

Annual Report

2019-2020



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List of Abbreviations

NGO	:	Non-Government Organization
DW	:	Democracywatch
LGSP	:	Local Governance Support Project
RTI	:	Right to Information
UP	:	Union Parishad
CG	:	Community Groups
EWG	:	Election Working Group
RPO	:	Representation of the People Order
SAP	:	Social Action Program
ToT	:	Training of Trainer
USAID	:	United States Agency for International Development
SDC	:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
CLGF	:	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
LGI	:	Local Government Institution
SAHR	:	South Asian for Human Rights
WYMD	:	World Youth Movement for Democracy.
NDI	:	National Democratic Institute
EWR	:	Elected Women Representative
PEWR	:	Potential Elected Women Representative
VGD	:	Vulnerable Group Development
BBG	:	Basic Block Grant
VGf	:	Vulnerable Group Feeding
LGD	:	Local Government Division
CBO	:	Community Based Organization
EC	:	Election Commission
DLAC	:	District Legal Aid Committee
UZLAC	:	Upazila Legal Aid Committee
UPLAC	:	Union Parishad Legal Aid Committee
DLAO	:	District Legal Aid Officer
UDC	:	Union Digital Centre
ACYLT	:	Active Citizens Youth Leadership Training

Executive Summary

This year the Founder Executive Director and Chairperson of Democracywatch was away sick so the full responsibility of continuation and smooth running of the projects, managing and maintaining transparency in Dhaka and district based offices were colossal task for the Acting Executive Director the Deputy Executive Director and the Directors. My heartfelt thanks to my colleagues, who had faith in Democracywatch and to our Chairperson and the Board of Directors whose support gave us the moral strength and inspiration to carry on, work hard and explore new avenues of interventions in spite of enduring enormous pressure. We implemented six projects in our main area of intervention of Governance. They were:

- Local Governance Program SHARIQUE
- Aparajita: Political Empowerment of Women
- Strengthening Community Participation and Empowerment (SCOPE)
- Active Citizen Youth Leadership Training (ACYLT)
- Promoting Peace and Justice- Sherpur
- Promoting Peace and Justice- Mymensingh

Local Governance Program: SHARIQUE contributes to the empowerment of local citizens to make and implement inclusive, gender sensitive and pro-poor collective choices about their lives and livelihoods through democratic, transparent, inclusive and effective local government systems. SHARIQUE is being implemented in Gaibandha district's seven Upazilas (Gaibandha, Fulchari, Saghata, Gobindaganj, Palashbari, Sadullapur and Sundarganj). Sixteen staff members work at Gaibandha who are frontline team members responsible for implementation of Sharique project. During the reporting period we have conducted 246 training on Social Safety Net-SSN where 6,647 members of Ward Platform-WP participated among them 3,267 were female. We have conducted 210 Participatory Gender Analysis-PGA practice to CBOs where 6,722 members of WP have participated among them 3,387 were female. We have also considered inclusion of the poor and disadvantaged people in the WPs. Beside this a total of 2,520 members including 1,425 women of WP have participated in Ward Shava meetings conducted by Union Parishad.

APARAJITA: Political Empowerment of Women: Aparajita builds on the achievements, lessons learnt and recommendations of its first two phases (2011-2015 and 2015-2017). This time the project is more geographically focused and work in 6 divisions. The primary stakeholder groups for the Aparajita project are firstly, women who have been elected in Local Governments; secondly, potential women candidates who sought or seek positions in the LGIs; thirdly women who are already in other leadership positions in the communities; and fourthly, young women, aged around 16-35, who are taking part in social, development activities in their communities and aspirants to be leaders/ politically influential.

Aparajita endeavors to improve its outreach strategy to be more diverse and inclusive. The project continues to strengthen previously participating women, while also facilitating space for inclusion of disadvantaged women. The project seeks to understand how it can influence the wider society by engaging with male elites, political party leaders and local government representatives. The project has its overall development goal that "Aparajita contributes to equal participation, representation and leadership of women within local governance".

Significant signs of progress have been made during the period. Primary stakeholders have been identified and under which 734 women leaders received training on women's leadership. In these initial months, the project staff have enhanced their professional liaison with local administration for effective coordination at different stages of field level, with regular meetings and conversations with Union Parishad members. Some specific activities have been undertaken in regards to sensitizing the male elected representatives and staff in the UPs, and also meetings to create networks and improved working relationships between the Aparajitas and local service providers. The Aparajitas take more interest in the local governance system by participating in the quarterly interface meetings, and being more vocal, and showing interest in being involved with community development activities.

HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation is responsible for the overall management of the project and provides capacity development and coaching support to the national partner organizations. An alliance of four national partner organizations (referred hereafter as partner NGOs or PNGOs) - namely Democracywatch Khan Foundation, PRIP Trust and Rupantar- are in charge of the implementation of the project in 6 cluster areas/divisions, covering 16 Districts, 62 Upazilas and 541 Union in Bangladesh.

Strengthening Community Participation and Empowerment (SCOPE): Democracywatch has achieved high reputation and experiences in activating UP Standing Committees, formation of inclusive and vibrant citizen groups, implementing different social accountability tools such as Community Scorecard Process (CSP), Social Audit, Report Card and Budget Expenditure Tracking and Analysis (BETA) to ensure pro-people governance at UP level.

With the support from ManusherJonno Foundation (MJF) the organization has taken up an intensive community driven action to make the public service delivery institutions pro-people and participatory. The goal of the action is to transform service delivery into a well governed institutional environment where poor marginalised and vulnerable people enjoy better quality of life. The expected outcomes are,

- Public service delivery agencies are more transparent and accountable to the people and responsive to the needs of people especially poor, marginalised and socially excluded section.
- Poor, marginalised and vulnerable citizens are more able to access resources, services and opportunities.

Community groups are mobilized, enriched with knowledge and capacity to raise voice as their civic responsibilities. On the contrary capacity of elected representatives being developed to respond to the demand of citizens by creating a space for participatory planning and budgeting. So far the project has recruited project personnel and set up the regional office in Tangail. We have formed 71 Citizen Support Groups (CSG) with 710 community people including male, female, PWD, old aged persons etc. We are strengthening the coordination and communication with the relevant stakeholders and local officials who delivers SSN programs.

Active Citizen Youth Leadership Training (ACYLT): Active Citizen is a unique programme funded by British Council since 2011. This project has been renewed every year with some gaps. Youths from different educational institutions participate in trainings for four days to be aware of their social responsibilities, overcome traditional barriers which hamper development, acquire gender sensitivity to influence their community through various Social Action Projects (SAP). Many of these SAPs are continuing and praised by the community. This successful programme created some amazing leaders who were sent abroad for further training to be facilitators who are involve in training and inspiring other youths for the development of their community and sustainability of the programme.

Promoting Peace and Justice- Sherpur and Mymensingh : PPJ- Sherpur and Mymensing activities funded by USAID's Promoting Peace and Justice, implemented by Democracy International, Local Partner Democracywatch. Democracywatch the beginning of the project everyone is given a basic idea about the project. The planning and activities of the project were discussed with the District Legal Aid Officer. On the advice of the District Legal Aid Officer initiatives were taken to form Legal Aid Committees in the Upazilas and Unions and to make a list of committees. At the beginning of the program, as per the plan in consultation with the District Legal Aid Officer in consultation with the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and the Upazila Chairman the orientation of the PPJ-project with the members of the committee was provided and the Union Orientation was organized in consultation with the Union Chairman and the Union Secretary. During the orientation the implementation strategy was determined in collaboration with the committee members at PPJ-Sherpur and Mymensingh project activities Upazila, Union and ward level. In consultation with the District Legal Aid Officer and in consultation with the District and Sessions Judge quarterly stakeholder meetings are held in the district and half-yearly meetings of the Sherpur and Mymensingh District. In collaboration with the Upazila, District and union, bi-monthly

meetings, miking, public hearing, cultural events, civic campaigns, school debates are implemented. Democracy International's consultation and cooperation continued in the implementation of all activities. Implementation steps are taken in consultation with the DI and Democracywatch management team prior to each activity. Democracy International approves banners, billboards before implementing each activity.

Lifeskills Training: This is our own income generating project which was DW's first initiative taken in 1995. Our leadership training includes:

- English for general purposes
- Basic Computing
- Programming
- Graphics and Web Designing

Lifestyle classes are given free with all courses which include manner, etiquette, ethics and social behavior to build their confidence. This has always been a very popular course. So far over 26,000 students benefitted by this unique leadership training, many of whom are engaged fruitfully in the social and economic spheres of Bangladesh. Unfortunately admission to these courses reduced drastically due to various reasons which affected us badly as we had to struggle for resources to share the project funding and meet the administration cost.

Many thanks to the donors, development partners, NGO Affairs Bureau, The Board of Governors, local administration, stakeholders, well-wishers and my dear colleagues who continued to keep faith, confidence and extent supports to Democracywatch fulfilling its aim of strengthening democracy by involving people. We look forward to your cooperation and goodwill.

Thank you.

Wazed Feroj
Executive Director

GOOD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMMES

Name of Project: SHARIQUE Local Governance Program

Development partner: HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh

Duration: July 2019 to June 2020

Focal Person: A KHanif Muhammad, Team Leader, Sharique

Local Governance Program: SHARIQUE contributes to the empowerment of local citizens to make and implement inclusive, gender sensitive and pro-poor collective choices about their lives and livelihoods through democratic, transparent, inclusive and effective local government systems.

Goal: The overall project goal is that Sharique contributes to the empowerment of local citizens to make and implement inclusive, gender sensitive and pro-poor collective choices about their lives and livelihoods through more democratic, transparent, inclusive and effective local government systems.



Outcome 1: Citizens, demonstrate more effective participation in decision-making and more effectively hold Union Parishads to account in the selected (2) districts.

Outcome 2: Union Parishads in the selected (6) districts demonstrate more effective, accountable and inclusive local governance and apply efficiently public management systems.

Outcome 3: National actors use and institutionalize tested Sharique capacity development tools for strengthening Union Parishad governance

Stakeholders: All Citizens, especially pro-poor of Gaibandha district.

Project Office: Dokhin Dhan Ghora, Opposite to SP Office, 4th floor, Gaibandha.

Manpower: A team of 16 staff, including one Team Leader, one Finance and Administration Officer (Female), Documentation and Monitoring Officer (Female), 12 Field Officers and two support staff, is working here. There are 5 female staff in the team, who deal with all the adverse conditions and are working using Motor Cycle.

Major Achievements: During the reporting period we have conducted 246 training on Right to Information where a total of 6,548 member of Ward Platform-WP participated among them 3,215 were female. We have conducted 210 Participatory Gender Analysis-PGA practice to CBOs where 6,650 member of WP has participated among them 3,245 was female. We have also ensured inclusion of the poor and disadvantage people in the WR. Among them a number of 2,520 members including 1,425 women of WP has participated in Ward Shava meeting conducted by Union Parishad.

Significant achievements:

- A total of 65 persons from Ward Platform members have been included in different committees of Union Parishad.
- A total of 298 citizens have now access to services by UPs with the interventions of Ward Platform Members.

Challenges:

- Communication with WP members at ward level by using local transport was difficult and time consuming.
- Ensure timely presence of participants in trainings and other project activities during harvesting season.
- Communication gap between demand and supply side.

Name of Project: Strengthening Community Participation and Empowerment (SCOPE)

Name of Donor: UKAID/ ManusherJonno Foundation

Duration: 01 July 2019- June 2020

Focal Person: Md. LutforRahman, Project Coordinator

Goal: Poor, marginalized and vulnerable people have quality life in democratically functioned local governments.

Objective: Marginalized peoples will claim their rights and entitlements, strengthen officials' capacity to citizen demands and community support group will strengthen for monitor the activities of government service delivery institutions.

Working Area: Silimpur, Porabari, Dainna, Hugra, Kakua, Gala, Mogra, TangailPourashava at TangailSadarUpazila and Lawhati, Fazilhati, Delduar, Atia, Pathrail at DelduarUpazila in Tangail District.

Beneficiaries: Total 12930 (Widow, Distress, Older and Disable), direct beneficiaries-12920 and indirect beneficiaries-310 (participation in different committee/ forums).

Stakeholders: LEB representatives, Government Officials, Support Group, Local elites etc.



Major Achievements: In this reporting period we have formed all Union, Upazila and Zila level Citizen Support Group (CSG). We also conducted 2 types of training for Citizen Support Group (CSG) members like Social Accountability Tools and Public service policies and their monitoring; a total of 155 and 153 CSG members respectively participated in those training programmes. In the other hand, before lockdown for COVID-19, we were able to complete 46 Wardshava in different Unions.

Impacts: Strengthening Public Institutions (SPI) under EPR programme has been just working on its track for reflecting the impacts of the project as well. By finishing the training of CSG members we started the activities in full swing. But suddenly COVID-19 breaks the normal life

and made a frightened situation around us on March 2020. In spite of unsafe situation, we have tried to achieve few activities by following safety guideline. For example we completed 715 court yard and awareness meeting in Ward level, 9 Advocacy meeting, 8 interface meeting, 27 Union Development Coordination Committee Meeting (UDCC), 39 Social Audit, 9 Community Score Card (CSC), 26 Union Citizen Support Group meeting, 3 Upz. CSG meeting and 2 Zila CSG meeting, Observation of RTI day 2019, 8 Tax campaign in Union level, 5 Budget meeting, 12 planning meeting etc. Community people becoming aware through different types of activities done by Democracwatch day by day. In fact, we are just creating the space to the access of public institutions for their entities for the marginalized people.



Lessons learned:

- LGIs are less interested to follow the existing rules and regulations.
- The institutions should be independent so that they can promote better services to the public.
- We were not prepared at all about the threat of COVID -19.
- Jobless and limited income level people are much frightened to survive in such type of situation like outbreak of COVID-19.

Major Challenges:

- LEB representatives are more interested for their personal profit from any tasks.
- The prevailing management system of LGIs is not democratic, quite autocratic.
- LEB/ Duty bearers think that Social Audit/ CSC are making conflict among them.
- The threat of the outbreak of COVID-19.

**Way forward:**

- Rapport building and further communication.
- Team approach and advocacy.
- Committed staffs for putting special effort/ extra hour works for doing the tasks.
- Frequent communication and coordination with public institutions by following safety measures.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

Name of Project: APARAJITA- Political Empowerment of Women

Name of Donor: HELVETAS SwissIntercooperation Bangladesh

Duration: 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

Focal Person: Feroze Nurun-Nabi Jugal, Program Coordinator

Goal: The Goal of the Aparajita project is to contribute to equal participation, representation and leadership of women in local governance.

Objectives:

- Potential and elected women representatives effectively participate in local government institutions and local governance processes in the selected districts.
- Elites, men and local institutions support the effective inclusion of women in local political life in the selected districts.
- Improved policy and legal framework and attention to hindering and enabling factors at national levels accelerate political empowerment of women.



Working Areas: 3 Districts (Rangpur, Dinajpur & Nilphamari) 10 Upazilas (Rangpur Sadar, Mithapukur, Gangachara, Dinajpur Sadar, Birampur, Chiribandar, Kaharol, NilphamariSadar, Kishoreganj and Saidpur) and 95 Union Parishads.

Stakeholders: The Primary Stakeholders contains of Elected Women Representatives (past and present ones) and potential candidates, women leaders in the communities and young women in the community and the secondary stakeholders contains of men in the LGs, spouses, family members, youths, local civil society, elites/ influential persons in the community, local authorities/ leaders, public sector service providers, private sector service providers, political parties and MPs, media associations and personnel, larger community, Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC), Parliamentary Standing Committees etc.

Major Achievements:

- At least 875 Elected Women Representatives & Potential Women Representatives have been trained on ward shava, Standing Committee, Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership.
- At least 159 (Rangpur: 07, Dinajpur: 126 and Nilphamari: 26) incidents of violence against women (VAW) have been reported during the pandemic. Among the cases, at least 132 cases have been closely dealt with by the Aparajitas of respective Upazila. In most of cases they have been tried to stand by the victim to ensure the legal access and proper remedy. Two of the cases were filed for murder. The short note of cases are given below:
- A total of 173 events have been completed during this period of time, where 3,896 men and women have participated in these events.




Major Challenges:

- Patriarchy, social stigma and fundamentalist ideology at grassroots level.
- Limitations of quality training venue at UP level.
- Wrong perception about political empowerment of women.
- The Elected Male Representatives have a wrong perception of leadership training.
- Ignorance towards systematic approaches.
- Culture of corruption at local level governance.
- The threat of the outbreak of COVID-19.
- The present local context becomes much more male-oriented rather than being women-friendly.

Way forward

- Establishing smooth professional relationship with stakeholders
- Contingency planning to implement the project activities and adoption of new strategies to tackle any challenges/ emerging issues of concern.

Case Study

<p>Name and Designation of person that collected the story</p>	<p>Fazley Rabbi Upazila Coordinator Mlthapukur Upazila, Rangpur</p>
<p>Title (Make sure your title is short, catchy & conveys the idea behind your story)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Uncompromising towards Injustice</p>
<p>Introduction (Give entry to your Change you wish to present. Give some background detail)</p>	<p>Dhalu Chandra Das is a resident of Tulsidanga village under ward no. 08 of Mirzapur union in Mithapukur upazila of Rangpur district. His wife's name is Bimala Rani Das, she also belongs to the same union. They got married in 2016. Last year, Dhalu Chandra became the father of a son. Despite having a low income, he was not worried about their food and clothes at all. In fact his family was well enough to lead smooth life.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p>Mrs. Ranjita Rani Das, EWR of 7,8,9 Wards of Mirzapur Union Parishad, Mithapukur Upazila, Rangpur</p> </div> <p>Like all other parts of the world, the COVID 19 pandemic created a challenging situation in front of the low-income family in Tulshidanga from March 2020. At first, the wheels of his van went off and he became unemployed. He was not able to earn any money for his small family. He was able to survive for two months with the little money he had saved for a long time in a volatile world. On the other hand, family expenses became a huge problem for him. He became helpless.</p>

	<p>Day by day poverty was putting a big pressure on him. He took some loans from his well-wishers but his daily expenses were not enough. One morning in June, Bimala asks Dhalu to bring some food items and groceries from the market. Dhalu replied that he did not have the ability to bring anything from the market. He was completely empty and out of cash. But when Bimala repeatedly told Dhalu that she had nothing to cook. Dhalu was so hungry that suddenly he got angry and started arguing. When Bimala gave some answers, Dhalu started beating Bimala mercilessly. Bimala, who was ill due to torture, went to her father's house the next day. A few days later, Dhalu realizes his mistake, contacts Bimala on the phone and asks her to return to the family. But the tortured, humiliated Bimala was so enraged that she replied without proper justice, she would not return to the family. She urged justice from the Upazila Chairman Mr. Zakir Hossain.</p>
<p>The Change or the Uniqueness in the Story You wish to Highlight (The central part of your story where you highlight the change or uniqueness of the story)</p>	<p>The Upazila Chairman entrusted the task of fair trial to Mrs. Ranjita Rani Das, UP member of 7,8,9 reserved seats of Mirzapur Union, for a fair trial subject to proper investigation. She has been a strong opponent of all forms of violence against women since childhood. Ranjita Rani was strongly protesting all sorts of violence against women, including this one. She demanded justice for women to reduce all kinds of injustices that have been committed by men in the region as well. She wanted to give him a good lesson for his wrongdoing. Dhalu apologized to Ranjita Rony for his wrongdoing. In reply, Ranjita said, "You have to write in front of everyone in this village that you will never be able to do such a thing again." At first Dhalu did not agree to this condition but later forced Ranjita in writing to assure him that he would never hurt his wife physically and mentally again. If this ever happens again, Dhalu will unconditionally obey the decision or actions taken by the elders of the area. After giving a written commitment to the Upazila Chairman through Ranjita Rani, Bimala returned to Tulsidanga.</p>
<p>The Conclusion (This is the analysis part where you should mention how the combination of the situation, the background and the change or uniqueness in the story lead to something better)</p>	<p>In this context, Ranjita Rani said, although the abuser of the woman was with my family, I did not provide him any mercy. Later this, the Upzila Chairman appreciated the role of Ranjita Rani ensuring proper justice for a helpless women. He said, "this initiative will be a milestone for future women leaders who really want to be a leader."</p>

OUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Name of Project: Active Citizens Youth Leadership Training (ACYLT)

Name of Donor: British Council and Own Fund

Duration: July 2019- 30 June 2020

Focal Person: Rafayet Ara, Program Coordinator

Objective: To increase the number of young people that see active citizenship as a way of overcoming traditional barriers, accessing decision makers and influencing the lives of their community.

Achievements

- Ten Social Action Projects initiated from Active Citizens volunteers in different remote areas of Bangladesh.
- Seventeen 4-days long ACYLT sessions were arranged and 450 participants (225 male and 225 female) joined in those sessions.
- Two volunteers from DW participated in an International Study Visit (ISV) held in UK.

Participants' Competence: In total 450 youths, both male and female, participated in the training and responded that the training helped them build skills in identifying their potentialities and gain competence to seek help in order to utilize local resources. The youth participants shared their social action project (SAP) plans i.e. Token of Life- Birth Registration for Street Children, Happy Day-Spent quality time to street children, Sounds of Tree- Know name of Trees, Education for street children by which they work together with their community for local developments.

Several groups of volunteers emerged from these training from Dhaka, Mymensingh, Kushtia, Sylhet, Noakhali and Narshindi. Some of them have been working on sustainable development such as waste management, promote positive social behavior, stop child abuse, mental health, tree plantation, violence against women, Stop online harassment and sanitation etc.

Most of the volunteers have been proactive and responsive to immediate needs of their community considering the limitations they have. Some of the Social Action projects initiated by DW volunteers have received supports from community people, entrepreneurs, clubs and trusts.



Challenges

- ACYLT is short-term program and huge trainings have conducted by three months.
- Conducting training sessions in urban areas due to Participants manage is a very difficult
- Designing and implementing Social Action Project (SAP) by the participants
- Volunteers and Facilitators manage and utilization for ACYLT trainings
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of SAPs after the training session

Way Forward:

To overcome some of the above mentioned challenges, actions to overcome are being taken in consultation with British Council and other partner organizations for smooth operation in future.

Promoting Peace and Justice- Sherpur

Name of Project: Promoting Peace and Justice-Sherpur

Name of Donor: Democracy International,

Duration: July 2019- 30 June 2020

Focal Person: Shahidur Rahman, Program Coordinator

Objective: Delivery of legal aid in the formal justice sector improved and Citizens Awareness of Legal Rights and Responsibilities increased.

Achievements: 2 half-yearly coordination meetings, 8 DLAC stakeholder meetings, 5 sensitization sessions, 17 Upazila Legal Aid Committee meetings, 8 Public hearings, 56 Cultural events, 231 Union Legal Aid Committee meetings, Activities are being implemented to raise awareness of legal aid among the people through the implementation of 14 days of miking campaigning, 325 courtyard meetings, 10 school debates and 10 civic campaigns. DW PPJ-Activities were inspected by the District Judge and the Director of the National Legal Aid Service Organization (NLASO). They expressed satisfaction with the activities of Sherpur Democracywatch PPJ. Sherpur district 17 out of 52 unions prepared the budget and in that budget made billboards and placed them in various important places. In 3 out of 5 upazilas, bill boards have been provided from their own funds for the promotion of legal aid. PSA Video has been uploaded on the web site of all unions and Sherpur Sadar Upazila for the promotion of legal aid.



Challenge

- To complete all the activities of the project within the specified period. Re-informing government officials about their projects due to transfers. Social distance and hygiene maintain so difficult at union and ward level.
- To ensure attendance of bi-monthly meeting of Upazila Chairman and Upazila Executive Officer.
- Implementing the decisions taken at the Upazila bi-monthly meeting, and lack of awareness about the responsibilities of the Upazila Legal Aid Committee.
- Did not receive a quarterly report as it did not work directly with panel lawyers.
- Use of Register of Union and Upazila Legal Aid activities and non-collection of information.

Way forward: Trying to virtualize all activities during COVID-19. Increasing the duration of the project. Arrange staff orientation so that action can be taken in time. To reduce the number of participants and make arrangements to conduct activities according to the rules. To make the monitoring system more active.

Case study (success/failure): The District Legal Aid Officer conducts activities in coordination with PPJ activities. PPJ has got priority in his every work. District Legal Aid Officer in every Upazila of Sherpur district has been connected with PPJ activities. He discussed the activities of the PPJ project with District and Sessions Judge Sir at every monthly meeting. He also decides on the implementation of the PPJ project at the Client Consultation Meeting, Court Staff Meeting, Panel Lawyers Meeting and Judges Meeting and he initiates the implementation. At first there was no seating in the district legal aid office. There was a wooden boundary in Room. The number of service recipients was also much less. The office assistant had to sit in that room. There was no separate seating for the service recipients. After the commencement of PPJ project activities, the District Legal Aid Officer consulted with the District and Sessions Judge. He was allowed to repair that room. He created a separate room for seating clients. Office assistants have a separate seating area. He held everyone accountable. He said that it is my duty to give beautiful service to the poor and helpless people who come to me for services. All in all, the role of District Legal Aid Officer is very much in the implementation of beautiful activities in Sherpur district.

Promoting Peace and Justice- Mymensingh

Name of Project: Promoting Peace and Justice-Mymensingh

Name of Donor: Democracy International,

Duration: July 2019- 30 June 2020

Focal Person: Nurul Islam Nahid, Program Coordinator

Objective: Delivery of legal aid in the formal justice sector improved and Citizens Awareness of Legal Rights and Responsibilities increased.

Achievements: A total of 2 half-yearly coordination meetings, 6 DLAC stakeholder meetings, 5 sensitization sessions, 12 Upazila Legal Aid Committee meetings, 6 Public hearings, 45 Cultural events, 200 Union Legal Aid Committee meetings, Activities are being implemented to raise awareness of legal aid among the people through the implementation of 14 days of miking campaigning, 325 courtyard meetings, 10 school debates and 10 civic campaigns. DW PPJ- Activities were inspected by the District Judge and the Director of the National Legal Aid Service Organization (NLASO). They expressed satisfaction with the activities of Sherpur Democracywatch PPJ. Mymensingh district 20 out of 55 unions prepared the budget and in that budget made billboards and placed them in various important places. In 3 out of 5 upazilas, bill boards have been provided from their own funds for the promotion of legal aid.



Major Challenges:

- LEB representatives/ few officials are less responsive towards sensitization programmes, instead they prefer to receive direct feasible benefits.
- Staff turnout during initial months hampered timely implementation of project activities.
- To ensure attendance of bi-monthly meeting of Upazila Chairman and Upazila Executive Officer.
- Implementing the decisions taken at the Upazila bi-monthly meeting, and lack of awareness about the responsibilities of the Upazila Legal Aid Committee.
- Did not receive a quarterly report as it did not work directly with panel lawyers.
- Use of Register of Union and Upazila Legal Aid activities and non-collection of information.



Way forward:

- Rapport building and frequent communication & coordination with LEB representatives/ officials by project staff members.
- Frequent communication and coordination with public institutions by following safety measures.

MONITORING

Democracywatch has a monitoring system. An experienced monitoring team is responsible for this and regularly monitors the project activities for protecting and safeguarding the interest of donors, as well as fulfilling the objectives of the organization.

Monitoring activities have been undertaken for the proper utilization of funds as well as effective and efficient implementation of the various programs. Monitoring process covers all aspects like drawing up of program guidelines, wide circulation, selection of deserving project proposals, release of funds, project implementation, etc. NGOs and donors both will monitor all such project activities as a tool of control mechanism. Democracywatch has a monitoring guideline. Monitoring team follows different methods and tools. According to this guideline Democracywatch monitors closely and regularly all the activities of the Partner NGOs starting from the selection process to ending of the projects. Similar monitoring activities have been performed by Democracywatch for its Field Office and activities undertaken at all level. We collect both qualitative and quantitative data from the field according to project indicators.

Monitoring Policy

- Ensure that the benefits of the projects reach the target groups in time.
- Ensure that the organizations have legality, loyalty to the people, credibility, reliability and capability to deliver the services required for the beneficiaries.
- A general attribute of the selected organization should be that it remains a non-political and non-partisan organization with members dedicated to community service.
- Ensure that the NGO should be able to bring about innovation and experimentation in organizing services, which are to be related to the needs of the people instead merely deploying people around services.
- Monitor all the activities related to filed program and financial management system of Field Office/Partner NGOs and own projects on regular basis and prepare a quarterly monitoring report for submission to the Executive Director of Democracywatch.

MANAGEMENT

Democracywatch has a General body of 15 members out of which 7 members are elected as members of the Board of Governors. A significant factor is that the majority members of DW's Board of Governors are women. The Board of Governors meets once in every three months and decisions are taken in a participatory manner. The BOG helps and support in formulating policies for general administration, staff welfare, financial & monitoring planning and evaluations of programs. The board members also personally take part in many activities and programs including recruitment, procurement etc. on invitation as and when needed which promote complete transparency and enhance goodwill. They are also involved in social and motivational activities of the staff.

The internal management is ensured through the Executive Director's initiative of taking all decisions in consultation with the Directors and other members of staff. The monthly Management and Coordination Meeting is one of the monitoring tools of Democracywatch. It aims at looking at the progress, success and limitations of both program and administration. The Coordination Meeting is held at two levels i.e. one with the senior managers and the other with all staff level. Senior Management meetings are held on a weekly basis and all staff coordination meetings are held Bi monthly. Project implementation meetings are held with project staff for planning and execution of project activities. In addition field coordination meeting are held at field level where respective project in charge are present.

The organization has well set, trained and experienced management staff who take care of internal management in a professional and friendly manner. Governance of Democracywatch is ascertained according to the rules and regulations of the Memorandum with clear vision mission, goal and values.