJECT**



ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
Period: January-December 2019



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Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) Project; Annual Report 2019.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVCB	Activating Village Court	NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
AWP	Annual Work Plan	NPD	National Project Director
CBOs	Community-based Organizations	PC	Project Coordinator
CSO	Civil Society Organizations	PMU	Project Management Unit
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency	PSC	Project Steering Committee
DC	Deputy Commissioner	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
DDLG	Deputy Director, Local Government	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
DLG	Director, Local Government	SC	Standing Committee
DF	District Facilitator	ToR	Terms of Reference
EALG	Efficient and Accountable Local Governance	ToT	Training of Trainers
GoB	Government of Bangladesh	UGDP	Upazila Governance and Development Project
IGA	Income Generating Activity	UICDP	Upazila Integrated Capacity Development Project
LG	Local Government	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
LGD	Local Government Division	UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
LGIs	Local Government Institutions	UAO	Upazila Agriculture Officer
LoGIC	Local Governments Initiatives on Climate Change	UDC	Union Digital Center
LGSP	Local Governance Support Project	UP	Union Parishad
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	UPGP	Union Parishad Governance Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	UZGP	Upazila Parishad Governance Project
MIS	Management Information System	UZP	Upazila Parishad
MoLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives	UWAO	Upazila Women Affairs Officer
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding	VAW	Violence Against Women
NILG	National Institute of Local Government	WDF	Women Development Forum

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE



EALG aims to better equip the two sub district local government units – Union Parishad (UP) and Upazila Parishad (UZP) with capacities for citizen centric service delivery through responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. At present it is active in 18 low-performing UZPs and 251 UPs across nine districts, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Government of Denmark.

Over the past two years, the project has promoted public engagement interventions such as ward sabhas, open budget sessions and public hearings at both UP and UZP levels. In previous local government strengthening programmes, such interventions were effective in identifying local development priorities and needs on the one hand and on the other improve transparency and accountability in local governance. With support from EALG, 35% of the UPs have for the first time prepared and published their annual reports which is a commendable first step towards fostering greater transparency and accountability.

The project also works to bring the voices of women forward through the Women Development Forums (WDFs) at Upazila and district levels and thereby make planning and budgeting processes and outcomes more gender-responsive. Through providing special research and analytical support to the Local Government Division, the project is also helping to bring in evidence based policy reforms that can in turn strengthen local government throughout the country.

The project, thanks to flexibility and generosity of the Development Partners and the leadership of the Local Government Division of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives also repurposed its budget to quickly respond to the COVID outbreak with community outreach, distribution of hygiene materials, setting up handwashing stations and supplying PPE for frontline local government personnel. These interventions reached at least half a million people and have helped to keep them safe and weather the crisis.

Going forward, the project in close consultation with the LGD and the Development Partners will also extend support to the post crisis recovery efforts as well as help accelerate SDG implementation at the local level.

Sudipto Mukerjee

Resident Representative
UNDP Bangladesh

Dhaka, September 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NATIONAL PROJECT DIRECTOR



Local governance is an integral part of the national governance and a strong tool for effective service delivery to the citizen in which Local Government Institutions (LGIs) are actively engaged. The local government institutions are providing many of the basic services to the people although they have limited resources and limited capacity to perform as of expectation. Within these limitations, for effective governance at the local level, the LGIs have been working hard. It also integrates the grassroots people in the local development planning and implementation process in their constituencies. Bangladesh government through LGD is trying to and utilizing effort to strengthen the LGIs by making them participatory, transparent and accountable institutions. EALG, a five-years project has so many interventions in support with the effort of LGD to enhance the capacities of UZPs and UPs so that they can be participatory, transparent and accountable institutions.

It is a great opportunity for EALG to work with comparatively low performing UPs (251) and UZPs (18). After completing its two years of journey, the project has been able to demonstrate notable progress on regularizing Ward Shava and introducing Public Hearing that give a good indication of citizen participation in the achievement process of LGI's transparency and accountability. The project also has demonstrated good progress in building capacity of UPs in preparation and publication of Annual Report for achieving wider transparency and accountability, systematic functioning of Steering Committees (SCs), localizing SDGs through LGIs planning process, and on many other issues that are connected with improved performance of UZP and UP to achieve citizen satisfaction on their service delivery.

It is with great pleasure that we present a report on the progress and achievements of Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) project in 2019. It was a busy year that included full pledged implementation of diversified activities and, at the same time, revision of the project for incorporating activities to be implemented in Cox's Bazar under this project support.

2019 was an important year of progress, achievement and learning for our Project. Our relationships with other stakeholders at the community and national levels have contributed to improve local governance, and we enter 2020 aiming towards support for further performance improvements of UPs and UZPs.

In 2019, EALG Project attempted to implement the priority recommendations of the 7th Five Year Plan related to the local government system. The project also attempted to supplement the annual activities of the Local Government Division (LGD) in attaining its desired development goals.

Mustakim Billah Faruqi

Joint Secretary (UP Branch)

Local Government Division and

National Project Director (NPD)

Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) Project

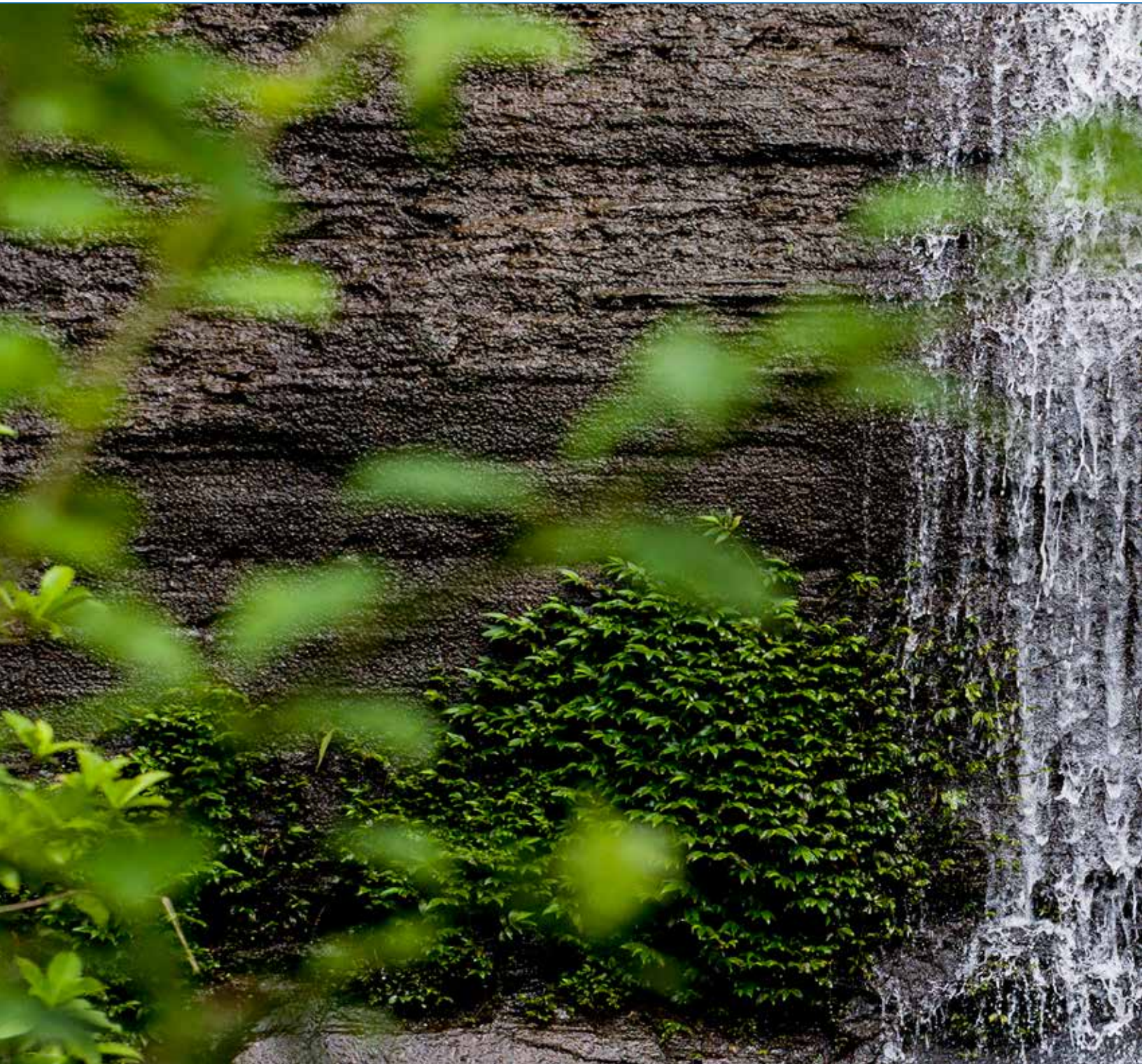


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNDP in collaboration with SDC and DANIDA is supporting 18 Upazila Parishad and 251 Union Parishad (UP) of 09 districts through Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) Project. The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacities of local government and other stakeholders to foster participatory local development and improve service delivery for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In this reporting period (January-December 2019), 100% Upazila Parishad under EALG project organized open budget sessions and published their budget timely where women (36%), poor (8%) and youth (17%) attended and raised their voices. UZP female Vice Chair led 17% schemes while 20% schemes of UPs were led by women members of UP that reveals gradual improvement of women's leadership in local development activities. Moreover, eighteen Women Development Forums (WDFs) addressed 84 early marriages, 53 sexual harassment and 35 other types of violence in their locality.

WDFs mobilized 18,50,000 BDT in 2018-19 fiscal year under 3% ADP allocation and provided Income Generating Activity (IGA) training to 199 poor and vulnerable women; 81% of UP allocated budget for marginalized citizens and women and 9% of development budget were allocated to enable participation and benefit to women and the marginalized section of the community. Overall performance of local government institutions (LGIs) in EALG areas have increased and 54% (136) top performing UPs accessed to performance-based block grants amounting to BDT 7,25,19,111 from LGSP-3 in 2018-19 fiscal year. Project also ensured 16% of UPs addressed climate issues in developing their plan and prepared climate resilient plan, allocated resources to raise awareness on climate change issues and climate adaptive local development. Under project intervention, 35% UPs for the first time prepared and published their annual reports that improved the public disclosure of information and contributing in transparency and accountability. During this reporting period, the project could utilize 100% of its resources allocated for this year.

Through organizing these targeted programs, the project has contributed in strengthening institutional capacity of UP and UZPs to improve their planning and budgeting process with citizen engagement; wider disclosure of information and shifting their attitude to address citizen's views thereby improved transparency and accountability. It has been observed that participation of the poor, women and youth in the Ward Shavas and Open Budget sessions enabled opportunities for interactive discussion that influenced the UPs and UZPs to allocate resources for addressing the needs of women, poor and the disadvantaged. UZP/UP functionaries

became sensitized on SDG goals, targets and indicators and they are considering SDG aligned schemes for local development. Secretaries of project Union Parishads became more capable of handling in advanced application of ICT including email communications and maintenance of official Facebook page, which improved efficiency in service delivery, and disclosure of UP activities through social media.

The project has been experiencing several challenges both at central and field level. Some of the planned activities could not be implemented due to the Upazila election and change of leadership in the UZPs. PSC meeting has been organized in delay due to changes of Secretary at LGD. The level of motivation of the local elected representative and the officials of the LGIs is still low in terms of brining positive changes in planning, budgeting, oversight and coordination functions of stakeholders at local level. It was observed that involvement of senior Government officials could help motivate the officials and elected representatives of the LGIs to a great extent. The project has enhanced coordination and interaction with the senior management of LGD at central level as well as at the field level to maximize the benefit of the project interventions. It is expected that more substantive results will be visible in coming days out the project interventions.



INTRODUCTION

Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) project in Bangladesh implementing the EALG project to 18 Upazilas and 251 Union Parishads (UPs) under nine (9) districts (Faridpur, Chandpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, Patuakhali, Sunamganj, Rangpur, Netrokona & Cox's Bazar) and commenced full implementation during this reporting period. The EALG was launched in January 2018 and will continue until December 2022. The Local Government Division (LGD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) has been implementing this project with financial and technical support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), GoB and UNDP. It aims to make local government institutions (LGIs) more responsive, inclusive and effective to carry out their mandates including improved public services with regard to their accountable, transparent and inclusive delivery.



Brief Description of the Project

Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) Project has been being implemented as a combined initiative of the government of Bangladesh and the development partners for strengthening local governance system. The five-year project (2018-2022) is designed based on the success and lessons learned from the previously implemented UNDP supported two projects titled “**Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP)**” and “**Upazila Parishad Governance Project (UZGP)**.”

Overall Objective

The overall objective of EALG is to strengthen the capacities of local governments and other stakeholders to foster participatory local development service delivery for the SDGs.

Specific Objectives



To make LGIs more responsive, inclusive and effective to carry out their mandates including improved public services with regard to their accountable, transparent and inclusive delivery.



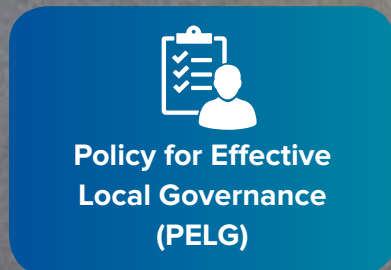
Particularly in Cox’s Bazar, EALG will seek to mitigate the impact of the refugee influx on host communities with regard to improved performance of the local government institutions through enhancing public participation, coordination, greater accountability, transparency and quality of service delivery at all levels.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The three interrelated components of EALG will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, particularly the following



This project has the following three components



1. Inclusive and Accountable Upazila Parishad (IAUZP):

IAUZP component emphasizes on strengthening the capacities of Upazila Parishad to improve service delivery. It would enable strengthening governance framework of Upazila Parishad for inclusive, effective and accountable planning process. Moreover, it tends to improve the financial management of Upazila Parishad for funding absorption capacity and accountability, strengthened downward accountability of the UZP Committees through effective and inclusive public engagement mechanisms and practices, and will strengthen ability of women Upazila Parishad members to fulfill their roles and duties in council activities.

2: Sustainable and Democratic Union Parishad (SDUP):

This component focuses on enhancing capacities of Union Parishad for participatory local development. It attempts to: i) strengthen the capacity of the Union Parishads to provide pro-poor, effective and accountable services; ii) make the Union Parishads more climate resilient through prioritizing resilience measures in the UP development plan; and iii) empower and institutionalize the space for the poor and marginalized citizens, especially women, to be more actively engaged in the decision-making process of UP.

3: Policy for Effective Local Governance (PELG):

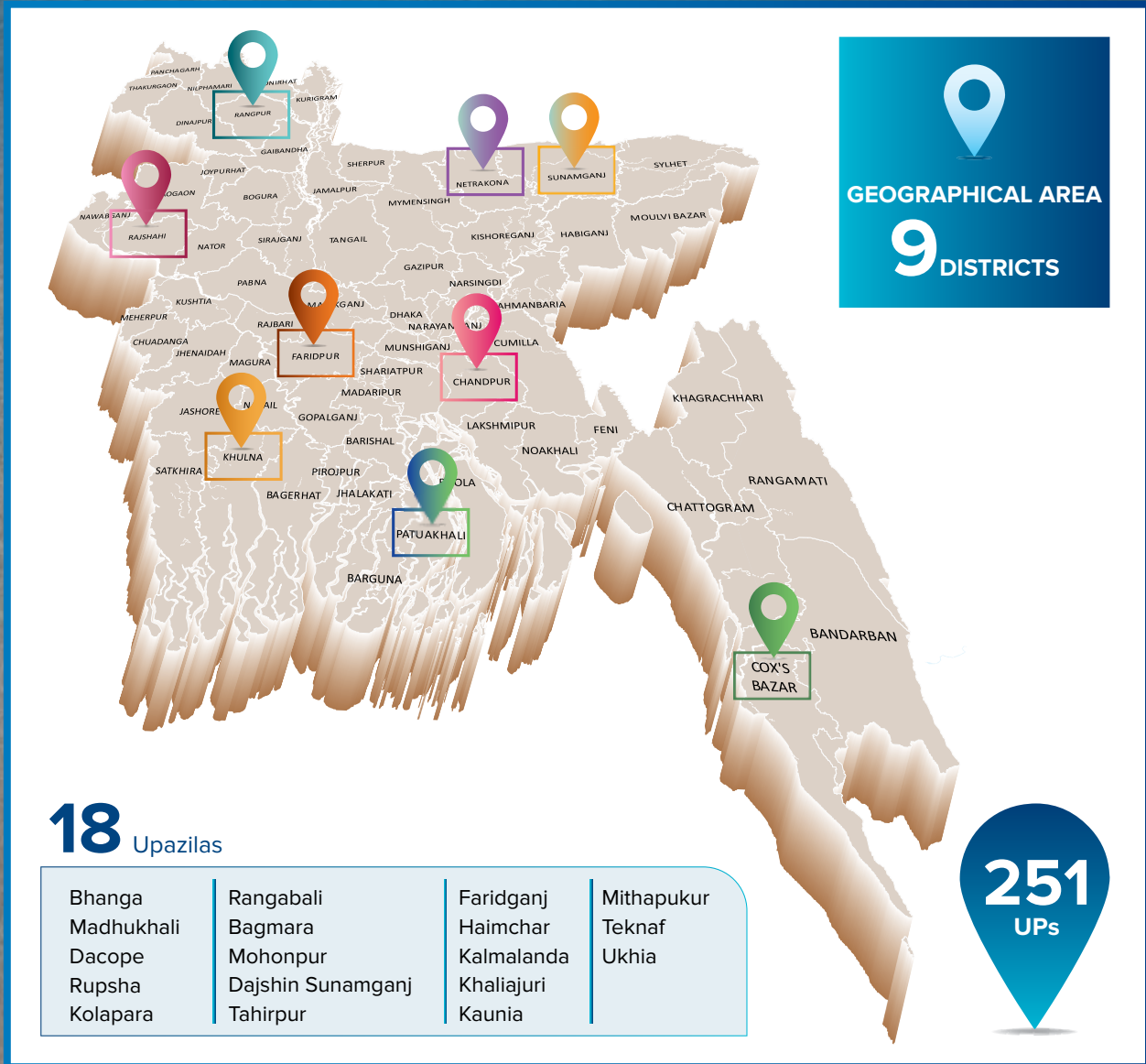
PELG Component is to provide technical assistance to the LGD for developing policies that can improve the performance of local governments, promote local governance through appropriate policy support and guidance based on the challenges and lessons learned working with the local governments.

Reporting Methodology

In the Annual Report 2019 of the Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) project, we will showcase the component wise project achievements and also the achieved results of the project activities and expenditure status of the reporting period. The report will also showcase success stories which will highlight the project achievements and changes in beneficiary level.

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

Efficient and Accountable Local Governance Project





SECTION 1: KEY RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



100% Upazila Parishad under EALG project organized open budget sessions and published their budget timely where women (**36%**), poor (**8%**) and youth (**17%**) attended and raised their voices.

UZP female Vice Chair led **17%** schemes while **20%** schemes of UPs were led by women members of UP that reveals gradual improvement of women's leadership in local development activities.



Eighteen Women Development Forums (WDFs) addressed **84** early marriages, **53** sexual harassment and **35** other types of violence in their locality.

WDFs mobilized **18,50,000** BDT in 2018-19 fiscal year under **3%** ADP allocation and provided Income Generating (IGA) IGA training to **199** poor and vulnerable women.



100% Union Parishads organized Ward Shava and Open Budget Sessions where poor (**12%**), youth (**13%**) and women (**36.9%**) attended and raised their voice.

31% of UP allocated budget for marginalized citizens and women and **9%** of development budget were allocated to enable participation of and benefit to women and the marginalized section of the community.



Around **2600** people took oath to prevent violence against women simultaneously in **18** Upazilas.

Overall performance of LGIs in EALG areas have increased and **54%** (136) top performing UPs accessed to performance-based block grants amounting to **BDT 7,25,19,111** from LGSP-3 in 2018-19 fiscal year.



EALG awarded **32** research proposals of young researchers where **52** researchers engaged in producing **32** research products on local governance issues.

EALG provided training to CSO/CBO members on local governance issues and directly engaged **240** young volunteers on facilitating model Ward Shava at UP level.



16% of UPs addressed climate issues in developing their plan and prepared climate resilient plan, allocated resources to raise awareness on climate change issues and climate adaptive local development.

35% UPs for the first time prepared and published their annual reports that improved the public disclosure of information and contributing in transparency and accountability.



EALG piloted public hearing at UP level to enhance accountability and public engagement. Through the hearing a total of **443** issues raised by the citizen and instant initiatives were taken to resolve **128** issues.

SECTION 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUT

Progress towards output discusses action progress against the results framework. During this reporting period, project implementation marked by significant progress particularly in the component 1 and 2. However, achievement in component 3 and in some cases of component 1 is limited, as those activities were not part of this year's target.

Component 1: Inclusive and Accountable Upazila Parishad (IAUZP)

Output 1: UZP Committees strengthened their horizontal coordination with line departments and oversight capacity and upward accountability with the District Development and Coordination Committee for inclusive, effective and accountable planning and service delivery

Coordination Workshops at District Level

To increase the coordination between Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad functionaries and monitor the overall planning and activities total four annual coordination workshops were held among nine (09) district in 2019 at district level where total 372 participants (male: 343, female: 29) participated. The workshop is important among all local level officials. The workshop identified the problems and mitigation processes of local governance. It also reviewed and analyzed the achievements and activities performed by UPs and UZPs in last 12 months under EALG project; discussed and identified the opportunities of coordination between UPs and UZPs; identified lessons learned and good practices available at LGIs, etc. During the workshop a guidance was provided to LGIs by Divisional Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner for functioning more effectively to serve the local people. The workshop also focused about integrated planning among LGIs so that overlapping of functions can be minimized and coordination among the stakeholders enhanced.

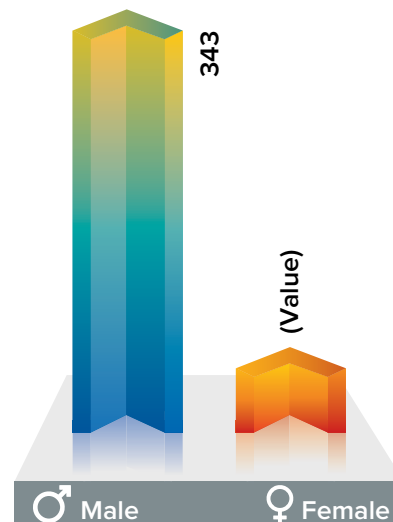


Fig 1: District level coordination workshop

Scopes Widened for Coordination with UGDP/LGSP and other relevant actors

A total of two coordination workshops with UGDP/LGSP and other relevant actors such were held during the reporting period where a total of 76 participants (male-63, female-13) attended. The workshops reviewed the progress of different projects, i.e. LGSP-III, AVCB-II, EALG, LoGIC, UGDP, UICDP, etc. discussed the lessons learned, identified the challenges and determined the strategy for improvement of functions provided by various LG actors. Through these workshops a coordination platform has been created among different project personnel and senior officials in district level. A coordination plan among various actors was developed to provide more systematic support and avoid overlapping and duplication of activities to LGIs.

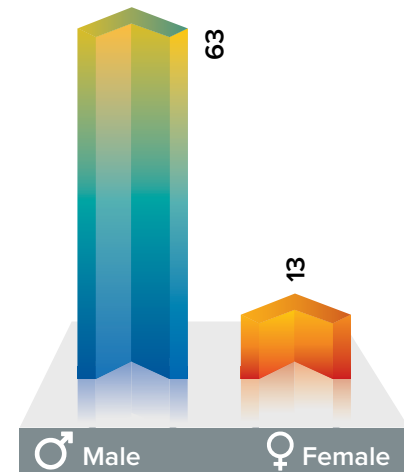


Fig 2: Coordination workshop with UGDP/LGSP

Provided ToT to integrate SDGs and Climate Issues in UP and UZP's Planning Process

A two-day ToT has been provided to selected government officials on integration of SDGs and climate change issues in the UP and UZP's planning process at NILG, Dhaka so that they can train respective UP and UZP functionaries further at field level. A total of 56 participants attended the training including DDLG, UNO, Family Planning Officer, Agriculture Officer, Youth Development Officer, Women Affairs Officer, Social Service Officer, Education Officer (secondary) and District Facilitators of EALG. After receiving ToT, the master trainers conducted training for UP and UZP functionaries to enable them in developing their respective UZP/UP plans considering SDGs and climate issues. This training will help them to integrate SDGs and climate issues addressed in UP and UZP Planning process.

Initiatives for Localizing SDGs at Field Level

Bangladesh is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the continuation of the Millennium Development Goals. To achieve this goal, it requires the full involvement of all types of government and non-government organizations and the people; the need is for comprehensive and integrated local planning. In addition, local

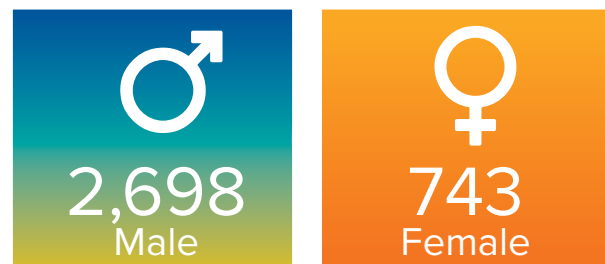


Fig: SDG localization training participants

plans need to be formulated in accordance with the SDGs so that local plans are reflected in national plans. Considering this fact, the government officials received ToT on SDGs from EALG provided the training to UP and UZP functionaries through cascade method. During the reporting period, a total of 84 batches training on SDG localization were held where 3441 participants (male: 2698, female: 743) participated. Through the training the UP and UZP functionaries were sensitized on SDGs' goals, targets and indicators so that they can plan and design development intervention aligning with those goals and targets. After getting the training, the UP and UZP functionaries have clearly understood about SDGs, their mandated roles and responsibilities and the strategy to address SDGs into their planning processes. After getting the training, some of UPs and UZPs revised their annual plan in 2019 and many of them planned to develop their annual and five-year plan in 2020 following integrated process for localizing SDGs.

Acquainted Integrated Development Plans with UZPs

EALG organized eight stakeholders' consultation workshops on UZP's integrated annual and five-year planning guideline drafted by LGD having technical assistance from UICDP, EALG and other. The main purpose of the workshop was to orient UZP functionaries about the process of annual and five-year planning and receive feedback from participants for further improvement of the draft guideline. The guideline focuses a systematic process of integrated planning for Upazila Parishad so that it can serve effectively to the citizen in line with SDGs.

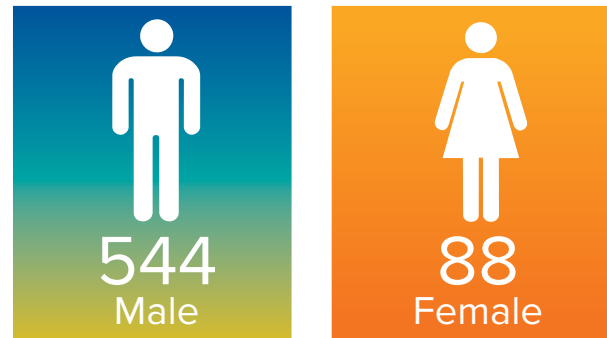


Fig: Participation in consultation workshop

A total of 632 participants (male-544, female-88) attended in the consultation workshops including DDLGS, Upazila Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, Upazila Nirbahi Officers, line department officials, Union Parishad Chairmen and Secretaries, heads of educational institutions, civil society members, NGO representatives, various project personnel and journalists. The Deputy Commissioners in eight districts were present in the workshop as chief guest. They also provided instruction to the UZP functionaries for timely formulating of their annual and five-year planning.

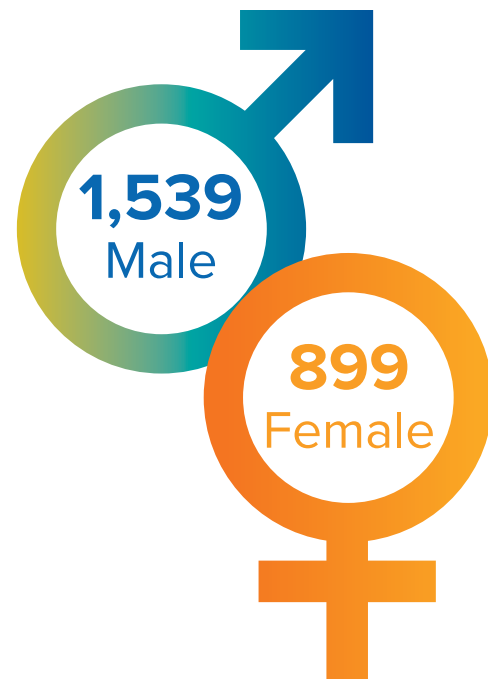
Horizontal Learning for Strengthening Capacities of Local Government Functionaries

A total of five learning visits with UZP and UP Chairmen, UZP Vice-Chairmen, UP Secretary, UNO, DDLG and DF were organized by EALG in 2019. These learning visits provided an opportunity to LGI representatives to see the innovations and good practices available in other Upazila and Union Parishad. The participants gathered knowledge about the operating system of digital Union Parishad, strategy for effective local resource mobilization, online services providing by UP and UZP, digital library and meeting room and their services, child corner facilities, well equipped health center, etc. By visiting good practices and innovations in different corner of the country, the UP and UZP functionaries were highly encouraged to apply those learning through their LGIs.

Output 3: Downward Accountability of the UZP Committees is Strengthened through Effective and Inclusive Public Engagement Mechanisms and Practices

Organized Open Budget Session at UZP Level

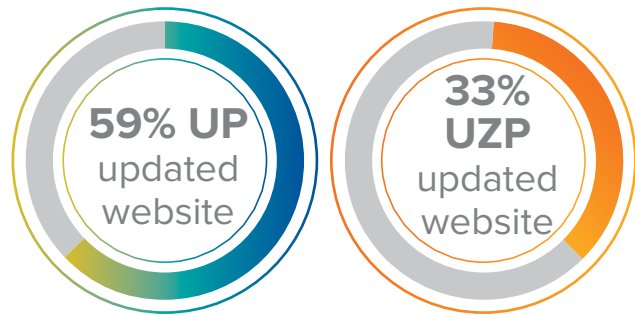
To ensure accountability, transparency and people's participation in planning and budgeting process, EALG organized a total of 16 open budget session at Upazila level. A total of 2,438 participants (male: 1539, female: 899) including UZP, UP and Municipality representatives, line department officials, NGO representatives, bank representatives, entrepreneurs, civil society representatives, students, youth, religious leaders, homemaker, farmer, fishermen, indigenous, poor and marginal people attended the budget sessions and helped prioritizing the local development interventions. EALG as like as UP trying to institutionalize the open budget session at UZP level. Hence, the open budget session ensured the community engagement in the annual budgeting process and disclosed budget line and planned activities to the citizen and with different stakeholders. It is mentioned that, Upazila Parishad under EALG are now regularly announcing their draft annual budget to receive public opinion having technical assistance from EALG project.



Capacity Strengthened for Updating UP and UZP Website

Bangladesh Government launched the national web portal with a view to creating connected public websites that reduce the time and cost. This Portal unites 46,500 government offices virtually, features detailed information on nearly 400 services from 36 ministries, which is also linked with local government websites, offering step by step information on service delivery and downloadable forms for availing services, Bangladesh is encouraging citizens to use technology for accessing information and availing public services. Linking with that, the UZP and UPs have their own websites in the national web portal to disclose information of their activities. Unfortunately, most of the UZPs and UPs web portal are not updated as per the project assessment.

EALG provided training to UP and UZP officials on updating their web portals. A total of eight batches trainings were held where 501 participants (male: 467, female: 34) attended. Through the training the UPs and UZPs representatives realized the importance of keeping the respective portal update and the participants requested to organize regular meeting to monitor the process. After the training, up gradation process of web portal has improved and identified the oversight mechanism of UP and UZP officials. This is to mention that govt. national web portal linked with local government websites, offering step by step information on service delivery and downloadable forms for availing services which encourages citizens to use technology for accessing information and availing public services. Unfortunately, many of the UZPs and UPs web portals under EALG areas were not updated as per the assessment done by EALG in 2019. Hence, project provided training on updating web portals to the respective UZPs and UPs technical bodies. After receiving the training, a total of 149 UPs (59%) and 06 UZPs (33%) updated their websites.



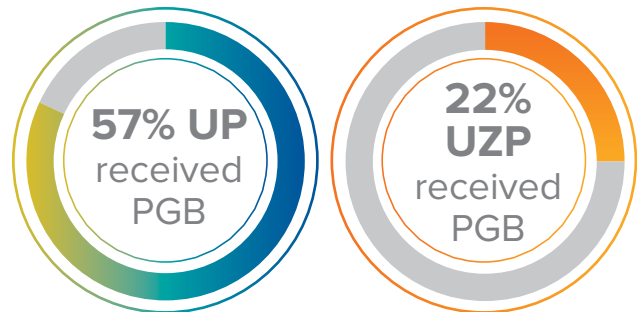
Performance Indicators of UZP & UP, Ward Shava and Public Hearing

To provide guidelines for organizing Ward Shavas, public hearings and to discuss the processes of providing grants by evaluating performance indicators of UZPs and UPs, a total of fourteen (14) orientation workshops were organized. Total 723 key functionaries including male (661) and female (62) of UPs and UZPs for improving their performance in line with the indicators provided by LGSP-III and organized. During the workshop, the performance indicators in details were discussed and instructed by DDLGs to improve their performance accordingly. In addition, the workshop also emphasized to follow the comprehensive guidelines on effectively

organizing Ward Shava and Public Hearing. It is to mention that, a total of 136 (57%) project UPs and 04 UZPs (22%) received PGB from LGSP-III and UGDP respectively in 2019. It is also expected that, the number of getting performance grants by UPs and UZPs will be increased in 2020.

Install SDGs' Billboard to Enhance SDG Awareness and Localization

To disseminate seventeen goals and create awareness of SDG among community people, EALG installed a total of one (01) in 2019 at Upazila premises. The Bangla text including goal wise logos were borrowed from Planning Commission, Bangladesh and installed mega billboard beside UZP Bhaban. The billboard is contributing to create mass awareness on SDGs as well as facilitating public representatives to integrate SDGs into their planning process. To enhance their awareness on SDGs, project installed billboards at UP and UZP level. This billboard was installed in front of UZP premise and 17 SDG goals were disseminated in Bangla among community people.



Output 4: The Ability of Women Upazila Parishads Members to Fulfill their Role and Duties in Council Work Strengthened

Male Councilors and Public Representatives Sensitized about Gender Awareness

EALG from its previous and current experience found that, gender awareness and analysis training is useful at both UP and UZP level. The training in that way can sensitize the public representatives and integrate gender issues in their planning process. To keep those in mind, EALG organized a series of gender awareness and analysis training for elected representatives both in 2018 and 2019. Among them, sixteen batches training on gender awareness conducted at district level in the reporting period, where a total of 628 (male-625 female-3) participants attended. During the training session, gender discrimination and the strategies to address those both at societal and institutional (UP & UZP) level; gender responsive Parishad activities and

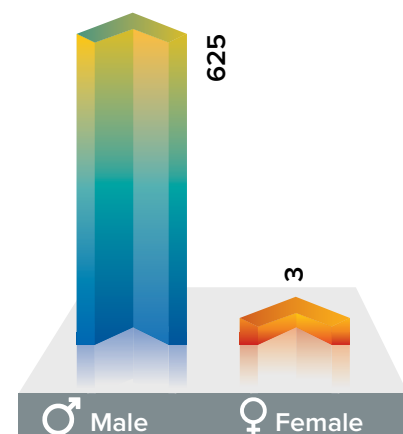


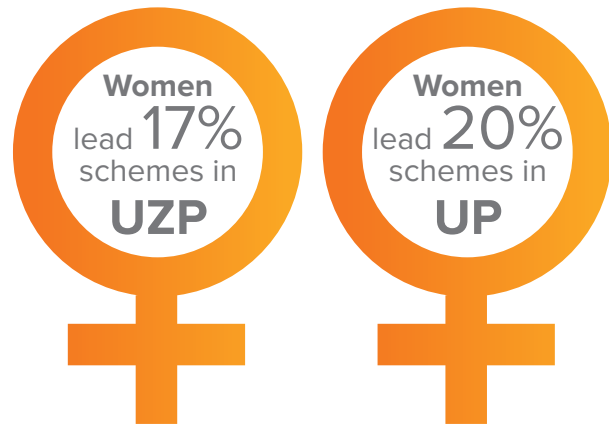
Fig 2: Gender awareness training participants

services; gender responsive planning and budgeting; violence and role of public institutions to address those; etc. were widely discussed. The training created a momentum and enhanced wider awareness on gender and women issues and after the training women Upazila Parishad Members actively engaged to fulfill their roles.



Support Women Development Forum (WDF) for holding Bi-monthly meeting

The Women Development Forum (WDF) to enhance gender responsive process established at Upazila and District level in 2013 through our earlier UZGP and UPGP projects. The WDF comprised of elected women representatives of UP, UZP and Municipality has been revitalized by EALG in 2018. With a view to regular functioning of WDF and undertaking gender responsive interventions, bi-monthly meeting with executive committee were organized at different Upazilas under eight districts. A total of nine meetings conducted during this reporting period where 112 (female-99, male-13,) participants



attended. Through their bi-monthly the committee members shared their learning experiences and successes achieved by WDFs, discussed about future action plans and set strategies to implement gender responsive schemes, selection of schemes can be proposed to Upazila Parishad, plan proposal of schemes under 3% ADP allocation, awareness raising against VAW, etc. etc. It is to mention that, WDF during the reporting period addressed 84 early marriages, 53 sexual harassment and 35 other types of violence against women in their locality.

According to the M&E data, WDF members especially UZP female Vice Chair led 17% schemes while 20% schemes of UPs were led by women members of UP that reveals gradual improvement of women's leadership in local development activities. In addition, WDFs mobilized 18,50,000 BDT in 2018-19 fiscal year under 3% ADP allocation and provided Income Generating (IGA) IGA training to 199 poor and vulnerable women in their locality.



Around 2600 people took oath through Orange Campaign against VAW simultaneously in 18 Upazilas

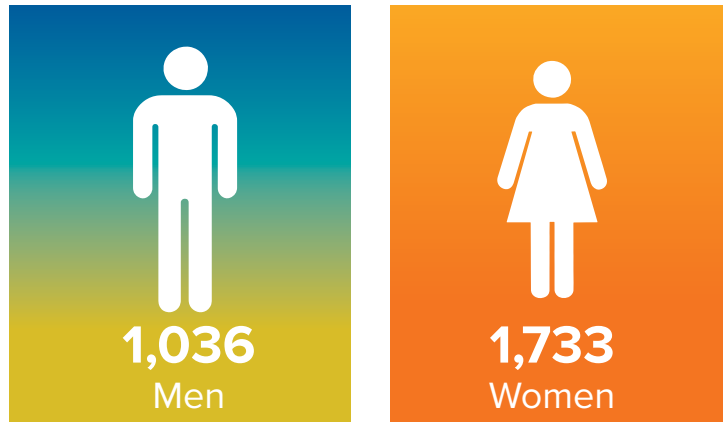


Fig: Orange campaign participants

With a view to promoting gender equality and addressing violence against women a total of 18 Orange Campaigns organized at 18 pilot Upazila under nine districts as part of global-16 days of activism against gender-based violence. The aforementioned campaigns were celebrated by organizing rallies, discussion sessions, video exhibitions, stage drama and taking oaths against VAW. Deputy Director-Local Government, Upazila Parishad Chairman, Line Department Officer, Vice Chairmen of Upazila Parishad, UP Chairman, Women Representative of UP and Municipality, UDC members, NGO representatives, teachers, Imam, Kazi and other professionals were attended the program. A total of 2,568 participants (male: 1036, female: 1,733) attended the eighteen awareness campaigns. All of the participants were provided Orange Card and Cap with national and local hotline number and messages against VAW. The participants also requested to call the toll-free hotline number whenever they face any violence against women and girls.





2,568
Participants



Component 2: Sustainable and Democratic Union Parishad (SDUP)

Output 1: Capacity of Targeted UPs is Significantly Strengthened to Provide Democratic, Transparent, Accountable, Responsive and Pro-Poor Services

Training Organized for UP Standing Committee (SC) Members

EALG organized a total of two hundred fifty-one batches training program during the reporting period where 7,301 participants of standing committee members including male (5,607) and female (1,694) attended. As the 13 UP Committees are not fully functional and around 91 members of those Committees were not oriented about their roles and responsibilities, EALG organized training for the functionalization of UP SCs. The Resolution/ToR of UP SCs approved in 2015 by LGD was taken as guiding document for the training. Therefore, the committee members have been well informed about their responsibilities, importance of the standing committees and the procedures for conducting meeting.

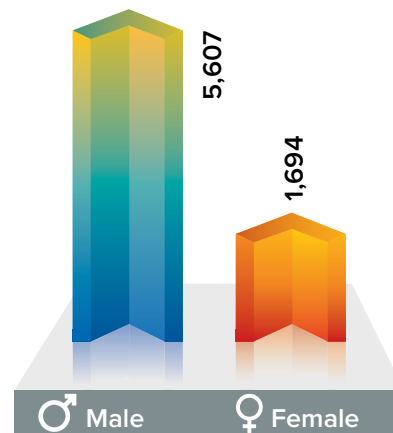
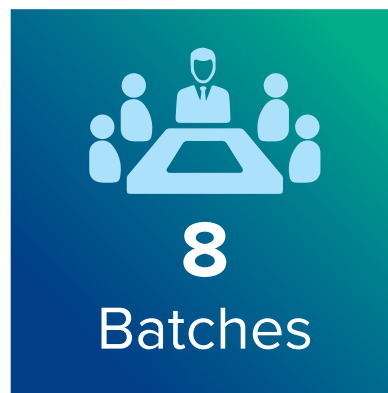


Fig 2: Gender awareness training participants

Organized Meetings for Activation of UP Standing Committees

To functionalize the UPs Standing Committees (SC) a daylong meeting with the UP Chairs and Secretaries were held at district level. A total of eight batches meeting held in last year for activation of UP SCs where a total of 489 participants attended. Through these meetings, participants got formal orientation about their roles and responsibilities as per UP Act, committee formation process and organizing SC meetings regularly. Deputy Commissioner (DC) and Deputy Director of Local Government were present there as chief and special guests and advised the respective UP Chairs and Secretaries for regularly organizing the SC meetings. As EALG is working for improving local governance, the full activation of UP SCs is needed to ensure participation of local experts in UPs planning process.





489

Participants



Gram Police Inspired and Enlightened

Near about 10 Gram Police are working under a Union Parishad to serve people on behalf of UP as well as to support local administration for maintaining law and order situation in the locality. Though they are seldom engaged in capacity development initiatives, even many of them do not properly know about their prescribed roles and responsibilities. Considering the context, EALG provided training to 2,261 Gram Polices (male-2,149 and female-112). During the training program, the Gram Police members were oriented about their service structure, career opportunities, discipline and code of conduct, social safety and security, role and responsibilities, supporting local people during emergency, etc. They also became oriented about collection of UP tax, fees and addressing early marriage, sexual harassment in their locality.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Additional Superintendent of Police (Add. SP), Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP), Officer in Charge and many other govt. officials facilitated their training sessions. The Gram Police members during the session shared their problems and challenges with their senior officials who in many areas resulted to ensure their bicycle, uniform, torchlight and other facilities. One of the Gram Police members during the training reflected about the training that, "Usually this type of orientation is not organized for us; we feel empowered to participate in the training and the information achieved so far." After the training, they found more inspired to serve for the local people.



- Code of conduct
- Service structure
- Career opportunities
- Emergency support
- Role and responsibilities
- Social safety and security



4486 (88%) schemes implemented by 251 UP from Ward Shava

With the aim of ensuring public participation and develop local plans by addressing local level feedbacks, (EALG) project provide technical assistance in organizing Ward Shava in Union Parishads. Ward Shava helps to include grassroots level needs and problems in local planning by conducting effective Ward Shavas to increase transparency, efficiency and accountability as well as play a leading role in establishing good governance. A total of two thousand eight hundred fourteen Ward Shavas were held in the selected UPs during this period where 3,12,105 participants including male-1, 97,037 and female-1, 15,068 attended. During the Ward Shava, the sector-wise development proposals for UP annual planning (2019-20) were received from citizens. The Ward Shava is a systematic process of democratic practices by giving opinion by people for local development. Participants during the Ward Shava included UP Chairmen and members, Standing Committee members, local elites, students, farmers, fishermen, homemakers, youths, day labors and marginalized population. Lists of priority schemes were prepared in the Ward Shavas, which were expected to be adopted in the annual plans of the Union Parishads.

A total of 5,553 schemes implemented by 251 UP for the year of 2018-19. Out of which, 4486 (88%) schemes were taken from Ward Shava. The district wise scheme proposal and implementation status is given below:

UPs Schemes Information

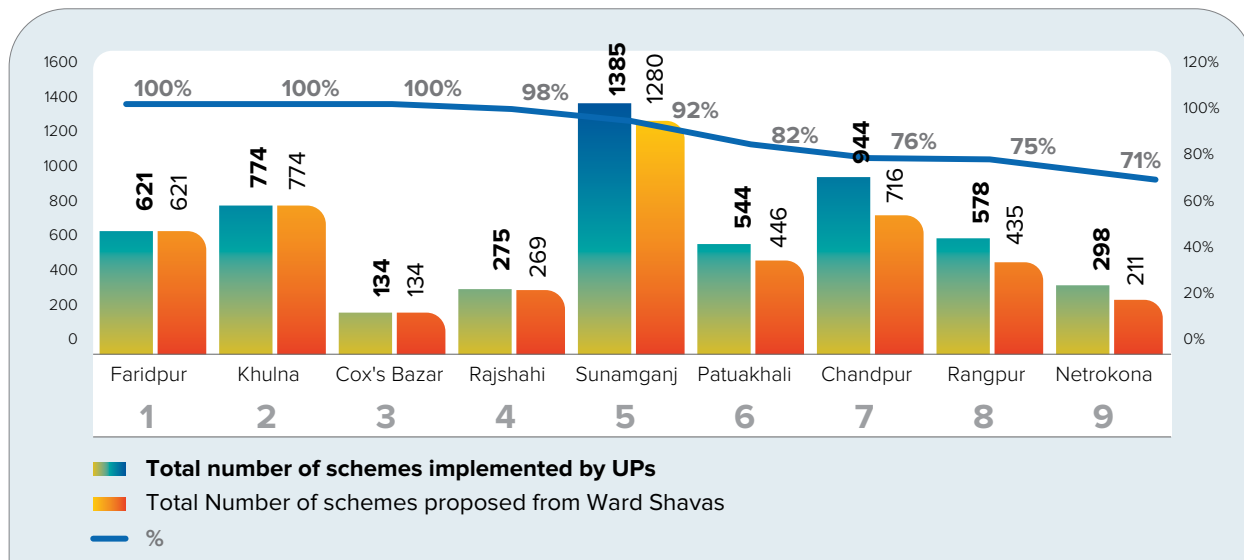


Fig: Ups Schemes information.



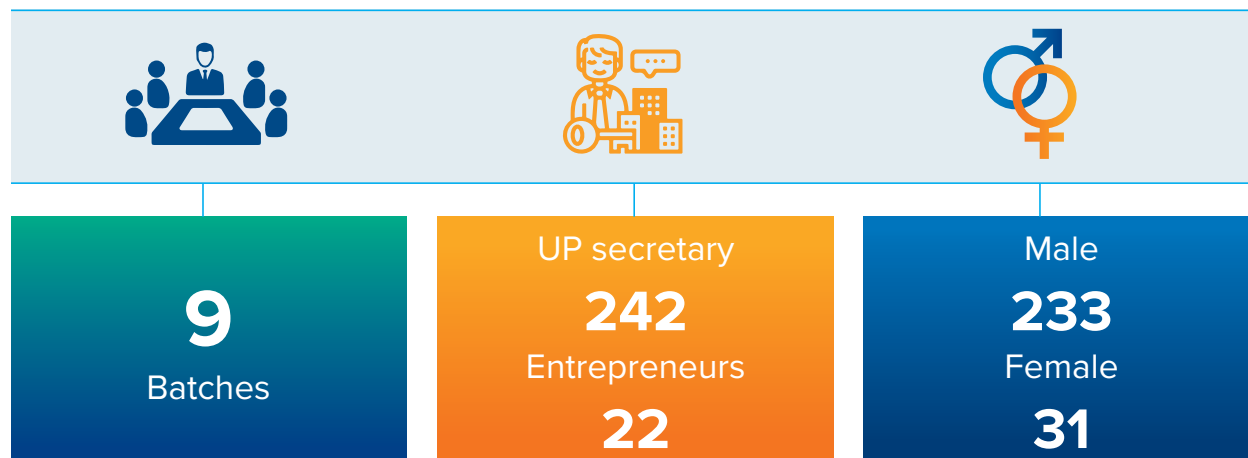
4486

Schemes



Enhanced Capacity on Advanced ICT to UP Secretaries and Entrepreneur

EALG provided advanced ICT training to UP Secretaries for enhancing their capacity to use updated technology in their office management. A total of nine batches of trainings were provided to 242 UP Secretaries and 22 entrepreneurs (male: 233, female: 31) in 2019. In addition to the common issues of ICT, the UP Secretaries were provided hands on training on e-mail communications, internet browsing, maintenance of Facebook page, common issues of hardware and troubleshooting etc. After receiving this training, UP Secretaries were not only using those skills in their day-to-day activities, but also in updating their websites and maintaining official Facebook pages. It was revealed through post assessment that, the communications skills of UP Secretaries were increased and many of the UP Secretaries expressed their satisfaction to receive such kind of useful training organized by EALG.



Union Parishads Published Annual Report First Time

Despite having legal obligations of preparing annual report, it was observed none of the UPs publish annual report earlier. EALG therefore provided technical assistance with detail guideline and orientation to prepare and publish the annual report on a pilot basis. A total of 32 annual reports for 2017-18 and 60 annual reports for the year of 2018-19 published.

The publication and dissemination of annual reports enhanced transparency and accountability to the citizen regarding UP annual budget, its expenditure and development interventions of their locality. The respective UPs also achieved extended skills by preparing and publishing their annual reports.

Output 2: UPs are Increasingly Investing in Climate Resilience by Identifying and Prioritizing Resilience Measures in the UP-Development Plan and their Implementation

Periodical Coordination Meeting held with Field Staff of UP line Agencies

EALG organized a total of sixteen periodical coordination meetings with field staffs of UP line agencies and UP representatives. To review the progress of different UP line departments, identify and minimize the gaps among UPs and line departments, discuss about the lessons learned and prepare the next six-monthly planning were held in this reporting period. A total of 536 participants (male-424, female-112) were present in those meetings including line department officials transferred to UPs, UP Chairmen, UP female members, UP Secretaries and representatives of other projects working for local governance.

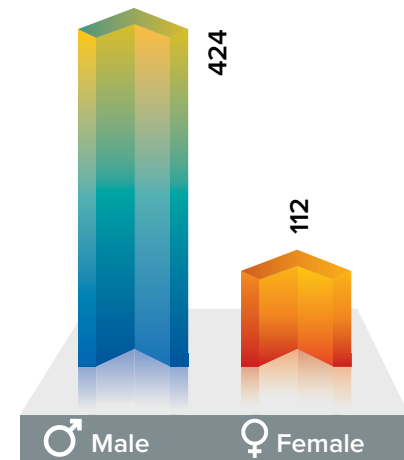


Fig: Coordination meeting participants

Training to CSO/CBO Members on the Role and Functions of LGIs

A total of 80 batches with 3,513 participants (male-2,640, female-873) were provided orientation training on local governance so that they could be aware about the role and functions of LGIs. This training helped to increase interest and participation of civil society in the local government activities and increase the transparency and accountability of LGIs.

The UP and UZP Act, different committees and their formation and functions, Ward Shava and Open Budget, Public Hearing and the role of citizen to be engaged in participatory programs. This training helped to increase interest and participation of civil society in the local government activities and increase the transparency and accountability of LGIs. The participants received the training afterwards extended their supports to the Parishads for organizing participatory programs to enhance people's satisfaction in the locality.

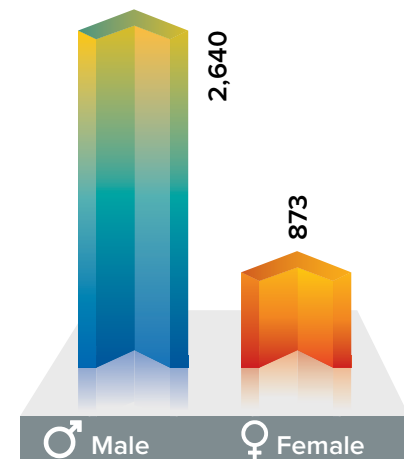
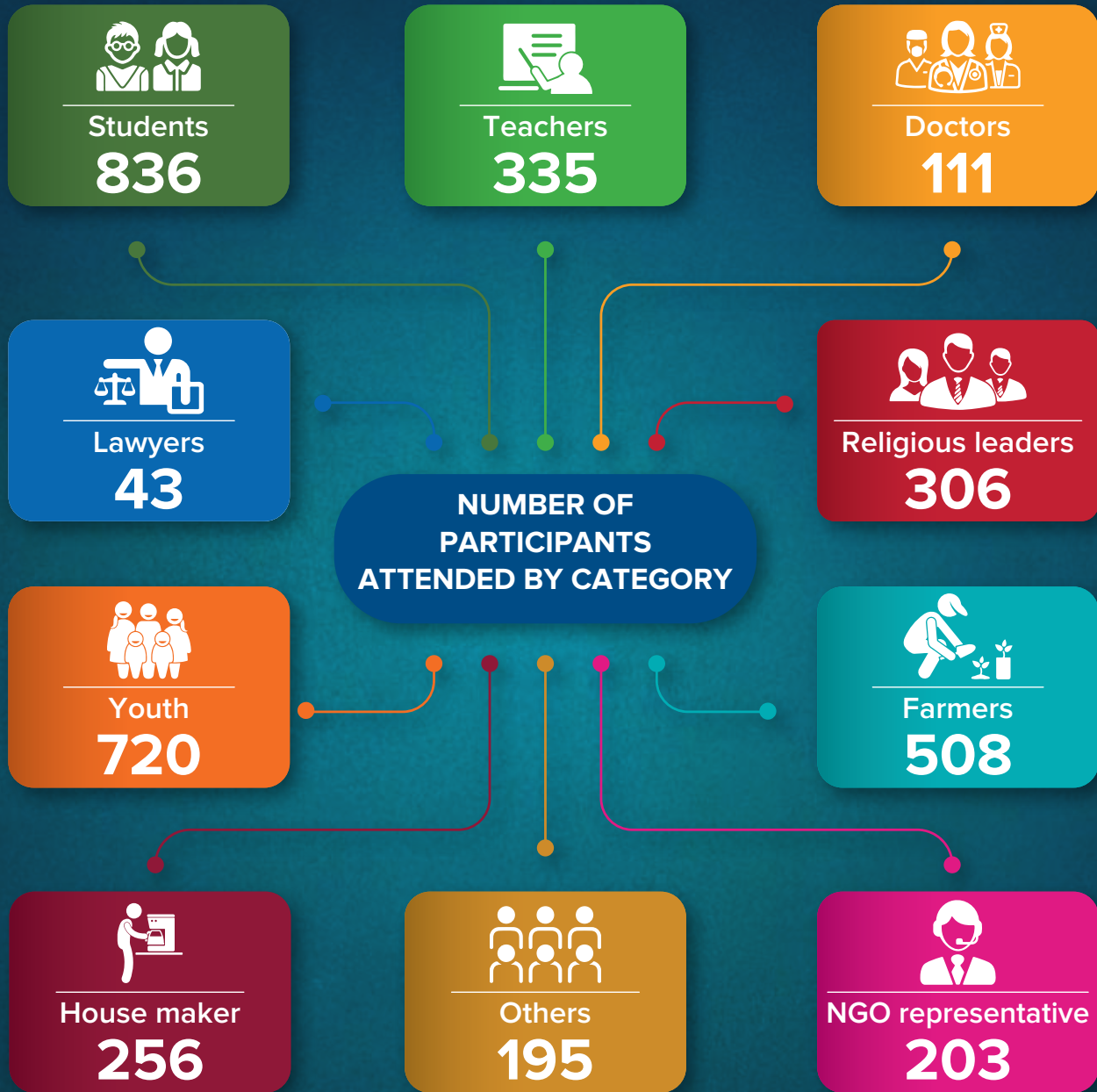


Fig: Orientation training participants on LG



Training on Climates Issue with UP Functionaries

Climate change is considered globally as one of the most difficult challenges faced by humankind. In the context of global climate vulnerability, Bangladesh is regarded as one of the most vulnerable country. In connection with this, EALG project organized 28 batches of training sessions on climate change and its impact issue with UP functionaries reporting year. A total of 1,225 (male-957, female-268) participants attended the training sessions. After the training, UP public representatives and secretaries acquired understanding of local climate risks and hazards (flood, cyclone, thunder, salinity, drought, etc.) and the strategies to address those vulnerabilities. During the training sessions, the participants completed exercise on how to address climate issues in their planning process. After the training, many of the UPs revised and prepared their annual plan.

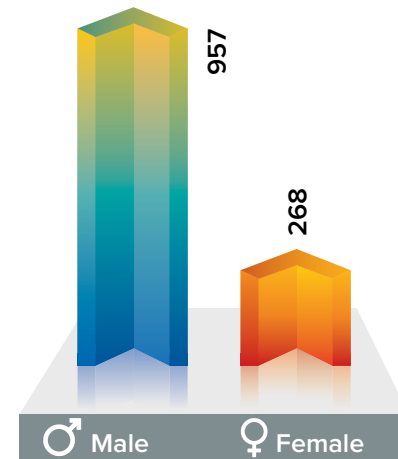


Fig: Training participants on climate change and its impact issue

Output 3: Poor and Marginalized Citizens, Including Women, are empowered to Make Decisions on Local Development and Political Participation

228 Grievances/Complains instantly resolved through Public Hearing

EALG for the first time introduced public hearing at UP level to enhance transparency and accountability of Union Parishads. EALG piloted public hearing in 6 UPs of among 09 districts. Through 28 hearings, a total of 6686 citizens attended and 443 issues rose by the citizen while 228 issues were resolved instantly. Some of the issues raised through the hearing were-providing VGD/VGF to the proper beneficiaries, installation of tube-well to school premises, construct connecting road to community clinic, addressing sexual harassment from the locality, stop drug addiction, shifting poultry firm nearer from school campus, etc.



28

Hearings



6,686

Citizens attended



443

Issues raised




228

Issues resolved

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের কার্যক্রম ও সেবা সংক্রান্ত গণশুনানি

স্থান: কোলকোন্দ ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ, গঙ্গাচড়া, রংপুর তারিখ: ১৪ নভেম্বর ২০১৯।

সহযোগিতায়: কার্যকর ও জবাবদিহিমূলক স্থানীয় সরকার (ইএএলজি) প্রকল্প

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

DANIDA



SDGs on Billboard

To disseminate seventeen goals and create awareness of SDG among community people, EALG installed a total of 21 billboards in 2019 at UP premises. The Bangla text including goal wise logos were borrowed from Planning Commission, Bangladesh and installed mega billboard beside UP Bhaban. The billboard is contributing to create mass awareness on SDGs as well as facilitating public representatives to integrate SDGs into their UP-planning process.



Raised People's Voice through Open Budget Session at UP Level



UP Open budget session is one of the pre-requisites for ensuring community participation in the development process. As per UP Act-2009, each UP will formulate their budget at least 60 days before starting of the financial year. A total of 240 open budget sessions were held in 240 Union Parishads during this period with the involvement of different section of community people where a total of 46,648 participants (male: 30,320, female: 16,328) attended. The objective of the budget session was to ensure community engagement in the budgeting process and wider disclosure of information of UP's planned activities for a year. After sharing the proposed budget, open discussions were held for receiving opinions, suggestions and comments from participants. These budget sessions created the opportunity to raise voices of women, poor and marginalized people. The UP's open budget session also enhanced local democracy, transparency and accountability to the people.

Output 4: Policy Dialogue at National and Local Level Engaging Civil Society and Other Stakeholders Initiated to Promote Democratic and Accountable Service Delivery at the Local Level

Orientation held on RTI Act for Disclosure of Information

To promote transparency & accountability and reduce corruption in the public sector, orientation on Right to Information Act was provided to the UZP and UP representatives at UZP level. A total of fourteen orientation programs were held with 859 participants among which 624 were male and 235 were female. This orientation helped participants to enhance awareness of UP and UZP functionaries on citizens' right to information and the need for disclosure of information. As a result, the UP's and UZP's information disclosure through web-portal and social media has increased.

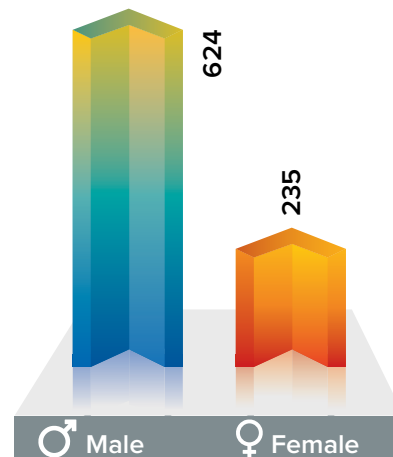


Fig: orientation participants on RTI Act

Orientation on Anti-Corruption Act with UP and UZP Functionaries

A total of sixteen batches of orientation program on anti-corruption act held with UP and UZP functionaries. The purpose was to develop awareness against corruption and to develop the moral attitudes and capabilities necessary to shape the civic anti-corruption attitudes, provide knowledge about the phenomenon of corruption and the problems posed by and the ways of dealing with corruption. The programs were organized with the participation of the Chairmen of the Upazila Parishads, the Vice-Chairmen, Government Officials, Chairmen and Secretaries of the Union Parishads. The workshops were presided over by DDLG where the honorable deputy commissioners were presented as a chief guest. Resource persons from National Information Commission in Dhaka facilitated the sessions going to the project districts. A total of 733 participants attended in these sessions, among them 644 were male and 89 were female.

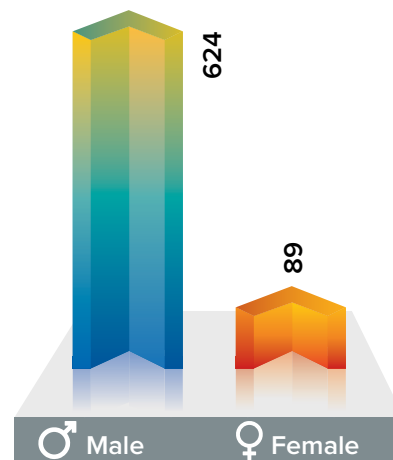


Fig: orientation participants on Anti corruption Act



733

Participants

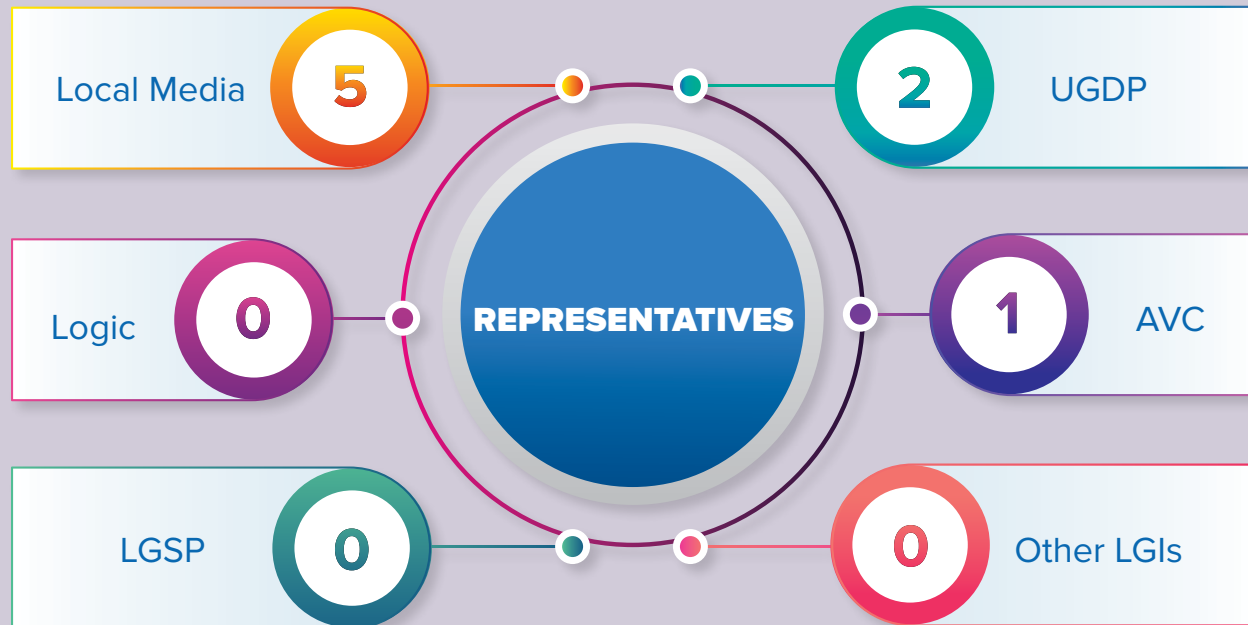


Component 3: Policy for Effective Local Governance (PELG)

Output 2: Public Engagement Strategies of UP/UZP/ZP Have Become Strengthened through Overcoming Institutional and Structural Challenges

Dialogue on Activating Ward Shava and Open Budget Session with Youth and CSOs

With the objective of developing strategies for activating Ward Shava of UPs and Open Budget Session for UZP, one dialogue session with youth and CSOs was held during in 2019. A total of 76 participants (male-55, female- 21) attended in the dialogue session. The dialogue session highlighted importance of Ward Shava and Open Budget Sessions of UPs and identified strategies for making those events more effective and useful. After getting inspiration from this dialogue, the participants are attending in Ward Shava and Open Budget Session in their respective areas. They are also providing their opinion highlighting their needs and aspirations for the local development.



Number of Participants attended by category

WDF Chairs
2

UP Chairs
27

Youth
27

CSO
members
12



Research Grant Encouraged Young Local Governance Researchers

EALG initiated the programme for providing research grants to young researchers to encourage researches on local government issues. The grant was administered by four reputed research institutions i.e., NILG, IBS, BARD & CGS. During the reporting period, training on research techniques and methodologies was provided to young researches and subsequently grants were disbursed.

A total of 52 young researchers (male 38, female-14) of different public universities received this training under this research institutes and received technical inputs prior to finalization of their research proposals perusing research on pertinent local governance issues. The researchers submitted their revised reports by incorporating feedback and the final reports would be published in the current year.



Annual Planning Workshop 2019 & 2020

Two Annual Planning Workshop were held in 2019. One is for 2019 which was held from 02-04 February 2019 at the Grand Sultan Hotel, Srimongal, Moulivibazar and another one was for the year of 2020, which was held from 18-20 December 2019 at BCDM, Rajendrapur, Gazipur. Mr. Amitabh Sarker, Additional Secretary, Local Government Division and NPD of EALG project chaired the workshops. DNPDs, Policy Specialist of DGC cluster and Project Coordinator and other PMU staff of EALG and all DFs and DDLG of eight districts, representatives from SDC attended the workshop.

During the workshop the progress of current year, challenges, and lessons learned were discussed and finalized the annual work plan of 2019 and 2020 and their implementation strategy as well. The workshops also finalized the effective implementation modalities of each activity to achieve the results.



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Conduction of Baseline Survey

A baseline survey was conducted by Policy Research Institute (PRI) during the reporting period. A total of 3800 House Holds (2,552 HHHs in treatment area and 1,248 HHHs in control area), 40 Upazila Parishads (16 UZPs in treatment area and 24 UZPs in control area) and 72 Union Parishads (40 UPs were treatment area and 32 UPs in control area) were taken information under the survey. The PRI submitted the final report on October 2019.

Staff Coordination Meeting

Two Staff Coordination Meetings of EALG Project were held respectively on 23 May at EALG Project Office, NILG Campus, Agargaon, Dhaka and 20 September 2019 at Kuakata, Patuakhali. Mr. Amitabh Sarker, National Project Director of EALG Project and Additional Secretary of LGD presided over the meeting. Head of Democratic Governance Cluster, UNDP, Policy Specialist of UNDP DGC cluster, DNPDs of EALG Project, DDLGs & District Facilitators of different districts under EALG project, Project Coordinator and other staffs of EALG PMU office were present in the meetings. Project Coordinator of EALG Project shared overall progress of project activities and achievements along with the challenges and lessons learned. It was discussed that most of the planned activities were implemented during the review period. The team in Patuakhali visited Ward Shava and Public Hearing by forming a two separate groups. After coming back from field, the participants shared their findings of monitoring visit and opinion for further improvement of the events.



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Project Implementation Committee Meeting Held

The Second Meeting of the Project Board/ Project Implementation Committee of ‘Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG)’ project was held on 15 September 2019 at the meeting room of EALG Project office, NILG Building, Agargaon, Dhaka. Mr. Amitavh Sarker, Additional Secretary, Local Government Division chaired the meeting.

A brief presentation on current progress of the activities was given to the members. Besides, the status of implementation of decisions of previous meeting; achievements and implementation challenges, sharing findings of assessment of UP/UZP websites; training for UZP functionaries and support the UZP planning process and potential areas of policy support to LGIs were discussed. The meeting decisions were: — provide training to UZP functionaries, strengthen monitoring of UP and UZP’s functions, regularly organize public hearing, support UPs for local resource mobilization, documentation of good practices, etc.

Project Steering Committee Meeting

The 3rd PSC meeting of ‘Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG)’ project was held on 03 November 2019 at the conference room of Local Government Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, MoLGRD&C. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Helaluddin Ahmed, Secretary, MoLGRD&C. The progress of decisions taken in last meeting; major achievement in 2019 and about the revised annual work plan for 2019 were discussed during the meeting.

The meeting approved some decisions, i.e. issuance of a circular to UP and UZP by LGD for regularly updating their websites, realignment of donors’ budget, recruitment of DF for Cox’s Bazar and Finance and Admin Officer for PMU, purchasing of motorcycle for DFs, starting 1st meeting of PAG, etc.

Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting

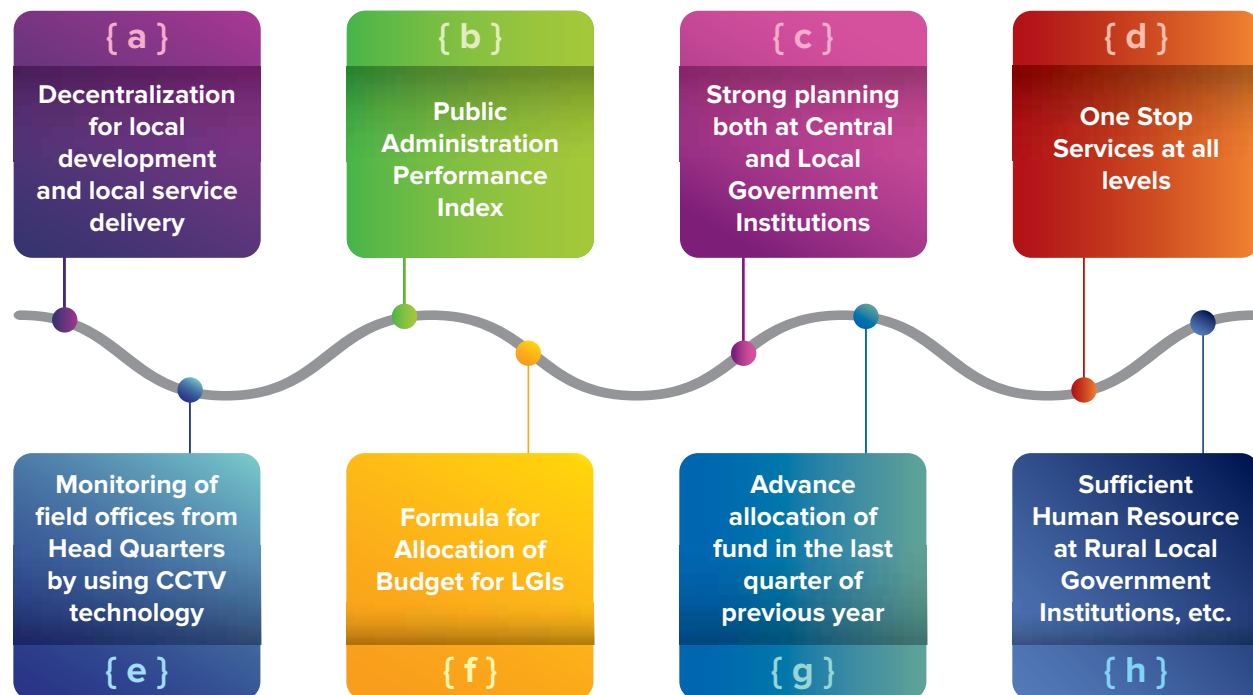
The Policy Advisory Group of ‘Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG)’ project was held on 23 December 2019 at the conference room of Local Government Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, MoLGRD&C. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Helaluddin Ahmed, Secretary, MoLGRD&C. Most of the members of PAG were attended the meeting. The discussed topics were background, objectives and scopes of PAG; sharing the activities of PAG under UPGP and UZGP project, and next action plan of PAG and strategy of implementing the plan by the new PAG.

The meeting approved some decisions, i.e. regular upgradation of EALG's activities to PAG and share findings of studies in PAG meeting, present updated information regarding the recruitment of Computer cum Accountant Assistant for UPs, organize the PAG at least two times in a year, allocating budget by LGD for organizing UP's and UZP's open budget sessions, preparation of income and expenditure reports, organizing SC's meetings of UP and UZP, WDF's meetings, Ward Shava, further examination of co-financing, etc.

Organized Exposure Visit of an LGD Delegation to Vietnam and Indonesia

EALG organized an exposure visit to Indonesia and Vietnam dated from 18-28 June 2019 by the participation of ten members. The participants including DNPDs, DDLGs, UP Chairs, project personnel and UNDP representative were attended the program. The objective of the exposure visit was to achieve development learning especially from local governance of Indonesia and Vietnam and initiate to apply the learning and good practices in Bangladesh as feasible.

The important learning points for possible replication of them in Bangladesh are in the following:



SUCCESS STORY

VACCINATION CAMPAIGN: NO ONE WILL BE LEFT BEHIND

Mrs. Radhamani Mardi said, “I am very happy to be able to vaccinate my 2 years boy Shadhin. Now we can give vaccination to our children easily in our area.”

Shri Radhamani Mardi added “I live in Shantipara village of Babudying under Mohonpur union, which is located at a distance of 5 km from the Union Parishad. The local contact with the Ward is very delicate and there is no transportation system except walking, as the village is separated from the main part of the Union by a narrow canal.

She also added that there is a total of 150 ethnic families live in the Shanti Para village where 17 km is muddy road. To get vaccine to the children people have to go to the vaccination center by crossing about 5 km across the creek. Due to the fact, no children were brought under the vaccination program till now. About 100 children in the village of 3-5 years have not received any vaccination.

One day Shri Radhamani Mardi attended in the Ward Shava, organized by EALG project, where she raised the absence of immunization program in their locality. Mr. Manwi, a neighbor of Shri Radhamani also agreed with and supported her about the absence of immunization program.

Afterwards, many of the villagers supported the issue and demanded for regular immunization program in their locality. Later, Md. Mustafa Hossain contacted with the chairman of the Mohonpur Union Parishad and Mr. Shimul Akter the Executive Officer of Godagari Upazila. In consultation with UNO, Dr. Mezbahul Haque, Upazila Health Officer of Godagari decided to ensure vaccination program for all children in the area.

Under the leadership of Mr. Md. Abdul Hai, Health Supervisor, by including Upazila Health Officer formed an eight (8) members team. The team successfully completed the vaccination campaign on 02 November 2019 in 4 spots in the locality. A total of 61 children then got vaccine for the first time. The Union also ensures the birth registration of all vaccinated children so that the next dose can be given.

The people of Babu Dying village also demanded a permanent vaccination camp in their area. It has already been presented at the Upazila Parishad meeting and a permanent vaccination camp is under process. Until the camp is set up, the Upazila Health Officer advised them to provide next doses regularly on a schedule date.



The chairman of the Union Parishad said, “People are now coming to Union Parishad more than ever before. Especially people from the ethnic group were afraid to come to UP. Currently they understand that basic citizen services are available in UP. As a result, they are giving their opinion at the Ward Shava regularly.”

He also added “The issue was brought to the notice of the Union Parishad as it was presented at the Ward Shava implemented through the EALG project. It’s been a great job.”



SHAHEENUR: A WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

“Before I could understand anything, my parents arranged marriage for me. I ran away from my house and took shelter at my uncle’s house. But I could not save myself as my parents bring me from there and arranged marriage without my consent”, Shaheenur Khatun, a women entrepreneur of Auchpara Union Parishad said.



Shaheenur was studying in seventh grade when she got married. After 2 years of marriage, her husband divorced her at that time she already become a mother. Since, she has been living at his father’s house. She carried out her expenses by working in a poultry farm in Palopara, where she got 3000 tk. as a monthly salary. Shaheenur is now working as a female member of the Auchpara Union Parishad.

After receiving gender training organized for UP and UZP representatives by EALG project, Mst. Mazeda, female member of the reserved seat also recommended to Mr. Jan Mohammed, Chairman to appoint her as the woman entrepreneur of the Auchpara Union Parishad.

Mst. Mazeda said, “I was aware about her condition and I felt to do something for her. On that feelings, I recommended to the chairman to appoint her as a women entrepreneur of the Union Parishad as she is educated and hard working.”

Later Mr. Jan Mohammed, Chairman of the Auchpara Union Parishad appointed her as the women entrepreneur on 25 august 2019 based on the recommendation. Before joined as an entrepreneur, she worked as a female member of union Parishad.

Currently, as an entrepreneur, Shaheenur involves in various developmental activities of the local government. In the Union Parishad, she is earning six thousand takas (6000 taka) by serving the people who come for various civic services like birth registration, citizenship certificate, trade license etc.

“As my husband left me, I used to work in people’s house. Now at the grace of God, I started to study again, and I took legal action against my husband. I am independent at present and my only one dream is to give my child a good life. I am thankful to the Union Parishad, because the UP created a job opportunity for me which will help me to be self-dependent,” Shaheenur added.



UNION PARISHADS TURNING HEALTHCARE FACILITIES AROUND

The health system of Bangladesh is experiencing multiple burdens of diseases, low service coverage, and a lack of effective protection mechanism from financial risk. However, good health and wellbeing is a major means of human development, and an end product of it.

At Badaghat (south) Union Parishad under Biswamvarpur Upazila of Sunamganj, the union's family welfare center is the only place for locals to avail health services.

Mina Rani Talukdar, a family welfare volunteer of Badaghat (south) Union Family Welfare Centre said, "Earlier, some people used to visit Family Welfare Centre only to collect primary information but now a lot of women, especially during pregnancy, visit the FWC for service, check-up and treatment. We are also serving a large number of adolescent girls from different villages."

She added, the health center's management committee and Union Parishad bodies regularly visit to help out with materials and emergency support. Mina mentioned that she is very happy to have this support from the UP chairperson and the Upazila Family Planning Officer.

United Nations Development Programme's Efficient and Accountable Local Government Project, funded by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), is working to localise the sustainable development goals.

The project educated UP bodies on raising awareness, ensuring health services, caring for adolescents, and undertaking separate schemes for marginalised communities. After the orientation, Union Parishad took initiative to form Family Welfare Centre Management Committee (FWCMC), after conducting needs assessment for better healthcare, monitoring, improvement of service delivery.

Before this intervention by Union Parishad, this facility could not handle any delivery cases due to lack of beds and instruments. Around 30 people would visit every day, but they would have to return without any solutions.

Today, the well-furnished and better-equipped welfare center is serving 100-120 people every day. It's handling around six to eight deliveries per month, while providing antenatal and postnatal care to 70-80 patients. It is educating around 200 adolescent girls on sexual and reproductive health.

Chairman Ershad Mia of Badaghat (South) UP said, “The UH&FWC is only center for providing primary healthcare service. Most people of my area are too poor to afford district hospitals. I have seen many women visiting my UP for collecting allowances, and I noticed that many of them are physically weak. That motivated me bring more investment into the welfare center, make it well-functioning to ensure service to the people.”



TRANSPARENCY ENSURED THROUGH FACEBOOK PAGES

Transparency and accountability are needed everywhere, also the Upazila and the Union Parishads Facebook can help to ensure transparency. As part of strengthening Upazila Parishads and Union Parishads, the EALG project has provided support for creating Facebook pages, so that they can inform citizens about the service delivery.

After providing advanced ICT training, a total of 246 Union Parishads among 251 and 15 Upazila Parishads among 18 created Facebook pages by the respective UP Secretaries and other officials. The Facebook pages were created for sharing information about the first point of contact to ensure citizens' easy access to relevant information.

The objectives of creating a Facebook pages were to make people aware about the services delivered by the UP and UZP as well as getting feedback from mass people to improve the quality of services provided by the respective institutions. EALG also intended to educate the individuals responsible on how to maintain and update the Facebook pages.

The Union Parishads Facebook page helped UP bodies to inform the public about the importance of the services of the Upazila and Union Parishads. They can also able to share information about the public service delivery of the union Parishads, where they can also receive feedback through the Facebook page.

Through these pages, anyone can easily access and learn about their activities and achievements. Now everyone is promoting their activities through the Facebook pages, as we can see the interventions of Union and Upazila Parishad from anywhere. As EALG is working for promoting transparency and accountability, the Facebook pages is a step to move them forward.



GIRLS PEDALING FOR EDUCATION



Girls in rural areas in Bangladesh often drop out of school or college as their educational institutions are far from where they stay. Like the girls in Kaunia Upazila of Rangpur district, who had to travel 4.5 kilometers on average every day to ensure their education. The poor girls couldn't afford money to commute to school or college. As a result, the girls get married at very early stage of their lives.

Noticing the difficult commute school and college-going girls have to make on a daily basis, Upazila Women Development Forum (WDF) came up with an eco-friendly, enjoyable solution by getting bicycles for the students.

Afroza Akter, an eighth-grader at Kaunia Mofazzol Hossain Govt. Model High School, said, "I had to spend Tk. 50-60 every day behind commuting. Now that I have a bicycle, I no longer have to spend extra money just to go to school."

Many of the girls said that this bicycle has increased their attendance in school and made it easier for them to be punctual.

This initiative was made possible by WDF through funding from Kaunia Upazila Parishad. Upazila Parishad provided Tk. 4,50,00 as part of its 3% annual allocation for WDF, which was used to purchase 50 bicycles for underprivileged girls from remote areas.

The bicycles were distributed among the students on May 26, 2019. Upazila WDF President, Angura Begum and Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Ulfat Ara Begum was present at the programme among other Upazila representatives. Olyma Akter Lima, a second-year student at Haragachh Degree College said, “I use this bicycle multiple times every day. Sometimes my mother rides as pillion. I feel happy to be able to help her, and I am proud that I get to commute on my own bicycle in the village.”

The Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) project of UNDP, funded by SDC and DANIDA re-activated WDF in 2018 through Upazila level workshops. Through this project, WDF members received training on SDG localisation and leadership. A total of 551 WDFs were established in the last phase of the project.

Passionate about sustainable development goal-4 which seeks to ensure quality education for all, WDF decided to ease the burden of young girls by providing them bicycles, so that they can focus on a bright future full of learning. “This initiative will help the girls stay in school, as it eliminated added expenditure and gave them more freedom to pursue education,” said Angura Begum.



SDGs DELIVERING A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Zohura Begum, who lives in Charbhadrasan Union of Faridpur, saw a colorful billboard with a few interesting points written on it. One that she could particularly relate with “quality education”.

The 43-year old Zohura, who works as a housemaid, always felt that education could have been her way out from the life she is leading. But according to her it is too late now, and she does not want a similar future for her two children.

“I could not get formal education and have to work as a housemaid. But I do not expect the same for my children and want a better life for them. That is why I spend a major share of my income on purchasing their books, uniforms, and stationery,” Zohura said.

She also pointed out that the school is quite far from her village making the commute difficult at times. “But it is a small price to pay for a degree that will one day enable my children to lead a better life,” she said.

“But not everyone in the village shares my enthusiasm for education. Girls and boys drop out of school at a young age like I did, which will only make their lives more difficult in the long run.”

The colorful billboard made an impression on Zohura, as she realized that education is not just a priority to herself, but that it is a priority for the nation also.

She showed the billboard to other parents in the village, and a conversation in the community about education, health, equality and more was initiated.

Many parents realized that taking their children out of school was not the right thing to do, while new parents made it a priority to send their young children to school as soon as they were old enough.

The billboard depicting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in their vibrant forms was an initiative of UNDP’s Efficient and Accountable Local Governance (EALG) project with the government, which provides support to local government institutions to integrate SDGs in their development plans and policies in a bid to reach the masses.

“It is not only the easy language that the villagers could understand or the vibrant colors that drew them in. What truly struck a chord with them was the message of hope that SDGs deliver,” pointed out Abu Shahin M Ashaduzzaman, the project coordinator of EALG.

“Beneficiaries must be aware of SDGs, in order to spread the message of sustainable development among everyone. Learning about the 17 global goals has made the villagers more aware of social and economic issues in their community,” he added.

“They can now engage in constructive and productive discussions on how to solve these issues and reap the benefits of sustainable development initiatives offered by their local government,” he ended on a note of hope.



LESSONS LEARNED/CHALLENGES

The project envisages several challenges and lessons learned during the reporting period which were in the following

CHALLENGES

- **Upazila Election:** Due to Upazila Election 2019 in Bangladesh it was a bit challenging period because many of the activities related to UZP could not be implemented.
- **Orientation to UZP representatives:** The newly elected UZP representatives did not receive any orientation on their roles and responsibilities and the project interventions, which affected effective implementation of project activities.
- **Organize Ward shava and open budget:** Few interests of UZP/UP functionaries in organizing Ward Shava and Open Budget Meeting in an effective manner.
- **Changes of relevant personnel:** Formation of Policy Advisory Group (PAG) delayed due to changes of Secretary, LGD in several times within few months.
- **Coordination:** Effective coordination of too many actors engaged in supporting development activities in Teknaf and Ukhia Upazilas.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **EALG-UICDP coordination:** EALG-UICDP coordination worked better in developing Planning Guideline for Upazila Parishads.
- **SDG localization:** SDG localization can benefit the poor and marginalized people if local government can plan better aligning with SDG off-tracked areas. However, LGIs requires backstopping support aligning of their development plan with SDG goals.
- **Changing attitudes and mindset:** Changing attitudes and mindset of UZP and UP functionaries is pivotal to address the needs of the poor, women, youth and disadvantaged section of people by allocation of resources.
- **Training to Standing Committee:** Training to Standing Committee members helped to understand their roles and functions but to improve and sustain quality engagement of SC members a Terms of Reference (TOR) for Standing Committee members coupled with budget support for meeting entertainment can make committees more functional.

WAY FORWARD

Last year EALG made a good progress in implementation of project activities. Through implementation of several activities and engagement of stakeholders, the project has demonstrated good results for improving governance system among the selected LGIs. Results and impacts of some of the activities will be visible after some time, if those can be continued. The project has been working closely with the Local Government Division, relevant stakeholders at central and field level to accomplish its planned activities and attain its expected results. In coming years, the project will continue increasing the efficiency and accountability of the Local Government Institutions in carrying out of capacity development activities.

The next year will also be the period when the mainstreaming of the project-focused MIS will commence. This will entail the scaling up of the use of IT enabled MIS supported by EALG and LGD, and commencing the transition to web-based platform that can be accessed by the MIE wing of the LGD.

The project will also be involved in key policy studies, for preparing a guideline for UZP Development and Coordination Committee (UZDCC) aligning with Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC); explore scopes through action research for develop guideline on achieving SDG's target; exploring potentials and challenges of integration of the UP, UZP and ZP. This year the project mid-term evaluation will be another priority, are expected to be completed in 2020.





STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN 2019

EALG's Finance Team follows the UNDP financial management and accounting policy, procedures and standards. National Project Director supervise the overall financial management and the central finance team in UNDP Bangladesh supports the project to ensure financial system compliance. The project has internal control system in place to detect and deter any form of corruption.

In this reporting period, the total allocated budget was USD 1,732,600 while EALG has expended 94.16% of it. The financial status of EALG for the reporting period covering the period January to December 2019 is as follows:

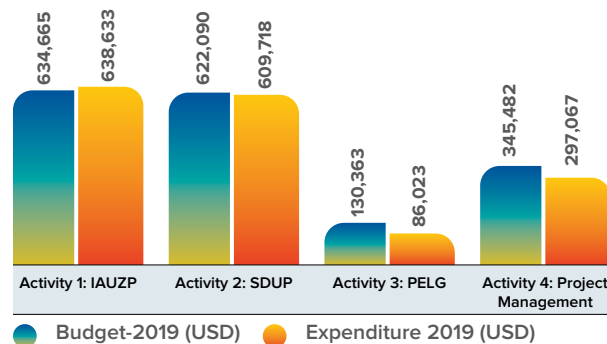
Activity	Budget-2019 (USD)	Expenditure-2019 (USD)	Expenditure in percentage
Activity 1: Inclusive and Accountable Upazila Parishad (IAUZP)	634,665	638,633	100.63%
Activity 2: Sustainable and Democratic Union Parishad (SDUP)	622,090	609,718	98.01%
Activity 3: Policy for Effective Local Governance (PELG)	130,363	86,023	65.99%
Activity 4: Project Management	345,482	297,067	85.99%
Total	1,732,600	1,631,441	94.16%

The table shows that, USD 634,665 has been allocated for the IAUZP component while it has expended 0.63% more than the anticipated amount during the reporting period. On the other hand, SDUP component has burned 98.01% of its allocated budget. The percentage of expenditure is relatively low in the PELG component as well as Project management activities, which is 65.99% and 85.99% respectively.

During this reporting period EALG has hosted one external audit for expenditure verification engaged by the Government of Bangladesh and an internal spot check by UNDP hired audit personnel.

EALG financial management control includes financial year planning and profiling, monthly budget monitoring of actuals against plan and contract and financial reconciliations. In addition, EALG has put in place defined financial management procedures for external payments and procurement.

Budget end actual expenditure of the reporting period (USD)







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