



Third Party Monitoring of the WB Country Assistance Strategy 2011-14

Dhaka, Bangladesh
December 2012

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List of Abbreviations:

BDPC	Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre
BWSP	Bangladesh Water Supply Program
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CRC	Citizen Report Card (CRC)
CSO	Civil Society organization
DPHE	Department of Public Health Engineering
ECRRP	Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Reconstruction Project
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
ft.	feet
FY	Fiscal Year
km.	kilometre
LGED	Local Government Engineering department
LGSP	Local Governance Support Program
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
MLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PH	Public Hearing
PSTC	Population Services and Training Center
RIC	Resource Integration Centre
RTI	Right to Information
RTIP	Rural Transport Improvement Project
SMC	School Management Committee
SSI	Semi-structured Interview
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UP	Union Parishad
WAMWUG	Ward Arsenic Mitigation and Water User Group
WB	World Bank

Introduction

This report summarizes the initial experience of applying Third Party Monitoring (TPM) to verify progress of the public programs and projects funded by the World Bank (WB) in the framework of its Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for the years 2011-14. CAS was developed in close collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh, civil society, the private sector, academia, and the major political parties. This second CAS for Bangladesh supports the country's ambitions to accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth, to strengthen governance at central and local levels and to improve service delivery.

While Bangladesh has recorded impressive economic and social gains in the past decade (including doubled per capita growth and significant progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals), improving governance and accountability in public finance and service management are the issues that are still high on the country's development agenda. Their enhancement would allow taking advantage of emerging public investment opportunities, including those related to International Development Assistance. These issues are in focus of the current CAS of the WB.

The TPM of CAS was commissioned by the WB in the framework of 'Placing Vulnerable Groups at the Centre of Result Monitoring of WB Supported Projects' initiative. The idea of this first TPM was to test the method for independent monitoring of the CAS implementation by verifying in the field the attainment of selected indicators of the CAS results framework.

The application of TPM is in line with the WB efforts to enhance the focus on results in its strategy and operations. TPM was recently introduced by WB as an additional monitoring tool that complements internal public project monitoring systems. It facilitates the collection of citizen feedback on the implementation of public investment projects and improvements in service delivery; it helps to gain a better understanding of which approaches work in practice; it helps identify unintended consequences, and helps utilize the knowledge of local communities.

TPM was conducted during the period of July 2011-June 2012 by the Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) with the support of four MJF partner civil society organizations (CSO) and independent experts.

The four MJF partner CSOs involved in TPM (the Population Services and Training Center, the Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre, the Resource Integration Centre and the Agrogoti Sangstha) have extensive experience in promoting various social accountability initiatives throughout the country.

Locations for monitoring were selected based on the partner NGOS suggestion from the list of rural communities where the government has completed or still implements projects with the WB financial support.

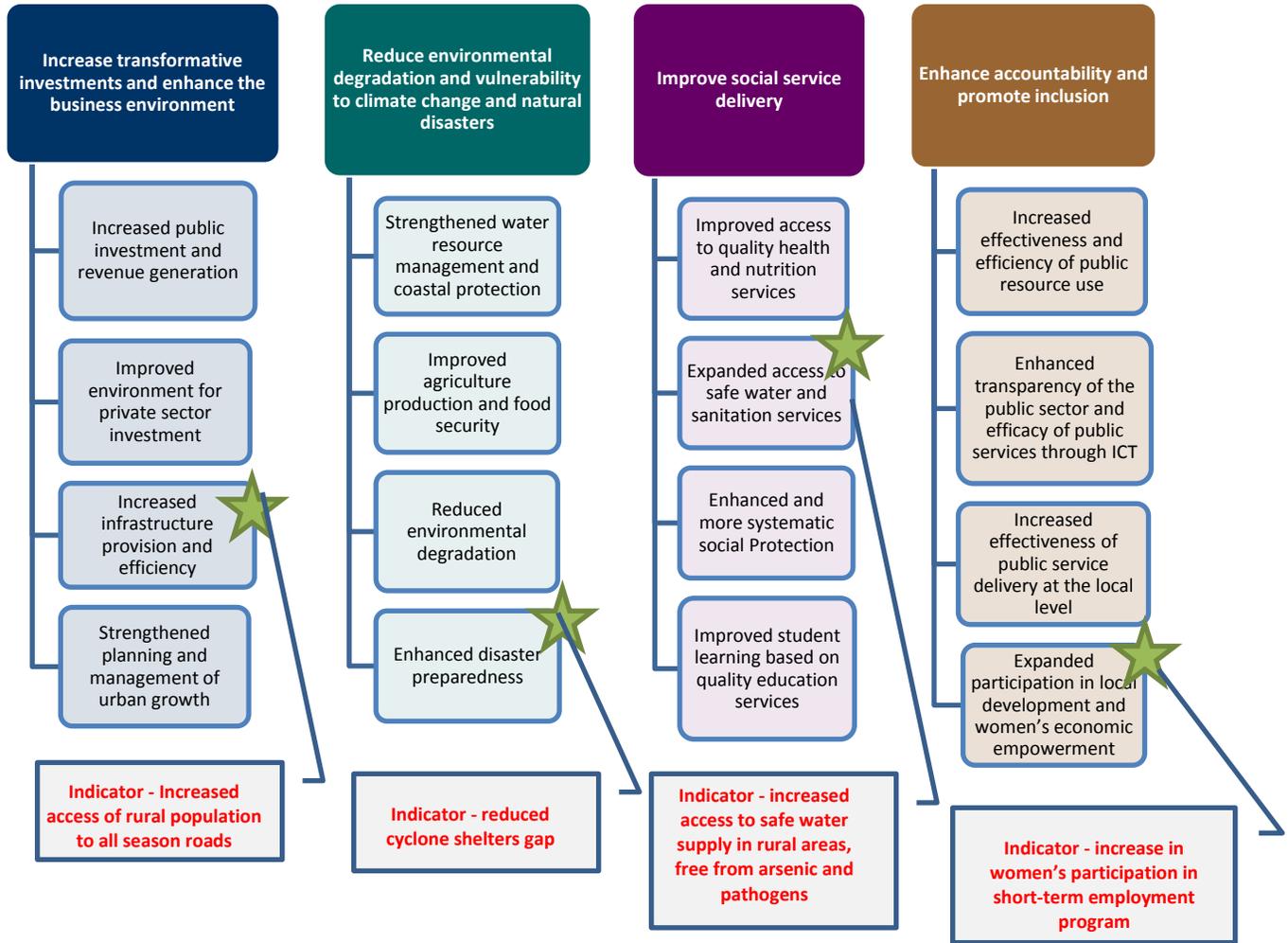
This report presents the TPM results. It is organized in the following way:

- The first chapter explains the TPM focus, methodology used and its limitations;
- The second chapter focuses on TPM findings that are organized by the monitored CAS indicators and suggests recommendations to different stakeholders;
- The third chapter summarizes lessons learned from this pilot CAS TPM initiative.

1 TPM Focus, Methodology and Limitations

Four indicators were selected from the framework – one from each pillar (Scheme 1).

Scheme 1: CAS FY 2011-14 framework and indicators selected for TPM



Although the TPM findings and recommendations presented in this report are relevant to particular projects, the goal of this TPM exercise was not to monitor the project's implementation on the ground. Rather, the goal was to monitor how practices on the ground contribute to the four selected TPM indicators related to access to all season rural roads, cyclone shelters, safe drinking water and women's employment opportunities.

The current TPM has a limitation. While the validity of TPM findings is ensured though inclusion of a large number of different stakeholders, given the small sample size (also due to time and budget limitations) and the qualitative research approach, the findings cannot be generated to judge the general success of relevant public projects and programs. However, the TPM highlighted a number of issues that are likely to be of relevance beyond the sample of communities.

The TPM findings rely on a set of the following data collection and validation methods systematically applied in each location where monitoring took place:

- *Citizen Report Card (CRC)*. CRC is participatory survey that provides quantitative feedback on user perceptions on the quality, adequacy and efficiency of public services.
- *Focus Group Discussion (FGD)*. An FGD is a discussion among 6-12 persons, guided by a facilitator, during which group members talk freely and spontaneously about a certain topic. It is used for qualitative data collection and verification of the survey findings.
- *Semi-structured individual and group interviews*. These interviews are conducted with key stakeholders to collect their views on issues under monitoring, and for validation of information received from the service users and beneficiaries.
- Acquiring information by the use of the *Right to Information (RTI)* Act that allows citizens and organizations to request information on the implementation of public programs and projects and obliges public institutions to disclose this information. This is an important source of official data (official documents, statistics, guidelines, etc.), access to which allows verification of perceptions of community residents and other stakeholders, and allows comparison of findings with official information.
- *Stakeholders' workshop*. The workshop is conducted with different levels of stakeholders to further validate information and to involve stakeholders in analysis and interpretation of received qualitative and quantitative information. The workshops are also used to elaborate on recommendations.
- *Public Hearing*. During the public hearing interested parties and any other persons that are affected by the public service under TPM has an opportunity to hear and discuss the findings, and deliberate on aspects related to the given service provision.
- In two cases *social mapping* was used. A social map reflecting on community layout, infrastructure, demography, local social structures and institutions facilitates discussion with community residents on access to services and infrastructure that are the subject of TPM.

The use of diverse methods allowing involvement of people from the variety of backgrounds, not only users but also local authorities, community leaders and activists, media, etc. aimed to increase the validity of TPM findings and to gain a better understanding of the impact of public projects on access to the services.

The field works were conducted between October 2011 and June 2012. All participants were given the information about the TPM and informed consent to participate was obtained. The analysis followed the principles of grounded theory: findings are grounded in the data received while recognizing that qualitative research is both inductive and deductive.

3 TPM Results Overview

A Increasing infrastructure provision, access and efficiency through increasing access of rural populations to all season roads

Focus and Methodology

The focus of the TPM under this component was the verification of user satisfaction with access to rural roads in a small number of selected localities, in particular, where the Rural Transport Improvement Project (RTIP) was implemented between May 2003 and June 2009 by the government of Bangladesh.¹ The location chosen for the TPM of the indicator was Belabo upazilla (Narsingdi district).

Field work for this component of the TPM was conducted by the Population Services and Training Center (PSTC) between October 2011 and June 2012. PSTC is a Bangladeshi NGO, active nation-wide in the area of improving livelihoods of the poor and socially disadvantaged.

The methods used for this TPM component include:

- *Citizen Report Cards Survey* that covered 384 randomly selected respondents from 3 unions situated along the Belabo Upazilla Union road (in total 269 men and 115 women).
- *FDGs*. Seven FDGs were organized with community residents in which 76 men and 16 women participated.
- *Semi-structured individual interviews* were conducted with the UP Council Chairman, Secretary, project officials and local leaders (3 women and 5 men).
- *Social mapping* was done in each Union with 55 men and 48 women contributing to the exercise.
- *Sharing meetings with stakeholders*. Four meetings were conducted with 45 men and 8 women taking part.
- *A public hearing* was organized in June 2012 with the involvement of LGED officials of Balabo and Shipur Upazilla and UP representatives, local activists, community representatives, local media, representatives of the School management committee, PSTC representatives and MJF representatives (total 37 men).

Brief Findings Overview

As a result of the monitoring activities the following findings were identified:

- *Access*. 99% of surveyed residents are fully or partially satisfied with the benefits associated with the road. The residents claim the road improvement boosted communication within the district center, improved access to health facilities and education facilities, positively influenced school/madrassas/college attendance of children and teachers, intensified use of agricultural machinery, improved peasants' access to outside markets and better prices for their produce, reduced transportation costs due to circulation of public buses, increased land value, enhanced entrepreneurial activity and employment opportunities.
- *Quality*. The survey registered 50% satisfaction with the quality of constructed roads and bridges. Among the points of dissatisfaction raised by residents were: insufficient road width,

¹ The project was jointly implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) at the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives

stagnation of water, lack of fencing on bridges, sharp curves. The verification of grievances confirmed deviation from the standard 16 ft. width of the road in some areas (along approximately 5 km of the 13 km road).

Often this deviation from the design was a result of insufficient cooperation of land owners whose land is crossed by the road. Several factors account for this, including an inadequate compensation scheme for land acquisition. 18% of land owners claim to not have received compensation, mainly due to relatively high cost related to receiving proof of ownership documents compared to the amount of compensation. Problems such as the generally low rate of compensation, owners previously understating their land value in order to avoid taxes, difficulties with establishing land ownership within a family, and the existence of “middle men” often account for the failure of residents to receive adequate compensation. Community residents believe that greater community involvement and responsibility in project implementation could facilitate a solution to the land issue.

- *Sustainability.* Community residents were not able to identify those responsible for the road and bridges maintenance.

Recommendations

Based on the TPM findings related to roads access, the following recommendations can be made:

To LGED

- Strengthen the information dissemination component in road construction projects and adopt a more participatory approach to road and bridges project implementation by expanding community participation and responsibility in the road planning committees. This would facilitate direct and more effective communication and mediation between government and community on the issue of land ownership and land acquisition.
- Strengthen capacities of UP Social Mobilization Specialists to engage communities.
- Sharpen focus on the safety of rural roads.
- Enhance implementation of the newly adopted national policies on management of the UP roads.
- Further apply TPM with communities’ involvement during rural road projects implementation, and integrate beneficiary feedback into the third party audits foreseen by the next phase of the RTIP.

To the Ministry of Land

- To simplify the process of land acquisition and issuance of compensation.

To UPs

- Take a more active role in identifying land owners whose land is subject to acquisition.
- Assess existing shortcomings of the roads and bridges and include them into the future capital investments plans.

To WB

- Apply TPM during project implementation to increase utility of findings, as opposed to ex-post (after project completion).

B Enhancing disaster preparedness through the reduction of the cyclone shelters gap

Focus and Methodology

The focus of TPM under this indicator was verification of the population's access to cyclone shelters in a small number of selected localities, particularly where the Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Reconstruction Project (ECRRP) has been implemented since 2008 by the government of Bangladesh.² The four locations were chosen from Morelganj Upazila (Bagerhat district) and included Baroikhali, Morelganj Sadar, Khaulia Union (where functioning primary schools were converted into multi-purpose cyclone shelters) and Panchokoron Union (where a new shelter is still being constructed).

Field work for this component of the TPM was conducted by the Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC) between October 2011 and June 2012. The BDPC is a Bangladeshi NGO specialising in the area of disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management. It has long-standing working experience in this area through supporting communities in Bagerhat district.

The methods used for the TPM included:

- *Social mapping.* Four social mapping exercises were conducted with communities in each of the monitored locations.
- *FGDs.* Twenty FGDs were organized (5 in each Union) with 163 men and 73 women participating.
- *SSIs.* SSIs were implemented with 20 key informants at local level (officials, councilors, community leaders, professionals, media).
- *Consultations with primary and secondary stakeholders.* Two consultations took place in Morelganj Sadar, Baroikhali, Panchakor and Kaulia Unions to validate received information, in which 118 men and 42 women participated.
- *A sharing workshop* was organized with all stakeholders (including LGED UP officials, other UPs representatives, school teachers, communities) in which 114 men and 46 women participated;
- RTI was used for acquiring information from government officials in 4 instances.
- *A public hearing meeting* was conducted on May 22, 2012 in Moralganj Sadar attended by 163 men and 37 women.

Brief Findings Overview

As a result of monitoring activities the following findings were identified:

- *Coverage.* Three multi-purpose cyclone shelters were renovated and one currently under construction has the capacity to host approx. 1,000 people each. The three renovated centres were previously used by the communities during the last cyclone in Morelganj Upazila (Bagerhat district) and included Baroikhali, Morelganj Sadar and Khaulia Union. Construction of the new shelter is still underway; delay in completing construction was identified by the Local Government Engineering Department and is now being addressed. The lack of experienced and

² The project is jointly implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and the Disaster Management Bureau (DMB), whereby each agency is responsible for particular components.

capable contractors is a major managerial challenge that puts additional demands on the project monitoring and supervision system.

- *Location*. In all cases the sites for shelters are deemed very suitable as they are all within walking distance for users. In several cases the users pointed out that the improvement of roads, bridges, and culverts could facilitate quicker access to cyclone shelters during emergencies.
- *Appropriateness*. The fact that the shelters are multi-purpose is considered highly appropriate. The renovation of schools to convert them into the multi-purpose shelters considerably improved the primary education facilities. The residents point out that the use of space can be maximized by organizing storage of school furniture during the emergency.
- *Design and equipment*. A general shortcoming of the multi-purpose cyclone shelters is the lack of some facilities proportionate to population capacity and user demand, such as water supply, toilets inside the building, and a separate space for pregnant women, the disabled and the elderly. These shortcomings are being addressed though in the design of the newly constructed shelter. The shelters still face a shortage of some essential equipment and materials, such as life jackets, siren systems, handheld lights and first-aid kits.
- *Sustainability*. School Management Committees (SMC) currently do not assume sufficient responsibility for the shelter maintenance, which is also linked to the deficit of funds for shelters maintenance. The schools that serve as shelters are funded by the Ministry of Primary Education and do not enjoy any additional allocations after their conversion into multi-purpose shelters. Another area where division of responsibilities needs to be clarified is the system of early warning and instructing people during disaster, which according to the community residents was not properly functional during the last cyclone.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in four monitored locations the following recommendations can be made:

To the UPs and communities

- Increase responsibility of the SMC for the maintenance of the multi-purpose shelters through awareness building and training. Consider the formation and capacity building of volunteer support groups to SMC in assisting people during the emergencies.
- Consider the inclusion of local infrastructure allowing better access to shelters into the capital investments plans and budgets.

To the LGED

- Most of the shortcomings identified through TPM in selected locations are already known to the LGED and are being addressed in the new project phase (through updated guidelines and standards). It is recommended to stress the need for capacity building of the contractors in a new project (possibly, through introducing a special project component).
- Intensify supervision of shelter constructions in the field. Involve communities more actively in monitoring and supervision.

To the Ministry of Primary Education

- Assign additional funding for maintenance of the schools serving as multi-purpose shelters.

C Expanding access to safe water and sanitation through increased access in rural areas to water supply free from arsenic and pathogens

Focus and Methodology

The focus of TPM under this indicator was verification of the communities' access to arsenic-free water sources in a small number of selected localities where the Bangladesh Water Supply Program (BWSP) was implemented in 2005-2010 by the government of Bangladesh.³The chosen location is Sreenagar Upazila of Munshiganj district, which is an arsenic prone area and most in need for safe drinking water.

Field works for this component of the TPM were conducted by the Resource Integration Centre (RIC) between April 2012 and June 2012. RIC is a national NGO that works in the areas of poverty alleviation through human resource mobilization and economic development.

The methods used for the TPM included:

- *Citizen Report Cards Survey* that involved 300 randomly selected households representing 3 out of 14 unions of the Sreenagar Upazila (60 tube-wells were distributed proportionately among 3 unions/ 5 households). Of the 300 of survey respondents there were 192 men and 108 women.
- *FDGs*. Seven FDGs were organized with the Ward Arsenic Mitigation and User Group members (WAMWUG), among which were 67 men and 23 women.
- *Semi-structured individual interviews* with the UP Chairman, Secretary, DPHE project officials and other local stakeholders involving 10 men.
- *Public hearing* with the participation of UP, project director, executive engineers and Upazilla level DPHE engineers, local activists, community representatives, media, WB and MJF representatives. The meeting was attended by 67 men and 23 women.

Brief Findings Overview

As a result of monitoring activities the following findings were identified:

- *Access*. 83% of survey participants have regular access to water (another 17% report irregular access, mainly due to tensions with households owning land where tube wells are located). 75% of locations for surveyed tube wells were selected in consultations with the users. 41% of respondents claimed that the location of the tube-well was changed after agreeing with the community; reasons given were convenience of community users (87,1%), influence of local elite (7%), problem with land ownership (1,7%).
- *Quality*. People are well aware of the need to use arsenic-free water due to the successfully implemented awareness component of the BWSP project; but they are not fully aware of which sources are arsenic free and which are not (green markings are missing on arsenic-free wells). Other concerns raised by some community residents included community-reported cases of iron in the water, irregular water quality controls, and tube-well platforms failing to meet standards (out of 60 tube wells 15 tube-wells are not constructed).
- *Sustainability*. There is a relatively low awareness among community residents of the function of the water user committees– the WAMWUGs. 65% of respondents claim to not have

³ The project is jointly implemented by the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) at the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives

committees, although committees had been previously established in all locations. The existing committees are formed mainly with UP members and some fail to meet the 30% women quota (only two out of six committees have met the 30% women quota). The responsibility for the maintenance of the tube-wells is rather blurred and there is no clear system of user fee collection or management of a maintenance fund: user contributions are sporadic with only 18,2% of users contributing financially to maintenance. There are several reported cases of denied access due to non-payment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in four monitored locations the following recommendations can be made:

To UPs and communities

- Increase people's awareness about the water committees and consolidate community involvement into maintenance of the water systems by improving the function of user committees, clarifying roles for system maintenance, and introducing a fair and well-managed system of community financial contributions. Actively involve interested stakeholders (health and social workers, women, youth, etc.) in improving the system.
- Seek regular monitoring of water quality control from DPHE (which should be provided to communities on demand).
- Further apply the TPM tool in monitoring the WB funded projects in water and sanitation in order to maximise impact and user satisfaction with public investments.

To central government (DPHE at MLGRDC)

- Provide more effective guidance (possibly by adjusting the existing guidelines for UPs) on ensuring sustainability of local arsenic-free water systems.
- Emphasise issues, such as community mobilisation, functioning of water user committees, and gender, in the ToR of the CSOs involved into the social mobilisation component of the BWSP project by DPHE; emphasise these same issues in the CSOs training.

D Expanding participation in local development and women's economic empowerment through increasing women's participation in short-term employment

Focus and Methodology

The focus of TPM under this indicator was the verification of women's access to employment opportunities through publically financed small infrastructure projects. Due to the fact that relations between the WB funded projects and the CAS indicators are not always linear (there are cases of several projects contributing to the same indicator and one project contributing to several indicators), there was some confusion regarding attaching the relevance of findings under this indicator to the Local Government Support Program⁴ (LGSP) implemented between November 2006 and March 2012, and the Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP) implemented between 2010 and 2013⁵. The TPM team reviewed the situation of women's employment within the frameworks of funds released under

⁴implemented by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives

⁵implemented by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management

LGSP. Although increasing women's employment was not among the LGSP objectives, the TPM findings have some bearing for the project.

The chosen locations for TPM are Nagarghata, Kumira, Khalishkhali, Magura, Jalapur Unions in Tala Upazila (Satkhira district).

Field works for this component of the TPM were conducted by the Agrogoti Sangstha between October 2011 and June 2012, a NGO working for the empowerment of communities and institutions to ensure good governance and human rights.

The methods used for the TPM included:

- Semi structured interviews and consultations with key stakeholders: elected UP Chairmen, UP members, local elite, UP secretary, communities, women laborers, Ward development committee, scheme supervision committee) (in total 78 men and 26 women).
- FGD. 25 FGDs were organized with community residents and service providers, in which 152 men and 204 women participated.
- Enquiries for information on the use of RTI on several occasions.
- Verification of the employment list, with women enlisted, received from UP.
- Sharing workshop with stakeholders with the participation of 81 men and 45 women.
- Public hearing with the participation of 240 men and 336 women representing community residents, UP Chairmen, UP members, local elite, UP secretary, communities, women laborers, Ward development committee, scheme supervision committee etc.

Brief Findings Overview

As a result of monitoring activities the following findings were identified:

- *Awareness.* Women are represented in formed Ward Development committees and UP planning committees. But women (neither in the committees nor in communities) are not fully aware of short-term employment initiatives intended to promote female labor. Under grants released for infrastructure projects within the framework of LGSP the employment process is organized in a traditional way (the labor *Sardar* acting as a "middle woman").
- *Access.* From the 254 women listed in the UP employment lists (from a total 1086 employed) only 45 were actually employed, which is 4% compared to the 22.5% officially reported.
- *Satisfaction.* At an individual level, those women employed were satisfied with the employment process and income.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in four monitored locations the following recommendations can be made:

To UPs and communities

- Draw more actively on the capacities of LG committees, community women's groups, activists and media to disseminate information on employment opportunities for women, and oversee the progress.
- Establish more participatory schemes for identifying women in need of employment and selection of beneficiaries. Provide instructions to contractors regarding this.

- Where women's employment in small infrastructure is not feasible (hard physical work, better off areas, cultural issues) search for other meaningful avenues of women's empowerment.

To the LGSP

- Ensure more rigorous internal monitoring and verification of the employment lists for projects funded from the LGSP grants.
- Provide guidance to UPs for meaningful empowerment of women (beyond the women's employment quota).

To WB

- Mainstream the women's employment indicator in WB interventions more systematically (beyond projects specifically dealing with the women's employment scheme). Make sure that the WB funded projects are sensitive to the indicators of CAS to which they do not contribute explicitly.

E Overarching Conclusions

From the limited number of locations where TPM was conducted the following overarching conclusions can be drawn:

- The government in general appropriately utilizes the WB funds for delivering public projects and progressing towards the indicators. There are multiple examples from the field that support this conclusion: increased access to roads bringing improved access to health, education services and economic opportunities; multi-functional shelters saving thousands of lives in the recent cyclones; wide coverage of communities with access to safe drinking water.
- However, the focus on beneficiary satisfaction, quality and sustainability of delivered public infrastructure and services in some cases needs further attention. Examples include: maintenance of rural roads, water systems and multi-purpose shelters, the issues of land acquisition compensation, meaningful inclusion and economic empowerment of women. Proper attention to these issues is an important precondition of people's positive perception of government programs and projects at the local level.
- Filling this gap is possible with more active beneficiary involvement and more rigorous control over the implementation of public projects and programs on the ground.

3 Lessons Learned from the TPM experience

This pilot application of TPM for monitoring CAS FY 2010-14 generated a number of important lessons to be taken into consideration for future design and implementation of TPM:

- TPM can be a useful tool for the verification of results of government implemented and WB funded projects. It can add value to a project's internal monitoring and evaluation, and feed valuable information to project management and decision makers, especially when TPM is conducted in the course of the project's implementation (as opposed to after its completion).
- TPM can have important practical utility for managing for results if it adopts a constructive approach, and if it is accepted and respected by partners. For TPM to be a credible and constructive tool, two important preconditions must be met. Firstly, there is a need for active involvement of relevant WB program officers, and government counterparts, in defining the TPM scope, indicators and expectations regarding the added value of TPM to the project's existing monitoring and evaluation systems. This involvement is critical for further acceptance of the TPM findings and recommendations, and also for securing access of third party monitors to official information and data. Secondly, TPM should be conducted with scientific rigor, and its findings and recommendations should rely upon credible and validated information.
- The use of a combination of different social accountability tools (citizen report cards/perception surveys, social mapping, focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders, public hearings, etc.) is appropriate for TPM. The tools need to be carefully coordinated with the scope of monitoring, and be used systematically for verification and interpretation of data received.
- Further capacity building for CSOs in Bangladesh would be required in the area of TPM application to monitoring the implementation of public projects, programs and policies in a credible, professional and constructive manner.