

# Annual Report

2020-2021



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## Foreword

The year 2020-21 has been a difficult period for the organization, staff members, beneficiaries and the stakeholders due to Coronavirus and its impacts i.e. countrywide lockdown, non-continuation of regular activities, economic setback, raising unemployment, shrinking space for civic participation (demand for accountability), limited accountability of functionaries and limited role of local governments. Democracywatch has been implementing programs in improving participatory governance, uphold human rights and empowerment of women, youths and marginalized community at national and local level. Projects and initiatives are,

- Strengthening Community Participation and Empowerment in Tangail
- Aparajita: Political Empowerment of Women in Rangpur, Dinajpur and Nilphamari.
- Active Citizen Youth Leadership Training Program in Dhaka
- Promoting Peace and Justice in Sherpur and Mymensingh
- Promotion of Civic Awareness in the Marginalized Dalit Community in Nilphamari, Mymensingh and Jashore

Most of the activities were implemented during the months of low rates of COVID transmission. However, we have managed to maintain over 95% burn rate of activity budgets. This annual report has been made short and simple which includes progress status from July 2020 to June 2021 about achievements for each projects, challenges/ lessons learned and way forwards.

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 extended supports to Democracywatch fulfilling its aim of strengthening democracy by involving people. We appreciate all of their cooperation and goodwill.

Thank you.

Taleya Rehman  
Chairperson

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

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

*(January 2019 to December 2021 with MJF-DFID)*

### Achievements:

- 53 UP and Municipality representatives received trainings on planning, budgeting and local resource mobilization in Tangail.
- 15 Citizen Support Groups activated that consist of 279 members. 88 members included in different forums/committees of LGs.
- 28 Citizen Support Group members trained on Public Service Policies and their Monitoring.
- Representatives of Citizen Support Groups become members of Standing Committee, UDCC, and Ward Shava and contributed in UP planning and budgeting process.
- Carried out direct cash transfer among jobless and poor citizens @ Tk. 7,500 each to 371 beneficiaries (Tk. 2,500 X 3 times).
- Initiated cash transfer to 300 beneficiaries @ Tk. 7,000 for as their income generating support. In short tome a few of them are considerably benefited by cattle firming.



## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

Goal: Equal participation, representation and leadership of women within local governance.

*(October 2018 to December 2022 with HSI, SDC)*

- A total of 938 activities have been conducted out of 1,114 (i.e. training and workshops; networking/ WDF meetings; seminars on RPO; advocacy/ lobby with political parties etc.)
- 1,380 out of 1,429 Aparajitas have received orientation about good governance, Ward Shava, community participation and leadership.
- Elections were held in three UPs of Rangpur on 20 Oct/20. A total of 45 candidates contested of which 26 were Aparajitas who won six seats out of nine. Some Aparajitas are preparing for general seats.
- Political party affiliation increased among the Aparajitas. As per baseline 435 were involved in party politics which raised to 555.
- A total of 336 Aparajitas are involved in humanitarian assistance committees during COVID period.
- A total of 1,550 minority and ethnic persons received the assistance (cash incentives during Covid) by the interventions of Aparajitas.
- A total of 149 cases related to VAW resolved by Aparajitas in this period.



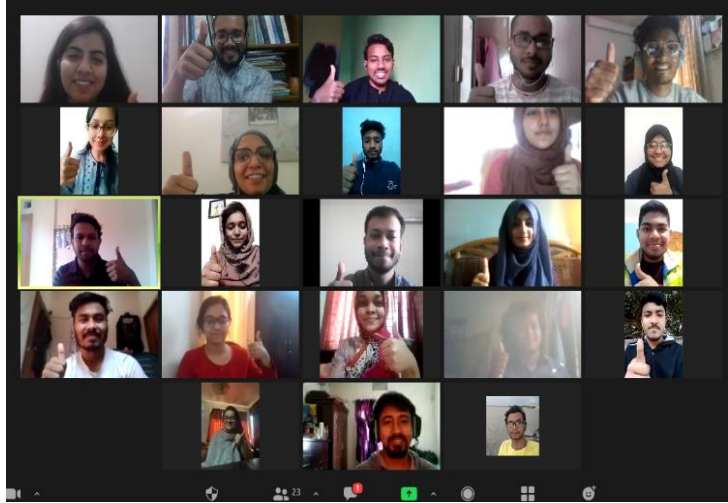
## YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Goal: 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.

*(1 January- 30 April 2021 with British Council)*

### Achievements:

- A total of 7 virtual workshops have been conducted on governance, leadership, participation and Social Action Projects which were participated by 143 (Male-78, Female- 65) active citizens.
- Total 14 Social Action Projects have been implemented on SDG 13 which is related with climate action at DNCC and DSCC areas.
- SAP by 'Social Canvasser' team on "Women Empowerment" recognized for national award by British Council.
- Two participants have been selected and joined the international study visit in UK.
- A group of youths/ active citizens are promoting social distancing, distributing masks, donating bloods, distributing foods among urban poor, and disseminating information about medical assistance.



## Promoting Peace and Justice- Sherpur

**Goal: Legal aid service within the formal justice sector is more accessible by increased awareness and responsibilities.**

**(May 2019 to October 2021with DI-USAID)**

### **Achievements:**

- A total of 686 activities has been conducted out of 840.
- A total of 16,782 participants attended in these activities among them 8,732 were male and 8,052 female.
- Over 275,000 people received information and more aware about government legal aid services through project interventions.
- Legal Aid Committees at UP, Upazila and District level are becoming active which is facilitating better access to legal aid services for poor and women.
- A total of 648 cases were filed of which 308 were resolved by which poor and vulnerable women and children have increased access to justice (majority of these cases are related to VAW).



## Promoting Peace and Justice- Mymensingh

**(June 2019 to December 2021with DI-USAID)**

### **Achievements:**

- A total of 714 activities has been conducted out of 867.
- A total of 23,330 participants attended in these activities among them 11,898 were male and 11,432 female.
- Over 357,000 people received information and more aware about government legal aid services through project interventions.
- Legal Aid Committees at UP, Upazila and District level are becoming active which is facilitating better access to legal aid services for poor and women.
- A total of 2,350 cases were filed of which 1,350 were resolved by which poor and vulnerable women and children have increased access to justice.





## Promotion of Civic Awareness in the Marginalized Dalit Community

(15 September- 31 December 2020 with International Republican Institute (IRI))

### Achievements:

- Simple and user friendly IEC materials and handouts have been developed for Dalit community people.
- A total of 6 FDGs conducted through which 90 Dalit citizens received training on equality, civic rights and responsibilities, social harmony, good governance, transparency and accountability at Nilphamari, Jashore and Mymensingh.
- Dalit groups are more empowered and advocating with local governments about their housing, education and employment rights.



### Challenges/ concerns

- Women's mobility and public participation are increasingly being restricted/ discouraged by the family members (*a recessive trend*)
- Women are losing spaces to take part in the decision making process.
- Marginalized community 'Dalits' so concern about their daily livelihood and are least interested about civic participation.
- Donor's desire to achieve project targets despite difficult time.
- Ensuring stakeholder participation in virtual trainings, meetings due to unavailability of internet, adequate devices, technical know-how etc.
- Ignorance of people in maintaining social distancing and wearing mask at field activities.
- Elected representatives and officials are more interested about direct benefits. Also craving of money, power and resources by the influential.
- Limited space for community participation, demand accountability.
- Reduced overhead support to run the head office.
- Doubtful perception about the organization.

## Financial Overview

This is a brief overview which we have prepared with some limitation as it was difficult to gather detailed financial documentations from field office. Will prepare detailed financial report as soon as the situation gets better.

Sl. No.	Project / Activities	Total Expenditure in BDT
1	APARAJITA - Political Empowerment of Women Phase III	16,173,754
2	Strengthening Community Participation and empowerment (SCOPE)	8,662,195
3	Promoting Peace and Justice (PPJ)	5,912,387
4	Local Governance Programme- SHARIQUE PH-IV	1,692,159
5	Promotion of Citizenship of Marginalized Dalit Community	840,300
6	Active Citizens - Digital Model	650,500
7	Overhead Expenditure & Core Activities	1,505,800
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>35,437,095</b>

## Operations and Logistics

- **Staff:** DW is now a team of 47 persons of which 17 are female.
- **Offices:** Dhaka, Tangail, Mymensingh, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Sherpur and Dinajpur.
- **Training Facilities:** Dhaka, Rangpur and Nilphamari
- **Working area:** DW comprehensively works at 215 Union Parishads and 22 Upazilas. But it has national coverage with some short-term and advocacy interventions.
- **Head office:** DW head office is maintained by a small team of five staff members. Due to a changed reality we need to supply adequate devices and logistics in order for them to work smoothly from home and office both. Maintenance and monitoring of support staff has been difficult with limited hands and changed situation.

## Way forward

- Enhance staff and stakeholder capacity for virtual communication.
- Strengthening rapport with elected representatives, Government officials and other potential stakeholders.
- Frequent communication and coordination with donor, development partners and local administration.
- Prepare simple and short strategy, communication and contingency plans.
- Develop timely and smart proposals.
- Explore uncommon and new funders. Open alternative windows.

Wazed Feroj  
Executive Director