



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Evaluation of the Improving Local Level Governance Project in Bangladesh

Combining Traditional Folk Arts with Democratic Local Governance

November 2012

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by Harry Blair (team leader), Michael Calavan, Md. Azizur Rahman Siddique and Naim Mostafa on behalf of Social Impact, Inc., for USAID/Bangladesh.

EVALUATION OF THE IMPROVING LOCAL LEVEL GOVERNANCE PROJECT IN BANGLADESH:

COMBINING TRADITIONAL FOLK ARTS WITH DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNANCE

November 20, 2012

AID-OAA-I-10-00003

DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States government.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation team was most fortunate in receiving all necessary assistance from the Social Impact staff in Dhaka and Rupantar staff in Khulna and Rangpur. Without it, the team would have had little of interest to write up in this report.

In particular the team would like to thank Sandra Basgall, Chief of Party at the Dhaka Social Impact office; Saiful Islam, Deputy Chief of Party; and Md. Pervez, Operations Manager, for their support throughout the team's work. At the Rupantar office in Khulna, the team wishes to thank Rafiqul Islam Khokan and Swapan Guha, Co-Founders and Executive Directors; Abu Nahin Md. Raquib, Finance Director; and Ashim Ananda Das and Taslim Ahamed Tongker, Program Coordinators. For their help with the evaluation team's Rangpur field visit, the team want to thank Zeelani Hossain and Mokhlesur Rahman Pintoo, Program Coordinators for that region. And finally, the evaluation team thanks Rumana Amin, the COR for USAID's Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Programs Evaluations Project, for her support.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....viii

INTRODUCTION.....1

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS.....1

PROJECT BACKGROUND.....3

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY.....5

FINDINGS.....10

CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNED.....29

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING.....31

ANNEXURES

Annex 1: Evaluation questions in condensed and original versions.....35

Annex 2: Figures and Tables.....36

Annex 3: Data Collection Instrument for field visits.....41

Annex 4: Evaluation Statement of Work.....45

Cover photograph: Rupantar troupe performing pot song while unfolding scroll.

(Photo from Rupantar)

ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AL	Awami League
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
BUPF	Bangladesh <i>UP Parishad</i> Forum
CC	Citizens Committee
DG	Democracy and Governance
DLG	Democratic Local Governance
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
EOP	End of Project
FSN	Foreign Service Nationals
ILLG	Improving Local Level Governance
LGSP	Local Government Support Project (World Bank)
LGU	Local Government Units
LRM	Local Revenue Mobilization
MAB	Municipal Association of Bangladesh
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
RGA	Rapid Governance Assessment
SOW	Scope of Work
Tk	Taka (Bangladesh)
UP	Union Parishad
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation is intended to provide USAID/Bangladesh an informed assessment of the Mission’s Improving Local Level Governance (ILLG) project, which included three phases rolled out from 2002 to 2011, at a cost of \$3.8 million. In addition to the project’s traditional components, ILLG offered several unique components for study. In a break from the usual USAID project structure, in which an intermediary—most often, U.S.-based—contractor or cooperating agency operates between USAID and in-country implementers, Rupantar, a Bangaldeshi nongovernmental organization, worked directly with USAID. As the implementing partner, Rupantar employed a mix of traditional song and drama to provide “adult civic education” in addition to more conventional approaches to promoting rural, local democratic governance. Finally, the evaluation took place some 18 months after ILLG ended, providing an unusual opportunity to assess its post-project sustainability.

The questions posed in our scope of work can be condensed into four basic queries, which are outlined according to the evaluation questions in Annex 1:

- To what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving its objectives in terms of outputs and outcomes?
- What were Rupantar’s key challenges, as implementer and as a direct USAID grantee?
- How sustainable were ILLG’s activities after the project’s end?
- Was Rupantar’s strategic approach the best possible one, or might other strategies have been more effective?

The initial DG environment presented four problems: weak local government units (LGUs) constrained by central government controls, as well as by interfering Members of Parliament (MPs) and upazila officials; low citizen expectations of LGUs; a low LGU resource base; and a lack of LGU transparency. The root causes of these problems lay in local elite capture and patronage-based political parties, leaving citizens at the mercy of the patronage structure. In response, ILLG sought to build LGU capacity to deliver services, enhance its accountability to citizens through an intermediate citizens committee (CC), mobilize local resources more effectively and increase public awareness about and expectations of LGUs.

The project itself began in August 2002 with 23 *union parishads* (UPs)¹, expanding in 2006 to a second phase with 50 UPs, and finally, encompassing 210 UPs and four *pourashavas*² in its third and last phase in 2008, which introduced a disaster management component and lasted until March 2011. The project’s three-part strategy worked (1) with UP chairs and members through training, mentoring and activity support; (2) with carefully selected CCs through training and mentoring; and (3) with citizens through traditional dramatic arts.

The evaluation team’s methodology comprised three basic elements: document review, intensive interviews and daylong field visits to 12 UPs in two regions of Bangladesh. For the field visits, the team employed a “Rapid-Governance Assessment” (RGA) tool—a semi-structured survey form used to interview UP chairs

¹ Union Parishads (UPs) are the smallest *rural* administrative and local government units in Bangladesh.

² *Pourashavas* are municipalities, the UP’s urban counterpart.

and secretaries individually and in group discussions with UP members, CC members and ordinary citizens—with an emphasis throughout on meeting women as well as men. The 12 UPs visited were selected to include eight sites from all three ILLG program phases (the “treatment” group), along with four UPs not participating in ILLG (the “control” group). The nine-year life of ILLG, plus the 18-month lag between its end and the evaluation, imposed significant limitations upon the evaluation: the evaluation team could not locate USAID personnel who had worked with the project before its terminal year, and, while memories at Rupantar on the project side were still strong, the same could not be said for the project’s target population. As a further constraint, the May 2011 UP elections installed new chairmen in most Ups, along with many new members resulting in a loss of actual ILLG participants available at project locales. These constraints however, did, provide an opportunity to assess post-project sustainability.

FINDINGS

Two general findings provide a context within which the RGA findings should be interpreted. The World Bank’s Local Government Support Program (LGSP), which began in 2006, disbursed a significant level of discretionary funding to all UPs, dwarfing both previous allotments made by the central government and funds the UPs had been able to raise through local revenue mobilization (LRM). The evaluation team found that these enhanced funds provided an incentive for UPs to focus on local needs, for CCs to become involved and for citizens to become more concerned with what LGUs were doing. LGSP also instituted regular audits of their funds, ensuring greater probity. Secondly, the team found that the 18-month time lag after end of project (EOP), plus the widespread turnover in UP chairs, resulted in a great loss of ILLG momentum—nevertheless, the team discovered a quantity of evidence pointing to a lasting project impact.

The evaluation’s most significant findings came from the RGA, itself, and its principal evaluation question: *to what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving program objectives?* Case studies of eight ILLG-supported UPs and four “controls” provided insights into the effectiveness of Project interventions, and supported an assertion that Rupantar activities successfully supported “sociopolitical mobilization.” Analysis is based on 12 good-performance variables selected after case studies were completed. Some are generic—e.g., a “dynamic chairman” and “active standing committees” should occur in effective local governments. Others are Bangladesh-specific, e.g., those related to ensuring transparent, effective implementation of LGSP schemes.

Following the selection of the 12 variables, relevant observations were collected from the field notes. Evaluators used a binary ex-post coding system; variables were recorded as “present” [with a plus score] or “absent” [with a minus]. The scores were totaled for each case. Eight UPs participating in ILLG received overall scores ranging from 4 to 11, and averaging 8.1. Four control UPs received scores ranging from 2 to 7, averaging 4.0. Overall, the analysis shows that Rupantar’s work in rural UPs was generally successful in achieving “sociopolitical mobilization.” Strategies contributing to this success included: (1) ILLG’s pursuit of a tripartite change strategy, working simultaneously with elected leaders, CCs and ordinary citizens; (2) provision of a comprehensive set of offsite training programs for elected leaders and CCs; (3) establishment and nurturing of CCs drawn from community leaders; (4) creative use of traditional dramatic arts to inform and mobilize ordinary citizens; and (5) sponsorship of activities supporting new traditions of transparency and accountability, such as open budget meetings and ward *shavas*.

Variables were grouped into two broad categories: effectiveness and accountability. Findings on effectiveness include:

- *Dynamic Chairman*: five of eight project UPs received positive scores, while two of four control UPs did as well. The scores do not significantly differentiate the two groups, but do suggest that local leaders’ energy and leadership skills are important for achieving governance effectiveness.

- *Clearly defined development strategy, widely known:* five of eight project UPs, but only one control UP, received positive scores for this variable. ILLG-supported UPs are more likely to have a three- or four-element development strategy with clear medium-term goals, rather than passively accepting resources when provided by central government.
- *Active, effective standing committees:* all eight ILLG Ups, but only one of four control Ups, received positive scores for this variable. Active committees pursue the most immediate needs of rural families—more effective schooling, more reliable health clinic services and medications, more effective agricultural extension and similar issues.
- *Transparent, effective LGSP project management:* Six of eight of the ILLG UPs, and two of four of the control UPs, received positive scores for this variable. ILLG UPs were more likely to manage LGSP projects in a transparent, effective manner, working through implementation committees and following government rules for tendering, supervision, and final clearance.

Findings on Accountability include:

- *Conduct of open budget meetings, following good practice:* six of eight ILLG UPs, and two of four control UPs, actually conducted meetings at which budget information was presented. Although ILLG UPs were more likely to conduct open budget meetings than the control UPs, both groups exhibited observable variations in “openness”—e.g. how widely the events were publicized and whether or not actual copies of the budget were available.
- *Citizens confident of their knowledge, and of their UP:* six of eight ILLG UPs, and only one of four control UPs, received a positive score for this variable. Before moving into an active role in local governance, ordinary citizens require basic knowledge. Female citizens regularly cited Rupantar’s *pot songs*³ and dramas as an important element of their understanding of local politics. They readily cited the topics of shows and described these as a valued part of their civic education.
- *Active, empowered Women Members:* Seven of the eight LLG Ups examined, and two of four of the control UPs, have activist women members. Some of the growth in these members’ roles should be attributed to the gradual expansion of women’s rights across the society, and to individual energy and self-confidence. However, the case studies provided substantial evidence that ILLG played a major role in empowering these members in project UPs. Formal training, coaching from field staff, and promotion of project activities greatly increased women members’ activity levels and authority.
- *Substantive female participation in justice activities:* in five of eight ILLG UPs, but only one of the control UPs, women were empowered to play a more substantial role in local justice institutions. Women members routinely served on *shalish* panels, and ordinary women sometimes did, too. These practices were virtually unknown 10 years ago.

In addition to the RGA, the evaluation team made several findings with respect to Rupantar itself as project implementer. The organization did not have to learn new program skills to undertake ILLG; it had largely perfected them in its previous work. It did have to acquire new operational skills to deal with USAID in a direct relationship, however, a process that included occasional difficulties. Rupantar concentrated almost exclusively on project deliverables and was meticulous in meeting project deadlines and targets. It spent very little effort on post-project sustainability, however. Aside from some vague wording in the Phase II grant agreement, USAID established no real requirement for planning for any post-project sustainability. Thus, the

³ A pot song is a special theatrical presentation of a traditional song that includes the unfurling of a scroll called a “pot,” as shown in the photo on the cover of the report.

absence of such continuation was not a shortcoming on the part of Rupantar. The evaluation did reveal that Rupantar was inattentive in its use of quantitative instruments in any substantive fashion. Although Rupantar conducted baseline surveys as successive UPs were added to ILLG, the data were not employed as management tools to ascertain what was working or what needed further effort.

CONCLUSIONS

- **A substantial project legacy can exist even absent institutional sustainability.** Despite the lack of a concerted effort to establish post-project continuance, a good number of ILLG aspects did carry on after EOP, such as citizen demand for public service provision, female empowerment and individual involvement in community activities, such as elective office. In short, new behaviors can be introduced into local political culture.
- **Post-project sustainability must be built into a project.** Some continuity can occur even absent USAID requirement, as demonstrated in ILLG, but it would be far better to include a sustainability component in the project design.
- **Not all local governance components are equally worth pursuing.** Despite great effort by ILLG, UPs were unable to increase revenue mobilization by any great measure. In contrast, work with local alternative dispute resolution (ADR) systems proved quite successful.
- **Alternative strategies would have been less successful than ILLG's approach.** For instance civil society advocacy, enhancing political party competition at local level, or pursuing policy change at macro-level likely would not have worked as well.

Recommendations for future programming

1. Include a definite post-project component in project design.
2. Include a monitoring and evaluation component that implementers can actually use
3. Build on previous successes (like ADR) and de-emphasize less successful components (i.e., LRM)
4. Utilize the new UP Information Service Center to exploit spreading cellphone use
5. Consider alternative approaches to organizing training groups
6. Improve linkages with World Bank's LGSP
7. Recycle/repurpose ILLG training materials
8. Plan to expand from pilot project to larger coverage

INTRODUCTION

Beginning with the Local Self-Government Act of 1885, passed by the Bengal Council at the behest of Lord Ripon, the British Viceroy of the early 1880s, the province of Bengal introduced elected local councils, a practice that continued down through the creation of East Pakistan in 1947 and the advent of independent Bangladesh in 1971. Various reforms were implemented along the way, the first of which was the Basic Democracies system promulgated in 1962 with some 4000 elected Union Councils in East Pakistan and indirectly elected councils at *thana* and district levels. After 1971, the names of these local government bodies changed several times, but the structure remained essentially the same: direct elections at the base level, with union council chairmen becoming representatives at higher level bodies. Directly elected chairmen were introduced at the *thana/upazila* level in the 1980s but abolished in 1991, while elected union-level bodies continued. In the current, post-caretaker democratic era, elected *upazila* chairs have returned, but with greatly reduced powers. After more than a century and a quarter, the directly elected UP remains the major mechanism of local governance in Bangladesh.

Since the partition of 1947, local governance has been characterized by two contradictory conditions. On the one hand, successive generations of political leaders have extolled the virtues of local democracy, decentralized governance, citizen participation, official accountability and the like, while on the other hand, local government units (LGUs) have been severely restricted in terms of control over public services, funds for investment and the generation of revenue—precisely the capacities needed to be effective. Instead, successive central governments, both authoritarian and democratic, have used LGUs as patronage machines to build vote banks and reward loyalists. The situation perhaps is captured best by noting that in recent governments, the posts of party general secretary and local government minister have invariably been held by the same person, so as to consolidate patronage and local governance. LGU capture by local elites, siphoning of public funds and an absence of accountability have been the hallmarks of local governance in Bangladesh.

Starting with American support for the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Programme in 1952, foreign aid from a large number of donors—bilateral, multilateral and foundational—has sought to enhance local governance in various ways. And while there has been some real improvement in rural conditions (health, education, food availability, transportation) local governance has remained much the same: largely elite-dominated, subject to corruption and mostly unaccountable to the citizenry.

More recently, the USAID-assisted Local Government Initiative in the early years of the last decade and its successor programs, including the ongoing Strengthening Democratic Local Governance Project, have endeavored to change this local equation by promoting collective LGU advocacy vis-à-vis the central government, through such organizations as the Bangladesh UP Forum. Another current example, the World Bank's Local Government Support Program, provides a combination of discretionary investment funding and strict auditing to the UPs. Into this context, USAID's ILLG brought together a set of efforts to improve UP capacity to deliver public services, create citizen intermediary bodies to link UPs and citizens and enhance public understanding of local governance by adapting traditional cultural activities to current needs. This report presents an evaluation of that program.

EVALUATION PURPOSE & EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EVALUATION PURPOSE

The central purpose of this evaluation is to provide USAID/Bangladesh with an informed assessment of the Mission's nine-year Improving Local Level Governance (ILLG) project. The program was implemented by

Rupantar, an NGO operating from Khulna that employed an innovative mix of traditional song and drama to provide “adult civic education,” in addition to employing more conventional approaches to promoting democratic governance. The program also utilized an alternative structure of implementation: USAID maintained a direct relationship with Rupantar, rather than running the normal project structure in which an intermediary contractor or cooperating agency (generally U.S.-based) operates between USAID and in-country implementers. The ILLG project utilized two unorthodox approaches to program implementation, both in the implementer’s approach to promoting local democratic governance and in its relationship to USAID. Both features are worth examining in detail.

In addition, this evaluation will assess the extent to which ILLG succeeded in meeting its goals, the degree to which its efforts actually promoted democratic local governance (DLG), the likelihood of its sustainability beyond the end of project (EOP) and its prospects for replication as a model for promoting DLG in Bangladesh. The scope of work (SOW) for the evaluation enjoins the team to undertake four tasks:

- Assess the actual results against targeted results;
- Assess the efficacy and result of the ILLG implementation tools and management structure in meeting the objectives;
- Assess the advantages and challenges faced by USAID in direct programming with Rupantar as a local organization and [its] advantage and challenges to comply with USAID’s regulations; and
- Make recommendations to USAID/Bangladesh concerning future direct programming with local organizations and also to the programs related to local government.⁴

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The SOW lists eleven evaluation questions, which may be found in Annex 4. These questions conveniently can be condensed into four larger queries, as shown in Annex 1. The four larger queries follow:

1. To what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving its objectives, both in terms of targets met (outputs) and impact on the conduct of local governance in its areas of operation (outcomes)?
2. What were the key challenges facing Rupantar both as project implementer and in its direct programming relationship with USAID and how did it meet them? Conversely, what challenges did USAID confront in its relationship with Rupantar?
3. How sustainable have ILLG’s program activities been after EOP, and has Rupantar itself become more sustainable as an organization over the course of ILLG?
4. Was Rupantar’s strategic approach the best possible one given the DG environment it faced, or were there other strategies that might have proven more effective?

In answering these four queries, we will address all of the questions posed in the SOW.

⁴ SOW (2012: 2).

PROJECT BACKGROUND

THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM AND USAID'S RESPONSE

The Problem

In the evaluation scope of work (SOW), USAID noted that in the governance environment in Bangladesh in the early 2000s, the central government exercised substantial control over local governments. Local governments were characterized by low levels of human capacity, limited resources and sparse public service delivery. To address these challenges, USAID/Bangladesh began supporting local government strengthening activities in 2001.

Then, in August of 2002, USAID contracted with Rupantar, a Bangaldeshi non-governmental organization (NGO), to further address these challenges through ILLG. ILLG's analysis of problems faced by LGUs and their causes varied somewhat as the project moved through successive phases and objectives shifted over time. But throughout the nine-year life of project (LOP), ILLG's views of the problem, its causes and the project's objectives remained essentially consistent, with the exception of adding a disaster management component in its third and final phase.

Rural, democratic development faced four types of obstacles at the program's outset, though only the first three were articulated in the grant agreements:⁵

- **Weak LGUs with low capacity to deliver public services**, owing in significant part to the structural constraints they faced in the form of central government control (particularly from the line ministries), interfering Members of Parliament (MPs), and (after the *upazilas*⁶ were reformed by the caretaker government) *upazila* chairmen and *nirbahi*⁷ officers.
- **Low citizen expectations of LGUs**, based on experience and leading to low demand for public services
- **A low LGU-resource base**, yielding low revenue and a dependence on a stingy central government for subsidies and grants
- **A lack of transparency on the part of LGUs**

Causes of the Problem

The root causes behind the central problem were well described in ILLG's first grant agreement with USAID:⁸

⁵ [Reference to the 3 grant agreements].

⁶ The districts of Bangladesh are divided into subdistricts called *Upazilas*, formerly known as *Thanas*. *Upazilas* are similar to the county subdivisions found in some Western countries. The *upazilas* are the second lowest tier of regional administration in Bangladesh. The administrative structure consists of Divisions (seven), Districts (64), *Upazilas* and UPs.

⁷ The chief executive of an *upazila*.

⁸ [Reference to first grant agreement, page 12]. There is abundant support for this assessment, e.g., Khan (2011), Siddique (2005).

- LGUs controlled by local elites in their own interest, perceiving themselves as entitled to manage public affairs without public interference, and with elections as an imperfect check that at best would replace incumbent elites with other elites
- Political parties influencing local affairs through patronage linkages to local elites
- Citizen access to LGUs only through patronage channels

Project Objectives

ILLG's objectives were fourfold:

1. Build LGU capacity to manage and deliver public services, including disaster management in the project's third phase
2. Enhance LGU accountability to the citizenry by increasing transparency and improving relations between elected officials and the citizenry through the use of an intermediary institution (the CC)
3. Mobilize local resources more effectively to help finance development by collecting present taxes more fully and increasing tax rates
4. Increase public awareness about LGUs and what should be expected from them.

THE PROJECT AND ITS MAIN ELEMENTS

Between August 2002 and March 2011, ILLG continued to roll out three project phases; over the course of these phases, it expanded its coverage from 23 UPs (the smallest *rural* administrative and local government units in Bangladesh) in Phase I to 50 UPs in Phase II and, finally, to 210 UPs plus four *pourasavas* (municipalities, the UP's urban counterpart) in the final phase. In this third phase, it also enlarged its mandate to include a substantial focus on disaster management in response to the devastating Cyclone Sidr of November 2007, which had caused serious damage to the coastal areas of southwestern Bangladesh, where most of ILLG's activities had been taking place. Table 3 in Annex 2 shows the coverage and funding allocations for ILLG's three phases.

The principal features of the project were: (1) ILLG's pursuit of an overall tripartite change strategy; (2) provision of a comprehensive set of offsite training programs; (3) establishment and nurturing of CCs; and (4) creative use of traditional dramatic arts.

Tripartite change strategy: Rupantar's three-part strategy consisted of working simultaneously with (1) UP chairmen and members through training, mentoring and activity support, (2) CCs through training and mentoring, and (3) ordinary citizens through *pot songs*,⁹ dramas, *melas*¹⁰ and posters.

Offsite training programs: Rupantar organized and delivered a large training program aimed at UP chairmen, members and CCs (and, later, disaster management committees, or DMCs). All training took place

⁹ A pot song is a special theatrical presentation of a traditional song that includes the unfurling of a scroll called a "pot," as shown in the photo on the cover of the report.

¹⁰ Village fair or festival.

at Rupantar’s well-equipped facility in Khulna or at a rented center in the Northwest. Training sessions for UP leaders generally lasted three days and covered a full range of “adult civic education” topics such as UP functions and responsibilities, UP management, gender perspective, financial and office management, roles of UPs in the local *shalish*¹¹ system, participatory budget preparation and block grant allocation, leadership and public relations, accountability, public financial management, disaster management and disaster risk reduction. Each chairman and UP member attended three to five separate training sessions. Training for CC members covered the same range of topics, but generally involved only two days of training and one night in the training center dormitory. There were also some joint training sessions for UP members and CC members. In Phase III, there was an added emphasis on disaster planning and management for UPs entering ILLG, with less emphasis on training local citizen-leaders for membership to the CC and more on joining a DMC.

Citizen Committees: Rupantar field workers initially worked with ward members¹² to identify respected local citizens who might plausibly join a citizen’s group as activist/volunteers. They then helped to establish organizational by-laws, supported formal election of executive committees and used modest tea-and-snack funding and prodding to establish a “tradition” of semi-monthly meetings between the UP and CC members. CC members, generally two or three at a time from multiple UPs, were given training at the Rupantar training center in Khulna or another facility in the Northwest. CC members were also encouraged to get involved in other governance activities, e.g., organizing UP melas, open budget meetings, and Ward *shavas*.¹³

Traditional dramatic arts: Rupantar’s performing troupes combined traditional art forms—primarily folk dramas and songs—with democratic local governance and social development themes like choosing a good leader and eliminating child marriage. The objective was to provide good entertainment and teach ordinary citizens valuable lessons about UP responsibilities, good leadership and social problems.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The data-gathering phase of this evaluation took place September–October 2012. The team consisted of four members: Harry Blair (the team leader), from the Political Science Department at Yale University; Michael Calavan, a retired USAID officer working as a consultant; Md. Azizur Rahman Siddique, a consultant with experience working for the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank on local governance; and Md. Naim Mostafa, local research specialist at the Social Impact Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Performance Evaluations (BDGPE) office in Dhaka.

The evaluation methodology comprised three basic elements: document review, intensive interviews and day-long field visits to 12 UPs in two regions of Bangladesh. The evaluation team was able to obtain documentation pertaining to ILLG, including the grant agreements for ILLG’s three phases as well as project

¹¹ The traditional alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism operating in most UPs throughout the country..

¹² Irrespective of its size and population, each UP is made up of nine Wards. Accordingly, ward populations are variable, but the ones we visited generally consisted of 2,000-4,000 inhabitants..

¹³ Ward assembly.

reports from USAID, and two outside assessments¹⁴ from Rupantar. The team conducted several interviews in Dhaka with USAID personnel, other project implementers and an official in the ministry of local government. As Rupantar's head office is in Khulna and all project activities were located far from Dhaka, the evaluation team conducted most interviews in the field; this consisted primarily of two-and-a-half days with Rupantar staff in Khulna city, and project site visits.

Rapid Governance Assessment

The evaluation team's primary source of data lay in the 12 day-long UP visits. The team applied a "Rapid Governance Assessment" (RGA) tool—a semi-structured survey form with open-ended questions about respondent perceptions of the overall quality of local governance, functioning of ILLG's CCs, UP standing committees; openness of UP decision making (especially budgeting); access to public services; the local justice system; women's empowerment; management of UP projects; and interference in UP affairs from higher levels.¹⁵ In each UP, the evaluation team employed the RGA tool to interview the current UP chairman and UP secretary, individually, and to conduct focused discussions with panels of former CC members, women UP members and "ordinary" female citizens. In some UPs, we also met with "ordinary" male citizens. Altogether, the team recorded approximately 300 pages of hand-written notes.

The team consolidated the results of its field visits into 12 "good governance variables," which captured the essence Rupantar accomplishments during ILLG and provided a picture of what project impacts remained 18 months after ILLG's end and the subsequent replacement of most UP elected officials. The variables and their presence, or absence, in the 12 sample UPs are depicted in Table 1, and forms the centerpiece of our discussion of findings.

The table is based on a set of ex-post, good-performance variables. These were selected after the case studies were completed and based on information compiled while analyzing research results. Some selected variables are generic, e.g., "dynamic chairman," "clearly defined development strategy," and "active standing committees." These variables should be found in virtually any effective LGU, any place in the world. Other variables are Bangladesh-specific, e.g., those related to ensuring transparent, effective implementation of LGSP schemes and equitable selection of candidates for social safety-net programs. Still others were unexpected by the team and discovered through accumulation of evidence—e.g. more active women members, and the expanding role of women on *shalish* panels. Collectively, the variables provide a reasonable basis for assessing the level of effectiveness and accountability of Bangladeshi local governments and, thus, a framework for judging the effectiveness of ILLG Project UPs by comparing them with control UPs.

The analysis can begin with broad generalizations: Rupantar's work in rural UPs was generally successful in achieving "sociopolitical mobilization."¹⁶ This was particularly true where ILLG field activities were ongoing during two or three project phases. In cases where the ILLG staff were present only during the project's final

¹⁴ These outside assessments were Kesheshian and Taft-Morales (2008) and Kabir (2011). Unfortunately, the first one analyzed another USAID local governance program as well as ILLG without differentiating between them, and the second was essentially a summary of ILLG's own periodic reports without any analysis, so neither report proved of value to us.

¹⁵ A copy of our questionnaire is in Annex 3 to this report.

¹⁶ "Sociopolitical mobilization": A process that occurs, often with the assistance of an outside organization, that allows and encourages ordinary citizens to participate more actively in the political process. Examples of this may include: Citizens exhibit greater confidence in approaching political leaders with requests, questions, and comments. Citizens participate more actively in proposing projects and activities to be undertaken with public funding. Citizens are more likely to criticize leaders who are ineffective or corrupt.

stage, success was unpredictable. Where there was dynamic leadership, striking results were achieved in a short time. Where religious conservatism dominated, less success was achieved.

Specific project interventions, such as establishing and nurturing CCs and using traditional entertainment media, came to team members' attention during interviews at every ILLG project site visited. However, these activities were not selected as performance variables. If included in the table, they would necessarily differentiate project sites from the controls and introduce an inappropriate "project bias" into the analysis without providing useful insights into how they contributed to building transparent, accountable, effective governance.

Coding Example

After the 12 variables in Table 1 were selected, relevant observations were collected from the field notes. The evaluation team opted for a binary, ex-post coding system because available data from the field notes frequently lacked sufficient detail to support more subtle judgments along a three- or five-point scale. The evaluation team has provided two examples below to illustrate how the ratings shown in Table 1 were assigned. Both examples include the findings considered in determining a +/- rating for indicator 11 "Active, empowered women members."

Case of UP F: women members are aware of their rights and duties [statement by chairman]

Findings:

- Women members no longer depend on male "guardians," e.g., husbands, brothers. [chairman]
- Women "raise their voice" on the UP. [women members]
- Women members each belong to three standing committees chaired by male ward members and chair another. [women members]
- Women members chair road schemes. [CC members]

Rating assigned by evaluation team: "+"

Case of UP G: women members not informed about some meetings. This happened even when ILLG was ongoing. [women members]

Findings:

- Women members are asked to leave some meetings when certain "miscellaneous items" are on the agenda. [women members]
- Sometimes they are required to sign minutes for meetings they did not attend. [women members]
- Haven't seen the 5-year planning document. [women members]
- Women members not actually included in project implementation committees. [women members]

Rating assigned by evaluation team: "-"

Most of the selected variables (e.g., (2) [A clearly defined development strategy], (3) [Active standing committees], (9) [Citizens confident of their knowledge], and 10) [Active, empowered women members]) expose strong contrasts between ILLG and control UPs, and support the assertion that ILLG has achieved significant success in "sociopolitical mobilization." Some variables show less contrast (e.g., (1) [Dynamic Chairman] and (12) [Relative freedom from MP and upazila chair interference]), but have been retained because they are legitimate indicators of effective governance, and because they provide useful insights into the governance setting within which ILLG operated.

Overall scores for each UP can be compared various ways:

- As indicated in Table 1: Government Effectiveness and Accountability in 12 UPs, eight UPs that participated in ILLG received overall scores ranging from 4 to 11 and averaging 8.1. Four control UPs received scores from 2 to 7, averaging 4.0.
- Five UPs that joined the Project in Phase I or Phase II received overall scores of ranging from 8 to 11 and averaging 9.2. Three UPs that joined in Phase III received scores ranging from 4 to 11 and averaging 6.3. Four control UPs received scores ranging from 2 to 7 and averaging 4.0.
- Seven UPs with dynamic leaders received overall scores ranging from 5 to 11 and averaging 8.7. Five UPs lacking dynamic leadership received scores ranging from 2 to 8, averaging 4.3.

Findings for each variable, grouped into two broad categories, as shown in Table 1.

Selection of Sample Union Parishads

The evaluation SOW called for visits to eight UPs that participated in ILLG (the “treatment” group), which were to be compared with four UPs not included in the project (the “control” group). ILLG began in the Khulna region, and the greater portion of project UPs continued to be located there throughout the project. In ILLG’s second phase, several UPs were added in Rangpur, and the number was further expanded in the third phase, as shown in Table 2 located in Annex 2. The evaluation team decided to visit five treatment and three control UPs in Khulna, along with three treatment and one control UPs in Rangpur, as shown in Table 3 and in the map in Figure 1 (see Annex 2). A 12-UP sample simply could not hope to include all the variant types. The team wanted (1) a sample of UPs that included start dates in each of the three project phases; (2) UPs in Khulna and Rangpur divisions; (3) Sidr and non-Sidr UPs; (4) UPs that replaced their UP chair in the 2011 elections and UPs that did not; and (5) treatment UPs that participated in the project and control UPs that did not. To include all of these possibilities would require a matrix with 48 cells (3 Phase types x Khulna/Rangpur x Sidr/non-Sidr x chair replaced/ reelected x treatment/control, or $3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 48$).¹⁷ Clearly, it was necessary to settle for considerably fewer variants.

Coming as it did in the wake of Cyclone Sidr in November, 2007, which brought great devastation to southwest Bangladesh, Phase III of the project was justified largely as an effort to build local government capacity to respond to disasters. Consequently, most UPs included in the project expansion featured a disaster management component. At the same time, project UPs from Phases I and II unaffected by Sidr continued in Phase III, and some new, unaffected UPs were added, as well.¹⁸ Accordingly, the evaluation team sought to include both Sidr-affected and non-Sidr UPs in the evaluation sample.

Finally, the team wanted to include some UPs that had begun with ILLG in Phase I, some in Phase II, and some in Phase III. This would provide an opportunity to compare areas that had been in the project for the full nine years against those that had been in for six, or only three, years.

¹⁷ Yet another dimension came in Phase III with the inclusion of four *pourasavas* (municipalities), but faced with choosing a sample of 12 cases, the evaluation team looked only at the 210 UPs as the evaluation’s population universe.

¹⁸ No UPs were dropped from ILLG over the course of the project.

LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

In undertaking this study, the evaluation team faced one significant limitation from the USAID side and several others stemming from the project itself. The USAID problem stemmed from the ongoing issue of institutional memory in an Agency where U.S. foreign service personnel transfer frequently and foreign service nationals (FSN) also come and go, albeit not so rapidly. The FSN who managed ILLG as the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) through 2009 had left USAID and was unavailable for interview, and his successor (a foreign service officer) stayed in office less than a year before leaving Bangladesh. The third AOR, an FSN, only worked with ILLG in the last year, when most of the program's efforts were centered on bringing ILLG to an end, and so she was not party to earlier decisions regarding the critical issue of sustainability, with which we will deal later in this report. The team did gain access to grant agreements for ILLG's three phases, which were helpful, as were approved project justifications about extensions and funds, but the team lacked some institutional insight into the origins of the project's design.

On the project side, as the previous section discussing the selection process should have made obvious, a 12-UP sample simply could not hope to include all the variant types. Accordingly, the evaluation's 8 + 4 sample could not be fully representative in any formal statistical sense. It could not cover all the ILLG program variations laid out above, and even if it did include them all, it would still not be statistically representative; some types have many more cases than others (e.g., 38 Phase III Sidr UPs in Barguna District vs. five Phase II non-Sidr UPs in Nilphamari District). But the 8 + 4 sample is sufficiently illustrative of ILLG's variety to provide a convincing analysis of what the project accomplished over its nine-year history. Table 3 (Annex 2) shows the relationship of our sample to the universe of ILLG project UPs.

A second limitation stemmed from the reality that team members were restricted to UPs that could be studied in a single day, including transportation both ways and a minimum of seven hours at the UP site. Given these time constraints, the team elected to stay overnight in one place in both the Southwest and Northwest, thus excluding Barisal Division (several hours away from the evaluation team's lodging in Khulna), which includes 86 UPs taken up in Phase III.

Thirdly, inasmuch as the team could not choose its sample UPs from Dhaka before beginning field work and had neither the time nor the resources after assembling as a team in Bangladesh, the evaluation depended on Rupantar to select evaluation sites. Moreover, the team had to rely on Rupantar to recruit respondents in each UP in order to spend each day wholly in interviews and discussion groups, rather than seeking people to interview. Finally, Rupantar itself was constrained to identify UPs where respondents could be identified and invited to join group discussions, some 18 months after the project ended and Rupantar withdrew its field personnel.

A fourth constraint (mentioned indirectly above) arose from the fact that ILLG ended a year and a half before this evaluation. Many Rupantar UP facilitators and other field staff were temporary hires who had moved; project participant memories had faded and institutions like the CCs had ceased to exist or had switched to more limited roles.

A fifth problem was not dissimilar: In the May 2011 elections, a great majority of the UP chairs, who had been in office since 2003,¹⁹ either retired or were defeated. Thus, the person who had been, in many ways, the central focus for the lifetime of ILLG was no longer in office. Only two out of 12 UP chairs were still in office and available to be interviewed. Most of the others were new in their role and had only limited knowledge of ILLG.²⁰ In addition, a significant number of UP members also had been replaced.

The first three constraints proved negligible. Despite non-representativeness and the locational limitations on the evaluation sample, there was enough variation to ensure that cases were widely illustrative. In addition, Rupantar's choice of sites did not display any obvious pattern of pro-project bias or "cherry-picking." A healthy range of cases was available to analyze, as is evident in the findings of this evaluation.

The last two constraints, the delay after the EOP and turnover of local leaders, potentially were more problematic. An 18-month time lag and replacement of elected officeholders who had worked with ILLG combined to create a situation that differed substantially from orthodox final evaluations, which typically come in a project's waning months, when implementers should be at their most proficient and beneficiaries should be at the "high water mark" of whatever gains they might garner from project activities. To use a sports metaphor, the evaluation team arrived after the game was long over, critical players had left the scene, and those still around could not be expected to recall many of the game's highlights, to say nothing of lesser, but nonetheless telling and significant moments and incidents.

On the other hand, the delay in undertaking this evaluation provided an excellent opportunity to ascertain what remained of ILLG after a year-and-a-half lapse and the replacement of many key participants. The time lapse provided an unusual chance to examine post-project sustainability and determine what remained of ILLG by the time the team examined it. This constitutes the central focus of this evaluation.

FINDINGS

CONTEXT

This initial subsection identifies several general factors that provide a lens through which to view the more extensive and detailed analysis arising from the RGA reported below.

The institutional role of the Local Government Support Program (LGSP)

Until 2006, discretionary spending by UPs for local infrastructure and service provision was limited to the small sums they raised through various local taxes and fees, plus a portion of the property transfer tax, collected by the *upazila* and refunded to them. Beginning in 2006, the World Bank launched its LGSP, based on an earlier project in the Sirajganj region that was funded for a number of years by UNDP, in cooperation with the government. On a 50-50 fund-sharing basis, LGSP initially provided a much larger annual grant to

¹⁹ A new election should have occurred in 2008 (i.e., at the end of five years), but the 2007-2008 Caretaker Government did not conduct any elections, and so UP terms were extended until a new nationwide election was held in 2011.

²⁰ In one case the new chairman had been a very active member of the Citizen Committee before the 2011 election and was well acquainted with ILLG and its major activities.

around 1,000 UPs as discretionary monies to be allocated toward activities their leaders selected, conditional upon certain practices such as participatory planning and open budget meetings, with budgets subject to annual outside financial audits. Over several years, LGSP expanded by about 1,000 UPs annually, until it covered virtually all of the country's almost 4,500 LGUs.²¹ The central hypothesis of LGSP is that, contrary to longstanding bureaucratic conviction that LGUs are inherently incompetent, unreliable and inevitably captured by local elites, they instead would prove quite capable if allotted real discretionary funding, combined with mechanisms to ensure citizen input into decision-making and stringent annual audits.

The annual LGSP grants requiring participatory mechanisms and audits formed the institutional environment within which ILLG operated after 2006. The grants were based on a population formula that averaged roughly Tk 650,000 in the first year and scaled up to almost Tk 1.1 million in 2011, the final year of the program, which greatly dwarfed local UP resources raised. Thus, LGSP greatly increased discretionary funds available to UPs beyond their recurring expenses, thereby offering both significant opportunities for programming and investment and providing some real incentives for the UP, the CC and ordinary citizens to involve themselves in planning and implementing development efforts. Without LGSP, ILLG could have operated just as it did before 2006, but the UPs would have had far fewer resources to allocate for investment purposes and fewer mandatory checks on using those resources. As it was, ILLG did provide significant added value to LGSP by supporting and reinforcing transparency and participation mechanisms; without LGSP, the project's total impact surely would have been less. After LGSP dramatically increased the resources available for UP discretionary spending, it became *worthwhile* for UPs, CCs and citizens to become involved in how these resources were deployed.

Post-election turnover in UPs

As already noted, most UP chairs and members were replaced in the May 2011 election. In the team's sample, only one UP chair won re-election, while another remained in place owing to a pending lawsuit resulting in a postponement of the 2011 election. Accordingly, in 10 of the 12 sample UPs, the UP chairs who had been in place from 2003 to 2011 were no longer there. The evaluation did not gather data on exactly how many UP members were replaced in the 2011 election, but conversations with UP members in group interviews made it clear that turnover was very high.

Combined with the 18-month time lag, the turnover in UP-elected officials could be expected to mean that whatever momentum ILLG had built up over its lifetime, particularly in its Phase III, would have dissipated a great deal. Unsurprisingly, this was indeed the case, though there was no way to separate these two factors in terms of their contribution to the fadeout. What did prove surprising was that so much evidence of ILLG's impact remained, despite the negative influence of the time lag and the turnover.

QUESTION #1: OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Outcomes

The evaluation team relied on the RGA to answer Question #1: *To What Extent Has ILLG Been Successful in Achieving Program Objectives?* A comparison of eight project-supported ("treatment") UPs and four others

²¹ The number of UPs keeps growing as individual units successfully petition to divide into two new ones. The total as of this report is 4,549.

(“controls”) provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of ILLG interventions. This broadly supports an assertion that Rupantar activities have been successful in supporting “sociopolitical mobilization” in Bangladeshi UPs and can be successful in the future. However, a careful examination of the cases also brings other, potentially significant issues to our attention: e.g., how important is the length of the field implementation period? What roles are played by dynamic leadership and religious conservatism? Table 1 presents our principal findings from the RGA.

Table 1: Government Effectiveness and Accountability in 12 UPs

GOVERNANCE VARIABLES	A	C	E	F	G	J	K	M	B	D	H	L
Phase when UP entered ILLG Project	1	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	-	-	-	-
	“Treatment” UPs								“Control UPs”			
EFFECTIVENESS												
1) Dynamic Chairman	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-
2) Clearly defined development strategy	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
3) Active, effective standing committees	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	-
4) Transparent, effective LGSP scheme management	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-
5) Active, effective Disaster Management Committees	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	+
6) Relative freedom from MP/Uz Chair interference	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ACCOUNTABILITY												
7) Conduct of open budget meetings	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
8) Ward <i>shavas</i> active according to 2009 Law	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
9) Transparent, equitable candidate selection for social safety net programs	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
10) Citizens confident of their knowledge, and their UP	+	**	+	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-
11) Active, empowered Women Members	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
12) Substantive female participation in <i>shalish</i>	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-
TOTAL SCORE	11	10	8	10	4	9	9	4	5	2	7	2
AVERAGE SCORE	7.0								4.0			

Note: See the section below on coding for an example of how the team determined whether a UP should get a + or a – for each governance variable.

** In this case, relevant information needed to assess the presence or absence of the variable was not collected.

Effectiveness Outcomes

Dynamic Chairman

While overall scores presented in Table 1 indicate that ILLG interventions were effective in fostering improved UP performance, scores for this variable suggest that dynamic leadership is also a significant success factor.

Five of eight (63 percent) project UPs interviewed received positive scores, while two of four (50 percent) control UPs did as well; the scores do not significantly differentiate the two groups, but do suggest that local leaders’ energy and leadership skills are important for achieving governance effectiveness. During interviews, some chairmen displayed their dynamism while describing their proudest accomplishments; for example, building a temporary dike to aid recovery of farm lands salinized by shrimp cultivation, or making a concerted

effort to clean out a den of thieves, were cited as proud accomplishments. Other indicators of dynamism included holding regular office hours, making sustained efforts to meet constituents in their villages and homes, and experimenting with new mechanisms for UP management and citizen participation. Chairmen receiving a negative score routinely expressed passivity and helplessness during interviews even if they had received training from ILLG.

Some examples of dynamic chairman from the treatment group follow:

- The chairman of UP A met constituents in his office four days a week, visited *upazila* headquarters on another day, and actively sought out citizens in their communities on weekends. Ordinary female citizens agreed that they routinely saw him around in their communities.
- In UP C, the chairman was a CC graduate, who had already displayed dynamism while serving a vice chairman of that group for several years. He planned to re-establish a regular meeting schedule with members of that group. He was able to secure funds to purchase sewing machines for a girls' high school from a benefactor in the United States, and he held office hours in the UP complex from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. every morning.
- The chairman of UP F had also organized a voluntary effort to build a temporary dike and desalinate farmlands, an effort that would benefit many local households. Female citizens also gave him high marks for successfully resisting the efforts of fellow members of an official, teacher-hiring committee to choose favored candidates for dubious reasons.
- In UP J, the chairman introduced a wall chart to “score” member performance. He also introduced a new system of *gram shavas*²² to confer with ordinary citizens in their neighborhoods, and announced a three-year plan. A woman member agreed that the chairman’s rating system for UP members was a useful innovation, bringing “heated competition” among members to do better.

Two of the chairmen from the control group also showed similar examples of dynamism. For example, the chairman of UP B took steps to reduce waterlogging and salinization in UP farm lands by recruiting voluntary workers, and in the process overcame the resistance of citizens who had created barriers to water movement for their own purposes. He also extended office hours in the UP complex and undertook a “well-being” analysis of local households developed by an NGO. Female citizens confirmed that he visited their communities every two or three days, and made contributions to the needy.

The contrast with non-dynamic leaders is strong. The chairmen of UPs D and L (controls) expressed helplessness and passivity throughout the interview. In UP E (treatment), where citizens wanted the UP *mela* continued, the chairman was unresponsive. The chairman of UP G (treatment) showed great passivity throughout the team’s interview with him and excused his ineffectiveness by stressing that he tries to “follow rules” and “obey orders.”

Clearly defined development strategy, widely known

A clear vision or strategy for the medium-term future is an invaluable tool for effective governance. With a few, clearly articulated goals, leaders can rise above the syndrome of “selling poverty” that has characterized development efforts in Bangladesh for several decades. A clear strategy enables decision makers to direct varied resources—Food for Peace, Test Relief, LGSP funds, local house and business taxes, the “1% land

²² Village assembly or meeting

tax”—toward specific development goals. The absence of a strategy brings disconnected decision making, subject to varying, unpredictable resources doled out by central government agencies during the year and leading to the patchwork of small infrastructure schemes that is typical of Bangladeshi LGUs.

Five of eight (63 percent) ILLG UPs and only one (25 percent) control UP received positive scores for this variable: ILLG-supported UPs are more likely to have a three- or four-element development strategy with clear, medium-term goals such as agricultural diversification and higher female school attendance, rather than passively accepting resources as they are provided by central government.

In UP D, the one control UP that received a positive score in this area, the chairman clearly laid out three goals: desalinization of agricultural land, full road access through brick soling, and improved girls’ school attendance. Women members endorsed his strategies, and female citizens were also aware of “the chairman’s dream.”

There were many more examples of stronger strategies from the treatment group, as follows:

- In UP A, the chairman succinctly outlined a four-part strategy: accessible roads, arsenic-free water, agricultural diversification and better quality schools.
- In UP K, where the chairman was elected to a second term in 2011, he proudly described accomplishments since 2003, notably a year-round road network and supply of sanitary toilets to all households. His current emphasis is on crop diversification, including specialized presentations to farmers by the *upazila* Agricultural Extension Officer. Women members are fully aware of the current emphasis on crop diversification, as are ordinary women citizens and members of the CC.
- In UP C, women members clearly articulated the need for crop diversification and improved girls’ education.
- In UP E, there was a plan for dam construction and outside funding was being sought. There was also a plan to establish a vocational education center.

In contrast, there were several other UPs visited by the team that lacked a clear strategy, especially among control UPs. In UP D (control), when queried about goals, the chairman ignored the question and complained about the lack of advance budget information from central government. Female citizens noted that the problem of arsenic-laden water has been known to UP D residents for at least 10 years, but there had been no concerted effort to provide improved water supplies such as deep tube wells. In UP H (control), the chairman did not express any specific strategy and ordinary citizens denied they were aware of any such plans.

Active, effective standing committees

The 2009 *UP Parishad* Law specifies 13 standing committees and it appears virtually all UPs meet the letter of the law by listing chairmen and members for all 13 in official documents. The issues of greatest concern to residents are much the same from UP to UP. These issues include attendance of teachers and students at local schools and availability of medicines and health professionals at clinics. Other concerns arise less often and may include the frequency of agricultural extension workers’ visits and gangster activity. While education, health and police services are not directly provided by Bangladeshi UPs, the 2009 Law empowers UP leaders to demand better services from central government agencies, generally by working through standing committees. Unfortunately, in some case study UPs the committees are dormant and unable to address even the most basic issues.

All eight (100 percent) ILLG UPs and one of four (25 percent) control UPs received positive scores for this variable: The ILLG UPs observed by the evaluation team were far more likely to have effective standing committees, although generally only four or five of the 13 specified in the 2009 *UP* Law were currently active. However, the active units pursued the most immediate needs of rural families: more effective

schooling, more reliable health clinic services and medications and more effective agricultural extension. Although standing committees were active, they often pursued their responsibilities by working closely with other units in the UP, notably school management committees and community clinic advisory committees. The 2009 law provided for inclusion of ordinary citizens in the committees and at some ILLG sites, this practice was followed. Some examples of good practices and work by treatment UP standing committees include:

- In UP J, women members described the results of work by standing committees with pride: schools were giving free tutorials, health clinics were fully manned and stocked with medicines, and 95% of households had sanitary toilets. Furthermore, female citizens reported that a “rickshaw ambulance service” had been set up, teacher attendance was good, a tree planting program to benefit youth had been established, and women had equal access to services. CC members reported that they were active on standing committees, and a former UP member observed that teachers were making visits to students’ homes.
- In UP C, the chairman noted that “standing committees [were] enjoying mixed success.” This most likely indicated that a majority of the units are inactive. However, women members noted that some committees were quite active and reported, with pride, that Health Committee members regularly inventoried medicines delivered to community clinics, a practical approach to preventing corruption and ensuring adequate supplies for patients. Women members were assigned to three or four committees, sometimes as chair. Local elite men reported that all committees met monthly.
- In UP F, the chairman reported that standing committees met monthly or bi-monthly and a segment of each UP meeting was reserved for their members to raise issues with the entire body. Women members noted that the committees were formed almost immediately after the 2011 election. The Health Committee organized special assistance to pregnant mothers. The Education Committee encouraged parents to send children to school, even providing modest UP funds to support their tuition and school supplies, monitored teacher attendance, and arranged for Test Relief workers to undertake school repairs. The Education Committee worked closely with school management committees.
- In UP G, the chairman listed active committees: Law and Order, Education, Food Security and Health. Ordinary female citizens served on some of the standing committees. The education committee focused on construction and repairs at local schools, presumably relying on Food for Work and similar programs to mobilize labor.

In contrast to the activist committees described above, most of the control UPs showed little evidence of effective standing committees. For instance:

- In UP B (where the chairman is personally quite dynamic), female citizens noted little evidence for operation of standing committees, and all accomplishments were thought to be initiatives of the chairman.
- In UP D, the chairman reported that all committees assembled in a single monthly meeting, an approach virtually guaranteed to undercut their effectiveness. He also admitted that little had been done to solve the problems of non-performing teachers and health workers.
- In UP L, standing committees existed on paper, but all were inactive. Community clinics lacked medicines, but there were no efforts to intervene. The issue was raised at the weekly *upazila* meeting, with no result. Women members confirmed that committees were inactive and female citizens

complained that at the health center, “known faces” were given preference for scarce medicines. The impoverished families living in *char*²³ lands lacked health services altogether.

Transparent, effective LGSP scheme management

Having selected LGSP schemes, UPs must arrange for their management. In evaluating this indicator, the evaluation team found that whether or not women members had a real role in the LGDP-funded project management provided a good indicator of transparency in how such projects were managed. Interviews at the eight project and four control sites suggest this is more often a transparent process than initial project selection. Where the process is not transparent, it may fall short in a variety of ways. For example, there may be procurement “shortcuts,” or project implementation committee members listed in UP records may have no actual role in scheme implementation.

Six of eight (75 percent) of the ILLG UPs and two of four (50 percent) of the control UPs received positive scores for this variable: ILLG UPs were more likely to manage LGSP schemes in a transparent, effective manner, working through implementation committees and following government rules for tendering, supervision, and final clearance.

Some examples of good practices in treatment UPs include:

- In UP F, the Chairman claimed that the UP used appropriate tendering methods for schemes between Tk 25,000 and 200,000. Women Members confirmed the essential integrity of the management by noting that they and ordinary citizens were fully involved in project implementation committees with citizens sometimes taking the lead in monitoring and supervision.
- In UP A, a woman member claimed adequate knowledge of small-scale tendering procedures and was personally responsible for overseeing a road initiative.
- In UP K, there were active project implementation committees, and committee chairs were able to select citizen members for their groups.

In contrast, among the control UPs, the team found:

- In UP D, women members reported that three of the nine male ward members managed all projects with minimal transparency. A large project implementation committee existed “only on paper.” Furthermore, the women signed blank project-related documents and got “pocket money” in exchange. In UP D, the implementation committee chairman undertook procurement, apparently without competition. Women members sometimes were not informed about key implementation meetings. Furthermore, initiatives were identified only within UP, and women members’ suggestions routinely were ignored. As an illustration of additional shortcomings in scheme management, the women members cited a cash-for-work project of 40 days, while workers were paid only for 35 days.
- In UP L, women members were unaware of any facets of LGSP scheme management. Likewise, prominent male citizens knew nothing about LGSP management, and none had been invited to join a management committee.

²³ Low, sandy tracts created as a river shifts its course.

Active, effective Disaster Management Committees (DMCs)

Following Cyclone Sidr in November 2007, USAID and Rupantar agreed to a dramatic expansion of ILLG, adding 160 UPs and four municipalities to the 50 UPs already included in the Project's Phase II. Overall, the emphasis shifted from establishing and nurturing CCs to support for DMCs. Members of the new DMCs were given much the same training as was provided in Phases I and II, but a substantial new module on disasters was added. Where CCs already existed, their members were often added to ward- and UP-level DMCs.

Four of eight (50 percent) of the ILLG UPs and one (25 percent) of the control UPs had DMCs that were currently active: All those that were currently active were located in UPs recently recovering from significant natural disasters Sidr and/or Ayla, a 2009 cyclone, in the Southwest, or river erosion in the Northwest. However, it must be noted that of six Sidr-affected UPs, three had inactive committees.

Findings from the treatment UPs include:

- In UP A, the chairman was able to outline neatly the role of the DMC at ward and UP levels, laying out responsibilities for preparation, shelter-and-rescue and clean-up phases during a cyclone. Women members reported that they made monthly inspections of emergency supplies stored in the UP building and ordered replacements as needed. CC members reported that ordinary citizens were well aware of DMC activities and noted their individual membership in either a ward-level DMC or the UP-level group.
- In UP E, the chairman noted with pride that the DMC was currently active and effective and met monthly. He further commented that at the time of Sidr, the existing DMC was corrupt and ineffective. Members of the CC confirmed that the DMC was active.
- In UP F, the chairman reported that the UP DMC meets bi-monthly, and that there also were ward DMCs. A woman who belonged to the DMC remarked, "Now there are DMCs even to the ward level. Before there were none." CC members noted that DMC members had been informed of quarterly meetings by mobile phone and that discussions at the meetings were wide ranging, sometimes touching on social issues distinct from disaster concerns.

In UP L, a control UP located in the Northwest's Rangpur District, where river erosion is a persistent problem, the team found that the UP's DMC was not active until recently. The major disaster issue was that several thousand impoverished people lived on low, flood-prone *char* lands created as the main river meandered over a deltaic landscape. Every year or two, hundreds of households flood; and, until recently, the UP did little to help, apparently relying on NGOs and higher-level government units to provide assistance. However, a DMC recently was formed with the assistance of CARE, and members developed a *char*-flooding plan that included boats for rescues, shelter space in nearby schools, livestock rescue and temporary storage of household rice supplies.

At other sites, the situation raised considerable concerns for disaster-prone Bangladesh. In project-supported, Sidr-affected UP C (treatment), the chairman, ordinary female citizens, and a former UP member reported that the DMC was "not so active" and "acting at a low level." In UP G (treatment), another project-supported, Sidr-affected area, the acting chairman claimed an elaborate network of ward-level DMCs and a frequent meeting schedule for the UP DMC and referred to a plan for "using boats and rickshaws for rescue work." However, women members flatly rejected this version of reality, stating that the DMC existed only on paper and no actual meetings had taken place other than initial training provided by World Vision. In UP M (treatment), a project-assisted site in Rangpur District, the chairman acknowledged that the DMC was inactive and clearly stated that "[d]isaster management is a low priority." In UP D (control), a Sidr-affected control site, the chairman admitted that the DMC was inactive, and women members were unaware of basic

concepts of pre-disaster planning and management. In UPs B and H, control sites not affected by Sidr, DMCs were formed but were not active.

Relative freedom from MP and Upazila Chairman Interference

Virtually all UPs in Bangladesh regularly face interference from higher authorities in performing their duties. Apparently, only a few have found effective means to fend off or moderate these demands.

Leaders in only two of eight (25 percent) of the ILLG UPs and none (0 percent) of the leaders in the control UPs offered convincing evidence that their UPs were substantially free from “higher up” interference. Evidence from the case-study UPs regarding pressure from MPs, *upazila* chairmen, *upazila nirbahi* officers, and other “higher ups” aimed at political and/or financial gains appeared indisputable.

Informants, particularly chairmen, but also members and ordinary citizens, were forthcoming on how these pressures were exerted. In UP D (control), the chairman noted that the MP controlled release of cash-for-work and food-for-work resources but “preferred” that the chairman release those resources. While reviewing project implementation documents with team members, the secretary noted two ward members had been banned from project implementation committees due to interference from government party officials who objected to the individuals on partisan grounds. In UP F (control), there was political interference in selecting members for local committees that, in turn, select cash-for-work and food-for-work laborers.

In a particularly petty case, the MP passed out Eid food (the festival allowance), even though this responsibility officially rests with the UP. In UP L, the chairman clearly stated, “Ruling party people are trying to take a percentage from me,” and further noted that the Awami League (AL) “nominates” members WS sub-committees. A prominent citizen noted, “This UP *Parishad* is dominated by external political forces.” The Chairman of UP M noted that “higher ups” interfered by insisting that certain people be selected for relief work or social safety-net benefits. Furthermore, he observed that there was interference despite the fact that the MP, *Upazila* chairman, and he all belonged to the same party. Similar reports of higher-level officials taking control of project resources were reported in UPs A, H, J, and K (which includes three treatment UPs and one control UP).

Despite this systemic problem, a few UPs apparently were able to limit such interference. For example, in UP C (treatment), the MP and Upazila chairman are of the same party as the UP chair, and the latter claimed there was minimal interference. CC members confirmed that UP/Upazila relations were good, while a former UP member opined, “It is probably helpful that the Chair and Upazila Chairman are kinsmen.”

Accountability Outcomes

Conduct of open budget meetings, following good practice

These meetings were encouraged and supported by ILLG field staff during the course of the project and are also required under operating rules for LGSP grants.

Six of eight (75 percent) ILLG UPs and two of four (50 percent) control UPs actually conducted meetings at which budget information was presented. Although ILLG UPs were more likely to conduct open budget meetings (OBMs) than the control UPs, both groups demonstrated observable variation in “openness:” for example, how widely the events were publicized and whether or not actual copies of the budget were available.

Some examples of this variation among treatment UPs include:

- In UP A, a round of open budget meetings was held in the wards, then at the UP level. According to women members, roughly 80–90 citizens attended ward meetings, while 200–300 citizens were present for the UP meeting.
- In UP C, the chairman reported that 70–80 citizens attended the most recent open budget meeting. The overall openness of governance in the UP was confirmed by the posting of current budget information in the UP building.
- In UP E, an open budget meeting was organized in June 2012, but accounts of the number of attendees varied. Women members reported that 100 citizens attended, CC members put the number at 70.
- In UP J, the budget was computerized with the help of the UP Information Service Centre staffer and distributed to members.

In UP L, a control site that received a very low overall governance score, a concerted effort was made to open the budget process. At a meeting attended by UP and local elites, all 50 in attendance received a copy of the budget to take away. This is a substantial effort; however, a female citizen (school teacher) made the valid point that budget information was limited to planning figures, and there was no information on revenues or expenditures. One participant in an interview with prominent male citizens attended the OBM, while all others in the group were invited but did not attend. One of those not attending was able to peruse a copy of the budget document received by a friend. At the meeting, the secretary read out the figures and distributed copies.

In UP K (treatment), where overall governance standards receive a reasonably high rating in Table 1, there were no identifiable efforts to impart budget information to citizens (or even to UP members). The chairman frankly admitted that no open budget meetings have been held. Women members noted, “We know very little about the budget,” and reported that at a closed budget meeting, “We signed and went home.” They know only the source of revenues, not the actual amounts. The CC recommended to the Chairman that he conduct an open budget meeting, but he did not respond. Finally, when the evaluation team requested a review of budget documents, a request honored at all other sites, the secretary stated, and the chairman confirmed, that all financial documents were at the chairman’s house, and thus unavailable. In UP D the Chairman noted frankly, “Getting the people involved in the budget process will make to process lengthy.” In UP B (control), the chairman admitted that no open budget meetings were held. Women members noted that budget decisions regarding LGSP schemes (though not actual costs), were announced to residents through ward *chowkidars*. Ordinary women “[didn’t] know about the budget.”

In UP M (treatment), the chairman readily admitted that open budget meetings currently were not being held. However, women members opined that such meetings should be undertaken. Ordinary women citizens claimed they had no knowledge of UP finances, while a former member pointed out that open budget meetings were conducted during the time of the ILLG project. The secretary indicated that the UP budget is a closely held document, signed by him and the Chairman before submission to the *Upazila* office, but not shared even with UP members. However, he did share it with evaluation team members.

Ward Shavas active in accordance with 2009 UP Law

The 2009 *UP Parishad Law* mandated creation of Ward *Shavas* in UPs across Bangladesh. These units were to be headed by the ward member, advised by a woman member, and could establish sub-committees. At least two annual meetings were specified, to focus on public presentation of the UP budget and review of audit reports. Meetings met quorum requirements only if at least five percent of registered voters in the ward were present and any decisions taken should be recorded by the secretary or his designee. There were indications that ILLG field workers made concerted efforts to support this new system, notably by encouraging ward-level meetings to enable ordinary citizens to air their ideas for small-scale development projects, and to encourage adoption of the open-budget-meeting concept at the ward level. Few UPs visited by the team, even

those supported by ILLG, had fully operationalized the new system. However, positive judgments regarding this variable were made when there was evidence of sincere efforts to establish the system and make it work.

Five of eight (63 percent) ILLG UPs and one of four (25 percent) control UPs had made some effort to activate these ward-level activities. ILLG UPs, where a variety of ward-level activities were sponsored under the project, were more likely to have active Ward *Shavas* at present.

In UP C (treatment), the chairman noted that two rounds of Ward *Shava* meetings had taken place since local elections in May 2011 (another round of meetings was due, soon). Women members confirmed that these meetings had taken place. In UP F (treatment), women members noted that they attend meetings chaired by ward members, and three female citizens confirmed that they have attended such meetings. In UP J (treatment), a voluntary system of *gram sabhas* was introduced by Chairman, an effort intended to further enhance citizen participation by extending meetings to the neighborhood level. Ward *shava* meetings also take place. Women members noted that the meetings were combined with cultural performances to draw a larger crowd. Female citizens also confirmed that they attended the events. In UP H, a control UP, it appears there had been concerted efforts to implement to the 2009 Law. Women members reported that the units provided a venue for selecting LGSP activities and social safety net households. Male citizens confirmed that they had attended ward *shava* meetings. The secretary produced minutes for meetings in 2011 but stated he had not collected the minutes for 2012, as yet.

In a few UPs, UP chairman claimed they were conforming to the Law, but other individuals disagreed. Thus in UP E, while the chairman claimed that ward *shavas* had met, women citizens clearly stated, “There are no ward *shavas*,” and members of the CC concurred. In UP G (treatment), the chairman claimed the existence of ward *shavas*, but Women members insisted, “They exist only on paper.” Furthermore, a woman member had offered to help to organize the units, but male UP members gave her no support. CC members who resided in five different wards provided further confirmation that these units were not active. Likewise, there was no evidence of functioning ward *shavas* in UPs B, D, L, or M (three of which are control UPs).

Transparent, equitable selection of candidates for social-safety-net programs

Bangladesh has a rather comprehensive “social-safety-net” system to ensure members of the poorest households are not threatened routinely by even greater impoverishment, malnutrition, starvation and death. The system has shortcomings in two areas: (1) there are few mechanisms to support self-improvement and eventual emergence from abject poverty and (2) systems to select candidate households are too open to cynical manipulation for purposes of political gain or corruption. Effective UPs can redress the latter issues of political manipulation and resource diversion by establishing open, equitable mechanisms to identify needy households and rank them in order of need.

Six of eight (75 percent) ILLG UPs and two of four (50 percent) control UPs received positive scores for this variable: ILLG UPs were more likely to display fairness in selecting candidate households for social safety-net programs, including pensions for widows and the elderly, feeding programs for vulnerable groups, and temporary employment opportunities under Food for Work, Cash for Work, and Test Relief. Transparency is generally the key to achieving fairness and avoiding misuse of resources. Some good examples of transparency practiced by treatment UPs include:

- In UP J, beneficiary lists for vulnerable-group-feeding programs and cash-for-work laborers were made available at ward *shava* and *gram sabha* meetings, a straightforward approach to introducing greater transparency and greater equity into the system. In UP E, female citizens praised women members for doing a “good job” of selecting social safety-net beneficiaries.
- In UP F, the chairman described consultation with ordinary citizens regarding all social safety-net/work programs. This effort culminated in a large public meeting with 250–300 individuals

present. Women members described separate, ward-level committees for initial identification of candidates for each program. These candidates included widows and old-age pensioners, as well as vulnerable groups (VGD).

- In UP K, women members contrasted current practice to the time before the 2003 *up* election. Since that time, selection of safety-net candidates has become more equitable and transparent. Female citizens noted that the programs were managed more effectively, and that UPs consulted with them on selection of safety-net candidates.
- In UP A, a woman member spoke with satisfaction of her membership on a social safety-net selection committee. Female citizens expressed their conviction that a program to provide poor farmers with fertilizer and seed operated fairly.

In UP L (control), the chairman complained that candidate families for the annual Eid festival allowance were selected by those ward committee members associated with the government party. Because of their party affiliation, these individuals were able to choose 80 families for festival gift packages. Women members stated that they have no role in selection of safety-net programs. One female citizen shared her cynicism about safety-net programs by suggesting that some families get safety-net benefits “two times.” Similar shortcomings in equity also could be detected in UPs F (treatment) and H (control).

Citizens confident of their knowledge and of their UP

Citizens are inclined to be more active, trusting and supportive if they have a reasonable understanding of roles and responsibilities in their LGU. This knowledge can be provided in varied ways: in U.S. communities, citizens initially learn about local governance through school lessons, and then continue to learn through newspaper and TV reports, dedicated cable TV channels, LGU websites and even the Twitter and Facebook accounts of elected officials. They can also gain an “inside view” by serving on advisory committees and commissions and attending public hearings and participatory planning sessions.

Six of eight (75 percent) ILLG UPs and only one of four (25 percent) control UPs received a positive score for this variable: In Bangladesh, where traditions of transparent and effective local governance and use of electronic media are still severely limited outside of Dhaka, an imaginative approach is needed. Much can be accomplished through face-to-face interactions and public meetings that involve UP leaders and citizens. But before moving into an active role, ordinary citizens need basic knowledge about democratic local governance. Female citizens who joined group interviews with the team regularly cited Rupantar’s *pot* shows and dramas as an important element of their understanding of local politics. They readily cited the topics of shows—UP roles and responsibilities, citizen responsibilities, responsible voting, good leadership, paying taxes and the social costs of child marriage and the dowry—and described these as a valued part of their civic education. Establishing and nurturing that knowledge can, in turn, bring more responsive governance.

Rupantar’s support for CCs played a role in supporting civic education and citizen activism, but did so for citizens who were generally better educated and more likely to be part of the local elite. In the absence of interventions by outside groups like Rupantar, UP leaders can seek to build openness and trust through “classic” methods such as Q&A forums with citizens or introducing new consultative mechanisms such as *gram shavas* at the level of the hamlet or neighborhood. Some examples of good practices follow:

- In UP A (treatment), female citizens firmly asserted that they “[knew] everything” about the UP, including its budget. CC members confirmed that “people know their rights” and that *pot* songs helped to “close the gap” between the UP and citizens.
- In UP F (treatment), women members confirmed that people were made more aware of their rights and of UP responsibilities through drama performances. Female citizens were pleased to note that the chairman talked to ordinary women “like a relative or family member.” They also asserted that

they “[knew] about” UP budgets and responsibilities and explained that they learned what they know from Rupantar’s drama performances.

- In UP E (treatment), CC members asserted that the best lessons among Rupantar drama performances included: dignity and citizen rights, UP roles and responsibilities, and the need for open budget meetings.
- In UP J (treatment), the chairman has supported the *gram sabha* concept as an approach to village-level consultations, while also supporting such mechanisms as open budget meetings and ward *shavas*. Women members note that the CC was still active in the community, although bi-monthly meetings with the UP ended. CC members noted in turn that Rupantar “taught us how to tell if UP Mmembers are effective,” and female committee members asserted that they had been “empowered” by Rupantar support for their role. Committee members proudly claimed that they had established an effective UP/citizen link.
- In UP K (treatment), the chairman pointed out that only he and two members were re-elected in 2011, while eight other members failed in their re-election bids. He then asserted that Rupantar performances helped women to become more discriminating voters. Female citizens confirmed this view, asserting that they were more aware of UP affairs than before and proudly noted, “We dropped the old faces” because of lessons about effective leadership learned from *pot* songs. Members of the CC also argued that *pot* songs “closed the gap” between the UP and citizens.
- In UP B (control), the chairman attempted on his own to build closer links to citizens by conducting Q&A sessions with citizens.

In other Ups, there were no explicit indications of efforts by leaders to inform or reach out to ordinary citizens. Thus a relatively “wide net” was used in the analytical process, seeking any positive indications that leaders were working actively to teach and inform ordinary citizens. Few positive results were discovered. For example, in control UP D (control), when ordinary female citizens were queried about opportunities to interact with and learn about their UP, they damned their chairman with faint praise by describing him only as “honest,” then denied they had been invited to ward *shavas* or other public meetings. A cynical male citizen asserted that he “never expects” services from the UP. In UP L (control), citizens were informed about LGSP schemes selected for their wards only after the fact. Despite LGSP norms, there were apparently no community consultations before selecting projects.

Active, empowered Women Members

Women members’ empowerment is manifested in several ways. It goes beyond playing a narrow, traditional role in mediating small-scale domestic disputes and relaying women’s concerns to male members. It does not allow for members to be dominated in their roles by husbands, brothers, or sons. Activist women members not only attend monthly UP meetings, but also speak up on a regular basis, participate fully in decision making, are active on standing committees, designate destitute households for inclusion in social safety net programs, exercise control over funds allocated to wards they represent, and take a direct role in supervising small-scale infrastructure schemes.

Seven of eight (88 percent) of the ILLG UPs and two of four (50 percent) of the control UPs have activist women members. It is appropriate to attribute some of the growth in these members’ roles to gradual expansion of women’s rights across the society and to individual energy and self-confidence. However, the case studies provided substantial evidence that ILLG played a major role in empowering these members in project UPs. Formal training, coaching from field staff and participation in promoting project activities greatly increased their activity levels and authority.

In UP F (treatment), the chairman noted that women members were aware of their rights and duties and no longer depended on male “guardians,” such as husbands and brothers. Women members asserted that they regularly “raise their voice” at UP meetings and each belonged to three standing committees, and chaired

another. CC members noted that women members regularly headed project implementation committees for small road construction activities. In UP K (treatment), the chairman noted that one-third of project implementation committees are chaired by women members. The members themselves proudly pointed out that they belonged to standing committees that undertook excellent initiatives in health—e.g., making inventories of medicines in community clinics and actively supporting a government immunization program—and in primary education, gathering support for school attendance by calling on parents and encouraging them to send their children, and persuading school officials to reduce fees for poor children. Women members estimated they have 200–250 weekly contacts, by phone and face-to-face, with their constituents, and women citizens noted that they prefer to contact women members.

In contrast to these clear manifestations of empowerment, the evaluation team found a very different situation in UP G, which is also a treatment UP. Women members reported that they were not informed about some UP meetings, and that this happened even when the ILLG pProject was ongoing in the UP. Furthermore, women members were asked to leave some meetings when certain “miscellaneous items” were on the agenda. Sometimes they were required to sign minutes for meetings they did not attend, and they were not included in project implementation committees even though their names were listed in associated documentation. In UP L (control), women members each were given one medium-depth tube well to allocate within their three wards, an apparent consolation prize. They were not involved in monitoring or supervising LGSP schemes, but when the *uzpazila* monitoring officer arrived, they were required to sign the reports. Women members had no idea about future planning and described their main role as (pre-*shalish*) informal dispute resolution. Documents provided by the UP secretary show that the three women members did not sign the minutes in the meeting at which cash-for-work allocations were made for 2012.

Substantive female participation in justice activities

The *shalish* is a semi-formal dispute resolution process traditionally undertaken by a panel of respected, male community elders. In general, rural residents prefer this form of justice to more formal approaches because it is relatively swift, involves minimal cost, is close to home, and (ideally) re-establishes cordial relations between disputants. Within the UP, the alternative is the village court, for which the chairman serves as magistrate, pleaders are selected by the disputants or the accused, and a formal guilty/not guilty verdict is reached and recorded.

In five of eight (63 percent) ILLG UPs and only one (25 percent) of the control UPs, women have been empowered to play a more substantial role in local justice institutions. Women members routinely serve on *shalish* panels, and ordinary female citizens sometimes do too. In some UPs, women members also serve as pleaders in the village court. These practices were virtually unknown ten years ago. Some good practices among treatment groups include:

- In UP F, women members regularly served on *shalish* panels and sometimes appeared as pleaders in the village court. In addition, three ordinary female citizens proudly stated that they had served as *shalish* panel members, while noting that 10 years ago, women “peeked at the *shalish* from behind the door.”
- As with UP F, in UP K, woman members regularly served on *shalish* panels and sometimes as pleaders in the village court, and even ordinary female citizens joined *shalish* panels.
- In UP M, where women members regularly joined *shalish* panels, female citizens noted that in the past, “Women used to tremble even to appear at the *shalish*.”

Informants in UPs B, D, E, G, J, and L (three treatment and three control UPs) indicated that women had no significant role to play in local *shalish* cases, except as disputants/victims and occasionally, in the specific case of women members, as witnesses. Thus, in UP L (control), the chairman noted that no woman could be a member of a *shalish* panel. To confirm this, women members clearly stated that they had not participated in

any *shalish* and noted that their role was limited to settling domestic disputes informally, before they reach the *shalish* stage.

Additional Observations Related to Outcomes

In addition to the variables presented in Table 1, two other matters came to our attention.

Local Resource Management (LRM)

Rupantar focused substantial attention on encouraging project UPs to increase own-account tax revenues, notably through the house tax and business licenses. There are at least three justifications for devoting significant time of Project staff to LRM:

- *Enhanced citizenship:* Citizens who pay taxes to their LGU, no matter how small, and thus assume the dual role of citizen/taxpayer, are more likely to feel confident and to demand accountability in dealing with political leaders and officials.
- *Creating good habits:* Citizens who become accustomed to paying small amounts now may be prevailed on to pay substantially more in the future.
- *A larger financial pie:* If Bangladeshi UPs become significantly more effective in raising own-account revenues, they can focus additional funds on service delivery and development programs to benefit their citizens.

Evaluation team members recognize the validity of the first two points, but question whether sufficient progress was made on the third one under ILLG to justify the amount of time spent by field staff and headquarters managers.

During review of UP documents, team members routinely queried secretaries about planning figures and actual collections for the house tax and business licenses, and were consistently unimpressed by what was learned. Few collection figures for either tax exceeded Tk 100,000 and many were far lower, sometimes as little as Tk 7,500. Even when other revenues, such as rental fees and the property transfer tax, were included, the totals were low. Inasmuch as populations of UPs visited by the team ranged from 16,000 to 48,000 and demonstrated significant variations in local wealth levels (as could be estimated by housing and road conditions observed during visits), it was not possible to rank UPs in terms of tax effectiveness per capita, but in all cases, these collection levels did not amount to more than a few *taka* per head. Even in Bangladesh, this is an absurdly low figure.

Unintended Outcomes

Team members did not ask specific questions about corruption. The primary emphasis was on capturing positive evidence of effective governance. However, women members frustrated with their less-than-complete role in UP decision-making and management, and occasionally chairmen venting their frustration with “higher-up” interference or lower-level government employees’ venality, most often introduced the topic in interviews. As noted above, women members in UP D (control) were asked to sign blank documents and then received “pocket money.” In UP G (treatment), women members cited a cash-for-work project that was charged for 40 days of work, although laborers were only paid for 35. In UP L (control), women members were persuaded to sign completion reports for activities they had not visited. It is noteworthy that two of these UPs (D and L) were part of the control group, while UP G entered the project only in the final phase. However, it must be noted that even leaders of the best-governed UPs sometimes had to immerse themselves

in corruption. For example, the chairman of UP A (treatment) noted that he routinely was forced to pay bribes to warehouse workers to release grain for food-for-work activities.

Impact of cultural vehicles in creating community awareness

Throughout ILLG, Rupantar employed *pot* songs and folk dramas, combining traditional entertainment with content on democratic governance and development. Over three project phases, thousands of performances were held. During October 2009–September 2010, for example, Rupantar fielded four troupes and put on 642 performances, with just more than one million attendees. Altogether, Rupantar reported that more than five million people attended these performances during LOP.

During field visits, the last open-ended question asked respondents what they remembered about Rupantar activities during ILLG. Invariably, the first things noted were the *pot* songs and dramas, with most people mentioning specific performances focused on such topics as the evils of child marriage and dowry, or civics lessons about what makes a good or bad leader, what to look for in candidates, etc.

Another vehicle for presenting democratic governance themes was the UP *melas*. These *melas* were large scale events with performances, agricultural and handicraft exhibits and prizes, similar to American county fairs, held during ILLG's first two phases but not in its third phase (they were not included in the grant agreement). Thus, the last events were held in 2008. Even so, most of those interviewed in UPs included in the first or second phase remembered the *melas* fondly and wished for their return.

Youth and the Disabled

While the original evaluation questions included inquiries into how the project effected youth and the disabled, the team found little evidence of differential effects in this area. Specifically, several respondents mentioned youth groups, but only vaguely, as if they were not important project components. And, whenever the team asked about attention to disabled people, respondents said the program had not really incorporated any activity to include them.

QUESTION #2: RUPANTAR'S CAPACITY AND CHALLENGES

- **To deliver high-quality interventions:** At ILLG's outset in 2003, Rupantar had been operating for ten years; it had been engaged in donor-supported activities for five years, beginning with a USAID-funded Asia Foundation project, and centered its efforts on employing traditional performance arts to promote developmental awareness and behavioral change. Its *modus operandi* was essentially in place, and the organization was able to scale it up successfully through the project's successive phases without outside training, consulting or support. Rupantar did augment its capacity during ILLG by growing to four performing troupes and developing new *pot* songs (by EOP, we were told, Rupantar had some 150 in its repertoire), but the organization accomplished all this in-house. It did not have to learn new operational or program skills in order to meet targets set out in grant agreements. USAID did report, however, that Rupantar also received funding from USAID for several staff trainings (the evaluation team was unable to uncover further evidence about the effectiveness of these trainings during the course of its evaluation).
- **To function in a direct programming relationship with USAID:** It was a new experience for Rupantar to make direct agreements with USAID rather than operate indirectly through an intermediary organization like Tetrattech-ARD, the Research Triangle Institute, or The Asia Foundation. With one exception, Rupantar appears to have mastered the intricacies of complying with USAID regulations and requirements in reporting activities and accounting for Agency funds. The exception involved procurement for services in 2009, resulting in Rupantar being required to

refund significant printing costs (among others), but this can be seen as part of the learning curve in dealing directly with USAID. Otherwise, Rupantar was able to develop the needed skills relatively smoothly.

- **Recruiting UP facilitators locally:** Rupantar recruited virtually all its UP facilitators from the immediate area where they were assigned, rather than hiring outsiders, contrary to the practice of many other NGOs as they implement local development projects. Consequently, the facilitators worked in locales where they had close links to the local culture. These ties gave them a real advantage when facing what each of the 12 field workers interviewed described as their greatest challenge: overcoming suspicion and even hostility from UP members, who feared that ILLG was setting up a rival power center that would compete with them.

As locals, the facilitators were able to convince their UPs that their purpose was to help the elected council connect with citizens, not to compete with it. By emphasizing citizen responsibilities toward the UP as well as citizen rights, conducting some ILLG training to mixed groups of CC and UP members, and conducting personal counseling with UP members, facilitators stated confidently to the evaluation team that they were able to accomplish this task. This assertion was supported by the frequent statements of appreciation that UP respondents directed toward both ILLG field workers and the CCs that the project supported. Hiring locals as UP facilitators proved an excellent strategy for Rupantar.

Outputs

Rupantar was meticulous in meeting project deadlines and targets, as indicated in Table 5 in Annex 2 for 2009–2010. Bimonthly meetings of the UPs and CCs (No. 7 on the list) were to be 330, and that is what ILLG achieved. Similarly, *pot* songs and drama performances (No. 14) were targeted at 587, exactly what Rupantar delivered. All other targets were met or missed very narrowly, except for the printing and distribution item (#15), where ILLG exceeded the target by a large margin. Other years showed a similar ability to meet targets.

QUESTION #3: SUSTAINABILITY

Lack of focus on post-project sustainability

Throughout the project, there was little attention paid to how achievements could be sustained after Rupantar and USAID's work with ILLG came to an end. This should not be surprising, because project descriptions for Phases I and III made no mention of building sustainability, and the proposal for Phase II merely hinted at such by requiring that Rupantar "build the program and replicate it in other areas in Bangladesh." But, the specific task here was to "prepare various audio-visual documentations for different activities of the project" and to "produce [six new pot songs and six new folk dramas that when documented with videos and printed materials that would] keep the performance alive for replication to any other area or any other organizations or occasions."²⁴ This statement falls far short of a requirement to include a project component focused on sustaining project-supported institutions once field personnel withdraw and project funds are no longer available.

²⁴ Rupantar, Project Proposal for 2005-2008, pages 15 and 27.

The project proposal for Phase III contains no reference to either sustainability or replication, although it does require a “national level advocacy meeting with policy makers and LG activists” to promote relief and rehabilitation in the Sidr-affected areas, and to undertake “annual consultation meetings with Bangladesh UP Parishad Forum (BUPF) and the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) separately in their advocacy campaign for effective disaster management through local governments”²⁵. The focus on the national policy level again hints at some concern with project sustainability, but as with Phase II, only in an indirect manner.

Throughout the evaluation, Rupantar staff and informants in the sample UPs were asked about sustainability. In two UPs, informants mentioned that toward the end of the project, Rupantar staff had discussed the need to continue some activities, but this was not a major theme. In meetings with Rupantar managers, there were no indications that staff considered sustainability to be a project component. They saw ILLG as a set of activities conceived around local governance, later expanded to include disaster management, to be undertaken during the project’s lifetime and not as an enterprise to be carried on after EOP.

Some interest in acting beyond the immediate scope of the project

Although Rupantar did not focus on sustainability, it did expend some effort on promoting ILLG approaches outside its actual project areas. Two ILLG requirements for Phase III were to consult with BUPF on their advocacy efforts on disaster management and to arrange yearly national meetings with policy makers and local governance activists. One outcome of a 2009 conference was a stipulation in the government’s 2010 Standing Orders on Disaster that all district disaster management committees had to include the district BUPF president.²⁶ Rupantar also took part in the discussions organized by the “Committee for Accelerating and Strengthening Local Government Institutions” constituted by the caretaker government in 2007–2008. Along with other organizations, Rupantar advocated for better transparency, accountability and people’s access to local decision-making process, as well as to strengthen the LGIs with more administrative and financial authority. These are good examples of reaching beyond the immediate geographical confines of a project to influence policy at higher level. However, it would have been good to find others.

USAID as Project Sponsor

As noted above, team members were unable to interview either of the AORs who managed ILLG before its last year. This meant the team could learn little about considerations that shaped initial project design or the various issues that came up during its implementation.

It was clear, however, that USAID devoted little attention to post-project sustainability and consequently, neither did Rupantar. There were shortcomings on both sides, but the primary fault lies with USAID. What is not required will not be implemented.

²⁵ USAID/Bangladesh, Modification of Assistance to extend ILLG to March 31, 2011. Page 6.

²⁶ GOB, Standing Orders on Disaster (2010), page 27.

QUESTION #4: STRATEGIC APPROACH

Insufficient attention to using quantitative instruments as management tools: Project proposals for Phases I and II mandated a baseline survey to “be conducted at the initial stage of the project implementation so as to collect all relevant information of the UPs including available local resources, tax position of the UP[s], existing performance of UPs, poverty level, prevalence of social violence, people’s participation in UP activities, infra-structure and service provisions of the UP[s] and such other pertinent matters.” The proposal continues, “The results of the project activity will be compared with this base line data to ascertain the success of the project”²⁷. The language in the proposal for Phase II was virtually identical.²⁸

These baseline surveys were duly undertaken for Phase I and 2 UPs, and although there was no equivalent requirement for Phase III, a similar survey was conducted for UPs and municipalities added in that phase. Unfortunately, Rupantar’s M&E expert for Phases I and II left before Phase III, and the questionnaires and the coding he used could not be located during the evaluation team’s visit (a common problem with project databases). Rupantar’s present M&E specialist devised a new survey instrument for the 160 new UPs and four *pourasavas* taken up in Phase III, with a new questionnaire and coding protocols, as well as a new database system (Microsoft Excel replaced Access), so that the new data are almost completely incompatible with the old.

For several years in the mid-2000s, annual surveys provided data on “citizen awareness of development plans,” “standing committee meeting status” and “management skills improvement status,” and similar items, but the lack of a code book rendered the data unusable for the purposes of this evaluation. For Phase III, there was a plan to conduct “annual” surveys, but the only survey actually conducted was the baseline itself. An analysis of that survey summed up findings for a sample of 50 UPs within the new population of 164,²⁹ but like the baseline survey itself, it was not used for comparison with later information to gauge ILLG progress.

A more serious problem was that the team could discern no real evidence that survey data were ever used as a management tool by Rupantar staff. The surveys appeared to be tasks undertaken to satisfy USAID requirements. There was no apparent interest in using them to understand what was working well in the project or what needed attention. The M&E enterprise at Rupantar seemed to be a semi-autonomous unit that carried on its work in isolation from the rest of the office. Other Rupantar staff who had built their expertise and reputation on combining traditional folk art forms with modern development themes were not oriented toward using quantitative measurement. They are consummate practitioners of the performing arts and adapted well to supporting democratic local governance, but they were not users of applied statistics.

Integration between ILLG and LGSP: Beginning in 2006, much of ILLG’s efforts concentrated on increasing citizen input into allocating LGSP block grants provided to the UPs. Activation of ward *shavas* (after passage of the *2009 UP Law*), substantive CC interactions with the UPs, and open budget meetings were all focused to a large degree on how best to deploy LGSP grants. In the process, CC members learned a great deal about UP budgeting, which was an important topic in ILLG training sessions. CC members

²⁷ USAID/Bangladesh, ILLG project agreement letter with attachments, August 6, 2002, page 23.

²⁸ Rupantar, Project Proposal for 2005-2008, page 18.

²⁹ Shawkat and Ghosh (2009).

reported that they were able to put this knowledge to good use in explaining budgets to citizens and in discussing budgetary issues with the UPs at bi-monthly meetings.

However, there might have been even stronger linkages developed between ILLG and LGSP. For example, CCs could have used annual LGSP financial audits as a tool in communicating to their UP and citizen counterparts. The audits provided a new transparency instrument that for the first time made UP budgets publicly available, which enabled citizens to see where UP money came from and how it was spent. The broad dimensions of these budgets were presented at open budget meetings and in several of the 12 case study UPs were posted on a wall or the bulletin board of the UP hall, but the audits offered a more fine-grained analysis that could have been used to better effect.

CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNED

A SUBSTANTIAL LEGACY CAN EXIST EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

ILLG left behind a substantial legacy in those UPs where the project was implemented that remain readily observable 18 months after EOP. Even though many institutions (in the form of organized activities) had substantially eroded, resources in the form of individual skills and knowledge were still very much in place. Several patterns became clear during field visits:

- Citizens are substantially more aware of UP responsibilities than they were before ILLG, and they are more demanding that the public services UPs are obligated to provide are in fact provided. They are uninhibited about asking UP members and chairs directly concerning services and entitlements (such as VGF cards and old age pensions), often calling them on the mobile phones that have become so ubiquitous all over rural Bangladesh.
- Women have become empowered. Ordinary female citizens call UP members (particularly women members, but also male members and chairs) about services. In some UPs they serve on UP standing committees, and even more often, they serve on shalish panels.
- Individuals involved in ILLG activities have often stayed involved, generally as individuals, not as part of an organized group.
- New community leaders have emerged from ILLG-sponsored citizen committees. Team members met one former CC activist elected as chairman in 2011, and heard about another from former ILLG field workers. The field workers also mentioned a dozen cases of CC activists who have been elected as UP members. Many CC members have joined UP standing committees and disaster management committees. In another variation on the “promotion” theme, the team also met two former ILLG UP facilitators who were elected as UP members in 2011. ILLG served as an effective school for citizen involvement in local governance. However, while many ILLG practices have had significant carryover impact, the institutions (CCs, pot songs, folk dramas, UP melas) that inspired them have not continued.

NEW BEHAVIORS CAN BE INTRODUCED INTO LOCAL POLITICAL CULTURE

Another way to assess the conclusions in the previous section is to observe that ILLG has demonstrated contrary to much received wisdom in the development field³⁰ that culture – or at least political culture – can change in a relatively short space of time. Admittedly, 18 months after EOP is not enough time to state this authoritatively, but it does show that the practices enumerated above did not dry up and wither away as soon as the donor-assisted project came to an end and outside support disappeared.

It must also be noted that Bangladesh is not a country under heavy stress from conflict like Afghanistan or from disaster like Haiti. To observe that new behaviors can be introduced in Bangladesh does not guarantee that similar programs will work in those more challenging environments. However, in calmer milieus, the ILLG approach should be worth considering in other countries.

POST-PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY MUST BE BUILT INTO THE PROJECT ITSELF

Most USAID projects dealing with local governance or civil society have sustainability requirements built in to the grant, cooperative agreement or contract. But if there is no such component, the implementer cannot be expected to take this task on gratuitously. Such was the case in Bangladesh.

NOT ALL LOCAL GOVERNANCE COMPONENTS ARE EQUALLY WORTH PURSUING

Local resource mobilization (LRM) is surely one of the most important components of local governance. Without it, LGUs are totally dependent on allocations from outside, whether from central governments, foreign donors, or, in a few cases, outside private enterprises, e.g., engaged in natural resource extraction. ILLG devoted considerable effort to increase LRM, but in UPs visited by the team, the results appeared very modest in terms of additional revenue mobilized, and many UPs had lost whatever momentum they had attained once ILLG came to an end.

Reluctant local taxing authorities, tax payer resistance and irresponsibility at higher levels such as upazilas not returning the UP's share of the property transfer tax contribute to this pattern, but equally responsible has been the arbitrary and very low ceilings established for local tax rates. The Tk 500 limit on the housing tax and similar limits on business licenses are prime examples. These low ceilings do not exist by accident; they have been established by design: higher authorities at the ministries along with the MPs, have long insisted on their right to exercise control over “incompetent” LGUs by restricting their ability to raise own-account revenues and to keep them dependent on grants and subsidies from above.³¹ Local governance projects supported by bilateral donors are not going to modify this policy position (though conditionality on much larger World Bank and Asian Development Bank loans might do so).

³⁰ See for instance Lawrence Harrison.

³¹ Central government severely constraining LRM is an old story in Bangladesh. See for example, Blair (1989). Harry Blair, ed., *Can Rural Development Be Financed from Below? Local Resource Mobilization in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1989).

In contrast, ILLG support for alternative dispute resolution systems – in this case the traditional shalish – has been quite successful. The project’s training programs combined with mentoring and support for women have made the shalish more accessible, more open, and more equitable in the opinion of many of those we interviewed. This relative success may have been in part due to a judiciary not feeling under threat from an energized ADR system, which would not be competing with the regular judicial system as opposed to the LRM scene in which the higher bureaucracy and MPs have perceived their interests at risk from energized LGUs.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS PRODUCTIVE

The overall ILLG strategy was to work with and build institutions that can operate effectively inside extant structures of local governance supporting them and helping them become more effective. Project managers could have followed quite different approaches, such as:

- Building local civil society organizations (perhaps community-based organizations) to advocate program objectives such as citizens’ rights, transparency, public service delivery, etc. These groups would be autonomous from the UPs, working from the outside to promote change in how local governance is exercised, just as CSOs at the national level advocate for policy change.
- Strengthening political party competition at local level, working from the belief that free and fair electoral contestation forms the ultimate instrument to enforce accountability in a democracy. In most Western systems, in the end it is elections that keep presidents, legislatures, mayors and local councils accountable to the citizenry, and presumably the same is true in developing democracies as well.
- Pursuing policy change at the national level to ease systemic constraints on local governance by:
 - Easing limitations imposed on local revenue mobilization; or
 - Preventing or at least constraining interference in UP affairs from MPs, upazila chairmen or nirbahi officers.

The Team does not believe any of these alternatives would have been productive. Working from outside the UP would have raised much hostility; in fact, as observed earlier in this report, ILLG’s UP facilitators had to go to some lengths to convince UPs that they were not a threat but rather a support. As for party competition as an engine of accountability, the massive failure of this mechanism at the national level in Bangladesh scarcely induces optimism that it could work at the LGU level. Finally, pursuing policy change along either of the dimensions suggested would face very strong headwinds from the groups to be affected. A combined phalanx of bureaucrats, MPs, and upazila level officials would bring formidable opposition to any such effort. In a word, the strategy ILLG did in fact follow was clearly the best one in our view.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

1. **Keep the Same Model with Modest Additions:** The Team believes the Rupantar model is a sound one; in particular, its central foci on creating Citizen Committees as intermediaries between the UP and ordinary citizens and on using culturally appropriate drama programs as a major mechanism for adult civic education. It can certainly be used again, but we recommend several modifications in the following points, mostly in the form of additions to a sound model.
2. **Include a Definite Post-Project Sustainability Component in Project Design:** It should be clear by now that the Team sees this as ILLG’s major shortcoming. Any future project should include a specific requirement that a post-project sustainability plan be designed and implemented with emphasis on the project’s final year. Some suggestions along these lines:

- If grants do not provide USAID enough leverage to assure a sustainability component, consider using a cooperative agreement.
 - An “ILLG-lite” glide path in the last year of a project could include:
 - Markedly less project funding for this transition period;
 - “Sustainability action plan” sessions, possibly training as well;
 - Transition-themed newsletters, emails, SMS texting for reinforcement;
 - Occasional field visits from implementer headquarters.
 - Building sustainable post-project centers for providing training and consulting (this is the “intermediate service provider” model used with considerable success in the E&E region with “graduating” countries).
3. **Include an M&E Component that Implementers Can Actually Use to Ascertain Project Progress:** Future projects should establish a baseline survey plan that includes “treatment” and “control” localities to be re-surveyed later in the project with the intention of identifying project activities that are proving successful and those that are not in specific sites. Control areas will facilitate identification of improvements due to the project itself as opposed to those that are part of the general background “noise” affecting all localities more or less equally, e.g., improved health that could be attributed to a project’s emphasis on increasing provider attendance at community health clinics but in fact flows from a countrywide anti-malaria campaign that affects treatment and control UPs equally. This kind of data collection and use will require some training and guidance for the project’s M&E cell and more importantly for project field staff and managers to orient them to using quantitative (and qualitative) data to assess progress and make needed changes.
 4. **Build on Project Successes, De-emphasize Less Successful Components:** Obvious examples from ILLG are shalish upgrading as a success and local revenue mobilization as less successful. Such insights should be built into any new project for there is every likelihood that alternative dispute resolution will remain a feasible alternative to the regular judicial system, and at the same time little chance that constraints presently hobbling LRM will be lightened in the near future.
 5. **Utilize the New UP Information Service Center and Exploit Skyrocketing Cellphone Use:** About the time ILLG ended in 2011, new UP Information Service Centers (UISCs) were set up across the country with the mission of bringing current information technology to rural Bangladesh. Any new program should be aware of these centers and their ability to facilitate such innovations as Facebook pages and Twitter accounts for UP chairs and members, SMS texting for emergency warnings on cyclones and the like. In a culture where cellphones are rapidly coming to every household, this idea is scarcely strange, and in fact we gather that UNDP has already begun some programming along these lines. But a future ILLG-type project could surely find some additional applications of emerging technology.
 6. **Consider Alternative Approaches to Organizing Training Groups:** Rupantar chose a “trickle in” training strategy. Generally, only two or three UP members from each UP were invited to a particular training session where they learned with counterparts from a dozen or so other UPs. A similar strategy was used for CC members. This approach presumably created a degree of camaraderie among Chairmen, Members, and UPs in the region. Therefore, essential civic education lessons could be “trickled in” to the UPs and CCs as each pair or triad of trainees returned to their groups. But, a different model, a “critical mass” approach, might have worked equally well or better. Rupantar could have assembled complete (or nearly complete) UPs perhaps three units at a time. These groups could have capitalized on their classroom learning by

following up with action planning sessions allowing them to establish new systems and start new (small) projects soon after returning to their UP.

7. **Improve Linkages with the Local Government Support Program:** LGSP is now in its second five-year phase, which will last into 2016. As before, it will include sizeable block grants directly to UPs and annual auditing of accounts accompanied by a training program. A new ILLG-type program could profitably tap into this initiative coordinating its training program with LGSP's, with a particular emphasis on incorporating LGSP audits into its own activities. A "new generation" ILLG of similar size to the old program's Phase III would have a large enough footprint to build an experience base worth sharing with LGSP. Such exchanges would be of much value to both programs.
8. **Recycle/repurpose ILLG training materials:** Over its lifetime, ILLG developed an impressive archive of training materials: manuals, lesson plans, scroll paintings, pot songs, drama productions, etc. Many and most likely most of these materials could be used again in future projects, either directly by Rupantar itself or using Rupantar as a consulting and resource organization if some other donor (e.g., UNDP, World Bank) or grantee/cooperator becomes the project implementor. It would be a severe loss to local governance in Bangladesh if this trove of materials were consigned to a storage closet at Rupantar when it could be advantageously used again and again.
9. **Plan to Expand from a Pilot Project to Larger Coverage:** The long history of experimental programs in Bangladesh that has been accumulated by USAID and other donors should encourage the Dhaka mission to ask what after is the ultimate purpose of such projects. Is it sufficient to implement a successful project of limited scope and hope that it will produce valuable lessons that might be replicated in some later effort? Or should there be some broader objective? By the time the project ended, ILLG had a sizeable presence in the field covering 210 UPs. But this amounts to less than five percent of the just under 4,500 UPs in the country. Although ILLG has produced interesting innovations in local governance that have outlived the project and continue to contribute to more open and accessible local governance there was no clear intention on the part of USAID or Rupantar to move beyond the level of accomplishment after the project's end. ILLG was in effect a pilot project with nowhere to fly to. It devised and nurtured a number of excellent ideas for local democratic governance but lacked an effort to spread them. The pilot remained on the runway at EOP. There are examples in Bangladesh of small experimental programs expanding and eventually becoming national programs. Chief among them has been the UNDP's Sirajganj project that operated in that region from 2000 to 2006 then becoming the model for the countrywide LGSP project³². USAID will not be able to commit resources at a level anywhere near the \$112 million that the World Bank allocated to LGSP's first phase or the \$290 million that it is committing to LGSP2 which began in 2011³³.

³² For a brief account of the Sirajganj project and its achievements that came to be incorporated in LGSP, see GOB & UNDP, Project Document: Local Government Support Project (2006: esp. pages 6-10), available at << mdtf.undp.org/document/download/2806>>.

³³ Data from < <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P098273/local-governance-support-project?lang=en>> and < <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P124514/bangladesh-local-governance-support-project-ii?lang=en>>, accessed on 23 October 2012.

But just as the Sirajganj project led to Bank support for a nationwide expansion so too a future USAID project might be passed on to a larger donor consortium.

10. **If similar LGU strengthening work is supported in the future, carefully examine the situation before project roll-out.** The evaluation team urges extreme caution and careful examination of the current situation before significant time and resources are devoted to improving LRM.

ANNEX I: EVALUATION QUESTIONS IN CONDENSED AND ORIGINAL VERSIONS

EVALUATION QUESTIONS USED IN THIS REPORT	USAID/BANGLADESH EVALUATION QUESTIONS
<p>1. To what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving its objectives, both in terms of targets met (outputs) and impact on the conduct of local governance in its areas of operation (outcomes)?</p>	<p>2. To what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving program objectives? 5. How did ILLG interventions support/complement other donor efforts? 10. How well were gender, youth and disability issues addressed by ILLG's interventions in the targeted areas?</p>
<p>2. What were the key challenges facing Rupantar both as project implementer and in its direct programming relationship with USAID and how did it meet them? Conversely, what challenges did USAID confront in its relationship with Rupantar?</p>	<p>3. What were some of the key challenges both Rupantar and USAID faced in the direct programming? (explain if some of these challenges related to lack of political will ; obstacle in implementing any local governance program) 4. How was programming affected with the budget increase post-Cyclone Sidr? Did Rupantar change the way they operated in order to manage these large sums? 7. Is there any noticeable capacity development/improvement of Rupantar itself over the life of the program to better manage activities, finances, administration, programming? If so, what was the extent and significance of these capacity improvements for efficiency and sustainability of the program?</p>
<p>3. How sustainable have ILLG's program activities been after EOP, and has Rupantar itself become more sustainable as an organization over the course of ILLG?</p>	<p>8. How sustainable are ILLG program activities beyond USAID support? (Describe obstacles undermined the goal of sustainability, measures could have been taken to enhance sustainability) 9. Has there been any evidence that after nine years of working with USAID, Rupantar is any more sustainable as an organization to conduct these types of projects on their own?</p>
<p>4. Was Rupantar's strategic approach the best possible one given the DG environment it faced, or were there other strategies that might have proven more effective?</p>	<p>1. To what extent are the assumptions behind the project still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh and will they provide sufficient guidance for appropriate programmatic and technical assistance decisions 6. Were activities selected such that project resources achieved the greatest possible utility given the project objectives? (describe if the program activities targeted at the appropriate beneficiaries to ensure the greatest result) 11. Is there evidence from ILLG to suggest that alternative program approaches may have been more successful?</p>

ANNEX 2: FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: ILLG sample UPs visited

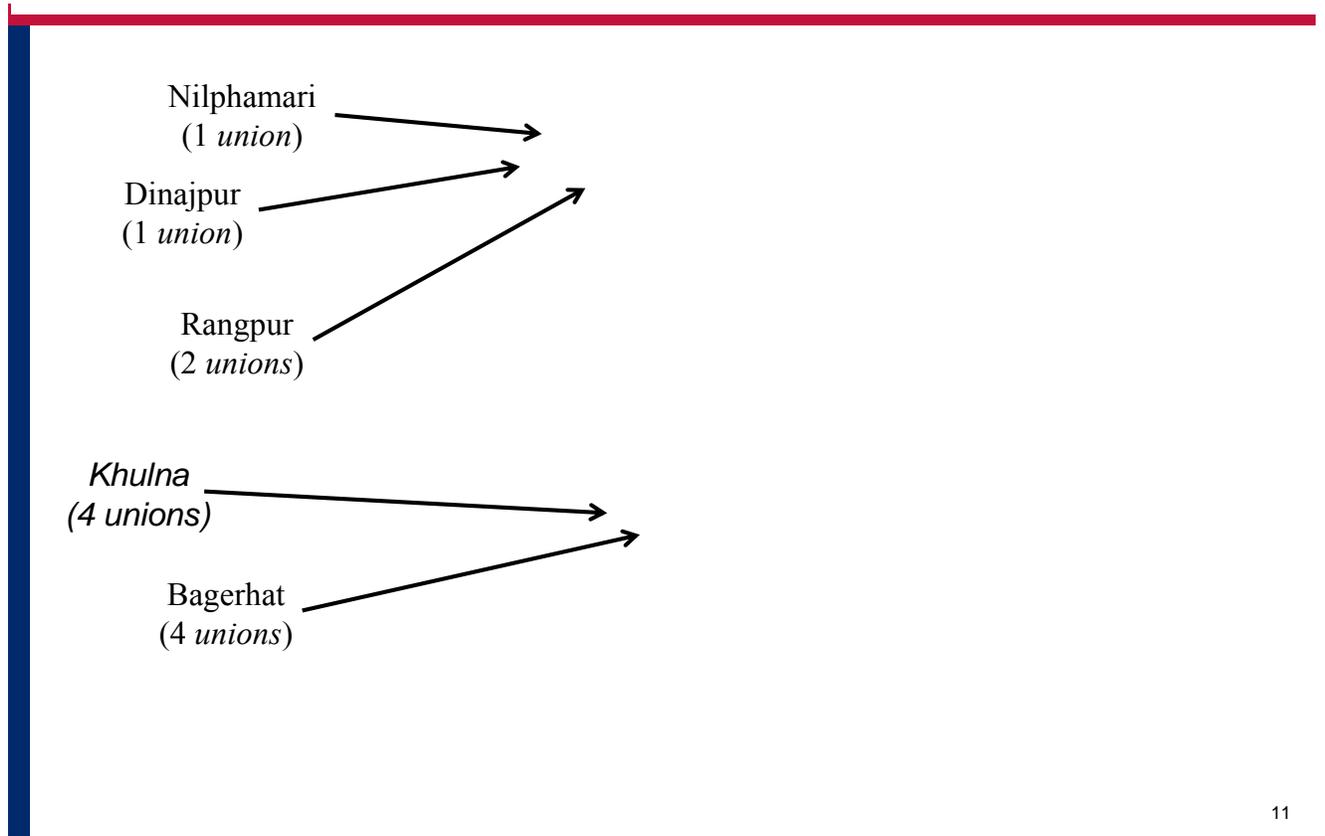


Table 2: The ILLG project, 2002–2011

PHASE	YEARS	UPS	FUNDING
1	2002–2006	23	\$0.5m
2	2006–2008	23 + 27 new	\$0.8m
3	2008–2011	50 + 164 new*	\$2.8m
TOTAL	2002–2011	214	\$3.8m

*Includes four municipalities

Table 3: UPs & Pourasavas covered under ILLG in its three phases and our sample

DIVISION	DISTRICT (UPS + MUNICIPALITIES)	PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III		SAMPLE	
		2002–2005	2005–2008	NON-SIDR	SIDR	TREATMENT	CONTROL
RANGPUR BARISAL (86 + 3M)	KHULNA (33)	New 7	Same 7		Same 7	1	2
					New 26	1	
	BAGARHAT (36 + 1M)	New 16	Same 16		Same 16	2	1
					New 20 + 1M	1	
	NORAIL (25)		New 12	Same 12			
					New 13		
	PATUAKHALI (27 + 1M)				New 27 + 1M		
	PIROJPUR (21 + 1M)				New 21 + 1M		
	BARGUNA (38 + 1M)				New 38 + 1M		
	DINAJPUR (10)		New 10	Same 10		1	
NILPHAMARI (5)		New 5	Same 5		1		
RANGPUR (5)				New 5	1	1	
LALMONIRHAT (10)				New 10			
Total	210 + 4M	23	50	55	155 + 4M	8	4

Table 4: UPs visited by ILLG evaluation team

DIVISION	DISTRICT	UPAZILA	UP	T/C	PHASE	SIDR?
Khulna	Bagerhat	Bagerhat	Rakhalgachi	T	I	Y
Khulna	Bagerhat	Kachua	Dhopakhali	C		Y
Khulna	Bagerhat	Mongla	Burirdanga	T	I	Y
Khulna	Bagerhat	Morrelganj	Hoglabunia	T	3	Y
Khulna	Khulna	Batiaghata	Amirpur	T	I	Y
Khulna	Khulna	Dacope	Bajua	T	3	Y
Khulna	Khulna	Fultola	Fultola	C		N
Khulna	Khulna	Dumuria	Rangpur	C		N
Rangpur	Dinajpur	Parbotipur	Palashbari	T	2	N
Rangpur	Nilphamari	Saidpur	Botlagari	T	2	N
Rangpur	Rangpur	Kaunia	Tepamodhupur	C		N
Rangpur	Rangpur	Taraganj	Kursha	T	3	N

T/C = Treatment or Control UP

Sidr? = Sidr-affected or not Sidr-affected

Table 5: Activity Targets and Achievements of ILLG in 2009-2010

ACTIVITY	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT	DEVIATION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	
01	Training on accounts & public finance for LEB's	40	40	0	1094	440	1534
02	Bi-monthly Meeting support to UP standing committee.	330	336	+6	6744	2112	8856
03	Workshop with UP Disaster management committee and LEBs on PSP action.	115	113	-2	3588	1301	4889
04	Disaster related Day observation by the LGI and DMC World Environment Day	214	213	-1	8151	3763	11914
05	Consultation Meeting with BUPF and MAB for Disaster Management at National Level	2	2	0	117	28	145
06	DMC Quarterly Meeting	636	630	-6	14681	6222	20903
07	Bi-monthly CS Committee Meeting	330	330	0	7256	3344	10600
08	Training on Disaster Management & Risk Reduction for DMC & Citizen Committee	25	25	0	630	367	997
09	Training on Cyclone Preparedness for DMC members	25	25	0	636	342	978
10	Dialogue Meeting with citizen leaders on strengthening UP activities & mobilizing local resource & ensuring local level service	159	158	-1	5378	2058	7429
11	Upazila Level Citizen Coordination Committee meeting for existing Upazila citizen committee and new committee program	58	56	-2	1865	889	2754
12	Regional level seminar/workshop on project issue	1	1	0	103	51	154
13	Supplement on disaster preparedness and mitigation (Exposure Visit for LEB's)	2	2	0	16	4	20
	Supplement on disaster preparedness and mitigation (GO, NGO, Donar & Journalist visit)	1	1	0	6	0	6
	Radio Program AMADER UP	24	24	0	0	--	--
14	Drama & Pot Song	587	587	0	601827	332127	933954
15	Awareness material printing and distribution awareness material development: (i) Poster	50000	70000	+20000	147000	63000	210000
16	Awareness material printing and	214	214	0	-	-	-

ACTIVITY	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT	DEVIATION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
distribution awareness material development: ii) Notice Board & display board						
Awareness material printing and distribution awareness material development: iii) Video and archive documentation for all production	4	1	-3	-	-	-
17 Technical training on financial management abroad	1	1	0	6	0	6
18 Quarterly staff meeting	32	32	0	319	135	454
19 National level policy advocacy meeting on draft disaster management policy act and action plan	1	1	0	135	36	171
20 Divisional level consultation meeting on draft disaster management policy act and action plan	6	6	0	283	88	371
21 Training on UP function, roles and responsibilities for new elected bodies	22	22	0	585	282	867
22 Drama and pot show at field level for non-Sidr area.	55	55	0	46050	30400	76450

Source: Kabir et al. (2011:12). The report erroneously labels this table as covering the entire second phase 2008-2011, but in fact it covers only the year October 2009-September 2010. In addition it covers only the Sidr-affected UPs, not the 55 UPs not covered in ILLG's disaster management project component.

ANNEX 3: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT FOR FIELD VISITS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW--Local Leaders[#]

Name _____ Position _____

Phone # _____ Date _____ Interviewer/Recorder _____

Participation ILLG: Phase I ____ Phase II ____ Phase III ____ Control ____

Sidr-Affected? Yes ____ No ____

Location: District, UP, Interview Site] _____

[Note: Explain that informant will not be identified by name or location in what we write. Ask questions in succession. When necessary, use supplementary questions. Generally, ask question in Bangla, but record answer in English. If informant “pre-answers,” shift to later page to record information. Then return to current page.]

1. _____ **UP IS A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE.** [Responses to this question may anticipate responses to later questions; not a problem. Later questions can explore issues in greater detail. Informant may cover such issues as infrastructure, landscape/location, work and business opportunities, neighbors, local culture and religion, local governance, available public and private facilities and services, etc., etc. Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

[Blank space for notes provided to the bottom of the page]

2. _____ **IS GOVERNED WELL BY EFFECTIVE LEADERS.** [Focus is on the UP--the Chairman, Council, Secretary, and UP Office. Note: Responses may touch on various subjects: Trust and respect among Council leaders, relationship with citizens, standing committees, relationship to Upazilla Chairman and MP, transparency, effective resource use, services, planning, by-laws, external relations, etc. etc. Encourage frank discussion of individuals and particular actions. Can you think of any examples? e.g.. When people made a demand and the UP

[#] Similar interview forms were used for citizen groups. The wording was modified to give these informants greater confidence. Thus #2 is written as follows: **AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, _____ IS GOVERNED WELL BY EFFECTIVE LEADERS.**

responded positively? Or didn't respond positively? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

[Blank space provided for notes]

3. UP LEADERS HAVE A CLEAR STRATEGY FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF _____ UP. [Examples might include; formal plans that have been made and publicized, Local by-laws that support the strategy. Election manifestoes. Is there a demonstrated concern for women? Strategic use of external resources. Etc. Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

[Blank space provided for notes]

4. PEOPLE IN _____ UP ARE PROVIDED ADEQUATE SERVICES AS A RESULT OF THE EFFORTS OF THEIR LOCAL GOVERNMENT. [Both inside and outside the UP office. To remind you, these may include water supply, sanitation, health services, education, garbage collection, street lighting, provision of certificates and letters of support.. They also include birth and death reporting. Are the services provided regularly? Are they performed well? Are they accessible to all citizens, including women and religious or other minorities? Are there ever any requests for inappropriate payments or favors? Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

[Blank space provided for notes]

5. ORDINARY CITIZENS IN _____ UP HAVE ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACT WITH AND COMMUNICATE WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS. *[For example, they are able to attend council meetings; they can meet leaders in the UP office or their homes, they can access public records and documents such as property deeds or council minutes, they receive written reports from the Chairman or council, etc. What about participation in the Ward Sabha? What about women, do they have adequate access and information? Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]*

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

[Blank space provided for notes]

6. IN _____ UP THERE ARE ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO PROMOTE PEACE AND JUSTICE AND CONTROL CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR. [For example, the Chairman plays an effective role as a magistrate, council members may play a role as jury members and mediators, there is cooperation between the UP and the police, etc. What about the "salish"? Do the chowkidars and matabar play a useful role? Is there adequate concern for safety and justice for

women? Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last local election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Neither Agree/Disagree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

[Blank space provided for notes]

[Note: This issue is for Sidr-affected areas only.]

7. THE LEADERSHIP OF _____ UP DID AN ADEQUATE JOB OF HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE TO COPE WITH CYCLONE SIDR. [Note: This could include early warning and efforts to get people to safety, rescue efforts, provision of relief supplies, post-emergency employment, etc. Could also include efforts to mobilize and coordinate support efforts from outside. Can you think of any specific examples?]

Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Neither Agree/Disagree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

[Blank space provided for notes]

[Note: This issue is for all areas.]

8. IN _____ UP, THE UP AND THE CITIZENS ARE ADEQUATELY PREPARED FOR THE NEXT NATURAL DISASTER. [As you know, Bangladesh is subject to many natural disasters--cyclones, floods, tornadoes, droughts, etc. We are interested in the wide variety of steps that may be taken to prevent, mitigate, and respond to human suffering. Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? Since Sidr? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Neither Agree/Disagree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

[Blank space provided for notes]

9. THE _____ UP DOES A SATISFACTORY JOB OF MANAGING FINANCIAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING BOTH RAISING REVENUES AND EXPENDING FUNDS. [For example, the UP can raise funds through house taxes business and professional licenses, and leasing out property, and expends funds on _____, _____, _____. Is information available to ordinary citizens and UP Members about financial practices of the UP? About procurement? Are you aware of any mis-use of funds? Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]

Strongly Agree___ Agree___ Neither Agree/Disagree___ Disagree___ Strongly Disagree___

10-A. First, Two orienting questions:

For Former Project Sites: ARE YOU AWARE OF THE WORK OF RUPANTAR AND THE ILLG PROJECT HERE IN _____ UP?

YES ____ NO ____ [If yes, is there anything in particular that stands out in your mind about Rupantar's work?]

[Blank space provided for notes]

For Control Sites and Project Sites: ARE YOU AWARE OF ORGANIZATIONS [OTHER THAN RUPANTAR] THAT HAVE HELPED TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN _____ UP IN RECENT YEARS?

YES _____ [NAME _____] NO ____
[What about the Local Government Support Program funded by the World Bank? Has it done anything here? If yes, what?]

[Blank space provided for notes]

10-B. AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, THE WORK OF RUPANTAR [or some other organization] HAS HAD SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACTS ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN _____. *[Remember, we have already talked about many aspects of local governance--services, financial management, citizen participation, competition and collaboration, peace and justice, planning and vision, etc. Now we are trying to understand if Rupantar/ILLG--or some other identified program--helped to strengthen any of those things. Can you think of any examples? Have things changed since the last election? If changed, in what way?]*

Strongly Agree__ Agree__ Neither Agree/Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

ANNEX 4: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

**Scope of Work
for the Improving Local Level Governance Program
External Summative Evaluation
USAID/Bangladesh
Office of Democracy and Governance**

Program Identification Data

Program Title : Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening UP
Parishads and Creating Citizens' Awareness (ILLG)
Program Number: Cooperative Agreement No. 388-G-00-02-00098-00
Program Dates : August 2002 - March 2011
Program Funding: \$3,937,163
Implementing Organization: RUPANTAR
Agreement Officer Technical Representative (AOTR): Muntaka Jabeen

I. Background

In general, democratic institutions in Bangladesh remain weak and confidence in the government is low. The central government continues to exercise substantial control over local governments. Even if fundamental reforms are approved, local governments would still lack sufficient human and management resources to apply them quickly and efficiently. Basic public service delivery has to be improved and coverage increased, local governments should be at the forefront of those initiatives. Until very recently, little concrete action has been taken by the Government of Bangladesh to move forward with democratic decentralization of resources and responsibilities. To address the challenges outlined above USAID/Bangladesh has been supporting local government strengthening activities since 2001.

USAID/Bangladesh has provided funding through the “Improving Local Level Governance (ILLG)” program since August 2002. The program was implemented by Rupantar, a Bangladeshi NGO. The program was designed based on some of the cornerstones of democratic institutions including quality service delivery, accountability, transparency, and citizen participation. The program went through three iterations, all with similar goals and objectives. The first iteration spanned from 2002 to 2005 focusing on addressing some of the root causes of the problem of over-centralized governance processes that had little or no civic participation through introducing the citizen participatory approach, strengthening citizen monitoring and watchdog committees, improving service delivery of the local government and utilizing the folk culture to create social awareness and disseminate and transmit a variety of social development message.

In 2008, USAID awarded ‘Democratic Local Governance Program (DLGP)’. The program was designed to increase transparent and participatory public administration at the sub-national levels and stimulate policy dialogue around local governance and decentralization issues. A major component of DLGP was to promote citizen participation and oversight at the local level.

Rupantar's model fully supported DLGP and USAID's fundamental objectives of local governance. As such, the ILLG project was extended through 2008 to use Rupantar's successful model to further refine and test larger geographic areas in Bangladesh. After Cyclone Sidr (2007), the USAID/Bangladesh Mission agreed to a non-competitive award to Rupantar to strengthen local governments' capacity, particularly for disaster preparedness, mitigation and post-disaster economic and social rehabilitation. This final programming spanned three years (2008-2011), totaling approximately \$1.8 million raising the total funding for ILLG to \$3.9 million. Rupantar expanded implementation based upon past successes of their model or approach of citizen participation in creating transparency and participatory public administration at the local level. Implementation increased to reach a total of 214 local governments in the southwest and northwest regions that included 159 local governments in five southwestern districts of Bangladesh most impacted by Cyclone Sidr.

The project's goal is: Strengthening Local Government Institutions (214 UP Parishads and Pourashavas) in South West and North West of Bangladesh as examples of democratic local government bodies responsive to citizens' needs. The broad program objectives that remained consistent throughout the life of the ILLG program included:

1. To build capacity of the targeted local governments as effective service providers;
2. To enhance the transparency and accountability of target governments through greater access to information and participation of community members;
3. To better utilize public and local resources through citizen participation and enhancing elected official's financial, planning, and administrative management skills; and
4. To better mobilize local resource generation activities.
5. To increase awareness (amongst communities and locally elected bodies) about the roles and responsibilities of locally elected bodies, disaster management and other social issues.

In order to achieve these objectives, Rupantar provided training and technical assistance to local governments in budgeting, planning, and developing specific skills of local governments. This program consisted of a number of interventions, such as participatory planning, strengthening citizen monitoring and watchdog committees, and institutionalizing open public budget hearings, and capacity building of local elected officials.

II. Objectives of the Evaluation

This performance evaluation will provide USAID/Bangladesh with an informed assessment of the nine year programming with Rupantar. The evaluation will assess the results/outcomes and lessons learned from ILLG for consideration of both the local governance model developed in collaboration with Rupantar, as well as the lessons learned from programming directly with a local Bangladeshi organization.. The evaluation will:

- Assess the actual results against targeted results;
- Assess the efficacy and result of the ILLG implementation tools and management structure in meeting the objectives;

- Assess the advantages and challenges faced by USAID in direct programming with Rupantar as a local organization and Local organization's advantage and challenges to comply with USAID's regulations. and
- Make recommendations to USAID/Bangladesh concerning future direct programming with local organizations and also to the programs related to local government.

The audience for this evaluation is USAID/Bangladesh, USAID/Washington leaders of USAID Forward, Rupantar, and existing USAID partners.

III. Evaluation Questions

This Scope of Work is for a summative performance evaluation after the conclusion of the ILLG program implementation from August 2002 to March 2011. The evaluation should review, analyze, and evaluate the ILLG program along the following criteria, and, where applicable, identify opportunities and make recommendations for future direct programming with Rupantar. In answering these questions, the Evaluation Team should assess both the performance of USAID and that of the implementing partner(s).

A. Relevance.

1. To what extent are the assumptions behind the project still relevant to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh and will they provide sufficient guidance for appropriate programmatic and technical assistance decisions?

B. Results.

2. To what extent has ILLG been successful in achieving program objectives?

C. Management and Administration.

1. What were some of the key challenges both Rupantar and USAID faced in the direct programming? (explain if some of these challenges related to lack of political will; obstacle in implementing any local governance program)
2. How was programming affected with the budget increase post-Cyclone Sidr? Did Rupantar change the way they operated in order to manage these large sums?
3. How did ILLG interventions support/complement other donor efforts?

D. Efficiency.

4. Were activities selected such that project resources achieved the greatest possible utility given the project objectives? (describe if the program activities targeted at the appropriate beneficiaries to ensure the greatest result)
5. Is there any noticeable capacity development/improvement of Rupantar itself over the life of the program to better manage activities, finances, administration, programming? If so, what was the extent and significance of these capacity improvements for efficiency and sustainability of the program?

E. Sustainability.

6. How sustainable are ILLG program activities beyond USAID support? (Describe obstacles undermined the goal of sustainability, measures could have been taken to enhance sustainability)
7. Has there been any evidence that after nine years of working with USAID, Rupantar is any more sustainable as an organization to conduct these types of projects on their own?

F. Cross Cutting Issues.

8. How well were gender, youth and disability issues addressed by ILLG's interventions in the targeted areas?

G. Program Opportunities

9. Is there evidence from ILLG to suggest that alternative program approaches may have been more successful?

IV. Proposed Evaluation Methodology

The detailed methodology of this evaluation will be described by the evaluation team in the Work Plan; this will include presentation of an evaluation matrix that will explicitly link evaluation questions and sub-questions to particular data collection approaches and data sources.

In general, the evaluation will apply a mixed-methods approach, with an emphasis on comparative field-based case studies of UP Parishads. Some quantitative analyses may be featured, for example, in the review of ILLG's performance monitoring data, or in the analysis of the program's cost effectiveness. The qualitative side of the evaluation will be incorporated to address several questions (regarding program relevance, management and administration, and sustainability, for example). In addition, the field data collection in the Northwest and Southwest will involve intensive case study visits, organized around a set of semi-structured individual interviews and group discussions. Individual interviewees will include: the current UP Chairman, another UP member, an "opposition" figure (for example, the person who ran unsuccessfully against the Chairman in the last election, or a former Chairman), the UP Parishad Clerk (who can make the UP council minutes and budget documents available), a local "opinion leader" (such as a major landowner, business person, or respected civil society leader). The team will welcome suggestions from USAID, as well as Rupantar and other evaluation stakeholders, for additional data sources at the UP level. Discussion groups will include 4 to 6 men, and a similar number of women.

Eight of the UPs visited will be Rupantar project sites, and there will be a concerted effort to understand both the community governance process and the role and effectiveness of Rupantar in improving it. Four other UPs will be studied with equally close attention, to serve as a qualitative "comparison group" to better assess the effectiveness of Rupantar's effectiveness.

An interview checklist of about 10-12 topics will be prepared for each type of interview or discussion. The primary focus of each interview or group discussion will be to get the respondent(s) to talk openly and thoughtfully about local governance.

The information collected will be analyzed by the Evaluation Team to establish credible answers to the questions and provide major trends and issues. USAID requires that evaluations explore issues of gender; thus, the evaluation should examine gender issues within the context of the evaluation of ILLG activities.

Methodological limitations and challenges for this evaluation are expected to include:

- Ensuring adequacy of the representativeness of interview and rapid appraisal sources vis-à-vis the full scope of ILLG activities and outcomes; and
- Taking systematic actions to counter any biases in (a) reporting by data collection sources and (b) interpretations of collected data by the evaluation team.

The methodology narrative should discuss the merits and limitations of the final evaluation methodology. The Evaluation Team will design appropriate tools for collecting data from various units of analysis. The tools will be shared with USAID during the evaluation and as part of the evaluation report.

The Evaluation Team will be required to perform tasks in Dhaka, Bangladesh and also will travel to activity sites within the country (particularly in the Northwest and Southwest).

V. Existing Sources of Information

USAID/Bangladesh DG Office will provide documents for the desk review and contact information for relevant interviewees. The list of available documents is presented in Annex A. The list is not exhaustive and the Evaluation Team will be responsible for identifying and reviewing additional materials relevant to the evaluation.

VI. Deliverables

All deliverables are internal to USAID and the Evaluation Team unless otherwise instructed by USAID. Evaluation deliverables include:

Evaluation Team Planning Meeting (s) – essential in organizing the team’s efforts. During the meeting (s), the team should review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members’ role and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and instruments and to prepare for the in-brief with USAID/Bangladesh

Work Plan - Detailed draft work plan (including task timeline, methodology outlining approach to be used in answering each evaluation question, team responsibilities, and data analysis plan): Within 5 working days after commencement of the evaluation;

In-brief Meeting - In-brief with USAID/Bangladesh: Within 2 working days of international team members' arrival in Bangladesh;

Data Collection Instruments – Development and submission of data collection instruments to USAID/Bangladesh during the design phase;

Regular Updates - The Evaluation Team Leader (or his/her delegate) will brief the BDGPE COR on progress with the evaluation on at least a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to USAID/Bangladesh as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities for the evaluation should also be discussed with USAID/Bangladesh.

Debriefing with USAID - Presentation of initial findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations to USAID/Bangladesh before the Evaluation Team departs from Bangladesh;

Debriefing with Partners - The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to USAID partners (as appropriate and as defined by USAID) through a PowerPoint presentation prior to the team's departure from the country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider partner comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the evaluation report.

Debriefing with USAID/W - Presentation of evaluation findings and recommendations to USAID/W (upon USAID/Bangladesh request); timeframe will be coordinated between USAID/Bangladesh and USAID/W;

Draft Evaluation Report - A draft report on the findings and recommendations should be submitted to USAID/Bangladesh 2 weeks after departure of international team members from Bangladesh. The written report should clearly describe findings, conclusions, and recommendations. USAID will provide comments on the draft report within ten working days of submission;

The final report should meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.

- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people’s opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a table of contents, table of figures (as appropriate), acronyms, executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, research design and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. The report should include, in the annex, any dissenting views by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations. The report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. The report will be submitted in English, electronically. The report will be disseminated within USAID. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) to Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) for dissemination among implementing partners and stakeholders.

All quantitative data, if gathered, should be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A thumb drive with all the data could be provided to the AOR.

The final report will be edited/formatted by Social Impact and provided to USAID/Bangladesh 15 working days after the Mission has reviewed the content and approved the final revised version of the report.

VII. Team Composition/ Technical Qualifications and Experience Requirements for the Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will include and balance several types of knowledge and experience related to program evaluation. Individual team members should have the technical qualifications as described below:

1 Team Leader (Sr. Program Development Specialist): At least 10 years of experience in democracy and governance evaluations and assessments, including those in local governance. Experience in the democracy and governance sector in Bangladesh preferred.

1 Evaluation Methodologist (Sr. Program Development Specialist): At least 10 years of experience in designing and conducting field-based evaluations and assessments in the democracy and governance sector. Relevant experience in Bangladesh preferred.

1 Local Governance Specialist (Local Senior Social Scientist): At least 10 years of experience in field-informed study (with published research) of local governance processes and challenges in Bangladesh. Fluency in Bangla required; familiarity with Hindi preferred.

The proposed team composition will include one team leader and two team members. USAID strongly prefers to have one member from the LTТА staff for this Evaluation. All positions will be considered key staff and will require USAID approval.

Overall the team will need expertise in USAID practices and expectations in program evaluation; program design and analysis; quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis; survey design and analysis; program issues, innovations and challenges in promotion of public sector transparency and accountability; and USAID practices and requirements in program performance measurement.

VIII. Conflict of Interest

All evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated. USAID/Bangladesh will provide the conflict of interest forms.

IX. SCHEDULING AND LOGISTICS

Funding and Logistical Support

The proposed evaluation will be funded and implemented through the BDGPE project. Social Impact will be responsible for all off-shore and in-country administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate consultants. Social Impact support includes arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel, hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, photocopying, arranging field visits, local travel, hotel and appointments with stakeholders.

The evaluation team should be able to make all logistic arrangements including the vehicle arrangements for travel within and outside Dhaka and should not expect any logistic support from the Mission. The team should also make their own arrangement on space for team meetings, and equipment support for producing the report.

Scheduling

The period of performance for this evaluation will be o/a 2 September to 27 November 2012.

A six-day work week (Saturday-Thursday) is authorized for the evaluation team while in Bangladesh. The evaluation team will submit a work plan as part of the evaluation methodology proposal with a detailed timeline. Pre-departure arrangements should include: travel approval; airline tickets; visas; lodging; work facility and vehicle transport arrangements; dates for meetings with USAID/Bangladesh DG staff and key contacts pre-arranged; in-country travel agenda and accommodations. The following represents a rough timeline.

Task/ Deliverable	Proposed Dates
Review background documents & preparation work (offshore): Draft work plan submitted to SI's technical backup for review by 9/13 and by SI HQ to USAID/Bangladesh by 9/17 (Dhaka time)	09/03/2012 to 09/16/2012
Travel to Bangladesh by expat Team members	09/17-18
Team Planning Meeting hosted by BDGPE; In-brief with USAID/Bangladesh	09/19
Data collection	09/22 to 10/9
Analysis and product drafting in-country	10/10 to 10/13
Evaluation Team submits annotated report outline and draft presentation for USAID/Bangladesh DG Team review; data collection continues (phase II) after submission of these products through 10/14	10/14
USAID provides comments (as needed) on report outline and draft presentation	10/15
Presentation and debrief with DG Team and USAID/Bangladesh	10/16
Debrief meetings with key stakeholders , including GOB	10/17
Expat Team members depart Bangladesh	10/18
SI delivers draft report to DG Team	10/28 Dhaka time [US Embassy holiday, 28 October]
Evaluation Team Leader delivers presentation to USAID/W (date to be coordinated with USAID/Washington)	11/1
USAID and partners provide comments on draft	11/11
Team revises draft report	11/12 to 11/17
Social Impact edits/formats report	11/19
SI delivers final report	11/20

X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The total pages, excluding references and annexes, should not be more than 30 pages. The following content (and suggested length) should be included in the report:

Table of Contents

Acronyms

Executive Summary - concisely state the project purpose and background, key evaluation questions, methods, most salient findings and recommendations (2-3 pp.);

1. **Introduction** – country context, including a summary of any relevant history, demography, socio-economic status etc. (1 pp.);

2. **The Development Problem and USAID's Response** - brief overview of the development problem and USAID's strategic response, including design and implementation of the ILLG project and any previous USAID activities implemented in response to the problem, (2-3 pp.);
3. **Purpose of the Evaluation** - purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 pp.);
4. **Evaluation Methodology** - describe evaluation methods, including strengths, constraints and gaps (1 pp.);
5. **Findings/Conclusions** - describe and analyze findings for each objective area using graphs, figures and tables, as applicable, and also include data quality and reporting system that should present verification of spot checks, issues, and outcomes (12-15 pp.);
6. **Lessons Learned** - provide a brief of key technical and/or administrative lessons on what has worked, not worked, and why for future project or relevant program designs (2-3 pp.);
7. **Recommendations** – prioritized for each key question; should be separate from conclusions and be supported by clearly defined set of findings and conclusions. Include recommendations for future project implementation or relevant program designs and synergies with other USAID projects and other donor interventions as appropriate (3-4 pp.);

Annexes – to include statement of work, documents reviewed, bibliographical documentation, evaluation methods, data generated from the evaluation, tools used, interview lists, meetings, focus group discussions, surveys, and tables. Annexes should be succinct, pertinent and readable. They should also include if necessary, a statement of differences regarding significant unresolved difference of opinion by funders, implementers, or members of the evaluation team on any of the findings or recommendations.

The report format should be restricted to Microsoft products and 12-point type font should be used throughout the body of the report, with page margins one inch top/bottom and left/right.

XI. LEVEL OF EFFORT

Note: LOE does not include LOE of: (a) any USAID staff member(s) participating on the team; (b) quality assurance provided by BDGPE's Chief of Party; (c) product editing and formatting from SI HQ; or (d) logistical/management support from BDGPE or SI HQ staff.

Task/ Deliverable	Team Leader	Senior Evaluation Methodologist	Senior Local Governance Specialist
Review background documents & preparation work (offshore)	3 days	3 days	3 days
Travel to Bangladesh by expat team members	2	2	--
Team Planning Meeting	.5	.5	.5
In-brief with USAID/Bangladesh	.5	.5	.5
Data collection (Phase I + Phase II) & Analysis	16	16	15
Final analysis and report drafting in-country	3	3	2
Presentation and debrief with USAID/Bangladesh	1	1	1
Debrief meetings with key stakeholders, including GOB	1	1	1
Expat team members depart Bangladesh	2	2	--
Finalize draft report	2	2	3
Evaluation Team Leader delivers presentation to USAID/Washington (includes travel to/from Washington, DC)	2	--	--
Team revises draft report	2	1	1
-TOTAL LOE by team member	35	32	31
TOTAL LOE: Full team: 112 days			

Documents for review include, but are not limited to the following:

- Bangladesh Democracy and Governance Assessment, ARD report, August 2009
- Evaluation of USAID/Bangladesh Local Government Activity, USAID report, October 2008
- USAID/Bangladesh Strategy, Annual Reports, Operational Plan, annual Performance Monitoring Plan, DQA reports
- ILLG agreement, amendments, work plans, semi-annual reports, and program performance reports
- Relevant GOB documents (e.g. relevant acts and policies)

- ILLG internal Program Review, 2011
- Relevant USAID Forward documents
- *Ahmed, S.G., Local Government System in Bangladesh: Empowerment, Participation and Development*, Round Table on Local Government Reform, TSC, Parliamentary System Council, Dhaka University, October 1997
- *Ahmed, T. (1993) DECENTRALISATION and the Local State Under Peripheral Capitalism A study in the Political Economy of Local Government in Bangladesh*, Dhaka, Academic Publishers, .
- *Ali, A. M. M. Shawkat (2002) 'Local Government, 1971-2002' in Chowdhury, A. M., & Alam, F. (Eds.). (2002). Bangladesh: On the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century. Dhaka, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.*
- *Bergh, Sylvia (2004) 'Democratic decentralization and local participation: a review of recent research', Development in Practice, 14:6, 780-790*
- *Chowdhury, A. I., Nazrul Islam and M.M. Khan Resource Mobilization and Urban Governance in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Centre for Urban Studies, 1997
- *Conyers, D. (1985) 'Decentralization: A framework for Discussion' in Hye, H. A. (Ed.). (1985). Decentralization Local Government Institutions and Resource Mobilization. Comilla.*
- *Crook, R.C. and A. S, Sverrisson (2003), "Does Decentralization Contribute to Poverty Reduction? Surveying the Evidence", in Peter P. Houtzager and Mick Moore (eds) Changing Path. International Development and the New Politics of Inclusion. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.*
- *Government of Bangladesh and Local Government Commission, Local Government Institutions Strengthening Report*, Dhaka, May 1997
- *Hossain, G. (1989) 'General Zia's BNP: Political Mobilization and Support Base', E. Ahmed (ed.), Society and Politics in Bangladesh, Dhaka, Academic Publishers.*
- *Islam, N., ed. M. Chatterjee and Y. Kaizong, Mc. Millan,(1997) Urban and Regional Development in Bangladesh: Past Trends and Future Prospects*, Regional Science in Developing Countries, London
- *Khan, M. M. (1998) ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN BANGLADESH*, Dhaka, The University Press Ltd.
- *Khan, M. M. (1997), Urban Local Governance in Bangladesh: an Overview, Urban Governance in Bangladesh*, Dhaka Centre for Urban Studies,
- *Khan, Z. R. (2000) 'Decentralized Governance: Trials and Triumphs', Raunaq Jahan (ed.), Bangladesh: Promise and Performance, (Dhaka: University Press Limited*
- *Litvack, J., Ahmad, J., & Bird, R. (1998). Rethinking Decentralization in Developing Countries Washington, DC: World Bank.*
- *Khan, M. M. & Muttalib M.A (1982) Theory of Local Government*, Dhaka, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- *Mallick, B. (2004) LOCAL GOVERNMENT: LOCAL PEOPLE'S INSTITUTION*, Dhaka A H Development Publishing House
- *Morshed, M. M. R. (1997) Bureaucratic Response to Administrative Decentralisation, A study of Bangladesh Civil Service*, Dhaka The University Press Ltd.
- *Nazneen, D. D. R. Z. A. (2002) POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL ADMINISTRATION: A CASE STUDY OF BANGLADESH*, Dhaka, Gyan Bitarani.

- Noor, A. (1996), *Local Government in Bangladesh: Problems and Issues*, Journal of Local Government NILG, Volume 15 No. 1, pp. 15-28, Dhaka, 1996
- Panday, K. P. (2007) –Web- file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/Iss-user/Local%20Settings/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.IE5/ET6RQFS1/South%20Asian%20Journal%20Local%20Government%5B1%5D.htm
- *Rahman, M. M. (2000) Politics and Development of Rural Local Self-Government in Bangladesh*, Devika Publications.
- *Riggs, F. W. (1964). Administration in Developing Societies: The Theory of Prismatic Society Boston.*
- Rondinelli, D. A and Cheema, G. S (1983) *Decentralization and Development: Policy Implication in Developing Countries*, Sage publications, London.
- *Rumy, D. S. N. A. (2006) DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN BANGLADESH AN INTRODUCTION TO CHITTAGONG DISTRICT, CHITTAGONG, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION*
- Shah, A., & Shah, S. (Eds.). (2006). *Local Government in Developing Countries*. Washington, The World Bank.
- *Siddiqui, K. (2005), Local Government in Bangladesh, UPL, Dhaka*
- Siddiqui, K. (ed.) (1992), *Local Government in South Asia: a Comparative Study on Bangladesh*, UPL, Dhaka
- *UN. (1996). Local Government in Bangladesh: an Agenda for Governance. New York: United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services.*
- *UNDP, Human Development Report, 1992*
- *Westergaard, K. (2000) 'Decentralization in Bangladesh: Local Government and NGOs', Colloquium on Decentralization and Development, Yale University.*

Other documents

- Hill Districts Law (Repeal, Implementation and Special Provision), 1989. Dhaka:
- Bangladesh Govt. Press, 1989 (in Bangla).
- Bandarban Hill District Local Government Parishad Chairmen (Election) Rules, 1989. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press, 1989 (in Bangla).
- Bangladesh, M/O Land Administration, Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. The UP Parishads (Resignation, Removal and Vacation of Office) Rules, 1979. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press, 1979.
- The Local Government (UP Parishads) (Amendment) Act, 1992. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press, 1992 (in Bangla).
- Kagrachari Hill District Local Government Parishad Act, 1989. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press 1989 (in Bangia).
- Bandarban Hill District Local Government Parishad Act, 1989. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press. 1989 (in Bangia).
- Rangamati Hill District Local Government Parishad Act, 1989. Dhaka: Bangladesh Govt. Press, 1989 (in Bangia).
- Report of the Local Government Structure Review Commission, 1992.
- UP Plan Book (1992-93 up to 1994-97). Dhaka: Local Government Engineering Bureau.
- A Report on the Upazila Parishad System and Activities. Dhaka: M/a Local Government.
- Rural Development and Cooperatives, 1991 (in Bangia).

ANNEX 4: INTERVIEWS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS

USAID/Dhaka

Rumana Amin, Project Management Assistant, Office of Democracy & Governance
Muntaka Jabeen, Project Management Assistant, Office of Democracy & Governance
M. Sirajam Munir, Senior Acquisition & Assistance Specialist, Office of Acquisition & Assistance

Tetratech ARD (USAID's Supporting Democratic Local Governance Project)

Jerome Sayre, Chief of Party

Government of Bangladesh, Local Government Division

Swapn Kumar Sarkar, Additional Secretary

Bangladesh UP Parishad Federation

Rafiqul Islam Faruque, Joint Secretary, BUPF Central Committee

World Bank, Water & Sanitation Program (Local Government Support Project)

Mark Ellery, Water & Sanitation Specialist

Rupantar

Rafiqul Islam Khonkar, Co-founder and Executive Director

Swapn Guha, Co-founder and Executive Director

Abu Nahim Md. Raquib, Finance Director

Tutul, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

Ashim Ananda Das, Program Coordinator

Taslim Ahamad Tongker, Program Coordinator

Zeelani Hossain, Project Coordinator

Mokhlesur Rahman Pintoo, Asst. Project Coordinator

Rupantar ILLG field supervisors and facilitators:

In Khulna

Dipankar Mondal

Atabur Rahaman Tipu

Shamima Parvin Mita

Madhobi Tikadar

G. M. Mostak Hossain

In Rangpur

Shahanaz Rarvin

Abu Hassion

Tumpa

Md. Mobinul Islam

Md. Jahangir Alam

Krishna Kamol Roy

Md. Alamgir Sardar

Field visits

Amirpur UP, Khulna District (Treatment)

Khairul Imran Johny, UP Chairman
Rohidash Kunda, UP Secretary
Citizen Committee (former members)
Md. Layek Ali
Minara Azad
Md. Ali Azgar Akand
Abdur Razzak Akand
Shaikh Rafiqul Islam
Mohsin Munshi
Afroza Begun
Woman UP member
Mahmuda Begum
Local women (not on UP or CC)
Reshma Akhter
Laiju Begum
Zakia Pervin
Zahida Begum
Former UP members
Abdul Jalil Sheikh
Bulu Rani Datta

Bajua UP, Khulna District (Treatment)

Deb Proshad Gyana, UP Chairman
Shaymal Kanti Sarkar, UP Secretary
Citizen Committee (former members)
Haider Ali
Swapan Kumar Ray
Anita Baidya
Shayma Proshad Gayn
Nomita Thander
Women UP members
Tondra Ray
Bulu Mondal
Bijoli Mondal
Local women (not on UP or CC)
Kabita Baidya
Sova Haidar
Kajol Ray
Luiza Sarkar
Sujita Ray

Botlagari UP, Nilphamari District (Treatment)

Saidur Rahman Sarkar, UP Chairman
Mosharraf Hossain, UP Secretary
Citizen Committee (former members)
Abdul Jobber
Rustam Ali
Babul Hossain

Sokina Begum
Shamima Akhter
Women UP members
Fatema Begum
Roksana Begum
Jorifa Khatun
Former UP members
Nazrul Islam
Tofazzal
Hellauzzaman
Golam Mustafa
Local women (not on UP or CC)
Shamsunnahar
Sufia Begum
Sahera Begum
Khadiza Begum

Burir Danga UP, Bagerhat District (Treatment)

Anirban Haldar, UP Chairman
Suvasish Mallik, UP Secretary
Citizen Committee (former members)
Bidhan Chandra Haldar
Nikhil Chandra Ray
Bondhona Haidar
Sujata Das
Women UP members
Sobita Rani
Mili Ray
Local women (not on UP or CC)
Kobita Ray
Mery Mondal
Chondona Ray
Shibani Mistri
Midhuka Mandal

Dhopakali UP, Bagerhat District (Control)

Mostazadul Haque, UP Chairman
Chiranjob Bishwash, UP Secretary
Women UP members
Dipalee Mollik
Safia Begum
Morzina Begum
Local women (not on UP or CC)
Nasima Akhter
Rumisa Begum
Nilufa Yeasmin
Selina Akhter Joli
Rupia Begum
Local men (not on UP or CC)
Serajul Islam Shaikh
Gaffar Shaikh

Fultola UP, Khulna District (Control)

Shaikh Abul Bashar, UP Chairman

S.M. Rajibul Islam, UP Secretary

Women UP members

Nurun Nahar

Champa

Jahanara

Local women (not on UP or CC)

Lutfun Nahar Lata

Masuma Begum

Hasina

Marufa Begum

Local men (not on UP or CC)

Murshed Ali Shaikh

Shaikh Sujaul Haque

Shaikh Sagor Hossain

Ghulam Mustafa Khan

Hoglabunia UP, Bagerhat District (Treatment)

Akmal Hossain, Acting UP Chairman

Salauddin, UP Secretary

Citizen Committee (former members)

Saiful Islam

Ali Haider

Shahjahan

Alamin Shaikh

Rashida

Women UP members

Jahanara Begum

Rabeya Begum

Hawa Begum

Former UP member

Akromazzaman Sikder

Local women (not UP or CC members)

Taslima Akhter

Mirupa Yeasmin

Beauty Akhter

Hasina Begum

Kursha UP, Rangpur District (Treatment)

Md. Shahinur Islam Marshal, UP Chairman

Mamunur Rashid, UP Secretary

Citizen Committee (former members)

Kazi Azabuddin

Md. Shahidul Alam

Md. Alta Hossain

Reshma Akhter

Lena Sarkar

Shahidul Alam

Women UP members
Sayeda Janatul Ferdous
Minoti Rani Ray
Aliza Begum
Local women (not UP or CC members)
Bely Rani
Liva Rani
Shoumita Rani
Dulann Begum
Lavli Rani

Palashbari UP, Dinajpur District (Treatment)

Mohahhaml Islam, UP Chairman
Citizen Committee (former members)
Rezaul Karim
Abu Hena Mostafa Kamal
Bharati Rani
Shahida Begum
Mamunur Rashid
Women UP members
Mahia Begum
Fatima
Tazia Begum
Local women (not CC or UP members)
Renu Bala Sarkar
Bharati Rani
Shefali Pervin
Sabia Khatun
Tahmina Begum

Rakhalgachi UP, Bagerhat District (Treatment)

Abu Shamim Asne, UP Chairman
Sarwar Hossain, UP Secretary
Citizen Committee (former members)
Motiar Rahman Hazra
Liaqat Ali
Joshir Uddin
Shajjad Haidar
Snigdha Dey
Shaikh Faruq Hossain
Uzzal Kumar Gosh
Women UP members
Rina Rani Sheel
Shova Rani Bhadra
Anjali Rani Das
Local leaders
Thakur Das Kunda
Jamal Uddin Moral
Shaikh Abful Hamid
Shaikh Delwar Hossain
Shaikh Masum Rahman

Khan Gulgar Ali
Rabindra Chandra
Shamal Das Barman
Local women (not UP or CC members)
Kushum Rani Ghosh
Eva Sultana
Majeda Begum
Aliya Begum
Sudha Rani Debnath

Rangpur UP, Khulna District (Control)

Ramprashad Jobbar, UP Chairman
Kamrul Hasan, UP Secretary
Women UP members
Pervin Akhter
Bonomala Mollik
Local women (not UP or CC members)
Deboki Bishwas
Pryanka Mondal
Ilaboti Mohaldar
Sonchita Mondal
Local men (not UP or CC members)
Gobinda Boiragi
Ripon Bishwas

Tepa Modhupur UP, Rangpur District (Control)

Md. Alim Uddin, UP Chairman
Emdadul Haque, UP Secretary
Women UP members
Rita Rani
Kawsara Begum
Ruhi Begum
Local women (not UP or CC members)
Tehara Begum
Sajeda Begum
Shahina Begum
Radha Rani
Local men (not UP or CC members)
Abdul Karim
Abdul Samad
Imran
Ataur Rahman
Lotif Chandra
Abdul Hadi

ANNEX 5: BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aminuzzaman, Dalahuddin H., 2010. *Local Government and Development in Bangladesh: Lessons Learned and Challenges for Improving Service Delivery of Union Parishad* (Dhaka: Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, Local Government Division, Local Governance Support Project-Learning and Innovation Component, January).
- Blair, Harry W., 1989. *Can Rural Development Be Financed from Below? Local Resource Mobilization in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited).
- Blair, Harry, 2005. "Civil Society and Pro-poor Initiatives at the Local Level in Bangladesh: Finding a Workable Strategy," *World Development* 33, 6 (June 2005), 921-936.
- BRAC, 1980. *The Net: Power Structure in Ten Villages* (Dacca: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee).
- GOB (Government of Bangladesh), Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009 (Dhaka: Bangladesh Gazette, 15 October).
- Harrison, Lawrence E., and Samuel P. Huntington. 2000. *Culture: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books).
- Kabir, Humayun, et al., 2011. Program Review of Improving Local Level Governance (ILG) Project, Program Review Report (Dhaka: Programme Support Professionals Limited, March).
- Kesheshian, Mike, and Maureen Taft-Morales, 2008. Evaluation of the USAID/Bangladesh Local Government Activity (n.p., 7 October).
- Khan, Mohammad Mohabbat, 2011. *Local Government in Bangladesh: Some Contemporary Issues and Practices* (Dhaka: A H Development Publishing House).
- Rupantar, 2003. Annual Report (First Year), Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness (Khulna, Rupantar).
- Rupantar, 2007. Annual Report (6 August 2006 to 5 August 2007), Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness (Khulna: Rupantar).
- Rupantar, 2010. Annual Activity Report, Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness. October 2009-September 2010 (Khulna: Rupantar).
- Rupantar, 2011. Project Final Report, Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness, August 6, 2002 to March 31, 2011 (Khulna: Rupantar).
- Schroeder, Larry, ed., 1989. *Financing Government Decentralization: The Case of Bangladesh* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press).
- Shawkat A. Begum and Tutul (Subol Ghosh), 2009. Baseline Survey Report: Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness (Khulna: Rupantar).
- Siddique, Kamal, 2005. *Local Government in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited).
- USAID, n.d. Proposal Summary: Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness, August 2005-August 2008.
- USAID, 2002. Grant agreement for Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness project (Dhaka, 6 August).

USAID, 2008. Modification of Assistance: Grant No. 388-G-00-02-00098-00, Improving Local Level Governance by Strengthening Union Parishads and Creating Citizen Awareness (Dhaka: September 2008).

**ANNEX 6: DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR USAID
EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS**

Social Impact, Inc.
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 300
Tel: (703) 465-1884
Fax: (703) 465-1888
www.socilaimpact.com