



UNCDF & UNDP Evaluation

Mid-Term Evaluation of the Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) in Bangladesh

Evaluation Report

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Program Data Sheet

Country	Bangladesh
Program Title (Long)	Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) GCCA+ support for enhancing communities' resilience to climate change and related disasters approved by the Government of Bangladesh as a multi-donor action titled "Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC)"
Program Atlas Code (by donor)	UNDP 00085984; UNCDF 00101390 (EU), 00102142 (Embassy of Sweden)
Joint Project Outcome	Improved and inclusive local level planning and a strengthened financing mechanism for community-based climate change adaptation solutions through local governments

Financial Breakdown (by donor)

Commitments	As per ProDoc (in USD)	Actual project budget (in USD)
EU/GCCA+	17, 049, 877.46	17, 049, 877.46
Embassy of Sweden	17,977,825.31	17,977,825.31
UNCDF	300,000	300,000
UNDP	300,000	300,000
Government of Bangladesh	1,890,160	1,890,160

Delivery to date (per donor)

Sources	Committed Budget (USD)					Expenditure until 31 Dec 21 (USD)					Percentage Expended				
	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021
UNCDF	7,322	15,163	116,195	61,320	35,000	-	-	-	-	27,527	-	-	-	-	79%
UNDP	22,230	45,184	103,590	28,996	111,428	12,191	18,435	17,946	28,771	64,958	55%	41%	17%	99%	58%
LGD	224,642	163,214	163,214	163,214	140,333	-	6,427	14,992	8,856	11,986	0%	4%	9%	5%	9%
SIDA	360,065	1,959,964	5,414,339	2,167,775	4,498,820	71,769	2,125,752	4,008,376	2,485,322	3,050,509	20%	108%	74%	115%	68%
EU	326,267	1,689,910	4,927,388	2,024,404	4,510,852	131,423	1,230,707	4,349,149	2,433,564	3,581,103	40%	73%	88%	120%	79%
Total	940,526	3,873,435	10,724,726	4,445,709	9,296,433	215,383	3,381,321	8,390,463	4,956,513	6,736,083	23%	87%	78%	111%	72%

Project Implementation

Executing Agency	Local Government Division (LGD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), Government of Bangladesh (GoB)
Implementing Agency	UNDP & UNCDF
Key Project Partners	Helvetas (formerly) BRAC Population Crisis Control & Mass Education Committee (PCC & MEC) Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology (BUET)
Approval Date of Project	ProDoc was signed on 22 November 2016 DPP was approved by ECNEC on 21 June 2018
Project Duration as Project Document	81 months
Project Amendment	February 2021
Evaluation Date	July 2021 – March 2022

Project Context

Other current UNCDF projects in-country	-
Previous UNCDF projects (if relevant)	
Previous evaluations (if relevant)	Study on the Absorption Capacity of LoGIC (Commission by the EU)
Dates of audits	

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.): Country Program Evaluation		
Final/midterm review/ other: Mid-Term Evaluation		
Period under evaluation	Start: 2017	End: Q3 2021 (September)
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Evaluation dates	Start: July 30, 2021	Completion: April 29, 2022
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Acronyms & abbreviations

ADP	Annual Development Plan
AR	Annual Review
ATM	Adaptation Tracking and Measurement Survey
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) 2009
BCCTF	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund
BCR	Benefit-Cost Ratio
BDP	Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP) 2100
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BG	Block Grant
CALO	Climate-Adaptive Livelihood Option
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CFF	National Climate Fiscal Framework
CLP	Chars Livelihood Program
CMF	Community Mobilization Facilitator
COP	Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC
CRA	Community Risk Assessment
CRF	Community Resilience Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTR	Cost-Transfer Ratio
CVF	Climate Vulnerable Forum
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCCC	District Climate Change Coordinator
DCFC	District Climate Finance Coordinator
DDLG	Deputy Director of Local Government
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCCA	Global Climate Change Alliance
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HHRRAP	Household Risk Reduction Action Plan
HRGE	Human Rights and Gender Equality
IBFCR	Inclusive Budgeting and Financing for Climate Resilience
KII	Key Informant Interview
LCFF	Local Climate Fiscal Framework
LGD	Local Government Division
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LGI	Local Government Institution
LGSP	Local Government Support Program
LLA	Locally-Led Adaptation
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LoCAL	Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility

MCP	Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan
MIS	Management Information System
MoLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperative, Government of Bangladesh
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action
NBS	Nature-Based Solutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPD	National Project Director
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PBCRG	Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grant
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RRAP	Risk Reduction Action Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Bound (Goals)
TA	Technical Assistance
TCTR	Total Cost-Transfer Ratio
TOC	Theory of Change
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
USD	US Dollar
VfM	Value for Money

Executive Summary

PROJECT PROFILE

The Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) project focuses on local climate change adaptation (CCA) in 7 climate vulnerable districts of Bangladesh. LoGIC is designed to enhance the capacity of Local Government Institutions (LGIs), vulnerable communities, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to engage in effective and inclusive local-level planning and financing. LoGIC is a **Nationally Implemented Project (NIM) executed by the Local Government Division (LGD)** of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), Government of Bangladesh (GoB). It is a joint United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) project with funding support from the European Union (EU) and the Embassy of Sweden.

It was launched in 2016 as a 4-year initiative with an outlay of USD 20 million but due to delays in project approval, it only started in 2018. Following a review by the EU, LoGIC's timelines have been extended to 2023 with an increase in budget to USD 37.517 million.

LoGIC is centered around three key pillars:

- Strengthening the capacity of vulnerable people and local stakeholders for accountable planning and financing of CCA/Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) actions for building resilience.
- Enhancing access of LGIs and vulnerable households to climate funds for climate-resilient infrastructures and adaptive livelihoods.
- Establishing evidence-based advocacy for a mechanism for financing local resilience.

As of Quarter 3 of 2021, a total of USD 28,599,046 was budgeted to be spent against which USD 18,115,938 (63%) was actually spent.¹

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES, METHODS & USE

The mid-term evaluation analyzed LoGIC's progress thus far to provide information and recommendations that are useful and relevant to support evidence-based program management and broader strategic decision-making. It covered the period from 2017 to Quarter 3 2021 (September). It applied the **OECD-DAC evaluation criteria** of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, likely impact, and sustainability, based on the project's strategic approach (Theory of Change) and emphasized the human rights and gender equality aspects as cross-cutting themes.

Contribution analysis was done by adopting a mixed methods research and evaluation design. Existing quantitative data was accessed from project documents and qualitative data was generated through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA). The data was then triangulated wherever possible to enrich the findings and allow cross-validation. The Value for Money (VfM) has been assessed based on the economy and cost efficiency drawing on expenditure data and comparisons with prevailing benchmarks. The target audience for this MTE includes the LGD, MoLGRD&C, UNDP, and UNCDF; the donors, the EU and the Embassy of Sweden, local governments in Bangladesh, other government agencies, development partners, and the wider audience to which the report will be disseminated.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

Desk review of the respective policy documents and the evaluation team's discussions with national climate policy experts shows that while the GoB has been an exemplary early adopter of climate strategies and action plans, translating these into climate-informed planning, budgeting, and financing of adaptive infrastructure and services at the local government level has been a major challenge. **In this context, LoGIC with its focus on climate change adaptation and climate-resilient livelihoods, awareness, and capacity building on climate change at the local government and community level is well aligned with Bangladesh's national climate policy framework.** LoGIC has been particularly relevant to the local context of 72 UPs in 7 Upazilas facing various climate hazards. These UPs are one

¹ Based on Financial Data Provided by LoGIC Project staff to the Evaluation Team

remotest and most climate-vulnerable areas in Bangladesh with high levels of poverty and low awareness and capacities on climate change and CCA.

LoGIC is also fully aligned with global climate change policy priorities and the SDGs, especially SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 13.² The recently held COP 26 has provided further global impetus to climate adaptation.

The design was intended to leverage the comparative advantage and mandates of the two UN agencies with UNCDF's expertise in developing climate finance and planning tools for local government and UNDP's expertise in large-scale program delivery and supporting climate policy in Bangladesh. Whilst this has generated useful synergies, strategic policy linkages are weak.

Additionally, though LoGIC's main objective is to set up a country-based climate financing mechanism for scale-up across all UPs in Bangladesh, the existing RF reflects and emphasizes more on the outputs and outcomes of the currently targeted 72 UPs. Therefore, there is an in-built dilemma/dichotomy in the program as to whether LoGIC is a delivery-based model for climate adaptation to benefit the targeted population in the intervention UPs or is it a demonstrative model to influence national policies and programs to scale up and enable the adoption of the local climate adaptation model across Bangladesh. **Here there is an opportunity for the project team to revise the results framework to incorporate replicability and scaling up indicators to the same.**

On gender and inclusion, LoGIC adopted a **'gender transformative' approach and is supporting the most vulnerable women who have not been covered under any other programs other than normal disaster relief provided.** Moreover, the project is being implemented in the remotest and most climate-vulnerable areas of the country with target beneficiaries coming from most marginalized groups such as women-headed households, persons with disability, ethnic minority groups, and small/marginalized occupational groups.

Coherence

LoGIC's design and implementation strategy are aligned and coherent with the core policy directives of Bangladesh. It is coherent with the national government's Local Government Support Project (LGSP) which seeks to fund infrastructure development in UPs through Block Grants. Some of the processes like annual audit, percentage allocation based on fulfilling certain criteria, etc. for Performance - Based Climate Resilience Grants (PBCRG) are in sync with the LGSP fiscal transfer guidelines.

LoGIC is working with the Local Government Department (LGD) of the Bangladesh government and while it has created some synergies with line departments at the Union Parishad (UP) level for livelihoods training, **this is not reflected in a more formal engagement at the national level.** Similarly, LoGIC has virtually no connection with the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change which has a lead role in climate change adaptation.

LoGIC's design with its three key outputs – training and capacity building of UPs and communities; Performance Based Climate Resilience Grants (PBCRG) and Community Resilience Fund (CRF) grants and, influencing national policies – are clear and coherent. However, in its design and results framework, the focus on the institutionalization of outcomes is weak. While the design attempted to address climate resilience both from the community-level livelihood and local infrastructure angles, **the evaluation team did not find many synergies between the PBCRG and CRF schemes in implementation.** Barring a few instances, they appear to work as two separate interventions – which pose some risks.

Efficiency

Despite a delayed start due to lags in project approval, LoGIC has made good progress against the targets set in its results framework. It has been rolled out across 72 UPs, albeit with varying degrees of ownership, involvement, and levels of support.

Output 1 focuses on capacity building at the community and local government levels. Under this, LoGIC has supported a total of 17,000 beneficiaries to develop Household Risk Reduction Action Plans (HHRRAP) and delivered training on 23 climate-adaptive livelihood options (through 16 training manuals) to help beneficiaries to adopt climate-resilient livelihood practices. 99% of the 17,000 CRF beneficiaries participated in the HHRRAP updating process against the target of 52%. Moreover, in 2021, LoGIC selected an additional 18,000 Community Resilience Fund (CRF) beneficiaries (100%-women) who have now started undergoing trainings on the Climate Adaptive Livelihood Options (CALO). At the local government level, LoGIC has conducted Community Risk Assessments (CRA) for all 72 UPs and facilitated planning

² Goal 1: No Poverty; Goal 2: Zero Hunger; Goal 5: Gender Equality; Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; Goal 9: Industry Innovation & Infrastructure ; Goal 13: Climate Action

workshops to develop climate risk-informed annual development plans (ADP) and 5-year development plans at the UP level, thereby meeting the stipulated target.

Output 2 focuses on local climate finance - the PBCRG and CRF funds. All 72 UPs have secured PBCRG funding to support CCA interventions meeting the envisaged target. A total of USD 7.91 million has been disbursed (between 2018 and 2021) to these 72 UPs for the implementation of 653 infrastructure and schemes.

Also, the project reports that 74% of CRF beneficiary households have gained economic benefit from engaging in the LoGIC-promoted CALOs exceeding the target (60%). A total of USD 9.72 million has been disbursed as CRF grants since inception till 2021 to provide seed funding. **Concerning Output 3 on policy advocacy and influence, the progress has been limited.** There has been a single high-level discussion with the Government counterpart on setting up a fiscal allocation model for climate-vulnerable areas.

As of Quarter 3 of 2021, a total of USD 28,599,046 was budgeted to be spent against which USD 18,115,938 (63%) was actually spent.³ Within the actual spend, 8% of resources were spent on Output 1, 80% on Output 2, 5% on Output 3 and 7% was the management fee. **As evident from this, the main expenditure was related to the Performance Based Climate Resilience Grants and the Community Resilience Fund grants.**

Though LoGIC has mostly achieved its targets, there are a few challenges related to timeliness and quality of implementation. For example, while the CALO trainings were useful to start alternate livelihood options, there has been a disconnect in the timing of training and the seasonality associated with some activities, rendering some of the exercises less effective. During field-level discussions, stakeholders opined that they would have welcomed more in-depth training and follow-up, especially on forming groups and linking with markets, which was not possible in the first phase due to the paucity of time. Also, a review of the online CALO training videos reflects that while these videos were comprehensive, they did not explain clearly why these practices are required, how they differ from traditional methods, and how the approaches are better for climate change and adaptation. In addition, critical aspects such as market linkages and value chain were missing.

Similarly, the project had prepared climate hazard maps and downscaled national vulnerability data to the UP level which have helped initiate dialogue on climate change with UPs and communities and develop the CRA and RRAPs. However, these maps do not provide sufficient information on the current exposure risks or share future exposure and stresses. **As a result, most schemes to date have been traditional, although all schemes are required to have some form of climate narrative to qualify for funding.** Therefore, in 2020-21 LoGIC started preparing a new set of climate risk maps which will be used for updating the CRAs and RRAPs.

Though LoGIC trained elected UP members, in many cases our discussions reflected the lack of genuine interest and involvement of the UP elected persons in training. The lack of interest was cited as one of the significant challenges faced by the LoGIC trainers. Furthermore, reporting and processes were done or extensively supported by LoGIC staff which reflects a lack of ownership and capacity. **Therefore, we feel that adequately sensitizing and ensuring their genuine involvement would require more orientation, refresher courses, and in-depth support as also requested by the UP chairmen during our interviews.**

Our review also finds the various project documents, guidelines, and manuals developed to be detailed and comprehensive. However, a few stakeholders observed that these are too complex and detailed for most UP chairpersons and members to follow and adhere to without the project team's support. Also, in the long run, without the intense supervision of the LoGIC project team, these parameters might be wrongly reported because of local influence on the audit.

The project monitoring has been excellent, and this stringent monitoring helps ensure quality and reduces fiduciary risks, which UP chairpersons also admitted. The PBCRG allocations are displayed publicly, and the schemes are discussed in the open budget sessions. However, from our field discussions, it was apparent that the participation of vulnerable populations at open budget sessions is relatively low. The social audit component got delayed, and training on social audit has been recently completed for the project staff. Although the project falls under the National Implementation Modality (NIM), it has its own set of procurement and financial reporting rules aligning with UN principles to minimize fiduciary risks.

On CRF, our discussion with the stakeholders reflects that the beneficiary selection is robust compared to other government schemes with a high degree of transparency along with the inclusion of a complaint redressal mechanism. Our field discussions confirmed the robust quality of the selection process, although this was seen to vary

³ Based on Financial Data Provided by LoGIC staff

slightly across districts. In some UPs, informants complained that there were some inclusion or exclusion errors. Climate migrants were excluded since they could not demonstrate adaptive ability or fit well for the given set of CALO as highlighted in the key stakeholder discussions. **It must also be noted that while the selection criteria are robust, it may be difficult for a UP to administer the same process independently.** Also, LoGIC has not engaged much with the CSOs and NGOs in building their capacities and engaging them to ensure increased participation and voice of marginalized communities in UP level meetings.

On governance and management structure, our discussions with donors and other stakeholders reflect that LoGIC is perceived to suffer from weak management at the project governance level, resulting in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings focusing on minor operational issues and approvals rather than strategic issues and project direction. Also, our discussions with the key departments reflected incongruence and lack of understanding of the project objectives and activities among the senior officials of the government. These issues highlight the need for LoGIC to ensure that the project coordinator or team leader has the necessary gravitas and skills to be able to manage the policy agenda optimally. Our review also found that long-vacant positions have affected project delivery. Key positions such as Policy Advocacy and Gender Expert are vacant. Similarly, the position of Capacity Building Expert was vacant till mid-2021.

Some project stakeholders have also pointed out an insufficient budget for policy-level work, capacity building, human resources, and social mobilization, even though all these are essential components of the project. The current project design allocates nearly 70% of the fund for PBCRG and CRF, with the remaining 30% for staffing and other activities. Since LoGIC is more than just a cash transfer or micro-credit program, staff members feel that capacity building, policy influence and advocacy, business planning, and market linkages are essential components and require additional resources and funding for effective implementation.

On M&E, LoGIC monitors its activities against the results framework and reports annually. Since the results matrix is based on quantitative reporting, some of the softer issues around voice, accountability, empowerment, capacity, and policy influence are not reported at the outcome level. **While it is encouraging to note that the project has instituted the Adaptation, Tracking and Measurement (ATM) survey, the evaluation team's review has found gaps in data aggregation and reporting** indicating that data quality assurance needs to be strengthened to avoid inaccurate or misleading reporting on outcomes and impacts.

On Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE), the budget analysis reflects that 100% of the CRF grants are to women. To date, the CRF amount that has been spent has reached 17,000 beneficiaries, equivalent to USD350 for each beneficiary. The amount of funds disbursed to each beneficiary is based on evidence of similar livelihood programs in Bangladesh.

For PBCRG schemes, the evaluation team could not ascertain the percentage of funds allocated for women-centric projects and how many women benefited from the PBCRG schemes. Also, was it not possible to determine the degree to which prioritization of schemes reflected women's choice and voice, although LoGIC has reported 26% of those participating in planning are women, implying relatively low involvement.

On the project's Value for Money (VfM), a broad analysis of project expenditures highlights the following breakdown: Output-1 - 8%; Output-2 -80%; Output-3 -5% and Management fees -7%. On the economy aspect, the staffing costs are around 12% which appears reasonable given the Technical Assistance (TA) component. The average transfer value of CRF grants to beneficiaries is USD 350, roughly similar to other UNDP livelihood programs such as Swapno. On Cost Efficiency, our calculation shows LoGIC's total cost to transfer ratio is 1:1.5, comparable to cash transfer programs globally. The administrative cost to transfer ratio for LoGIC is 50% which appears to be high. It should be noted that direct comparability with global cash transfer programs is not suitable since it varies with the context, sector, inputs, and interventions.

Effectiveness

Overall LoGIC has demonstrated systematic interventions through training at various levels. The success has varied, and the gaps in delivery at the project level, coupled with the challenges of working with elected representatives, are areas that need strengthening going forward.

LoGIC has contributed to changing the mindset of the local governments on the importance and need for climate adaptation in the local planning, budgeting, and investment. At the Union Parishad level, there have been some improvements in understanding and awareness on climate change but more sustained efforts are needed for elected representatives to own and implement climate adaptive practices. Moreover, there do exist tendencies to

conflate CCA with disaster risk mitigation. **The major successes in the selection of climate-resilient and nature-based solutions have been driven majorly by LoGIC project staff who lead the CRA, RRAP, and scheme identification processes.**

The planning process (chiefly conducted by LoGIC staff) has been a mix of a top-down and bottom-up approach. It is based on a menu of investments and finalized in consultation with the beneficiaries reflecting their need and requirements. **The field level discussion reflected that the participation of the vulnerable population in the LoGIC meetings has been good. However, the participation of these groups in UP meetings is still minimal.** Overall, the process has been project-driven with minimal involvement of elected UP chairpersons or members, which has reduced the ownership of the process even though the UP has endorsed the selection. While the Chairpersons appreciated the involvement of the LoGIC project staff, **they were not sure whether they will be able to maintain full compliance and momentum once LoGIC concludes, threatening the sustainability of the results achieved.**

Based on the learnings from previous UNDP and UNCDF programs and the LGSP, LoGIC has established a decentralized fiscal transfer model for local climate adaptation with set standards and criteria for fiscal allocation. However, these could not be strictly followed in the initial year of the project. **Though LoGIC has established systems the capacity and willingness to sustain it at the local level is still a challenge.** Also, the issue of mainstreaming it rather than keeping a siloed and projectized approach is important to consider. Although the fiscal transfer mechanism has been established the leveraging of additional resources and access to the private sector or other sources of climate finance so far has been limited.

Whilst there has been a focus on training and capacity building, in certain instances, these were not very effective. Though the training of UPs though generated interest and awareness, it did not build their capacity to the desired extent. Likewise, for the CRF wherein there has been a gradual dropout from continuing the CALO activities in many instances. At the same time, it should be noted that the CRF beneficiaries reported that there has been an increase in household income and improvement in food security due to the CALO training and CRF grants. Furthermore, during the FDGS and PRA exercise the beneficiaries appreciated and rated the planning process, CRF, and PBCRG schemes highly. LoGIC has also promoted transparency and accountability at all stages of PBCRG and CRF implementation through displaying beneficiary lists, open budget sessions, and setting up grievance redressal cells which are welcome measures.

While there has been a gradual shift towards adopting climate-resilient infrastructure at the UP level rather than traditional roads, culverts, and cyclone shelters, it is the evaluation team's opinion that mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local development and investment planning needs to be strengthened. Additionally, mainstreaming LoGIC through building convergence and engagement with other line departments and UPs has been limited. There has been no attempt to share the learnings with other non-intervention UPs and national departments or agencies in an attempt to influence policies.

On HRGE aspects of LoGIC's results, it is crucial to note that the project has adopted a 'gender transformative approach since its inception, focusing almost exclusively on women as CRF beneficiaries'. LoGIC beneficiaries are from the most vulnerable and marginalized communities such as the Kamar, Bagdi, fisherfolk, etc., and face regular climate stresses due to their geographical location and remoteness. **Moreover, many of the LoGIC beneficiaries are unique and excluded from other NGO programs. LoGIC has facilitated the opening of bank accounts, leading to the financial inclusion of these women for the first time.**

With respect to adaptive capacity, our review suggests that the CALO options are mostly gender-sensitive. Although the CALO options are not unique, the LoGIC process of combining individual and group approaches increases accountability and gives confidence to first-time beneficiaries. The new livelihood practices have helped increase household income.

The PBCRG-funded projects are largely gender-neutral except perhaps where drinking water-related facilities have been set up. While the identification of the intervention may not have been overtly gender dictated, these drinking water plants have contributed to reducing the burden on women and girls from the drudgery of fetching water. **Furthermore, since 2021, LoGIC has started engaging with young people.** On access to institutions and voice, it must be noted that LoGIC-facilitated community meetings see a high percentage of women in attendance and voicing opinions. However, women's participation in the UP meetings is low as unanimously revealed in our FGDs.

Likely Impact

LoGIC has contributed to improving climate-adaptive planning and financing of community infrastructure at the UP level and adaptive livelihoods at the household level to boost resilience to climate stresses. Although at the UP level there has been an incremental shift toward climate adaptive solutions, it is still too early to assess the actual

degree of climate resilience and climate additionality. **Furthermore, there was a unanimous perception among Local Government officials and participants that the quality of infrastructure provided under PBCRG is substantially better due to very close monitoring and intense involvement of the LoGIC team.** At the same time, the evaluation team has found no evidence of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs being considered as a part of the PBCRG allocation, putting the sustainability of PBCRG investments at risk. Few PBCRG schemes have been destroyed during the Amphan and Yaas cyclones.

At the community level, LoGIC has selected 'unique beneficiaries' and has brought in high levels of transparency and objectivity, and managed well potential 'elite capture' influenced by local politics. While the CALO options being promoted are like other livelihood diversification programs, LoGIC's key differentiator is its attempt to demonstrate community-based climate change adaptation that is driven through government institutions while the others are more civil society-oriented.

During the FGDs and PRA activities, all beneficiaries agreed that general household incomes and disposable income have increased. However, there is substantial scope for improving the market linkages and access. **The evaluation team also has concerns about the sustainability of the CALO activities given the risk perceptions of the beneficiaries as well as their low self-reported confidence levels,** especially in Bhola and Patuakhali districts. This also evinces the need for more training as also requested by most beneficiaries.

Though there have been few instances, at an overall level there is an absence of any clear linkage between the PBCRG schemes which might be helpful and make the interventions more effective and adaptive livelihoods. **Also, there is a challenge related to PBCRG schemes with respect to public versus private goods.** PBCRGs have been used to create irrigation infrastructure in private lands for cultivation by landless laborers or beneficiaries engaged in fishing in PBCRG restored private ponds through lease agreements that are all time-bound and are at risk of discontinuation of current livelihoods at the end of the agreements. Whether groups that have been recently formed will be able to renegotiate such leases in the future is debatable. **If this does not materialize, there is a strong possibility that assets improved with PBCRG funds could revert to the private owner.**

On national policy advocacy and influence, progress thus far has been limited. The only evidence that the evaluation team found was the Policy Dialogue held in October 2020 from where the recommendation on the preparation of the Climate Vulnerability Index emerged. While the project plans a series of workshops/policy dialogues on various issues in the next year, we found no evidence of a clear strategy for policy advocacy and no nodal person in the project team tasked with this responsibility. **Overall, decentralization in Bangladesh has very strong central overtones and the very limited advocacy for policy influence undertaken by LoGIC is a concern as it may not change the equation sufficiently in favor of devolved action for local climate adaptation.**

Sustainability

In its current form, prospects for sustainability and mainstreaming appear to be challenging. While counterpart staff from LGD have assisted delivery across the 7 project districts, the project activities have been heavily dependent on and driven by LoGIC staff. At the UP level, it is crucial to acknowledge that while the project has attempted to build institutional capacity, the human and monetary resources of LGIs still remain low. There are serious limitations with the understanding, capacity, and incentives of elected UP members and local level officials especially engineers to engage proactively in designing schemes to enable access to alternative (including international) sources of climate finance.

At the same time, however, sustainability also requires a commitment from the government to continue funding from internal resources over the medium term. While the evaluation team accepts that it is still somewhat early to expect to see confirmation of clear funding lines, this is an area that LoGIC will need to address as a key part of its roadmap going forward. **The decision to construct a Climate Vulnerability Index and use it as a parameter for fiscal transfer is a good beginning.** If implemented, it will help vulnerable regions to access funds. Hitherto the focus has been on capacity building and setting up processes, but it will also be crucial for LoGIC to aggressively focus on advocacy and influence with the LGD as well as other agencies such as the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Water Resources, Agriculture and Disaster Management.

At the beneficiary level, while the skill-building efforts have been useful, sustainability would require the facilitation of market access and the creation of instruments for additional financing for scale-up. The federated cooperative business models being taken up by LoGIC would also require professional support, capacity, leadership, and skill-building efforts. Additionally, there also needs to be capacity building and engagement with local CSOs and NGOs to foster local level demand and strengthen the ecosystem around the voice and participation of the most vulnerable and marginalized.

CONCLUSIONS

Taking into account the effects of the pandemic and the resulting shorter implementation period (particularly at the local district level), **LoGIC can be judged to have initiated and delivered results in many aspects of the intervention.** It has introduced risk-informed LDP planning for UPs as well as helped to integrate CAA-DRR into the 5-year annual plans of LGIs. It has also piloted a model for decentralized performance-based fiscal transfers to 72 UPs for climate-resilient infrastructure and livelihoods, with strong fiduciary risk measurement to reduce leakages and nepotism. However, **LoGIC (both PBCRG and CRF) is yet to be properly institutionalized at the national and local levels and needs to build strong multi-sector partnerships.**

One of the main challenges reflected during the evaluation interactions with LoGIC stakeholders relates to the confusion around its dichotomy of purpose in terms of the demands related to maximizing delivery coverage and creating an impact at the local level on the one hand and, the specific requirements related to building a robust model of devolved planning and financing of local climate adaptation for mainstreaming and scale-up through government systems. This is important to clarify and agree upon since it has ramifications on the project delivery structure, approach, and results framework.

If LoGIC considers that it is a demonstration model or that it is developing a pathway as its key objective, scaling-up and institutionalization indicators should be defined in the results framework at the outcome level with sufficient attention and focus. If LoGIC is viewed through a systems transformation lens rather than a project delivery lens, the delivery approach needs to change with more emphasis on technical assistance support for the facilitation of delivery rather than pure project delivery.

Going forward, continued technical support, especially on building capacity at the local level, embedding LoGIC in LGD, and support in scaling up across UPs will all remain relevant and important. Although Bangladesh has several policies and programs on climate change and adaptation, these are mainly driven by the line departments with low cascading effect and low involvement of the Local Government Institutions and communities. Although there are some successes due to LoGIC in intervening with UPs to ensure adequate opportunities for continued participation of and contribution of marginalized and vulnerable populations in climate adaptation dialogue and interventions remain and require strengthening. Going forward, LoGIC needs to focus more on transferring skills and knowledge to local institutions and building local ownership. For this, it is also equally important to strengthen engagement with NGOs and CSOs to develop their capacities on climate adaptation, social audit and amplifying the voice and demand of the communities, and ensuring accountability at local levels.

LoGIC has successfully piloted a systematic mechanism to transfer climate finance at the local level with strong fiduciary standards, but it has not been able to address the challenge of limited public finance options to promote climate change adaptation at scale, especially related to access to international climate finance for local climate adaptation. This is challenging and as yet, a relatively uncharted territory, but it is essential to focus on how to go about leveraging alternate funding sources to ensure longer-term sustainability.

While the project has improved the life and immediate livelihoods context of many climate-vulnerable beneficiaries within the most climate-vulnerable districts in the country, it is essential to focus more on consolidating the gains by building resilience and greater portability of skills to sustain livelihood opportunities in the relatively likely event of future climate-related displacement. Finally, it will be important for LoGIC to devise a mechanism to strengthen the complementarity of the PBCRG and CRF schemes and PBCRG and CRF investments at different geographic and administrative scales. This will help to ensure that LoGIC is positioned to deliver more significant impacts and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategic Recommendations

1. Given that LoGIC's success thus far has been primarily due to the intense engagement of project staff in planning, delivery and monitoring, **it will be critical to focus on mainstreaming LoGIC within the government system** for sustainability. This can be done by:
 - Deepening the awareness levels on LoGIC amongst senior LGD officials and issuing directives to the district and Upazila officials to monitor, facilitate and mainstream climate adaptation within the existing LGD programs and schemes implemented at the local level.

- Using the Climate Risk Atlas as a tool to embed climate adaptation in planning LGSP works at UP, Upazila and district levels.
 - Streamlining and simplifying LoGIC processes for sustained use and training on the institutionalization of these processes at the UP level.
 - Supporting the LGD to leverage additional resources from the Finance Ministry during the budget preparation process for local climate-adaptive projects and schemes. This would complement LoGIC funding and help scale up.
2. **LoGIC should also focus on building strong and formalized linkages and engagement with other relevant line departments at the national and local levels, which hitherto has been limited and ad-hoc.** These include LGED, and the Ministries of Environment and Water Resources, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. Apart from the national level, the project also needs to focus on improving the local level capacity.

Along with capacity building, it is equally important to build ownership of the UP chairpersons and elected members by incentivizing them within the context of the political economy. For example, giving awards and recognition through monetary and non-monetary incentives to high-performing UP chairpersons and members might induce them to take ownership and adhere to the process and systems whilst generating wider political credit, all of which would help deliver quality climate-resilient infrastructure and support to the most climate-vulnerable people.

Also, building the capacity of the local CSOs (which has not been a major focus to date) would help in mobilizing and amplifying the voice of the most climate-vulnerable in planning and decision making. At the beneficiary level, it is equally important to facilitate market linkages, access to low-cost capital, and build portable skills for sustaining and scaling up their individual or groups' livelihood options. The current plan of building a cooperative model is an excellent idea but needs a substantial investment of time and capacity building. An alternate option could be linking some of the existing groups with the existing well-functioning cooperatives/federations/other networks that may be promoted by CSOs in the region.

Given that LoGIC is being conceived and developed as a proof of concept for local climate adaptation, **it needs to generate and share learnings of both process and implementation across other UPs for scaling up.** This aspect has been largely missing. Here, learnings and experiences could be shared among the pilot UPs, which might help them adopt best practices and avoid pitfalls.

4. The other important area for the project to invest in over the remaining period is policy advocacy. **Along with deepening the engagement with the Government for policy advocacy, it is also essential that the project develops a policy influencing strategy that could lay out the issues, approaches, mode, and responsibilities.** Policy advocacy work needs to go beyond workshops. Here, LoGIC could explore other approaches such as developing policy briefs, hosting talk shows, engaging with the media, and reaching out to key influencers or advisors in government. Also, broadening the policy dialogue platform to incorporate and create more space for donors to engage on relevant policy issues might be helpful since they also have other funding and strategic political leverage that could help in taking forward the agenda.

Operational Recommendations

- It is essential to strengthen the climate science in the risk atlas through further analysis of exposure, modeling, and assessment of risk to design appropriate climate-resilient works at the district, Upazila, and UP levels.
- It is also important to build synergies between PBCRG and CRF projects and ensure that the PBCRG projects complement larger climate-resilient projects planned or implemented in the district for enhanced impact and sustainability.
- While LoGIC has invested in a field-level team for Monitoring and Evaluation to collect data online, it is essential that it also pays attention and provides the necessary technical support to strengthen data quality and data analysis for the recently launched ATM.
- Lastly, LoGIC should focus on its ways of working and deepening engagement with the Steering Committee to ensure that the platform provides strategic policy directives and facilitates embedding the project within LGD and GoB systems.

LESSONS

In addition to the specific recommendations, the evaluation findings also give rise to some general lessons that may be relevant more widely to other programs, donors, and governments implementing similar initiatives elsewhere.

- **Political Ownership:** One of the major learnings from LoGIC is that incentive-based systems such as the minimum conditions-performance measures of the PBCRG to improve efficiency and effectiveness would be more effective if there is political ownership at both the national and local levels of and the systems/structure facilitates the political economy context. Failing this, there is a high risk that efficiency and effectiveness gains in the project lifetime will dissipate if the program is being majorly driven by the project staff.
- **Policy Influence and Agenda Steering:** It is also important to note that having a National Project Director with a 50%-time commitment and a governing board with different government stakeholders does not necessarily lead to policy influence and embedding in government systems unless the Secretariat takes a more proactive approach to engage and steer the governing board for strategic decision-making.
- **Convergence with Larger Sectoral Programs:** Another key learning emerging from LoGIC is that the selected schemes or interventions should consciously seek synergies and complementarities with large sectoral programs and projects for improved and cascading impacts. For instance, our discussions highlighted that though drainage systems were developed to facilitate sunflower cultivation, the absence of local embankments or dykes in the area led to large-scale flooding which ultimately exposes the LoGIC PBCRG solution to risk.

1. Evaluation Scope, Objectives & Use

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The **overarching purpose** of the LoGIC Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) is to provide information and recommendations that are useful and relevant to support evidence-based program management and broader strategic decision-making.

The evaluation purpose is three-fold:

- (i) To allow UNCDF, UNDP, the Government of Bangladesh, the EU, and the Embassy of Sweden to meet their accountability and learning objectives, and inform programming in-country and globally
- (ii) To support ongoing attempts by LoGIC and its funders and key partners to capture good practices and lessons to date
- (iii) To guide and inform the remaining years of implementation with evidence-based, forward-looking recommendations.

The **specific objectives** as recognized in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the evaluation are to:

- Assist UNCDF, UNDP and their partners understand the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, likely impact, and sustainability of LoGIC at the mid-term point, including positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, changes and effects driven by LoGIC-supported interventions
- More specifically, assess the relevance and effectiveness of LoGIC as an approach, identify gaps to meet its objectives in the context of the national policy environment and expectations of the local community, donors, and the government
- Consider the likely impact and sustainability of the LoGIC approach on the policy and institutional environment at the national level and the implementation structures at the local level
- Examine the hypotheses and assumptions embedded in the Theory of Change (ToC) of the LoGIC project and validate and/or refine the theory of change at this stage of implementation
- Consider the appropriateness to date of LoGIC as an approach to support direct access by the country to international climate finance for local-level initiatives
- Situate the program in its broader institutional and policy context with sustainability and impact in mind, and compare to similar programs and other initiatives by other development partners, including other UNCDF and UNDP sister initiatives in the region/worldwide
- Draw lessons learned and provide forward-looking operational and strategic recommendations that are realistic and practical in terms of programmatic approach and resource allocation to assist further improvement in the implementation of the program over the remainder of its term and way forward for future intervention

The evaluation also seeks to identify how LoGIC is working as a model Climate Financing mechanism for local climate adaptation and progress in achieving its targets and goal. The evaluation also assesses the extent to which a rights-based approach and gender-mainstreaming have been applied in implementation, the alignment of LoGIC's interventions with the national government policies, and the current capacity for policy review and monitoring. In doing so, the evaluation attempts to assess results to date and to provide evidence on progress on capacity building, climate financing, and policy advocacy. The evaluation captures LoGIC's good practices, key learnings, success factors, and challenges. It will also attempt to provide specific and actionable recommendations to guide and inform the remaining years of program implementation as well as a set of indicative action points for the implementation team's consideration.

1.2 SCOPE

The mid-term evaluation assesses the validity of the Theory of Change (ToC), processes, and operations that impact the quality of outputs, the policy issues, ground-level performance, and challenges in implementation. In addressing the above, the evaluation covers the progress from the start of the project in 2017 to Quarter 3 2021 (September). The assessment was conducted at three levels, i.e., national (with key government departments); the local level-Union Parishads and Upazilas, and at the beneficiary level.

1.3 USE OF THE EVALUATION

The primary audience for this MTE includes the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), the Government of Bangladesh, UNDP, and UNCDF; the donors, the EU and the Embassy of Sweden, local governments in Bangladesh, other government agencies, development partners

and the wider audience to which the report will be disseminated. The evaluation report is expected to provide preliminary evidence at the mid-term stage on LoGIC's current and likely contributions to:

- Improved inclusive local-level planning and a strengthened financing mechanism for community-based climate change adaptation solutions through local governments
- Strengthening the capacity of local government institutions, most vulnerable households and CSOs to develop and implement plans that integrate climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management
- Establishing a robust financing mechanism to fund local communities for CCA measures
- Advocating for evidence-based improvements and policies for UPs and national systems with respect to CCA

2. Program Profile

2.1 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, STRATEGY & BACKGROUND

Program Background & Description

Bangladesh, currently a least developed country (LDC) and scheduled to graduate to a developing country in 2026⁴, is exceptionally vulnerable to climate change with every 1 in 7 people in the country estimated to be displaced by climate change by 2050.⁵ The country has been identified as the 7th most affected globally on climate risk from 2000 to 2019⁶ and is subject to frequent floods, cyclones, salinity, livelihood, and biodiversity losses, reducing wetlands, that have exacerbated impacts on agriculture and food resources, poverty and vulnerability.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) acknowledges the importance of this issue which is reflected in its respective climate change policies and plans, as discussed in the following section on Relevance. **However, climate change is often a localized affair.** Even areas of close geographical proximity may face varied adaptation challenges and thus require customized responses. Moreover, the problems associated with climate change are different for women and men, rich and poor, elderly, and young, and differ among professions and livelihoods. Thus, adaptation interventions are often most suited to be addressed through Local Government Institutions (LGIs).

However, LGIs, communities, marginalized groups, and the vulnerable face several challenges in addressing climate action. There is a low level of climate awareness, skills and knowledge amongst LGIs, devolved budgets are insufficient, and they lack the political incentives and accountability to address climate change. The problem is heightened by weak policy frameworks and capacities for planning. Meanwhile, most civil society engagement has remained 'projectized' in the absence of robust policy frameworks for institutionalization. At the same time, vulnerable households face the twin challenges of insufficient influence and resources to engage in climate-resilient planning and actions.

In this context, the Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) project focuses on local climate change adaptation (CCA) in 7 climate vulnerable districts of Bangladesh. LoGIC is designed to enhance the capacity of LGIs, vulnerable communities, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to engage in effective and inclusive local-level planning and financing. The initiative aims to reduce poverty and climate-induced vulnerabilities through gender-sensitive approaches that promote local action on climate change at scale and influence policy for mainstreaming climate considerations into government programs and investments.

LoGIC is a **Nationally Implemented Project (NIM) executed by the Local Government Division (LGD)** of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C). It is a joint United Nations Development

⁴ Least Developed Country Category: Bangladesh Profile <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category-bangladesh.html>

⁵ Environmental Justice Foundation <https://ejfoundation.org/reports/climate-displacement-in-bangladesh#:~:text=Climate%20Change%20in%20Bangladesh,exceptionally%20vulnerable%20to%20climate%20change.&text=It%20has%20been%20estimated%20that,of%20sea%20level%20rise%20alone>

⁶ https://germanwatch.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Climate%20Risk%20Index%202021_1.pdf

Program (UNDP) and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) project with funding support from the European Union (EU) and the Embassy of Sweden.

It was launched in 2016 as a 4-year initiative with a total budget of USD 20 million. However, there were delays in obtaining project approval from the GoB and in reaching a consensus on the specific interventions eligible for PBCRG and CRF funding. Thus, project implementation started only started in 2018. Following a review by the EU in 2020, LoGIC's timelines have been extended to 2023 with an increase in budget to USD 37.517 million.

The overall objectives of LoGIC are:

- Strengthening the capacity of vulnerable people and local stakeholders for accountable planning and financing on CCA/Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) actions for building resilience.
- Enhancing access of LGs and vulnerable households to climate funds for climate-resilient infrastructures and adaptive livelihoods.
- Establishing evidence-based advocacy for a mechanism for financing local resilience.

LoGIC is being implemented in **72 Unions of 19 Upazilas** in 7 districts - Kurigram, Sunamganj, Khulna, Bagerhat, Barguna, Patuakhali, and Bhola and across 4 climate-vulnerable zones.

These are (i) flash flood-prone *haor* areas (Sunamganj); (ii) flood-prone *char* areas (Kurigram); (iii) southwest coastal areas (Khulna and Bagerhat); and (iv) south-central coastal areas (Barguna, Patuakhali, and Bhola).

These districts were selected based on (i) exposure to climate hazards and risks i.e., salinity, sea-level rise, cyclone, and flood, and (ii) concentration of extreme poverty based on the Poverty

Map of Bangladesh and household income and expenditure survey. The selection criteria were based on a combination of the exposed population, remoteness, and poverty drawing on available macro-level data from the Government Survey on Disasters and World Bank data.

Figure 1. LoGIC districts & their climate hazards



Project Strategy

LoGIC's goal is to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change and related disaster risks in Bangladesh. The underlying assumption is that local communities are on the frontlines of climate change impacts. Yet, they and other local actors and institutions have limited awareness, capacity, resources, and voice in the decisions that most affect them.

The ToC has been conceptualized around six strands: (i) Building capacity, awareness, and empowerment of vulnerable people to generate climate-informed plans (ii) Development of the capacity of the local government to integrate climate change into their local development plans (iii) Building capacity and engagement of local actors and government extension workers at the local level to work as a driver for accountability of climate action (iv) Provide grants to local government as an additional resource to climate-proof their community-based climate adaptation investments (v)

Provide direct support to vulnerable households to meet their adaptation needs (vi) Promote a local climate financing mechanism through evidence-based advocacy for delivering climate finance at scale. The table below summarizes the joint project outcome and the 3 outputs

Table 1. LoGIC Bangladesh Outcome & Outputs

Joint Project Outcome	Improved and inclusive local level planning and a strengthened financing mechanism for community-based climate change adaptation solutions through local governments.
Output 1	Strengthened local governments, households, and other local stakeholders to develop local plans that integrate CCA-DRR solutions.
Output 2	Established financing mechanism to fund local governments and communities for implementing adaptation measures.
Output 3	Experience and evidence inform and contribute to further improvements in policies and for UPs and national systems concerning CCA.

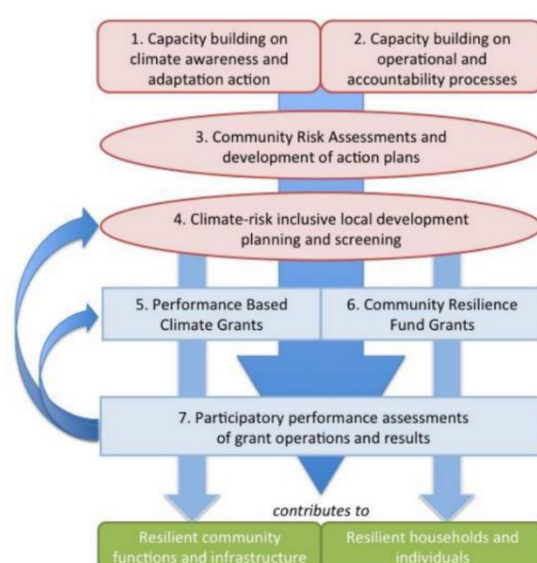
Figure 2. LoGIC strategic approach

The figure alongside shows the main approaches (or thematic areas) that make up the integrated strategy to achieve Output 1 and Output 2.⁷

Outputs 1 and 2 are closely interlinked and Approaches 1 to 7 (figure alongside) contribute to achieving these outputs. These are as follows:

- **Approaches 1 and 2** focus on the capacity building of local government, CSOs, local stakeholders, and community members on climate change awareness, knowledge, technology and skills, local planning, and importance and opportunities for climate adaptation in livelihoods infrastructure essential services.

- The underlying assumptions are that awareness and capacity building at the local level with guidance provided through the project will lead stakeholders to undertake



- **Approach 3**, the **participatory Community Risk Assessments (CRA)**, to develop **local Risk Reduction Action Plans (RRAP)**. **Approach 4** entails integrating the RRAPs into the local development planning process with regular screening for changes in the current and emerging environment, climate, and disaster risk priorities to ensure climate-inclusive **Local Development Plans** remain relevant, effective, and sustainable.
- To implement the local climate adaptation plans, LoGIC has established two types of specific financing at the Union Parishad (UP) level: a **Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grant (PBCRG)** and a **Community Resilience Fund (CRF)**. Under **Approach 5**, the **PBCRG** is aligned with the current system of fiscal transfers to local governments and **allocates additional resources to complement existing LGI budgets** for strengthening resilience to adverse climate and disaster impacts through investment in infrastructure and public services for the poor.
- **Approach 6** includes establishing **the CRF** to channel grants directly to vulnerable households to enhance their resilience through support for livelihoods and food security. Both the **PBCRG and CRF are complementary**. The **CRF is a medium-term measure** to meet the livelihood and food security needs of vulnerable households that are currently difficult to reach or excluded, while efforts increase to strengthen systems for sustainable public service delivery. The CRF predominantly supports extremely poor households to enhance their adaptive livelihood portfolios.
- **Approach 7** focuses on **strengthening the quality and accountability** of local-level institutions' planning and budgeting and the **performance of the grant mechanism** itself. This involves strengthening the transparency of local institutions and the participation of beneficiaries in quality and accountability monitoring.

⁷ The red-shaded approaches 1-4 are organized under output 1, and the blue-shaded approaches 5-7 are organized under output 2

- Together, the approaches culminate in Output 3, which aims to generate knowledge and mobilize opinion for shaping a local climate fiscal framework and enhance the readiness of both the LGIs and the LGD to utilize national and international climate finance in an accountable way.

LoGIC envisages helping National Ministries develop a systematic mechanism to transfer climate finance at the local level with strong fiduciary standards; build capacity to improve the delivery of climate-adaptive infrastructure and services of local institutions and reduce the vulnerability of marginalized communities and women through increased participation and influence local on development plans and improving their knowledge and skills for climate-adaptive livelihoods.

2.2 CURRENT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

To achieve its goal and objectives, LoGIC has three main pillars of intervention and is reflected in the results framework. The progress against the results framework has been presented in a tabular format in [Annex 1](#). This section provides a narrative of the progress against the targets.

Output 1: Strengthened capacity of various stakeholders (local governments, vulnerable households) to develop local plans that integrate climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management.

Our desk review, FGDs and PRAs highlight that LoGIC has trained vulnerable households on climate-resilient livelihoods and facilitated financial inclusion by way of opening individual bank accounts. It has supported 17,000 beneficiaries to develop household risk reduction action plans (HRRRAPs) and delivered training on 23 climate-adaptive livelihood options (CALOs⁸) to help beneficiaries to adopt climate-adaptive livelihood practices. 99% of the 17,000 CRF beneficiaries participated in the HRRRAP updating process against the target (2021) of 52%. Moreover, in 2021, LoGIC selected an additional 18,000 Community Resilience Fund (CRF) beneficiaries (100%-women) who have now started undergoing CALO trainings.⁹

At the local government level, LoGIC has conducted Community Risk Assessments (CRA) for **all 72 UPs and facilitated planning workshops to develop climate risk-informed annual development plans (ADP) and 5-year development plans at the UP level**. The project has also initiated an Adaptation Tracking and Measurement (ATM) Survey to measure and monitor the climate change adaptation and resilience progress of households and communities.

LoGIC also organized trainings on the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) and Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grant (PBCRG) Manuals for elected UP chairpersons and members (234) to develop an understanding of the grant mechanism methodologies, procedures, and reporting systems. LoGIC has developed Hazard Maps and more recently 'Climate Risk Atlas' at the Upazila level as a tool for identifying, quantifying analyzing, and projecting risks arising from natural hazards, exposures, and vulnerabilities at the UP level. In addition, it has also provided training on accounting, Management Information System (MIS), and ATM software to UP staff and the project's own Community Mobilization Facilitators (CMFs).

Output 2: Establishing financing mechanisms to fund local governments and communities for implementing climate change adaptation measures.

As described in the project document, LoGIC has designed two mechanisms i.e., the Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grants (PBCRG) and the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) to support additional funding to local governments (through the PBCRG) and individual households (through CRF) to undertake climate-adaptive interventions in areas of infrastructure and livelihoods.

The PBCRG supports local government institutions based on an annual assessment of compliance with mandatory requirements under the grant to plan and implement community-level climate-resilient infrastructure, while the CRF is

⁸ CALOs are climate-resilient livelihood options. LoGIC provides new skills and start-up grant support to end-beneficiaries to pursue these alternate climate- resilient means of livelihoods. Examples of CALOs under LoGIC include sheep rearing, duck and fish farming, crab fattening, stress-tolerant fruit and vegetable gardening, etc.

⁹ LoGIC Project Document, LoGIC Annual Review 2018, 2019, 2020 & validated through KIIs

administered through beneficiary bank accounts and targets climate-adaptive livelihood improvements of vulnerable households.

All (100%) of the 72 UPs have secured PBCRG funding to support CCA-linked schemes based on their performance, thereby fulfilling the designated project target. As reported in the draft Annual Review (AR) 2021, a total of USD 7.91 million has been disbursed (between 2018 and 2021) to these 72 UPs for the implementation of 653 infrastructure and schemes covering water supply such as rainwater harvesting, integrated water treatment plants, infrastructures such as guide walls, culverts, drainage, emergency shelters and small-scale irrigation. This has been accompanied by the development of an operational manual, guidelines, disbursement criteria, and an audit mechanism for accessing and utilizing the grants.

The AR 2021 also reported that LoGIC has disbursed a total of USD 9.72 million as CRF grants since inception till 2021. The ATM survey 2021 reported that a total of 97% of beneficiaries had completed their 1st CALO, 79% completed the 2nd and 25% the 3rd on activities such as stress-tolerant crop production (maize, mung, watermelon, sesame, sunflower, etc.), sheep rearing, crab rearing, saline water fisheries and hydroponics, among others. The AR 2021 and discussions with the LoGIC staff also highlight that 74% of the CRF beneficiaries have gained economic benefit from the implementation of their CALO against the target of 60%.

Output 3: Knowledge management and informed policy advocacy at local government and national government levels for improved climate change adaptation.

This entailed the development of knowledge products, organizing an inter-ministerial policy dialogue at the national level as well as workshops and trainings at the local government level for mainstreaming and policy influence. LoGIC organized a policy dialogue focused on revisiting funding allocation rationale from the perspective of climate change and consolidation of climate-informed planning and budgeting at the local level. LoGIC has initiated working with UNDP's Inclusive Budgeting and Financing for Climate Resilience (IBFCR) project to share policy lessons for the development of the Local Climate Fiscal Framework (LCFF) which has been piloted in 2 UPs. In addition, LoGIC has raised awareness on COVID-19 protocols and remained engaged with its target audience by utilizing virtual communication methods at the height of the pandemic. LoGIC also conducted 4 rounds of the 'Kemon Achen' (How Are You?) Survey to understand the immediate impact of COVID-19, Cyclones Amphan and Yaas and flood events (tidal, riverine, and flash) on the health, income, livelihoods, education, and social wellbeing of the beneficiaries.

From a gender and social inclusion perspective, LoGIC has adopted a gender transformative approach keeping in mind that the impacts of climate change are largely gendered exacerbating pre-existing inequalities and deeply entrenched regressive gender norms. Women's lack of control over capital, limited economic opportunities and lack of voice in household and community decision-making further impede their ability to adapt to and overcome climate change challenges. As a result, CRF funding has been almost exclusively focused on women with 98-99% of CALO beneficiaries being female. From a vulnerability perspective, LoGIC is being implemented in some of the remotest parts of the country supporting the most-climate vulnerable marginalized populations in each district.

2.3 CURRENT PROGRAMME FINANCIAL STATUS

The table below shows the committed budget, expenditure and percentage expended by donors and year till December 31st 2021

Table 2. LoGIC's Financial Status, Budget v. Spend¹⁰

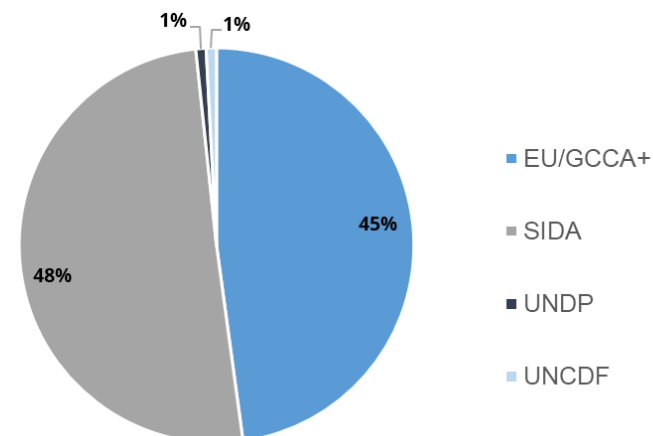
Sources	Committed Budget (USD)					Expenditure until 31 Dec 21 (USD)					Percentage Expended				
	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021	Y1 2017	Y2 2018	Y3 2019	Y4 2020	Y5 2021
UNCDF	7,322	15,163	116,195	61,320	35,000	-	-	-	-	27,527	-	-	-	-	79%
UNDP	22,230	45,184	103,590	28,996	111,428	12,191	18,435	17,946	28,771	64,958	55%	41%	17%	99%	58%
LGD	224,642	163,214	163,214	163,214	140,333	-	6,427	14,992	8,856	11,986	0%	4%	9%	5%	9%
Embassy of Sweden	360,065	1,959,964	5,414,339	2,167,775	4,498,820	71,769	2,125,752	4,008,376	2,485,322	3,050,509	20%	108%	74%	115%	68%
EU	326,267	1,689,910	4,927,388	2,024,404	4,510,852	131,423	1,230,707	4,349,149	2,433,564	3,581,103	40%	73%	88%	120%	79%
Total	940,526	3,873,435	10,724,726	4,445,709	9,296,433	215,383	3,381,321	8,390,463	4,956,513	6,736,083	23%	87%	78%	111%	72%

The table below shows the total budget commitment, by donor. The chart below shows the percentage composition of the total program budget, by donor.

Table 3. Budget Commitment by Donor

Commitments	As per ProDoc (in USD)	Actual project budget (in USD)
EU/GCCA+	17,049,877.46	17,049,877.46
Embassy of Sweden	17,977,825.31	17,977,825.31
UNCDF	300,000	300,000
UNDP	300,000	300,000
Government of Bangladesh	1,890,160	1,890,160

Figure 3. Percentage contribution to budget by donor



¹⁰ As shared by the LoGIC team.

Figure 4. Evolution of committed budget since inception till 2021, by donor, by year

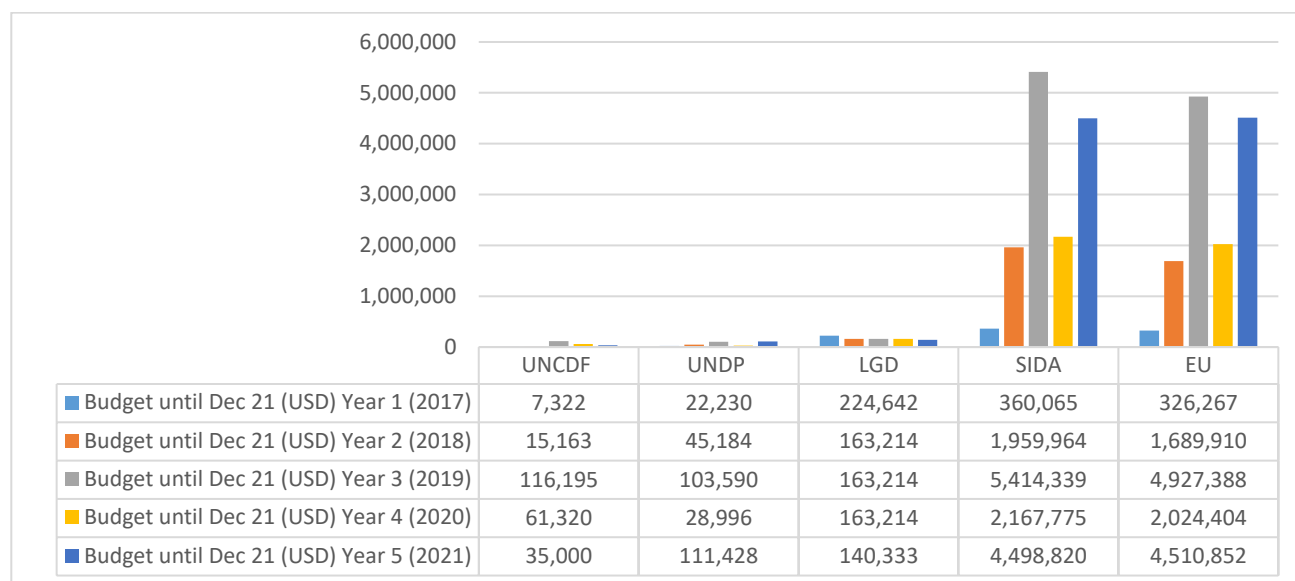
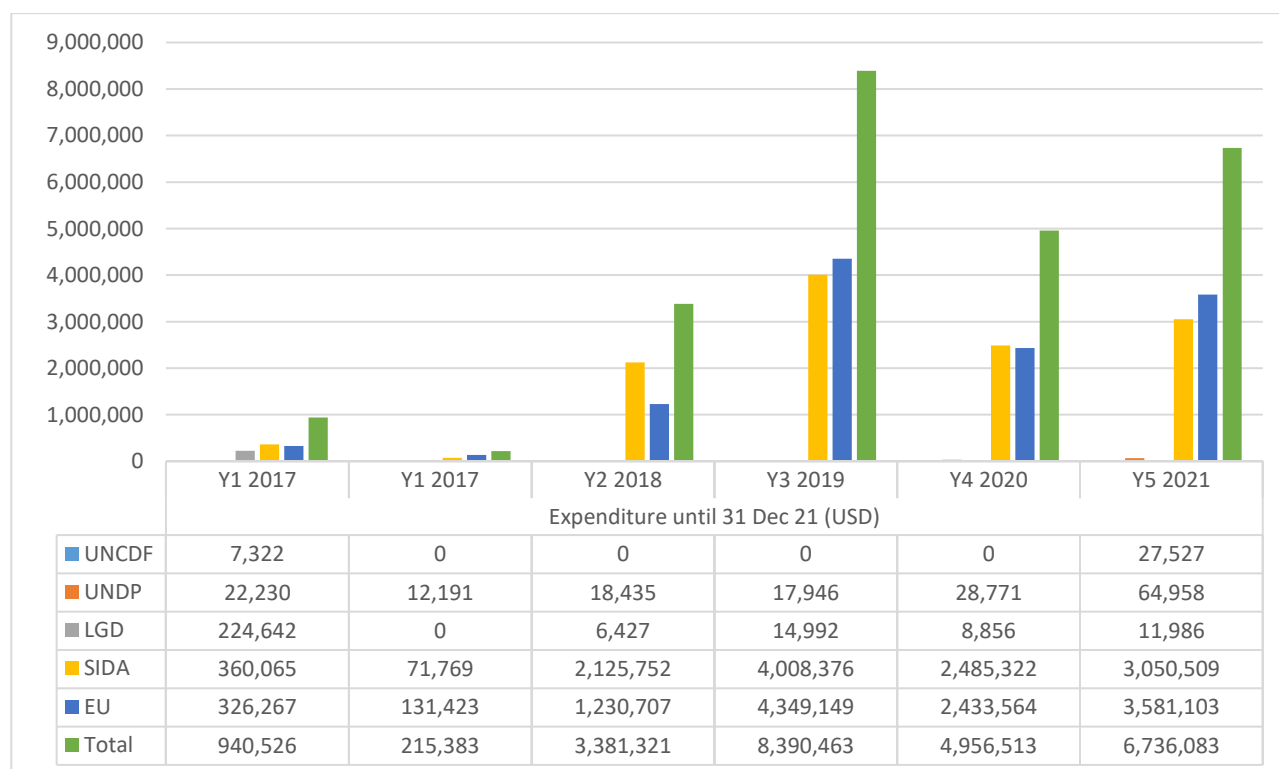


Figure 5. Evolution of actual spending since inception till 2021, by donor, by year



2.5. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS

The European Union (EU) had commissioned an independent study in 2019-2020 to assess the absorption capacity of LoGIC. The report recommended an amendment to the project timeline by 2 years. and budget, including the rationale for the two years, costed extension. Thus, LoGIC will now end in 2023.

Based on the report's findings, the project was required to strengthen three key areas so that they become innovative and sustainable.

- Reaching all eligible vulnerable groups with different grants packages or reaching the most vulnerable people with standard grant packages
- Scaling up the most viable climate-resilient livelihood options with the formal credit market, with higher environmental safeguarding initiatives (i.e. crab fattening)

- Facilitating private sector actors and co-designing business cases for scalable business opportunities on climate-resilient means of livelihoods, where vulnerable people would secure income, backed up by skill training and social guarantee

The report also emphasized the need to strengthen LoGIC's climate change narrative and core processes during the extension period. In this context, core processes mean 1) conducting climate-risk assessments through bottom-up and top-down approaches, 2) formulating climate-risk reduction plans at the community and household levels, 3) mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local development and investment planning, 4) supporting community level and household level investments and activities to enhance climate resilience, 5) ensuring that the supported household-level resilience investments contribute to the climate resilience of the community as a whole, and 6) monitoring and learning about the effectiveness of the supported measures ensuring that increasingly effective solutions are supported.

3. Evaluation Approach & Methodology

3.1 APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The evaluation has been conducted in a consultative and participatory manner with a wide range of stakeholder discussions. A **theory-based evaluation approach with contribution analysis** was used to assess the progress and the pathways to achieve the results and outcomes, both intended and unintended. The LoGIC Project Document (ProDoc) showed that the ToC has been conceptualized as a **project strategic approach** as described in [Section 2](#).

The theory-based evaluation helped to validate LoGIC's relevance to the country and local contexts and bolstered the understanding of the 'how and why' of the project as well as the assumptions, success factors, challenges, and risks (including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic) that have influenced the delivery, outputs, and outcomes.

The evaluation has applied a **contribution analysis, wherein it attempted to assess the impact or influence of the set of LoGIC interventions (capacity building for LGIs and end-beneficiaries; local climate finance and policy advocacy) at the various levels of the program ecosystems and the changes it has brought along the theory of change pathways.**

3.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS, ANALYSIS & TRIANGULATION

The evaluation adopted a mixed methods research and evaluation design to measure the likely impact of LoGIC and the contribution of the activities at different levels: national (including policy), local government and beneficiary levels to improve climate financing and adaptation. Existing quantitative data was accessed from project documents and qualitative data was generated through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA). **The Value for Money (VfM)** has been assessed on the basis of economy and cost efficiency drawing on expenditure data and comparisons with prevailing benchmarks.

Data has been **triangulated wherever possible drawing on information from** desk reviews, secondary data analysis, KIIs, FGDs and PRAs **to enrich the findings** and allow cross-validation and has incorporated gender equality and human rights (GE and HR) perspectives.¹¹

3.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The backbone of the evaluation is a set of key evaluation questions that have been categorized into the OECD-DAC criteria of **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, (likely) impact and sustainability with human rights and gender equity (HRGE) as a cross-cutting dimension covering all these criteria.**

¹¹ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616>

These criteria provided an analytical framework for the operationalization of different levels of the theory of change and intervention logic into measurable evaluation questions in line with accepted international standards of good quality international development evaluation. The evaluation matrix was prepared based on the review of documents and has guided the development of tools, which were deployed to bring out primary findings. The matrix includes judgment criteria of what would constitute good performance for each of the indicators, as well as the sources and means of verification. These were informed by the LoGIC ProDoc (Original and Revised), and the various progress reports. An abridged version of the Evaluation Matrix is presented below (the lines of evidence are elucidated in the subsequent paragraphs). **The detailed evaluation matrix with evaluation questions, judgment criteria/sub-evaluation questions, lines of evidence/data sources, and stakeholders is presented in [Annex 2](#).**

OECD-DAC Criteria and Evaluation Question
EQ1: RELEVANCE
How relevant and how well designed is LoGIC's approach to the policy priorities and sector strategies of the government of Bangladesh (NDC, Climate Change Policy, NAP, Country Investment Plans, Climate Fiscal Framework); the UN country Plans (UNDAF, CPD, etc.); similar initiatives by national or development partners?
How relevant is the support provided by LoGIC to the needs of the government of Bangladesh, partner organizations, local governments, and communities?
To what extent does the LoGIC design address climate stress issues at the Upazila level and to what extent do these differ at the intra-Upazila level based on any specific climate stress differentiation?
To what extent does the LoGIC design incorporate gender equality (GE) and human rights (HR) issues, as well as environmental sustainability? How coherent is it to the needs and interests of all stakeholder groups? Does it offer good quality information on the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination to inform the program?
EQ 2: Coherence
How distinct/complementary is LoGIC's approach to other programs and initiatives implemented in Bangladesh by the government and/or key development partners with similar objectives?
As presently designed, how coherent is the program design in view of program objectives and the collaboration of the two UN agencies in working together to implement the program?
EQ 3: Efficiency
How well, and with what quality, has LoGIC delivered its expected results to date in terms of the results framework, budget allocations, and cost-efficiency of activities? Has LoGIC succeeded in mobilizing resources from counterpart agencies and/ or other actors?
How well is the program governance system, including partnerships (development and national) working? How are the government counterparts engaged in the program and how is LOGIC working with other LoCAL countries towards implementing the LoCAL standard and joint Board Decisions?
How well are resources (financial, time, people) allocated to integrate Human Rights (HR) & Gender Equality (GE) in the implementation of LoGIC, and to what extent are HR & GE a priority in the overall intervention budget? To what extent are such resources being used efficiently?
How have program managers adapted to the impact of COVID-19 in the design and management of the program, and with what likely results? Has there been a change in program delivery mechanisms as a fallout of COVID-19 and does the situation warrant any modifications in program targets and overall outcomes?
EQ 4: Effectiveness
To what extent is the program beginning to contribute to changes in the capacity of local governments to plan, budget, and manage investments for CCA and DRR at the local level, and of communities' CCA solutions?
To what extent is the program contributing to establishing sustainable financing mechanisms to fund local governments and communities for implementing CCA measures?
To what extent is the program contributing to mainstreaming community-based CCA into intergovernmental fiscal systems?
To what extent is LoGIC on track to achieve on HR & GE? To what degree are the results achieved equitably distributed among the targeted stakeholder groups?
EQ 5: Likely Impacts
To what extent are LoGIC results on track to contributing to better planning and financing for community-based CCA beyond the program life-cycle?
To what extent is the program on track to supporting, or likely to support macro, meso, and micro-level impacts for resilient community functions and infrastructure and resilient households and individuals?
How is the program contributing to influencing the national and international policy agenda on community-based CCA solutions through local governments?

OECD-DAC Criteria and Evaluation Question

To what extent are LoGIC results likely to change attitudes and behaviors toward HR & GE within various stakeholder groups, and reduce the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?

EQ 6: Sustainability

To what extent are the changes in the capacity of local governments to develop and finance effective and inclusive local level plans integrating CCA and DRR likely to continue over time? To what extent are partners likely to institutionalize and scale up the financing mechanisms of LoGIC, such as CRF and PBCRGs?

How sustainable is the knowledge and capacity building that has been transferred at the macro, meso, and micro levels over time? Have the necessary institutional mechanisms been set up to foster local ownership and to ensure the long-term effects of project interventions?

3.3 METHODS & TOOLS

Contribution Analysis with a cross-sectional research design was adopted for this evaluation using a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques, as well as primary and desk-based reviews. This section outlines the key methods and tools as well as how they were deployed. [Annex 3](#) highlights the summary of the main results from the different evaluation instruments.

Various ‘**lines of evidence**’ (or **evaluation techniques**) contributed to the evaluation findings. These include:

- Desk review of project documents and other literature (See Annexure 3 for documents consulted)
- Secondary (program) data analysis such as the baseline, ATM Survey, Kemon Achen Survey, data reported on the results framework indicators and program budget and spend data
- 60 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) with various stakeholders such as the program staff (national and field level), donors, government officials at the UP, Upazila, District and national levels, and partner organizations. (See [Annex 4](#) for the list of stakeholders consulted)
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries (2x19)
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) with beneficiaries¹² (19)
- An online survey for self-assessment of UPs was also rolled out. However, despite several reminders, the response rate was low (only 6 of 93 potential respondents- with e-mail addresses). Thus, the results from this tool could not be considered during the data analysis.

The core evaluation team designed all the data collection tools and trained a field team of 12 researchers that carried out face-to-face data collection with the beneficiaries and the local government officials at the UP and Upazila levels. Some of the core team members also joined these field surveys online. The district and national level consultations were conducted by the core evaluation team. The team leader and other experts also visited Bangladesh for high-level national consultations and a field visit. However, this had to be terminated 2 days early due to rising COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh.

3.4 SAMPLING STRATEGY

The following strategy was used for the sample selection:

Selection of Districts, Upazilas and Union Parishads (UPs)

The UPs were selected from all the 7 districts and 19 Upazilas targeted by LoGIC. Given that the selection was made from all the LoGIC Upazilas with all four climatic zones¹³ well-represented. Within the Upazilas, Union Parishads were selected using simple random sampling; one Union Parishad from each Upazila was chosen using simple random sampling (thus, a total of 19 Union Parishads (UPs) were chosen representing a little more than 25% of all the LoGIC intervention UPs).

The following Unions (Union Parishads) were selected:

¹² In a given UP, each of the FGDs and PRA activity were carried out in different villages

¹³ (i) flash flood-prone haor areas (Sunamganj); (ii) flood-prone char areas (Kurigram); (iii) southwest coastal areas (Khulna and Bagerhat); and (iv) south-central coastal areas (Barguna, Patuakhali, and Bhola)

Table 4. List of sampled UPs for the evaluation

District	Upazila	Union
Barguna	Patharghata	Nachnapara
	Taltali	Nishanbaria
	Barguna Sadar	Burirchar
Patuakhali	Dashmina	Char Borhan
	Rangabali	Bara Baishdia
Bhola	Bhola Sadar	Dakkhin Digholdi
	Daulatkhan	Char Khalifa
	Borhanuddin	Bara Manika
Bagerhat	Morelganj	Nishanbaria
	Sharankhola	Southkhali
	Mongla	Sundarban
Khulna	Dacope	Kamarkhola
	Koyra	Dakkhin Bedkashi
Kurigram	Rowmari	Bandaber
	Char Rajibpur	Mohanganj
	Chilmari	Thanahat
Sunamganj	Derai	Bhatipara
	Shalla	Sulla
	Tahirpur	Dakkhin Baradal

At the field level, the following primary data collection activities were conducted¹⁴:

- KIs with Deputy Director of Local Government (DDLGs)
 - KIs with Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs)
 - KIs with Union Parishad (UP) Chairmen
 - FGDs with beneficiaries
 - PRAs with beneficiaries
- (FGDs and PRA were carried in different villages in a Union)

For beneficiary recruitment for FGDs and PRA in selected unions, the following parameters were considered:

- Livelihood categories before and after LoGIC
- Gender of Household Head and Women-Headed Households
- Small and Marginal Occupational Groups (such as Blacksmith, Potter, Weaver, Barber, Cobbler, Behara, Washer-Folk, Swineherd, etc.)
- Marginalized populations such as persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, minorities, etc.

Other project stakeholders:

The evaluation, having relied substantially on qualitative interviews and consultations in the districts in which LoGIC was being rolled out followed a purposive sampling strategy for the selection of other key stakeholders. This sample of stakeholders was identified keeping in mind the objectives and scope of the evaluation and derived consultatively with the project team. These included national level consultations with the MoLGRD&C, and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate. The team also conducted consultations with a number of Upazila Line department officials. A consultation was also undertaken with Helvetas Foundation, LoGIC's former key CSO partner. Finally, various discussions were held with program stakeholders such as UNDP and UNCDF Country Office (CO) team members, governing board members, donors (Embassy of Sweden and EU), Project Staff (PMU and district level) and consultants.

¹⁴ The evaluation team encountered a few limitations in fixing interviews with a few DDLGs and the line department officials due to their unavailability of time/lack of response

3.5 HUMAN RIGHTS & GENDER EQUALITY (HRGE) RESPONSIVENESS OF THE EVALUATION

As is required in all United Nations-commissioned evaluations, Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) with a strong focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups was a key underlying theme of this evaluation. **In line with this, we abided by the *Leave No One Behind (LNOB)* objectives of the SDGs and included HRGE-focused questions throughout our evaluation matrix and tools. These indicators covered aspects such as:**

- The extent of women centrality of LoGIC and focus on the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized populations
- Economic empowerment of women and vulnerable groups (livelihood and income levels, livelihood diversification and financial inclusion)
- Social empowerment of women and vulnerable groups (voice, participation, awareness and knowledge, skills and capacity to deal with climate change)

Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) were considered during sample selection: Given that 99% of LoGIC beneficiaries are women¹⁵, most of the field-level respondents recruited were women. Furthermore, as is evident from Section 3.4, the sample of beneficiaries included representation from women-headed households, marginalized groups, Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and small and marginalized occupational groups¹⁶ based on guidance from the UNEG principles on conducting an HRGE responsive evaluation.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The key ethical considerations followed during the evaluation were

- **Informed consent:** We ensured a free and fair execution of the respondent's right to know the purpose and scope of the project. The interviewers informed the respondents about the nature and purpose of the research clearly, and prior consent of the participants was taken before initiating the interview/activity.
- **Freedom to terminate the interview and not to respond to questions** – Respondents were given complete freedom to not respond to specific questions or to terminate the interview at any point during the interview/activity. Participation in the survey was voluntary and all respondents will be presented with an opportunity for non-participation if they did not feel comfortable.
- **Respect and dignity of the respondent** – The respondents were treated as being engaged in a process, rather than being mere information providers. The teams were respectful of the rights and dignity of all the participants.
- **Privacy and confidentiality** – We understood that data pertaining to UNDP and UNCDF, its partners and other respondents may be sensitive and thus took steps to protect not just identity, but all financial account-related data. As such, we stored data in secure servers and allowed access only to the team involved in the evaluation. We have protected the privacy of clients and respondents during the analysis and reporting of data.
- **Socio-cultural sensitivity of respondents** – Given the socio-cultural realities that the evaluation team was sensitive about, and respected while approaching and conducting research activities.
- **UNEG Code and Conduct:** Each team Member has reviewed and signed the United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

At the time of training of the field teams, a dedicated session was held on the code of conduct and ethical considerations.

3.8 LIMITATIONS & CHALLENGES OF THE EVALUATION

Whilst the team developed a robust evaluation methodology in response to the requirements of the ToR, there were a few practical limitations as described below:

1. **Project data quality:** While a mixed-method approach was adopted, the quantitative data was sourced entirely from the program. The evaluation team encountered certain data quality and consistency issues. The evaluators consulted the program team to resolve key issues and attempted to triangulate information and findings across various documents and primary data collected, wherever possible.

¹⁵ LoGIC Annual Reviews

¹⁶ Program Document: LoGIC: Inclusion of Socially Excluded Groups

2. **Attribution challenges:** The evaluation has not entailed a primary survey of a representative sample of beneficiaries, making attribution difficult. A contribution analysis methodology was selected as appropriate to address some of these challenges.
3. **Possibility of early implementation stage for certain components:** With the LoGIC project extension and the actions being taken on some of the earlier evaluation studies, certain new components such as the social audit and work on the GCF funding proposal, etc. have been planned or recently initiated. Whilst the evaluation team mentioned a few of these, it is difficult to comment fully on their current effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, although the team has commented on the future potential of these early-stage activities, wherever possible.

Also, given the limited progress of the project on Output 3 focusing on policy advocacy, the associated case study could not be prepared.

4. **Challenges due to self-reported data:** The team encountered some bias during the PRA and UP chairpersons' meetings when beneficiaries/UP chairpersons reported on their own experiences before and after becoming a part of the LoGIC project.
5. **COVID-19 and timeline-related issues:** The evaluation timeline underwent a few changes due to the evolving COVID-19 situation in the country. The field team was able to undertake face-to-face interactions with all the beneficiaries and local government officials. Daily quality assurance of the data collected was undertaken by the core-evaluation team. However, the high-level mission entailing meetings with national stakeholders as well as a field visit to one of the project sites had to be concluded a few days earlier due to rising COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh and the evaluators have had to rely mostly on online consultations for qualitative interviews. All online interviews were conducted by senior members of the evaluation team to ensure relevant and quality data collection.

4. Evaluation Findings

4.1 RELEVANCE / QUALITY OF DESIGN

The relevance section assesses the extent to which LoGIC's objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.

The evaluation finds that LoGIC is well aligned and complements Bangladesh's national climate policy framework. The program interventions have been particularly relevant to the local context of 72 UPs in 7 Upazilas and factored in the specific climate hazards. These UPs are among the remotest and most climate-vulnerable areas in Bangladesh with high levels of poverty and low awareness and capacities on climate change and CCA.

LoGIC is also fully aligned with global climate change policy priorities and the SDGs, especially SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 13. The program is well-aligned with the UNCDF strategic framework and an important country intervention feeding into UNCDF LoCAL mechanism to influence the global agenda on local adaptation and climate finance. **LoGIC is implemented as a joint program with UNDP which has generated useful synergies, however, strategic policy linkages are weak.** Also, LoGIC adopts a 'gender transformative approach' almost exclusively targeting women. LoGIC beneficiaries are unique, that is they have not been covered under any other programs other than normal disaster relief provided by the government in the immediate aftermath of the events.

Additionally, though LoGIC's main objective is to set up a country-based climate financing mechanism for scale-up across all UPs in Bangladesh, the existing RF reflects and emphasizes more on the outputs and outcomes on the currently targeted 72 UPs. **Therefore, there is an in-built dilemma in the program as to whether LoGIC is a delivery-based model for climate adaptation to benefit the targeted population in the intervention UPs or is it a demonstrative model to influence national policies and programs or a combination of both to scale up and enable the adoption of the local climate adaptation model across Bangladesh.** Although the two are expected to be mutually reinforcing, there might be resource (HR, budget) implications of emphasizing one or the other. There is an opportunity for the project team to revise the results framework to incorporate scalability and scaling up indicators to the same, and for the budget/staffing to be revisited as may be required.

How relevant and how well designed is LoGIC's approach to the policy priorities and sector strategies of the Government of Bangladesh, similar initiatives by national or development partners?

Recognizing its climate vulnerability, Bangladesh is one of the first countries in Asia to have prepared several climate change strategies, policies, and plans to address its vulnerabilities as reflected in the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (2009), National Adaptation Program of Action (2009), the National Climate Fiscal Framework (2020) and the recent Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan (2021). Together, these strategies and plans have helped to ensure that climate risks are integrated into national, sector policies and programs of action. The government has also established climate change cells in each ministry to facilitate the mainstreaming of climate adaptation within sector policies and plans.

Desk review of the respective policy documents and the evaluation team's discussions with national climate policy experts shows that while the GoB has been an exemplary early adopter of climate strategies and action plans to address the rapid onset of sea-level rise, storm surge, pluvial and fluvial flooding, embankment erosion and saline water intrusion, translating these strategies and plans into climate-informed planning, budgeting and financing of adaptive infrastructure and services at the local government level has been a major challenge.

This is primarily due to the lack of awareness on levels of climate hazards, exposure, and vulnerability; lack of capacity to plan climate-resilient infrastructure and livelihoods, and lack of funding targeted at climate adaptation. The evaluation team's interactions with national climate experts also confirmed that most of the policy initiatives to date have been sector-driven by the respective line Ministries with limited integration and involvement of local-level institutions or people. Hence, many of the initiatives thus far have not incorporated the views and requirements of the local population in many of the worst-affected areas. Moreover, due to limited capacity and a siloed approach to program interventions, local government institutions have little influence on project design or implementation of sectoral projects. A review of the literature on approaches to climate adaptation also suggests that local involvement¹⁷ through a process of structured and inclusive planning and budgeting helps to customize and promote locally led adaptation that has higher probabilities of sustainability.

LoGIC is also relevant since it is the first attempt to complement the existing GoB initiatives and plans by focusing on local level planning, capacity building, setting up a standard mechanism of fiscal transfer model, and support financing for local climate adaptive measures. The existing policies and plans, especially the BCCSAP identified many of the priority adaptation programs affecting the lives and livelihoods of the vulnerable population; but many of these initiatives were never adopted or piloted through the government institutions. LoGIC has piloted mainstreaming local climate adaptation measures for climate-resilient infrastructure and climate adaptive livelihood through local government institutions. Local adaptation solutions are more likely to be effective because they are holistic, customized, with higher local ownership, and relatively easier to embed thus increasing the probabilities of sustainability.

Furthermore, LoGIC has been particularly relevant to the local context of 72 UPs in 7 Upazilas facing various climate hazards. These UPs are among the most remote and climate-vulnerable areas in Bangladesh, with high levels of poverty and climate distress. Local awareness and capacities of the local institutions and communities on climate adaptation are also very low. Therefore, LoGIC's strategy of building the capacity of UP elected members, strengthening local planning through climate atlas, developing fiscal transfer mechanisms, and financing climate-resilient infrastructure and climate adaptive livelihoods for the most vulnerable women are relevant and appropriate. LoGIC provides a tried and tested model to apply and scale up national climate policy and strategy priorities and action plans at the local level working through MoLGRD&C to enhance sustainability and scaling up in an enabling policy context where the recent Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan (2021) which aims to mobilize USD1 billion per annum for locally-led adaptation by 2030 includes provision for a co-funded financing window for locally-driven adaptation through MoLGRD&C.

On global policy alignment, it is critical to note that the importance of climate adaptation is increasingly recognized globally. The Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA) highlighted adaptation solutions as most often being of a "no regrets" character and hence worth pursuing regardless of the ultimate climate path. This is due to their multiple co-benefits, particularly for nature-based solutions and disaster risk prevention. Consequently, adaptation is seen to have a triple dividend of avoiding future human, natural and material losses; generating economic benefits by reducing risks and increasing productivity and innovation; and social, environmental, and cultural benefits.¹⁸

¹⁷ WRI documents on 'Locally Led Adaptation'

¹⁸ Adapt Now: A Global Call for Leadership on Climate Resilience, Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA), 2019. https://gca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/GlobalCommission_Report_FINAL.pdf

Whilst UNCDF's Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL) has been firmly rooted in promoting climate finance for locally-led adaptation, the strategic importance of its positioning has been further reinforced in recent years with a flurry of activity on adaptation at the global level such as the creation of the GCA which has produced a series of action tracks, including one on Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) with UNCDF and UNDP being part of the global collective on LLA.

Recent decisions taken at the UN Climate Change Conference COP 26 hosted in Glasgow in November 2021 are designed to help accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC. Climate adaptation has been at the forefront of the work of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) in which Bangladesh plays a pivotal role. COP 26 has provided further global impetus to climate adaptation with the Glasgow-Sharm el-sheik (GlaSS) work program seeking to articulate a global strategy on adaptation and the announcement of USD350 + million for the Adaptation Fund for 'locally-led adaptation approaches', three times higher than previous commitments and a requirement to publish national adaptation plans.

All these initiatives clearly demonstrate that LoGIC is fully aligned with global climate policy priorities and is well-positioned to demonstrate the efficacy of devolved planning and financing for the adaptation of local infrastructure and livelihoods in Bangladesh.

With respect to the SDGs, LoGIC contributes to SDG 13 on Climate Action by working towards strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards at both the local government and community levels. It also focuses on improving awareness and institutional capacity on CCA, and financial management (SDG 16) and promotes mechanisms (such as CRAs and RRAPs) for effective climate-change-related planning. CALO trainings and CRF for livelihoods diversification align well with SDGs 1 and 2 whilst its work on supporting resilient infrastructure aligns to SDG 9; some of which also aligns to SDG 5 on drinking water systems to address rising groundwater salinity.

Further, LoGIC is well-aligned with the UNCDF Strategic Framework. The framework in consideration here includes most of the aspects already covered - working with most marginalized populations, making finance work for the poor, technical capacity-building support, and investments for local development. LoGIC is also a potentially important intervention feeding into UNCDF's LoCAL mechanism, part of which seeks to influence the wider global agenda on local adaptation. In line with LoCAL's objective, LoGIC has aimed to set up a standard and country-based mechanism for intergovernmental fiscal transfers for local climate adaptation. Here LoGIC is well placed to generate a body of evidence around the effectiveness and efficacy of financing mechanisms for climate adaptive infrastructure and livelihoods at the local level. LoGIC also fits well with the UNDP Country Program Document (CPD) on two focus areas centered around improving democratic governance and disaster risk reduction. The country plan aims to strengthen policies and programs promoting practices related to climate change. LoGIC also builds on the lessons and understanding of the Upazila Governance Project and the Union Parishad Governance Project aimed at improving the efficiency and accountability and building the capacities and effectiveness of LGIs, which are also key components of LoGIC. Climate change adaptation through local and participatory planning is also a part of the UNDP priorities and some of the experiences in implementing programs such as SWAPNO at the local levels and the beneficiaries selection process have been used in LoGIC.

LoGIC also corresponds to the priorities of its donor partners. The project was designed as a joint initiative with UNDP to develop a standard mechanism only for the PBCRG as a planning and financing tool for climate adaptation. In Bangladesh, UNDP is leading on the livelihoods component of the project. The design was intended to leverage the comparative advantage and mandates of the two agencies with UNCDF's expertise in developing climate finance and planning tools for local government and UNDP's expertise in large-scale program delivery and supporting climate policy in Bangladesh. Whilst this has generated useful synergies at the implementation level, the partnership has not been able to capitalize on UNDP's strategic position for policy dialogue with the government.

The EU's country partnership priorities have a strong focus on climate change and green growth, sustainable consumption and production, human rights, and gender equality. Integrating ecological and climate change considerations in the growth strategy and strengthening institutional capacity and governance is a high priority issue for the EU and LoGIC commits to addressing some of these. Similarly, the Embassy of Sweden's development cooperation prioritizes climate and environment as well as democracy, human rights, and gender equality. LoGIC's positioning on devolved planning and finance for climate adaptation at the local government and community levels means that it is fully aligned with both development partners' country priorities.

It is clear from this outline of evolving climate policy at the global and national level, that LoGIC's design focus on establishing mechanisms for planning and financing climate adaptation at the local level has become increasingly relevant as policies reflect the importance of mitigation and adaptation balancing climate action at various scales of interventions as discussed below.

How relevant is the support provided by LoGIC to the needs of the Government of Bangladesh, partner organizations, local governments, and local communities?

LoGIC is working at two levels – at the beneficiary level by way of providing grants for diversification of livelihoods and, at the UP level by developing a standard mechanism for fiscal transfers to fund locally-led climate-adaptive projects. At the start of the LoGIC project, ‘Hazard Maps’ for the UPs were prepared for the intervention areas and formed the basis of identifying the infrastructure needed to be supported by PBCRG funds. The Hazard Maps were weak in the context of climate science. The Hazard Maps were based on the downscaling of global climate models to the regional scale and showed the general trend of climate extremes but no projections of future trends. These maps did not show data at the local level or projections of climate stresses based on scientific modeling. Although infrastructure funded does align with the predominant climate risk of the concerned UP, in the absence of robust climate science that dictates location, design, and appropriateness of proposed infrastructure, there is very little difference from traditional infrastructure funded by other government projects, especially the LGSP. LoGIC has emphasized the need for a climate narrative for all the infrastructure created thus far which is of great need in these climate-vulnerable areas but, there is no evidence yet on their resilience outcomes. This is because many of these have been recently constructed without significant exposure to severe climatic hazards. However, based on anecdotal evidence, it has been reported that some of the infrastructures have been able to withstand recent climate stresses comparatively better than those constructed under LGSP.

The project is supporting vulnerable communities to diversify their livelihoods which is relevant in the given socio-economic conditions of the locality. While the menu of livelihood options is not unique, the LoGIC CRF is supporting the most marginalized women who have been excluded from other programs therefore, it is improving the economic conditions of beneficiaries. Interventions for the marginalized communities (only women are being supported) are indeed contributing to their economic empowerment, financial inclusion, and some changes in household dynamics that could lead to better coping mechanisms for climate shocks

Another feature of the LoGIC design has been to emphasize the need for climate-informed planning of investments in local public infrastructure as well as in community and household livelihoods. This has enabled LoGIC to focus on climate additionality in the planning and delivery of investments at the local level which was completely missing from existing local government planning processes and essential for the given context. Recently LoGIC has prepared ‘Climate Risk Atlas that includes climate projection data and is updating the RRAPs. These possibly stem from the realization that for LoGIC to remain climate-relevant at the programmatic level, it will need to be supported by an analysis that can help to establish longer-term climate change-related impacts at the local and regional levels. Further, the micro-interventions at the local level may need to be protected by upstream solutions at a larger geographic scale. Therefore, a solution at the community or village level may not be effective unless it is linked to and complements large infrastructure projects (like dykes or embankments complement with certain soft intervention like afforestation, or culverts) that addresses the wider impacts and implications of climate-induced hazards. It is expected that with the updating of the RRAPs based on the climate projection information now available in the Climate Risk Atlas, the project will be better placed to deliver more robust adaptation and resilience outcomes.

The LoGIC design includes grants mediated by local government for public sector investment in climate adaptation of small-scale public infrastructure as well as financial support for livelihood diversification at the community and household level. Here, the design rationale is that grants to individuals for the adaptation of livelihoods would be complemented by investments in local infrastructure that would protect and sustain local livelihoods, however, this link was always not very visible in many cases. At the same time, the LoGIC design assumed that grants for livelihoods would enable communities to access other sources of private finance like direct individual or group bank loans for enterprises (which is yet to happen), thereby enhancing community resilience and prosperity while reducing dependence on government.

LoGIC’s main objective is to set up a country-based local climate financing (dual) mechanism and scale it up across all UPs in Bangladesh, however, the existing Results Framework reflects and emphasizes more on the output and outcome in the current set of interventions in the 72 UPs. The joint ‘outcome statement’ of LoGIC has focused mostly on the ‘output level’ indicators like – percentage of target UPs that incorporated climate change adaptation into their development plans; % of UPs that established and are implementing the Climate Resilience Financing System. The outcome indicators are measuring progress against the targeted UPs rather than emphasizing the scalability and transformative aspects of LoGIC. Therefore, there is an in-built dilemma/dichotomy in the program related to whether it is a delivery-based model for climate adaptation to benefit the targeted population in the intervention UPs or it is a demonstrative model to influence national policies and programs to scale up and adopt Local climate adaptation model across Bangladesh – although it is understood the two are expected to be mutually reinforcing.

We understand that LoGIC is part of the overall UNCDF LoCAL global portfolio and the main purpose is to demonstrate and set up/embed this country-based financial mechanism within the government system for a smooth transition to a Phase 3 country¹⁹. Therefore, it is important for the program to reflect the trade-offs between a project with wide coverage requiring a substantial level of effort focused on delivery as compared to fewer demonstrative projects with a higher level of resources and effort on influencing scale-up through government systems. The program team must consider revising the results (and resource) framework to incorporate scale-up indicators. This would guide them to focus more on systems-level changes and the embeddedness of LoGIC through learning and evidence rather than the current approach of delivery in the 72 intervention UPs.

Although LoGIC is being conceived as a pathway or model, the outcome goal reflects the primacy of delivery of climate adaptive solutions at the local level rather than developing a robust model for sustained scalability. Although the delivery element is necessary to generate evidence on the benefits and efficacy of planning and financing for climate adaptation at the local level, this may not be sufficient to bring about a systemic and transformative change. The outcome target in the Results Framework is defined largely in terms of percentage achievements in operationalizing climate adaptation plans and projects, designing financing mechanisms in recipient UPs as well as increased overall spending on climate adaptation. Whilst this represents a reasonable outcome in terms of results that are under the control of the project, neither the outcome statement nor the targets reflect a pathway to a more transformative change beyond the life of the project itself. In this sense, the outcome indicator is somewhat weak. The main indicators in the Results Framework at the outcome and output levels represent a reasonable gauge of progress and achievements as they are, for the most part, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. Baselines have been incrementally populated where data was not available at the outset.

To what extent does the LoGIC design address climate stress issues at the Upazila level and to what extent do these differ across the intra-Upazila level based on any specific climate stress differentiation?

The design has factored in the different climatic conditions that can be found across the country for the set of interventions funded by the PBCRG and CRF schemes. For example, in coastal and saline ingress areas the project has focused on saline-resistant crop varieties for livelihoods and focused more on drinking water schemes or supporting the fishing communities through the PBCRG schemes in coastal areas. However, as mentioned earlier, given the absence of robust climate science for LoGIC planning, it was difficult to develop better infrastructure designs for PBCRG schemes. With respect to LoGIC capacity building and institutionalization, we have not observed much difference in design or intervention approaches across the districts or Upazila level.

The evaluation team observed that LoGIC is delivering its targets in a projectized mode mostly led by its own team with less ownership and involvement of the local governments. While every effort is made to involve local governments, evidence points to only an endorsement role. Community-level interventions thus far have few differences from traditional infrastructure works led by local governments although, LoGIC has insisted on a climate narrative. The evaluation team has found very few examples of community-level works that differ substantially from traditional works – which may be largely due to the lack of proper climate risk atlas and projections during the initial periods. We also did not find any evidence on intra/inter UP learnings.

To what extent does the LoGIC design incorporate GE and HR issues, as well as environmental sustainability? How coherent is it to the needs and interests of all stakeholder groups? Does it offer good quality information on the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination to inform the program?

LoGIC's gender strategy leading to its 'gender transformative approach' is based on the premises that (i) vulnerability and climate change are gendered (ii) adaptive capacity is gendered, (iii) vulnerabilities are inter-generational and youth are key human capital to transform for building resilience (iv) access to institutions that can help increase adaptive capacity is also gendered. There are strong merits in this approach *'since extensive research has shown that women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty and 70% of the world's poor are women.'*²⁰ Women are more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change. Some of the factors that influence the higher vulnerability of women to disasters include the lack of means and assets to ensure their safety in situations of flooding, landslides, and storms. As women constitute the largest percentage of Bangladesh's poorest people, they are most affected by these changes. Children and youth – especially girls – and elderly women, are often the most vulnerable. The LoGIC project interventions have to a certain extent been

¹⁹ Phase 3 is the scaling-up phase of LoCAL under which the PBCRG in the country, based on the results and lessons is gradually extended to all local governments.

²⁰ Annual Report Draft 2021

successful in addressing these. LoGIC is supporting its beneficiaries through training for diversification of livelihoods, grants for starting new livelihoods, financial inclusion, and facilitation for market access. By supporting the most vulnerable women and ensuring that all beneficiaries are 'unique' i.e., are not covered under programs other than normal relief provided by the government post a disaster, LoGIC is facilitating economic empowerment and an increase in household incomes, and these will be sufficiently attractive for women to want to continue in future.

The evaluation team has reservations about the sustainability of the efforts of community mobilization and group formation that are at the core of the implementation strategy. The project team plans to foster cooperatives from the lowest unit to federations at the district level. The evaluation team notes that while the intent is perhaps appropriate, nurturing cooperatives involves significant time periods that the project may not have – there is merit in designing alternate institutionalization mechanisms rather than the single approach now on cooperatives.

4.2 COHERENCE

The coherence section assesses the compatibility of LoGIC with other interventions in Bangladesh in the space of local government and climate change adaptation. It also evaluates how coherent is LoGIC's design in view of its objectives and the collaboration of the two UN agencies in working together to implement the project.

LoGIC's design and implementation strategy are aligned and coherent with the core policy directives of Bangladesh. The approach of working with UPs and with vulnerable communities, through targeted grants to strengthen resilience both at the individual and ward level are all in sync with the overarching goals of national climate policies and strategies. LoGIC is working with the Local Government Division (LGD) and while it has created some synergies with a few line departments at the UP level for livelihoods training, this is not reflected in a more formal engagement at the national level. Similarly, LoGIC has very limited engagement with the Ministry of Environment and Forests which has a lead role in climate change adaptation, and other sectoral line departments like the Local Government Engineering Division (LGED), water resources which all have significant budgets and mandates for climate resilience infrastructure.

LoGIC's design with its three key outputs – training and capacity building of UPs and communities; PBCRG and CRF grants and, influencing national policies – are clear and coherent. However, in its design and results framework, the focus on the institutionalization of outcomes is weak. Moreover, **the linkages between the CRF and PBCRG are also weak barring a few instances.**

How distinct/complementary is LoGIC's approach to other programs and initiatives implemented in Bangladesh by the government and/or key development partners with similar objectives?

LoGIC's design and implementation strategy are aligned and coherent with the core policy directives of Bangladesh. The approach of working with UPs at one level, and directly with the most vulnerable communities at another, through targeted grants to strengthen resilience are all in sync with the overarching goals of the national policies and strategies. LoGIC is coherent with the country development plans of the EU and the Embassy of Sweden that focus on climate change, green growth, human rights, and gender equality.

LoGIC is coherent with the national government's Local Government Support Project (LGSP) which seeks to fund infrastructure development in UPs through Block Grants. Some of the processes like annual audit, percentage allocation based on fulfilling certain criteria, etc. for PBCRG are in sync with the LGSP fiscal transfer guidelines. To a certain extent, LoGIC complements the LGSP and ADP with respect to influencing and creating more climate-resilient infrastructure at the local level by supporting CRA and RRAP which feeds into the local annual development plan. The livelihood options supported are relevant and coherent to local needs and vulnerabilities.

In terms of promoting resilient livelihoods, LoGICs 'gender transformative approach' works in perfect sync with donor priorities and globally accepted knowledge that women are the worst affected by disasters. While the livelihoods being promoted are not innovative or novel with other programs promoting them from as far back as 2005, LoGIC is targeting vulnerable women who have not benefited from any other government or NGO program. To this effect, LoGIC is making a significant impact on the economic upliftment of vulnerable and marginalized women in remote areas of Bangladesh.

LoGIC is working with the LGD and while it has created some synergies with line departments at the UP level for livelihoods training, this is not reflected in a more formal engagement at the national level. Similarly, LoGIC has virtually

no connection with the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change which has a lead role in climate change adaptation. Overall, LoGIC displays strong coherence with the national government policies and priorities for climate change adaptation.

As presently designed, how coherent is the program design in view of program objectives and the collaboration of the two UN agencies in working together to implement the program?

LoGIC was designed as a joint initiative with UNDP to capitalize on its expertise to deliver large programs on the ground through its extensive teams. UNCDF brought its global expertise in developing climate finance and planning tools for local government as part of its global LoCAL program. LoGIC's design with its three key outputs – training and capacity building of UPs and communities; PBCRG and CRF grants and, influencing national policies – is clear and coherent. However, in its design and results framework, the focus on the institutionalization of outcomes is weak.

Though the design attempted to address climate resilience both from the community or individual livelihood and local infrastructure angles through joint programming, in its implementation, the evaluation team did not see many synergies between the PBCRG and CRF schemes and, barring a few instances, they appear to work as two separate interventions. In addition, LoGIC has not yet been able to fully capitalize on its position as being a 'nationally implemented project' or, being a 'UN project' or, its donor partnerships to work on policy advocacy.

While there are clear advantages of co-location of UNDP and UNCDF teams including members of the core team, the evaluation team found no evidence of enhanced advantages that go beyond just implementation of the project. LoGIC is implemented much like a 'project' with a limited lifetime and, unless there are significant and concrete strategies for policy advocacy, the gains are unlikely to sustain beyond the project's lifetime.

4.3 EFFICIENCY

This section discusses and assesses the extent to which LoGIC is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely way. It describes and evaluates the results achieved thus far including the Value for Money, the quality of results, governance mechanisms, M&E, and adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite its delayed start, LoGIC has made good progress against most of the targets envisaged in its results framework. LoGIC has supported (all) 17,000 beneficiaries²¹ to develop household risk reduction action plans (HHRRAP) and delivered training on 23 climate-adaptive livelihood options. **However, there are issues with respect to their timeliness and quality.** LoGIC has conducted Community Risk Assessments (CRA) for all 72 UPs and facilitated planning workshops. LoGIC also organized trainings on the CRF and PBCRG implementation for 234 elected UP chairpersons and members. **While the PBCRG and CRF manuals, beneficiary selection process, etc. are robust and have improved transparency, these are complex and may be difficult for the UPs to administer independently.** Through the PBCRG funding, 653 climate-resilient infrastructures have been created with an average investment of BDT 700,000. These are mostly roads, culverts, drainage, irrigation, tube well, and water reservoirs in the vulnerable wards of the 72 UPs. **On policy influence, there has been limited progress on policy advocacy and influence.** Though there has been good progress in terms of initiating a decentralized mode of fiscal transfer for CCA, there has been limited success in deepening the engagement with other line departments and leveraging additional resources.

As of Quarter 3 of 2021, a total of USD 28,599,046 was budgeted to be spent against which USD 18,115,938 (63%) was actually spent.²² Within the actual spend, 8% of resources were spent on Output 1, 80% on Output 2, 5% on Output and 7% was the management fee. On Cost Efficiency, our calculation shows LoGIC's total cost to transfer ratio is 1:1.5, comparable to cash transfer programs globally. The administrative cost to transfer ratio²³ for LoGIC is 50% which appears to be in the expected range of 1.29 to 2.1 of international literature (and its lower range).

Further, while the project governance and management structure are aligned with the LoGIC's design, there exist certain efficiency gaps. The project is implemented in a National Implementation Modality (NIM) headed by the

²¹ An additional 18,000 CRF beneficiaries (100%) are being targeted in the second phase and are being provided CALO trainings starting December 2021

²² Based on Financial Data Provided by LoGIC staff -cumulative until Q3 2021

²³ See main narrative below for arriving at administrative cost to transfer ratio

National Project Director, a senior official from the LGD. LoGIC is being governed and guided by the Steering Committee with the representation of senior GoB officials. **However, the PSC hitherto has focused on administrative issues and approvals rather than on strategic issues and project direction.** This needs to change. There are also challenges related to reporting and data quality that also need to improve. **Additionally, our review found that project delivery was affected because key positions were vacant for a very long time.** Key positions such as Policy Advocacy and Gender Expert are vacant since inception. Similarly, the position of Capacity Building Expert was vacant till mid-2021.

On M&E, LoGIC monitors its activities against the results framework and reports annually. **Since the results matrix is based on quantitative reporting, some of the softer issues around voice, accountability, empowerment, capacity, and policy influence are not reported at the outcome level.** While it is encouraging to note that the project has instituted the Adaptation Tracking and Measurement (ATM) survey, the evaluation team's review of the ATM has found gaps in data aggregation and reporting indicating that data quality assurance needs to be strengthened to avoid inaccurate or misleading reporting on outcomes and impacts.

With respect to HRGE aspects, the budget analysis reflects that 100% of the CRF grants are to women. To date, the CRF amount that has been spent has reached 17,000 beneficiaries, equivalent to USD 350 for each beneficiary. The amount of funds disbursed to each beneficiary is based on evidence of similar livelihood programs in Bangladesh. For PBCRG schemes, the evaluation team could not ascertain the percentage of funds allocated for women-centric projects and how many women benefited from the PBCRG schemes. From the management perspective, LoGIC could benefit by having a dedicated gender expert. LoGIC should also consider adding awareness and training sessions for UP Chairmen on how they can better encourage and incentivize greater participation of women and vulnerable people in the UP-planning meetings. Furthermore, in the selection of the PBCRG schemes, there is scope for further mainstreaming of investments that disproportionately benefit women and strengthen the gender narrative along with the CCA rationale.

How well, and with what quality, has LoGIC delivered its expected results to date in terms of the results framework, budget allocations, and cost-efficiency of activities? Has LoGIC succeeded in mobilizing resources from counterpart agencies and other actors?

The project has made good progress against the results framework. *(The progress against the results framework has been given in a tabular format in [Annex 1](#).)* Although it had a delayed start due to late government approval, it has supported 72 climate-vulnerable UPs in 7 districts as initially planned. In all 72 UPs, PBCRG and CRF mechanisms have been implemented (as targeted), albeit with varying ownership, involvement, and levels of support.

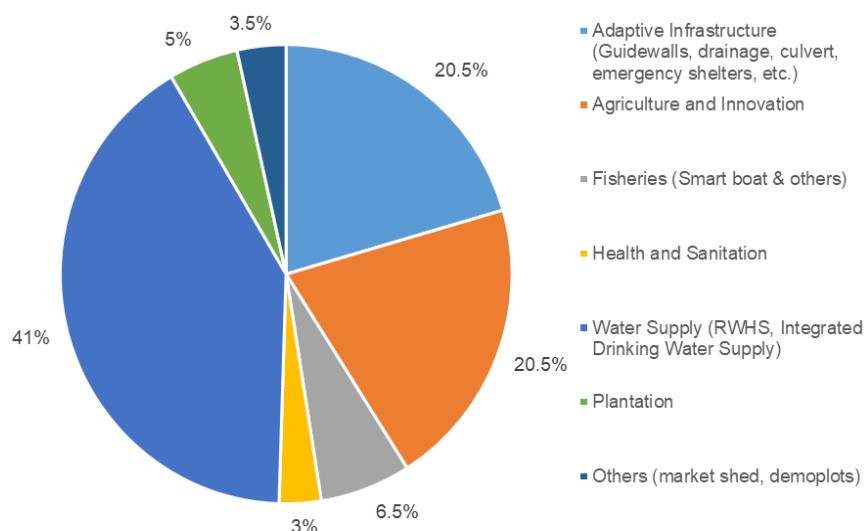
Under Output 1, the project supported awareness, capacity building, planning, financing, developing guidelines and manuals, and beneficiary identification for the CRF. It has helped conduct CRAs and develop RRAPs and HHRRAPs at the UP and household levels. The project reports having reached a total of 17,000 CRF beneficiaries and 234 UP members and chairpersons with training. The UP chairpersons and members have been sensitized on climate challenges, impacts, and local adaptation. Along with training, the program provided support on relevant documentation, procedures, and financial management practices, with varying degrees of success.

Based on the CRA and RRAP, LoGIC has supported the implementation of 653 PBCRG schemes (investments) with average schemes costs of 7.12 lakhs Bangladesh Taka (BDT) (USD 8300). A total of USD 7.91 Mn (AR-21) has been spent on PBCRG schemes for climate-resilient infrastructure, ranging across roads, culverts, drinking water facilities, and nature-based solutions such as irrigation/water drainage, afforestation, etc. The draft Annual report 2021 report mentions that there has been an increase in the percentage of schemes that are climate adaptive beyond the ones funded by LoGIC (14% in 2018 to 23% now in the LoGIC UPs). The Annual Report mentions that the increased climate-adaptive schemes were funded by both LoGIC and funds from other sources. However, our discussions reflect that these numbers are reported by the LoGIC Community Facilitators since none of the KIIs with UP officials echoed this. There is therefore a high possibility that many could also be traditional projects with the climate attribution unknown at the local government level – the evaluation team has not validated this at the field level.

The focus areas of PBCRG supported schemes under LoGIC as reported in the AR of 2021 are shown in the figure below - 41% of the LoGIC supported PBCRG schemes were for water supply (rainwater harvesting structures, integrated drinking water plants, etc.), 20.5% were for adaptive infrastructure (guide walls, drainage, culverts, emergency shelters,

etc.), 20.5% were for agriculture and irrigation, 3.5% were for others (market sheds, demo plots, etc.), 6.5% were for fisheries (smart boats, etc.), plantations 5% and 3% were for health and sanitation.

Figure 6. Focus areas of PBCRG supported schemes



A total of 17,000 CRF beneficiaries, mostly climate-vulnerable people, of whom 98% are women, were reported to have received financial support of around USD350 (29,000 BDT) each for livelihood adaptation diversification and training on climate-adaptative livelihood options. 100% of recipients implemented at least one CALO, 79% two CALO, and 25% three CALOs. According to MIS data, 74% of beneficiaries have gained benefits due to the CALO, i.e., increased income against the stated target of 60%. In the last quarter of 2021, an additional 18,000 beneficiaries have been

identified, and training and cash transfers are yet to be rolled out.

Output 3 focuses on policy advocacy and influence where the progress has been limited. There has been a single high-level discussion with the Government counterpart on setting up a fiscal allocation model for climate-vulnerable areas. For the government to be able to make informed decisions on allocations, a request was made to develop a Climate Vulnerability Index with clear criteria to guide the transfer of block grants or Government funds to the district / Upazila level for climate adaptation and mitigation. There has been some discussion on scaling the pilot Local Climate Financing Framework, which the Finance Ministry developed under UNDP funded support for the Climate Fiscal Framework, but this is still at a very nascent stage.

LoGIC has reported that project targets as defined in the log frame have been exceeded for Outputs 1 and 2. Output 3 has not seen much progress. Therefore, LoGIC may consider a reorientation of efforts under Output 3 and light touch support for Outputs 1 and 2.

In discussions, it has become evident that although LoGIC had a delayed start, it has stayed broadly on course in the delivery sequence. LoGIC supported the 72 Union Parishads to organize community meetings or Wardshavas to share the Risk Reduction Plans (RRAP) as an endorsement by the UPs. The project started with the CRA and was followed by RRAP, and household-level risk adaptation plans to inform the selection of schemes under PBCRG and CRF.

The CRA was supported by the preparation of climate hazard maps and downscaling national vulnerability data to the UP level, which was supposed to be the first set of activities. However, in the first year, the existing hazards maps were used which were not adequate with respect to specification and granularity. Subsequently, the project commissioned the preparation of the Climate Risk Atlas and is using these to update the RRAPs. While the initial Hazard Maps provide an indication of the main physical features and climate hazards in each UP, there are significant variations in terms of the details of the various maps and ease of visualization where certain features such as ward and union boundaries are not easily discernible and where variables such as water depth are not easily distinguishable. While these maps have helped initiate dialogue on climate change with UPs and communities, they do not provide sufficient information on the current and future vulnerabilities, exposures and risks. As a result, many schemes to date have been similar to traditional schemes, although, all PBCRG-funded schemes are required to have some form of climate narrative to qualify for funding. The most successful PBCRG interventions have been the water treatment plants and rainwater harvesting to address drinking water issues in selected geographies. From the field discussions with the UP chairpersons and members, it was reported that these process, particularly that of HRRAP, has been led by the project team with limited involvement of the UP chairpersons and members.

At the household level, LoGIC has mainly focused on building skills of the CRF beneficiaries on livelihoods diversification.

A training calendar and training plan were developed and rolled out across all 72 UPs. 16 training manuals have been created for CALO training which is quite substantial. Some of the line department officials or extension officers (agriculture, livestock, fisheries, etc.) have conducted CALO training along with Helvetas and LoGIC staff, demonstrating good convergence at the local level. However, beneficiaries have reported that they would welcome more in-depth training and follow-up, especially on forming groups and linking with markets, which was not possible in the first phase due to lack of time. Also, there has been a disconnect in the timing of training and seasonality issues, rendering some of the exercises less effective.

We understand that before COVID-19, training was conducted onsite, which many participants found useful. However, with the onset of COVID, the project had to adapt by moving towards a more online mode. A quick review of the training videos reflects that while they are comprehensive on technical aspects related to diversification for adaptive agriculture, livestock, and fisheries production; the videos did not explain clearly why these practices are required, how they differ from traditional methods, and how the approaches are better for climate change and adaptation. Also, aspects of market linkages and value chain were missing, which we feel are critical for beneficiaries' decision-making. Group discussions with beneficiaries reflect they have gained new skills and understanding of production/cultivation, although initial evidence from the ATM indicates that the efficiency of training in terms of building confidence and skills varies across districts, with Bhola and Pathuakhali districts performing distinctly less well. The updated ATM information does not reflect this but, the evaluation team has identified problems with the updated ATM data as well.

Table 5. Summary of the trainings conducted under LoGIC

Activity	Duration of the event	Type of Participants	Total Attended	Female Attended
Union level inception workshop	Day long	UP, GoB Officials, CSO & others	2636	402
Training on the process of Community Risk Assessment (CRA)	Two Days	Community Volunteers	148	32
Training on the process of Climate Risk Informed LDP and RRAP development	Day long	UP, GoB Officials, CSO & others	2512	581 (22% Poor Representative, 1% Indigenous, 11% Marginalized groups)
Training on CRF and PBCRG Manual for UP	Day long	UP, CSO & others	1656	412
Training on Financial Management (audit & accounts, finance & establishment, fiduciary risk, taxation, etc.)	Day long	UP	1950	339
Training on the process of social audit	Day long	UP	1791	336
Training on ATM and MIS software for UP Secretary	Day long	UP Secretary, CMF, DCCC & DCFC	228	71
Training on the email system, cloud-based file management, ATM app, reporting, and group communications (WhatsApp/ Messenger)	Day long	CMF	143	67
Training of CRF beneficiaries on Climate Adaptive Livelihood Options (CALO)	4 Hours	CRF Beneficiaries	23000	22697
Orientation on climate adaptive livelihood options, adaptive infrastructures, and Nature-based Solutions (NBS) to climate change adaptation for GoB line department officials	Day long	Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock Dept.	125	0
ToT on the process of Social Audit	3 days	Project staff, community & CSO representatives	36	11
Training on ATM and MIS software	Day long	CMF, DCFC & DCCC	157	71

Training on sheep service provider for youth group	2 Days	Youth	144	71
Training on sheep insurance for youth group	2 Days	Youth	143	71

From the discussions with the field and project teams, it was reflected that there was a lack of genuine interest and involvement of the UP elected persons in training in many cases. This was cited as one of the significant challenges faced by the LoGIC trainers. In our discussions, the UP chairmen admitted to receiving training but suggested that more training is necessary to enhance their skills and understanding. Therefore, we feel that adequately sensitizing and ensuring their genuine involvement would require more orientation, refresher courses, and in-depth support.

Our review found that the various project documents, guidelines, and manuals developed are detailed and comprehensive. Some of the documents, such as the PBCRG and CRF manuals, were developed based on previous or ongoing projects, including UNDP's SWAPNO and UNCDF's LoCAL PBCRG manual and adapted to the context. Both the guidelines are comprehensive and detailed.

The PBCRG operational guidelines align with the GoB's Annual Development Plan (ADP) basic block grant / ongoing LGSP grants guidelines, with the introduction of different allocation and disbursement parameters and weights, especially with a 25% weightage on climate change vulnerability. The PBCRG grants guidelines introduce a few supplementary minimum conditions to the standard block grant conditions for UPs, such as the completion of RRAP and the development of CRA. Interestingly, a climate change adaptation criterion has been developed for the disbursement of the subsequent tranche of PBCRG, and performance allocation is directly related to performance against climate change adaptation. This methodology has helped incentivize climate adaptive performance and investments at the local level. However, a few stakeholders observed that these are too complex and detailed for most UP chairman and members to follow and adhere to without project team support. Also, in the long run, without intense supervision, in many cases, these parameters might be wrongly reported because of local influence on the audit, as stated by several stakeholders including the program team members.

As discussed earlier, the subsequent tranche of PBCRG funds has been transferred to the UP account based on the audit findings²⁴, fulfilling "compliance with minimum conditions and performance indicators".²⁵ The project staff and, in some areas, even the UNOs closely monitor the PBCRG schemes. This stringent monitoring helps ensure quality and reduces fiduciary risks, which UP chairmen also admitted. The PBCRG allocations are displayed publicly, and the schemes are discussed in the open budget sessions mandated by the laws of the land at the UP level. However, our field discussions highlighted that the participation of vulnerable populations at open budget sessions is relatively low. LoGIC plans to institute and conduct a social audit, and training on social audit has been recently completed for the project staff. Although the project falls under the NIM, it has its own set of procurement and financial reporting rules aligning with UN principles to minimize fiduciary risks.

On the CRF, our discussion with the stakeholders reflects that the beneficiary selection was robust compared to other Government schemes with a high degree of transparency and the inclusion of a complaint redressal mechanism. The selection criteria are a weighted formula based on household assets (fewer assets high score), exposure to vulnerability, and adaptive capacity. Overall, the process includes a census, a household survey to assess the vulnerability, a transparent mechanism displaying the beneficiaries list, and a grievance redressal mechanism. All this minimizes inclusion/exclusion errors and reduces political influence or nepotism. CRF funds are transferred directly to the beneficiary bank accounts and are less susceptible to leakages.

Our field discussions confirmed the robust quality of the selection process, although this was seen to vary slightly across districts. In some UPs, informants complained that there were some inclusion or exclusion errors. In some cases, people were excluded since they were unavailable on a particular day or did not have proper identification cards. One stakeholder opined that the focus of the beneficiary selection was geared more towards identifying vulnerable households with the capacity for taking up climate adaptive livelihoods, which led to the exclusion of some climate migrants since they could not demonstrate adaptive ability or fit well for the given set of CALO. However, it is essential to note this year, only 2% of the people (down from 4% at the start) in the UPs have lodged complaints about the selection process.

²⁴ PBCRGs related audits are usually referred to as annual performance assessments in the literature on PBG and PBCRGs (UNCDF, 2010 and UNCDF, 2018) while audits are generally understood as the general audits from government.

²⁵ PBCRG Audit Summary Report FY 2019-20, Grant Thornton

While the selection criteria have been robust, it may be difficult for a UP to administer the same process independently. Overall, the process has been project-driven with minimal involvement of elected UP chairpersons or members, which has reduced the ownership of the process even though the UP has endorsed the selection. This will need to be addressed in due course to ensure sustainability.

On timing, the project, as mentioned earlier, had a slow start due to delays in approval from GOB due to certain coordination issues and preferences concerning the scope of the project. There were also delays in the early phase of implementation whilst LoGIC developed a consensus on the specific interventions eligible for PBCRG and CRF funding. Due to the delay in development and downscaling of the climate hazard maps, the climate vulnerability parameters and associated weightage could not be considered for the selection of PBCRG schemes in the first year, which led to the selection of more traditional schemes linked to a climate narrative in the first year of the program.

Discussions with UP chairpersons have confirmed that the disbursement and receipt of PBCRG funds are smoother and quicker than funds under GoB's block grant, such as LGSP, which often gets delayed. The UPs are also happy with the predictability of funding under LoGIC which has enabled timely scheme completion. The 2018-19 audit report suggests that 85% of the schemes were completed on time, although the 2020-21 audit report contains no information on timely completion. However, we understand that there have been delays due to the pandemic-induced lockdown. As already mentioned, CRF has also been subject to delays around the selection of beneficiaries and rollout of the capacity building on livelihoods, resulting in many beneficiaries not being able to initiate their CALO on time due to seasonality issues thus rendering some of the training ineffective.

The PBCRG audit report is comprehensive. The 2020 audit reports that most UPs have complied with all LoGIC processes (MC and PC), and where this is not the case, the gaps have been highlighted. Examples of gaps include improper maintenance of cashbook, 5% retention money not deducted from schemes, etc.²⁶ The PBCRG audit findings say that most UPs (barring a few) adhered to the defined procedures and documentation on resource allocation and utilization. Whilst the 2021 audit report highlights gaps and inadequacies in project processes, the 2020 and 2021 reports reflect the same set of recommendations without any details on how the previous set of recommendations was followed up or any management response and action taken against the recommendations from the project team or LGD. From the field level discussions, it was evident that the field level project staff are extensively involved in supporting the UPs in the documentation and financial management practices for adhering to the PBCRG guidelines and norms, which ideally should have been carried out by the UP chairpersons and staff.

However, it is also important to note the weak capacity of the UP chairpersons and the resource gap at the UP level. The Chairman and one staff member bear all the workload related to financial management and reporting for all the projects or programs at the UP level, each with its formats and timelines. Therefore, it is **crucial to consolidate and streamline all processes and reporting formats in such a way as to reduce administrative burden and improve compliance.**

Analysis of the PBCRG audit compliance findings reflects opportunities for improved targeting. The scores range from 15-20 out of 25, whereas other components such as the quality of PBCRG-funded schemes and the quality of the implementation process received a total score of 25 across all UPs. Also, the score on the capacity of the CRA processes varies from 11 to 25. Therefore, it reflects a need for greater focus on PBCRG schemes targeting and proper climate risk assessment. Given the tenure and scope of the current evaluation, we cannot make any independent judgment on the quality of infrastructure created. However, in our field-level discussions, we observed that all stakeholders suggested that the quality of infrastructure is better than other government schemes given the stringent monitoring by project staff/ UNO or other Upazilla or District staff.

Although the project document and PBCRG manuals mention PBCRG as a 'top-up fund' (indeed calculated as a top-up percentage to the block grants) for climate-resilient infrastructure however our discussion with the UPs did not reflect any leverage of other funds for PBCRG schemes. It was mentioned that the PBCRG has a separate bank account, and funds from various projects/sources cannot be mixed. However, the project reported that 23% of PBCRG project costs have been from other sources. (This we have not been able to validate since the information came in post our field visit).

The [Value for Money \(VfM\)](#) analysis is presented towards the end of the Efficiency Section.

How well is the project governance system, including partnerships (development and national), working? How are the government counterparts engaged in the program, and how is LOGIC working with other LoCAL countries towards implementing the LoCAL standard and joint Board Decisions?

²⁶ PBCRG Audit Summary Report FY 2019-20, Grant Thornton

LoGIC's design aims to strengthen the UPs' capacity to plan, design, implement and monitor more climate-resilient infrastructure. The effectiveness of the interventions is strongly influenced by the nature of decentralization and engagement with other relevant departments for coordination and convergence. LGIs in Bangladesh are severely constrained in terms of staff and funds and rely on the national government. Further, key positions in local government institutions (the Secretary for example) are appointed by the national government and at risk of frequent transfers. Therefore, although there are laws on decentralization, the translation on the ground remains a challenge as does convergence across departments that are governed by respective laws. At the same time, the persistence of strong central control over the local government system in Bangladesh makes it important for LoGIC to be firmly embedded into the Local Government Division in the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of Bangladesh (MoLGRD&C) and active engagement with other line departments at the national, district and local levels. The evaluation has found evidence of engagement with local line department officials of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and a few other departments, especially to lead the CALO trainings and provide follow-up advice as required. One of the former key stakeholders²⁷ suggested that there need to be deeper connections with the DDLGs to strengthen their understanding of the LoGIC mission and vision, including periodic orientations to help drive the UPs forward. Hence, engagement with the line departments needs strengthening by formalizing the engagement and developing a framework for consolidation of support in specific livelihoods activities and in conducting joint field missions.

While LoGIC is a 'Nationally Implemented Project' headed by a National Project Director who is a senior official seconded from the LGD with a 50% time commitment to LoGIC and a Deputy Project Director also from the Government, their ability to champion LoGIC has varied over time with different personnel. The evaluation team observed that LoGIC has benefitted significantly from a dynamic National Project Director who remained in post for almost 2 years and succeeded in communicating the project vision to lower-tier functionaries. However, this did not necessarily translate into effective influence at the senior level within the same Ministry and with other Ministries. There has been a tendency for senior officials and the steering committee to focus on administrative approvals rather than policy issues. It is important to steer and use the steering committee as a platform for strategic discussions on program direction and institutionalization. In conversation with the evaluation team, the former National Project Director mentioned that the new Project Director should write to the Secretary of the LGD to push the LoGIC agenda with the Finance Ministry during the budget-making process, begging the question as to why this has not already been addressed. It is vital to ensure the leadership team in LGD is engaged in the policy dimension of the work rather than the administration of project delivery. This is especially critical in Bangladesh where local government is heavily dependent on fiscal transfers from the national government. Based on our review, we understand the current governance and management structure was established for close engagement and embedding the project processes and systems within government, particularly LGD and other relevant line ministries. A few stakeholders have reported that the current structure has slowed down progress and delivery effectiveness. They felt that the Direct Implementation Mode (DIM) could have helped faster delivery. On balance, however, despite delays due to internal decision-making processes, some of the stakeholders opined that other similar program interventions suggest the NIM mode helps build ownership and transfer of knowledge and capacity. It might be a more useful mechanism for embedding the process in government systems and facilitates convergence, mainstreaming, and influencing policies for sustainability.

Our discussions with key funders reflect that LoGIC is perceived to suffer from weak management at the project governance level, resulting in the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings focusing on minor operational issues and approvals rather than strategic issues and project direction. Weak management at the project governance level has also resulted in frustrations being expressed around inadequate preparation for the PSC meetings, last-minute circulation of supporting documentation, and a failure to anticipate and alert stakeholders to potential issues. This would appear to be due to the project team's lack of engagement or support in briefing and preparing the steering committee members on the project challenges and policy directions. Our discussions with the key departments reflected incongruence and lack of understanding of the project objectives and activities among the senior officials of the government.

These issues highlight the need for LoGIC to ensure that the project team includes staff with the necessary gravitas and skills to be able to manage the policy agenda optimally. They need to liaise closely with senior officials in MoLGRD as well as in other Ministries, including Finance, Environment and Planning, IFIs, and donors to strengthen the climate narrative, resist political pressures and optimize the scale of interventions to mainstream and institutionalize LoGIC mechanisms into local government planning and financing.

Our field-level analysis of convergence and synergies with other government schemes reflects that the LoGIC district

²⁷ KII with Helvetas

teams work closely with the UP and select line department officials at the district and Upazila levels. LoGIC field teams lead on beneficiary selection for the CRF funds, liaise with the line departments to facilitate CALO trainings for the CRF beneficiaries, discuss likely projects that UPs should take up using PBCRG funds through a mix of a 'top down' and 'bottom up' approach, participate in the UP meetings to ensure approval, manage project delivery at the local level with the supervision of the core team and in a few cases, UNOs and lead on all project-related reporting. At the district and Upazila levels, the engagement with the local line department officials for training and capacity building has been largely successful. The line department officials conducted the CALO training and remained responsive to the beneficiaries' queries. However, the engagement with Upazila engineers and other staff members was unsuccessful. In many cases, there has been reluctance and little incentives for the local level officials, such as the government engineers at the Upazila level, to support LoGIC as this is seen as an additional responsibility. LoGIC has recently recruited engineers at the Upazila level to address this and, it is expected that the technical parameters of PBCRG schemes will improve with this additional input. The national-level engagement has been somewhat limited. Our brief interaction with Government counterparts at the senior level revealed some lack of clarity on certain aspects of LoGIC. This may be due to limited engagement with the government beyond the NPD and gaps in policy engagement and influence.

Our field visits and discussions confirmed that LoGIC is being delivered in a project mode through project staff with limited ownership of the elected representatives of the UPs and LGIs whose primary role is limited to the approval of the PBCRG schemes and, in some cases, monitoring or inspection of the schemes. However, there have been instances in some of the Upazilas where the district administration has provided support in market access by allocating spaces in market yards under the government's 'Suhasini' scheme. Discussions with district officials revealed a strong perception that they have only had limited involvement since they were not primarily responsible for allocating or utilizing the resources. While the project mode has enabled a rigorous approach to select beneficiaries and stringent monitoring of projects to ensure quality; however, LoGIC processes for both the CRF and PBCRG may be difficult to scale or replicate within government systems.

With respect to synergies between LoGIC and LoCAL, LoGIC's design stems from LoCAL's goal of developing a "standard and internationally recognized country-based mechanism to channel climate finance and local resilience through PBCRG". The project implementation strategy is partially guided by this overall goal of LoCAL. The PBCRG guidelines draw inspiration from LoCAL's (UNCDF, 2018) and mirror Bangladesh's LGSP program. Additionally, the progress against the results framework is reported annually to the LoCAL global Board, together with the other participating countries, and attended by the GoB. The LoGIC program also shared that there was an exposure visit to Cambodia for learning in 2015, and a global workshop held in 2019 before the COVID pandemic started.

Key efficiency success factors and challenges

One of the key reasons cited for the project's success by stakeholders at all levels was the leadership and frequent engagement of the second National Project Director. Her direct involvement and engagement with the district officials even during the pandemic helped project delivery. Another success factor has been the extensive prior experience of both UNCDF and the Local Government Division in supporting the provision of devolved block grants at the UP level. The LoGIC PBCRG guidelines including planning and financing procedures are strongly based on LGSP III. Similarly, the beneficiary identification processes under LoGIC were developed based on experience and learnings of the UNDP-supported SWAPNO project.

The project has also faced a few external and internal challenges in maintaining efficiency. These include the external challenges arising from the pandemic, the cyclones Amphan and Yaas, and internal challenges due to human resource gaps in the project team and different reporting requirements since each donor and partner has different reporting formats and expectations. A single consolidated project reporting format might be helpful and will save a lot of administrative time and effort focused on delivery and quality assurances.

The absence of dedicated project staff to focus on policy influence has seen limited progress in Output 3. Our analysis of project staffing and the project organogram reflects several challenges. Some of the key positions are/have been vacant for extended periods, resulting in no staff to lead or oversee functions such as policy, gender or capacity building for extended periods and overlapping roles.

Some project stakeholders have pointed to an insufficient budget for policy-level work, capacity building, human resources, and social mobilization, even though all these are essential components of the project. The current project design allocates nearly 70% of the funds for PBCRG and CRF, with the remaining 30% for staffing and other activities. Since LoGIC is more than just a cash transfer or micro-credit program, staff members feel that capacity building, policy influence and advocacy, business planning, and market linkages are essential components and require additional resources and funding for effective implementation. While the new LoGIC organogram includes more field-level staff, it

does not have a dedicated post for a Policy Expert or Gender Expert, thus raising questions on the sustainability or potential scale-up. This we believe is a key implementation challenge. In our discussions with senior management in UNDP, we learned that the policy influencing role is to be led by them because of the strong connections with GoB. However, we believe that for this to be effective, there needs to be a focal point in the LoGIC team to support this agenda. In our opinion, there are two other factors behind the weak policy influencing agenda – one is to do with the Results Framework and the other is to do with partnerships. On the Results Framework, the outcome level indicators are more ‘implicit’ and the indicators are better oriented for the output level. On the partnerships aspect, we believe that LoGIC has not fully utilized the linkages that the EU and Embassy of Sweden have with GoB to further the policy agenda.

LoGIC’s risk register captures the risks which are beyond the control of its domain that may require contingency/mitigation measures. LoGIC has managed the risks well, including those associated with the ongoing pandemic. The project has adapted to changing circumstances and proactively addressed some of the key risks around leakages, ‘elite capture’, and political economy factors through adherence to detailed project guidelines, procedures, and norms. LoGIC has a well-maintained risk register that captures a host of political, environmental, and operational risks and regularly updates these in the face of evolving challenges, including political risks associated with local elections. However, if certain known risks such as leadership change at the UP level had been anticipated at the outset instead in the July 2021 risk review, LoGIC could have better adjusted the delivery of capacity building activities to accommodate the expected changes in leadership at the local level and mitigate associated challenges of capacity building for this stakeholder group.

The other risks we perceived from our discussions are related to donor relationships. The donors feel that there is insufficient recognition of their contributions to LoGIC with GoB on the policy influencing agenda. While the UNDP has stressed that this is their responsibility, donors (especially the EU) feel that there is insufficient strategizing on this aspect and sometimes they are caught unawares at Steering Committee Meetings. The EU would welcome more significant participation in policy dialogues whilst ensuring the UN gives enough space to donors on the policy table and agenda.

How appropriate is the program's monitoring system to track direct program results and its broader contribution to the overall objectives? How well does it capture the financial and development additionality of its results in the context of adaptive management, learning, and scaling up?

LoGIC has set up an automated, online monitoring system with real-time data and GPS tracking to validate the exact location of activities and infrastructure with uploaded photos for tracking progress and reporting. Staff at the field level have been trained on data collection through tab-based handheld devices. The core team does the data aggregation and validation and regularly updates progress and achievements against activities, outputs, and outcomes. There is an established process for data validation by the core team members and the M&E officer who quality assures the data through spot checks and back checks. Also, the project team carries out post-training follow-up discussions to ascertain the quality of training activities and other softer interventions. The project team has developed a training monitoring checklist for spot checks and quality assurance for interventions such as training or awareness sessions.

LoGIC also monitors activity against the results framework and reports annually mostly at the output and outcome levels. Since the results matrix is based on quantitative reporting, some of the softer issues around voice, accountability, empowerment, capacity, and policy influence are not reported at the outcome level in the results framework. At the same time, there has been an attempt to measure the transformative or impact of the LoGIC, through the ATM mechanism. The ATM system collects data through surveys on indicators to track outcome-level achievements periodically. The ATM is designed to help LoGIC measure the reach/coverage, outcome/impact, sustainability, and replicability of the program. Some of the indicators that the ATM attempts to report on skills developed, assets gained, livelihood adaptation due to CALO, and benefits of PBCRG schemes. However, the evaluation team’s review of the ATM has found gaps in data aggregation and reporting indicating that data quality assurance needs to be strengthened to avoid inaccurate or misleading reporting on transformation. Hence, there is a need to revisit, check and revise the ATM data to ensure that the findings are accurate and valid.

LoGIC conducted a baseline survey at the start to facilitate tracking and measuring output and outcome indicators for the end of project evaluation. A review of the baseline survey has shown that it is very detailed and captures both output and outcome level indicators and the annual progress reports against the target and baseline values.

The MIS system captures data at a gender-disaggregated level. Since LoGIC has adopted a ‘gender transformative approach’, around 99% of the beneficiaries are women. The data also captures disaggregated data on women-headed households, people with disabilities, castes, or communities, and CRF beneficiaries’ religion. The ATM attempted to capture information on changes in vulnerability, socio-economic conditions, and occupational level, however, these

need to be reviewed. Though disaggregated data for CRF beneficiaries is available, there has been difficulty reporting disaggregated level data for PBCRG schemes since they are primarily public goods.

For financial and project reporting, there are different formats for each donor. However, the donors have flagged challenges related to data and the quality of reports. The project did not have an effective reporting template in place at the outset, which served to undermine the quality of the reports requiring various iterations and corrections, which contributed to delays in funds disbursement from donors and a failure to generate a high degree of confidence amongst senior management at donor level. This is important for the project to address.

The evaluation team's field visits and discussions have confirmed that the LoGIC MIS is being used for course correction and adaptive programming. For example, it was observed that elderly people often fail to comprehend or adopt new practices; hence training is now being provided to the 18-55 age group rather than targeting the elderly. Also, a review of the PBCRG implemented schemes reflected that many assets were not being maintained hence flagging a need for maintenance guidelines. Based on the initial set of project implementation learnings, LoGIC has recently begun to shift from traditional infrastructure assets to nature-based solutions with different requirements for custodianship to ensure the longevity of the PBCRG investments. This is a very recent introduction and some of the examples stated by the project team were the planting of vetiver grass to strengthen the slopes of embankments, planting of trees along roads and embankments constructed, and installation of rainwater harvesting tanks to address the issue of water quality in the monsoons or at times of climate events.

How well are resources (financial, time, people) allocated to integrate Human Rights (HR) & Gender Equality (GE) in the implementation of LoGIC, and to what extent are HR & GE a priority in the overall intervention budget? To what extent are such resources being used efficiently?

The budget analysis reflects that 100% of the CRF grants are to women, constituting 98% of the beneficiaries. To date, the CRF amount that has been spent has reached 17,000 beneficiaries, equivalent to USD350 for each beneficiary. The amount of funds disbursed to each beneficiary is based on evidence of similar livelihood programs in Bangladesh. The initial MIS data reports that this fund has led to a return of more than 1.15, (i.e. for every USD 1 grant received the beneficiary generated an income of USD1.15) reflecting that the initial grant has had an incremental effect on the household income and expenditure. Our field-level discussions suggest that the fund was sufficient for the chosen livelihood options like sheep rearing, fish or crab cultivation, vegetable production, etc. However, the aspirations or expectations of the beneficiaries were to receive a larger sum to own a plot of land or buy cows instead of sheep. However, bringing optimum change will depend not only on the initial grant but also on the ancillary capacity-building support on market access and linkages.

LoGIC also scores well on addressing exclusion as most households are from marginalized communities. Rough data analysis of the beneficiaries list reflects that 14% are women-headed households and MIS data shows that about 2% of the beneficiaries are PwD, similar to the national comparison.²⁸ However, it has been suggested that though the project covered most of the vulnerable sections of the population, it still left out many, especially the climate migrants and the poorest who did not have minimum adaptability to participate in the CALO.

For PBCRG schemes, the evaluation team could not ascertain the percentage of funds allocated for women-centric projects and how many women benefited from the PBCRG schemes. In discussions, the National Project Director reported around 75% of the schemes are women-centric based on national gender budgeting norms. In our field level discussion, the tube wells and drinking water schemes were cited as women-centric investments (since drinking water disproportionately benefits women as those responsible for collecting water). The degree of women centrality regarding other public infrastructure is difficult to ascertain, nor was it possible to determine the degree to which prioritization of schemes reflected women's choice and voice, although LoGIC has reported 26% of those participating in planning are women, implying relatively low involvement. It is important to note that the LGSP guidelines, which the UPs are also implementing, suggest that 30% of the schemes need to be women-centric or women prioritized schemes.

Concerning participation in planning and budget sessions, the project reported around 16,000 people, of which 26% were women participated in the UP planning and budget meetings. The degree of empowerment, voice, and demands are challenging to capture in the standard MIS reporting system; hence LoGIC may need to consider a separate modality for capturing this. Evaluation team discussions and field observations have found that participation, voice, and empowerment have increased very marginally over time and overall remain low. Most beneficiaries reported they were not invited to or aware of the ward's planning and open budget meetings. In a few cases, husbands participated in the

²⁸ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Census, 2011

ward meetings. Many of the field-level discussions reflected that there is a lot of male domination and elite capture in local-level planning and decision-making processes. The evaluation team could not observe any specific activities or processes that promote women's participation in the UP-planning process.

From the management perspective, the evaluation team felt that the program could significantly benefit by having a dedicated gender expert. LoGIC should also consider adding awareness and training sessions for the UP Chairmen on how they can better encourage and incentivize greater participation of women and vulnerable people in the UP-planning meetings. Furthermore, in the selection of the PBCRG schemes, there is scope for further mainstreaming of investments that disproportionately benefit women and strengthen the gender narrative along with the CCA rationale.

How have program managers adapted to the impact of COVID -19 in the design and management of the program, and with what likely results? Has there been a change in program delivery mechanisms as a fallout of Covid-19, and does the situation warrant any modifications in program targets and overall outcomes?

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 disrupted LoGIC's regular field activities and livelihood initiatives. In addition, disruption by cyclones Amphaan (May 2020) and Yaas (May 2021) alongside flash flooding, exacerbated vulnerabilities, slowed delivery, and hence the achievement of results.

Despite this, LoGIC has responded well with significant agility enabling it to mitigate the effects of these disruptions, although field activities such as beneficiary meetings and training had to be temporarily halted due to government-imposed lockdowns. LoGIC developed an alternative operational strategy of maintaining social distancing and using personal protective equipment (PPE) during fieldwork alongside remote work through online communication), enabling the project to accomplish most of its planned activities. As part of its COVID protocol, LoGIC formulated guidelines for carrying out meetings and awareness-raising to promote COVID appropriate behavior, distribution of PPE and masks among the local government official and the community members.

LoGIC has also conducted the "Kemon Achen"- How are You? – a light-touch survey to understand the vulnerabilities and adaptation status of beneficiaries in the wake of COVID-19, cyclone Amphan, as well as tidal, flash, and riverine floods. This has shown that 72% of CRF beneficiaries have been severely affected by these hazards, with around 14% unable to start their CALO. The survey also shows that in almost all districts, CRF-supported livelihoods had to halt temporarily either as nationally imposed lockdowns or in the immediate aftermath of disasters.

The LoGIC team responded by rationalizing the timings and developing e-learning materials for the CRF-livelihood initiatives, although there are concerns about how effective online training can be in this context. Nonetheless, all the project beneficiaries had started their CALO by 2020, and numerous beneficiaries have reported economic benefits from implementing their CALO. Overall, the evaluation team findings indicate that both beneficiaries' and UPs' trust in LoGIC improved as they did not feel forgotten in the face of an unprecedented crisis.

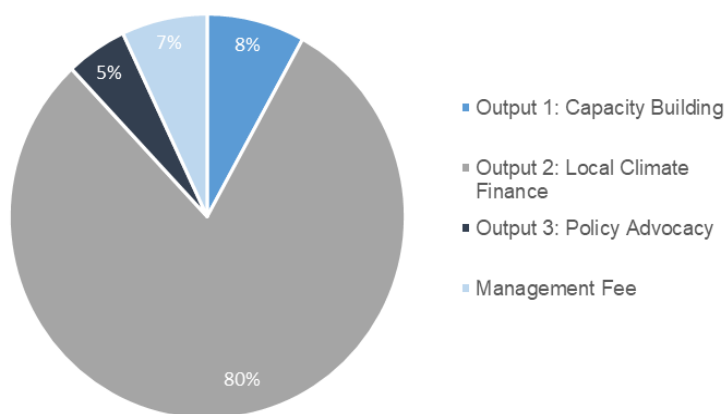
Value for Money (VfM)

Generally, the VfM of a program is measured by the economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity with which it is implemented. We have attempted to assess some of these parameters and compared them with available benchmarks or study reports. Unfortunately, there are few VfM studies available against which to benchmark climate adaptation projects.

A broad analysis of project expenditures shared with the evaluation team reflects the following breakdown as shown in the Figure below.

Output-1 - 8%; Output-2 -80%; Output-3 -5% and Management fees -7%

Figure 7. Breakdown of project expenditure



On the economy, the staffing costs are around 12% which appears reasonable given the focus on providing technical assistance along with financial support. The average transfer value of CRF grants to beneficiaries is USD 350, almost like other UNDP livelihood programs such as SWAPNO. The average cost of each PBCRG scheme is USD 8,382. As there is little or no comparable data available, it is difficult to provide any judgment, although this looks to be economical. However, it is important to note that nature-based solutions are less cost-intensive, as suggested by the program team. As they are a part of the menu of eligible investments under PBCRGs, they could be increasingly supported in the future.

Cost-efficiency is calculated based on the following parameters:

- The total cost-transfer ratio (TCTR) is the ratio of total program cost to the value of transfers.
- Cost-transfer ratio (CTR) is the ratio of administrative costs to transfer costs.
- Unit cost is the cost per unit of output or cost per direct recipient or beneficiary per period.

The table below summarizes these key ratios for the LoGIC project:

Table 6. Key Cost Efficiency Ratios for LoGIC

Total Cost-Transfer Ratio	1: 1.5
Cost-Transfer Ratio	50%
Unit Cost	USD 100

Our calculation shows LoGIC's total cost to transfer ratio is 1:1.5, comparable to cash transfer programs globally. The literature

shows that the TC to transfer ratio is generally around 1.29 - 2.1²⁹

The cost-transfer ratio (administrative cost to transfer costs ratio) for LoGIC is 50% which appears to be in the range from the literature. It should be noted that direct comparability with global cash transfer programs is not suitable since it varies with the context, sector, inputs, and intervention. Also, LoGIC is not merely a cash transfer program but is designed to implement a new financing mechanism for climate-adaptive infrastructure and provide technical support on capacity building, policy advocacy, mainstreaming, etc. If capacity building and policy costs are deducted from the total LoGIC administrative cost to transfer costs is around 31%. This is lower than the Bangladesh Chars Livelihood Program (CLP), predominantly a livelihood program with capacity building and market access. A quick literature review shows that such costs typically range between 17%-44% barring a few outlying cases where it can be as low as 5%. The administrative cost to total cost ratio is approximately 33% which is broadly in line apparently with the LDC Group's discussion in the UN Convention as shared by the EU and some other stakeholders.

The unit costs ratio i.e., the unit cost per direct recipient, is difficult to calculate since the actual number of beneficiaries for the PBCRG schemes is difficult to estimate.

Based on certain assumptions, the rough calculation for CRF schemes shows the unit costs ratio to be around USD100, which appears to be high given the actual transfer value per beneficiary. Literature evidence however does reveal that some projects do have administrative costs per recipient well above USD 100 (e.g., Niger Child Development Grant-CDG, Tanzania's Productive Social Safety Net-PSSN, Bangladesh's CLP).³⁰

The commonly used parameter for calculating effectiveness is a benefit-cost ratio (BCR). However, it is difficult to analyze this for LoGIC due to difficulties in monetizing the benefits of PBCRG. For CRF, we understand from the program monitoring report that 74% of the beneficiaries have received a benefit of 1.15 times their initial investment, which indicates that the BCR for CRF funds is cost-effective and can further improve in the long run.

²⁹ Social Transfers Value for Money Checklist, Department for International Development (DFID) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204383/Social-transfers-VFM-checklist-edition2.pdf

³⁰ Ibid.

Concerning equity, since the CRF only targets women, the efficiency concerning transfer to women is 100% for CRF. Since PBCRG is public good oriented the overall transfer efficiency to women is difficult to calculate.

Our rapid literature review suggests that investments in capacity-building information and awareness have high benefits to cost ratios as these involve low costs. The project has invested 8% of its expenditure on capacity building which is expected to yield better results and benefit-cost ratios. On PBCRG, the enhanced resilience might represent value for money for some but not all. This will depend on the robustness, quality, and flexibility of infrastructure design and long terms benefits.

Our discussions reflect that the LoGIC has received USD1.2 million from GoB and there are instances of a few PBCRG schemes at the UP level where there has been some co-funding from UP's own source of funds and other schemes implemented at the UP level.

4.4 EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness section assesses the extent to which partner local governments and communities are starting to make use of LoGIC support to change their approaches to designing and implementing community-based climate change adaptation solutions.

LoGIC has been effective in contributing to changing the mindset of the local governments on the importance and need for climate adaptation in the local planning, budgeting, and investment. **At the UP level, there have been some improvements in understanding and awareness on climate change but more sustained efforts are needed** for elected representatives to own and implement climate adaptive practices

Based on the learnings from the previous UNDP and UNCDF programs and the Local Government Support Program (LGSP), LoGIC has established a decentralized fiscal transfer model for local climate adaptation with set standards and criteria for fiscal allocation. However, these could not be strictly adhered to in the initial year of the project. Though LoGIC has established the systems, robust guidelines, and manuals, the capacity and willingness within the UPs and government systems are still very weak.

One of the key factors for LoGIC's success is the dedicated and committed staff who led the implementation. However, it also created the challenge of sustainability due to the low involvement of the UP elected members in the prioritization and implementation of schemes and selection of beneficiaries.

The CALO training and the CRF grants to the marginalized communities have been useful and helped them to improve their household income and livelihood opportunities. Also, the program intervention has led to a gradual shift towards creating and adopting climate-resilient infrastructure at the UP level rather than traditional roads, culverts, and cyclone shelters. **The evaluation team felt that mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local development and investment planning needs to be further strengthened.**

LoGIC has promoted transparency and accountability at all stages of the PBCRG and CRF implementation, however, the participation of women and most vulnerable populations in UP planning meetings is still minimal. LoGIC has not engaged much with the CSOs and NGOs in building their capacities and engaging them to ensure increased participation and voice of marginalized communities in UP level meetings.

The review suggests that CALO options suggested and practiced by the beneficiaries are mostly gender-sensitive. Although the CALO options are not unique, the LoGIC process of combining individual and group approaches increases accountability and gives confidence to first-time beneficiaries. The new livelihood practices have helped increase household income. The PBCRG-funded projects are largely gender-neutral except perhaps where drinking water-related facilities have been set up. While the identification of the intervention may not have been overtly gender-dictated, these drinking water plants have contributed to reducing the burden on women and girls from the drudgery of fetching water.

To what extent is the program beginning to contribute to changes in the capacity of local governments to plan, budget, and manage investments for CCA and DRR at the local level and of communities' CCA solutions?

Evaluation team discussions with stakeholders and monitoring data suggest that the effectiveness of training and capacity building of local government representatives has varied across districts. In most cases, there has been some improvement in understanding and awareness on climate change but with significantly different inclinations for implementing climate adaptive practices. The main success in selecting climate-resilient and nature-based solutions to date rests with the efforts of the project staff who lead the process of Community Risk Assessment (CRA), Risk Reduction Action Plan (RRAP), and identifying Performance Based Climate Resilience Grant (PBCRG) schemes. While this has

undoubtedly resulted in better identification and selection of schemes and beneficiaries, however, involvement and ownership of the UPs have been somewhat limited. Curiously, several UP chairpersons reported that they have benefited from training although they did not always have time to attend sessions, and they requested more training.

Whilst LoGIC has increased the climate awareness of UP chairpersons there is a tendency for them to conflate climate adaptation with more traditional investments in disaster risk mitigation. Other challenges included the high turnover of elected representatives after the local government elections, with 72% of UP chairpersons trained no longer in post impacting on the potential gains from training. Also, the low level of basic educational qualifications of local officials has constrained the degree to which LoGIC has been able to sensitize participants.

At the start of the project, LoGIC used the 'Hazard Maps' and available secondary data to prepare the CRAs. These were then used to guide discussions on and preparation of the RRAPs and the HHRRAP on the choice of works to be funded under the PBCRG by UPs and the CALO menu. While the Hazard Maps were used to guide discussions on climate issues, they did not provide the basis for determining the levels of exposure and risk to enable more climate-informed decision-making. Hence, the RRAPs were not particularly forward-looking or effective in terms of ensuring that the selected infrastructure solutions would deliver the desired resilience outcomes. To address this, and as a key recommendation emerging from the EU's appraisal, LoGIC commissioned the preparation of 'Climate Risk Atlas'³¹ for seven districts, 18 Upazilas and 72 Unions to help Union Parishads and the community understand the nature of climate change, forecast future scenarios and alert stakeholders to potential climate change risks. Based on the Risk Atlas, 24 Union Parishads now have updated their Risk Reduction Action Plans which have been integrated into their 5-year plans. The recent preparation of the 'Risk Atlas' and the updating of the RRAPs are positive steps in supporting more climate-informed decision making at district, Upazilla and UP levels.

The PBCRG projects are prioritized and selected by the UPs with limited participation of the community, although in some, men do attend meetings.³² LoGIC staff is also present in these meetings to help rationalize, justify, and communicate the interventions. All proposed projects are then reviewed by the UNOs, DDLGs, and the LoGIC project selection committee for final approval. The KIIs with the UP chairpersons highlighted that their primary interest remains more focused on traditional development activities (also reiterated by LoGIC project staff) and, it has required great effort from the project team to include climate change adaptation as a criterion in project selection at the local level. LoGIC has prepared a menu of climate-appropriate infrastructure suitable for the different project areas and used this list to guide the choice of interventions. The menu includes considerations emerging from the community level meetings, whilst the LoGIC team guides and steers the selection resulting in a blended 'top down' and 'bottom-up' approach. The evaluation team feels that this blended approach has been helpful given the prevailing capacity gaps and levels of understanding on climate change at the local level.

In the first year of the project, most schemes were like traditional ADP investments but there was a 'climate narrative' which classified the schemes as being climate adaptive. However, from the second year, there has been a shift towards identifying and selecting more climate-oriented investments reflected in design improvements in traditional infrastructure alongside drinking water plants to combat salinity, etc. **In the future, with improved climate data being used by LoGIC, there is a high likelihood of more climate adaptive and resilient infrastructure being implemented.**

PBCRG scheme designs have suffered from delays in engineering inputs due to the non-availability of the UP engineer. As a result, LoGIC has recently appointed its own engineers in all the UPs which will ensure timely and climate adaptive designs going forward. Although the evaluation team did not have the means to test the quality of the PBCRG schemes, the unanimous view from Government staff, UP chairpersons, and beneficiaries is that the LoGIC infrastructure is of better quality than other projects. This has been attributed to the close monitoring of schemes by project staff and occasionally by the UNO or district officials.

Evaluation discussions with 19 UP chairpersons reveal the level of intense engagement of the LoGIC team at the field level. While the UP chairpersons appreciated this involvement and felt that this was a key success factor, they are not sure whether they will be able to maintain full compliance and momentum once LoGIC concludes. Hence, there is a risk that UP chairpersons will revert to more traditional development schemes rather than take risks with newer kinds of infrastructure adaptation projects to address future climate hazards. This is reinforced by the fact that projected climate risks may well not materialize in the short term during their time in office which could undermine continuity and sustainability.

³¹ Annual Report Draft 2021

³² Our respondents in the FGDs were primarily women – no clear consensus on whether men participated in the planning meetings.

Another constraint raised with the evaluation team relates to the additional administrative burden on the UP Secretary in terms of compliances and reporting. LoGIC is only one of several projects and each entails different procedures, bank accounts, reporting formats, and timelines, hence there is a risk of overload. Capacity gaps and limited staffing at the UP level exacerbate this problem. The ADLG³³ in one district felt that to ensure the sustainability of the reporting systems, the national Government could consider issuing an order delegating supervision and monitoring responsibilities to the ADLG. It was suggested that this could include monthly monitoring of works and vetting reports – which would ease the burden on the DDLG, who would then have more of an endorsement role. Meanwhile, the DDLGs of two districts³⁴ felt that similar interventions could continue through another funded/NGO program following the conclusion of LoGIC. These observations raise concerns about local government ownership of the processes. While the DDLGs mentioned continuity, they underlined the 'projectized' approach and the absence of synergies between projects funded under different sources, which would remain a challenge.

While training at all levels is at the core of LoGIC, there have been gaps in the delivery mechanism. From October 2018 to January 2020, LoGIC initially appointed Helvetas to lead on the training at the community and UP levels. A seasonal training calendar for CALO was developed for the community, but it was not always possible to maintain. There were gaps in initiating the implementation of specific CALO because of the seasonality of interventions. Moreover, LoGIC has relied on technical staff from line departments for the delivery of CALO trainings, and sometimes there were issues with their availability and quality of training. Following Helvetas, there was a gap of 18 months and BRAC has now been appointed to lead on the CALO trainings. Additionally, there was no nodal person in the LoGIC core team responsible for training and capacity building until July 2021. In the interim i.e., in the period between the end of the Helvetas contract and the appointment of BRAC and the nodal person in the core team, training responsibilities were devolved to the district-level LoGIC team members adding to their other duties.

The LoGIC team promoted transparency and accountability at all stages of PBCRG and CRF implementation. This includes specific interventions such as displaying beneficiary lists and project costs and ensuring that the PBCRG schemes are included in the agenda of the legally mandated open budget sessions at the UP level. These are welcome measures, although the field level discussion reflected that the participation of the vulnerable population is still minimal. LoGIC must promote or encourage more active participation and involvement of the vulnerable in these meetings to create demand for climate-resilient infrastructure and ensure accountability. LoGIC has not engaged much with the CSOs and NGOs in building their capacities and engaging them to ensure increased participation and voice of marginalized communities in UP level meetings. One of the key activities on transparency and accountability was the Social Audit and its rollout has been delayed. LoGIC has recently completed an online Training of Trainers (ToT) in three districts and the training was attended by project staff as well as community representatives.³⁵

Overall LoGIC has demonstrated systematic interventions through training at various levels. The success has varied, and the gaps in delivery at the project level, coupled with the challenges of working with elected representatives, are areas that need strengthening going forward.

To what extent is the LoGIC contributing to establishing sustainable financing mechanisms to fund local governments and communities for implementing CCA measures?

LoGIC's focus thus far has been more on setting up systems and processes, building capacity, and delivering results. Our review suggests that the project has led to the diversification of livelihood opportunities, improved income, and food security, reducing climate shocks with respect to the availability of fresh water for drinking and irrigation purposes for many beneficiaries. The interventions supported thus far demonstrate the various adaptation possibilities at the household and community levels to address climate stresses. Thus far, the interventions have not been scaled up or expanded to neighboring areas that face similar climate issues. Considering that LoGIC is demonstrating a new approach to adaptation that will enhance resilience in the future, it is important that the project focus more on advocacy and knowledge sharing so that there is a gradual shift towards adopting climate-resilient infrastructure at the UP level rather than traditional roads, culverts, and cyclone shelters that are now perceptible.

Project funds have been used mostly to construct climate-resilient infrastructure and direct benefit transfers for initiating climate adaptive livelihoods. The EU review in 2020 recommended a top-up for the continuation and scaling up of the initiatives. LoGIC has facilitated the opening of bank accounts linking beneficiaries with the formal financial systems and introducing an insurance scheme for sheep, which was innovative. However, groups' access to credit through banks or other new financial instruments is yet to be facilitated/formalized. Access to loans and other financial

³³ KII ADLG Barguna

³⁴ KII DDLG Khulna and DDLG Kurigram

³⁵ Annual Report Draft 2021

instruments is also dependent on the maturity and capacity of the beneficiary groups. The evaluation team feels that 2 years is too short a period for any newly formed groups, especially of the most vulnerable population residing in the remotest parts of the country, to access loans from markets.

We understand that alternate funding sources such as the Global Climate Fund (GCF) and others, are yet to be explored fully. Also, the capacity and financial management systems of the Local Government Division (LGD) – and/or other entities which could play an oversight role as NIEs should be assessed to prepare funding proposals or access alternate funding sources including market-based concessionary finance instruments in the short to medium term. UPs might need to rely more on IDA/grant funds from other donors (ADB/WB/JICA/other donors) or Government's own funds for sustainable financing. From our discussions, we understand that co-funding from other donors has not been explored yet. The GoB and the project might also explore engaging with existing NIEs to go to scale through direct access.

Funding from Government so far has been limited. The Government committed a grant of BDT10.8 crore as noted in the Steering Committee meeting minutes. We feel that mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local development and investment planning needs to be strengthened through greater policy influence and knowledge sharing. The ongoing Climate Vulnerability Index could be a powerful advocacy tool to consider 'climate vulnerability as an indicator for future fiscal transfers from the national to local governments. We understand that local-level climate adaptation is only being made through LoGIC; however, the Annual Report Draft 2021 mentions that the UPs have taken up 863 climate-adaptive schemes in this year, of which only 200 are from PBCRG. If this is indeed the case then it is an impressive success; however, in our field-level discussions, none of the stakeholders mentioned this. The evaluation team received this in December after completion of the evaluation field survey and thus could not validate this. The previous Quarterly and Annual reports do not mention these numbers. The Evaluation Team discussed the numbers reported with the project team and learned that the climate adaptation attribution analysis was done by project staff and the results were included in the Annual Report Draft 2021. This clarifies the reason for the fact that none of the stakeholders mentioned these achievements. It however raises questions on reporting and data interpretation at the project level – this is an area that should be addressed.

The AR Draft 2021 highlights that 23% of funds for PBCRG schemes were from other sources. The evaluation team did however come across the following examples³⁶: (i) a solar-based irrigation system in Bagerhat where the PBCRG contributed USD 21,000 and farmers and local government support groups contributed USD 11,600 (ii) construction of a road to withstand tidal surges in Char Montaz Union of Patuakhali where the PBCRG contributed BDT 700,000 and the Union Parishad BDT 50,000 (iii) water treatment plant in Sutarkhali Union, Dacope Union Parishad in Khulna at the cost of USD 19,000 of which the PBCRG contributed USD 17,500 with the remaining from local government and the government's public health engineering department.

Whilst these examples demonstrate co-funding synergies and leveraging of funds for climate adaptation, they would appear to be the exceptions rather than the norm and were not mentioned in evaluation team field survey discussions. This sort of co-funding is interesting and important and hence there is a need to continue to increase efforts in leveraging scheme finance. Further leveraging or complementing the PBCRG schemes with other line department funds and projects (including LGED, Water Resources, or Environment and Forest) at the UP level will be critical going forward. Given the limitation of funding for climate adaptation and the lack of own-source revenue at the UP level, it would be useful for LoGIC to capture the lessons and learnings from the success cases to understand how funds leveraging can be made more effective in the future.

The LoGIC team at the district level in Khulna spoke about influencing the UPs on the use of alternative funding for nature-based solutions such as mangrove plantation from another UNDP funded project called 'Suphal' to allow PBCRG funds to be used on other interventions – this is a successful example of influencing the choice of the intervention. From the discussions, it was evident that this was possible because of the staff's initiative and knowledge of the Suphal scheme. However, for mainstreaming and convergence with other programs, a well-thought-out strategy along with sensitizing and encouraging UPs to explore these sorts of convergence could be undertaken. In general, the evaluation team does not see much evidence of establishing a sustainable funding flow for the local governments beyond the existing LoGIC funding. The project design includes a specific component on policy influencing which, if done in a sustained manner, as per a well-defined strategy and on time, should have begun to ease the funding concerns for the future. The limited achievements around policy influencing have been discussed under the Efficiency section. Additionally, the limited engagement of local government officials in LoGIC implementation as discussed in the preceding sections under Effectiveness are areas of concern for the future. LoGIC should quickly focus on these aspects and develop an exit strategy that ensures continuity post its conclusion else, there is a high risk that adaptation demonstrated thus far will not be sustained. However, the ongoing development of the Climate Vulnerability Index and

³⁶ Case Study Documents

the intent of using it to advocate for the inclusion of 'climate vulnerability' as an indicator for fiscal transfers from the national government may lead to more sustainable finance at the local level for climate adaptation.

To what extent is LoGIC on track to achieve on HR & GE? To what degree are the results achieved equitably distributed among the targeted stakeholder groups?

LoGIC's gender strategy is based on the premises that (i) vulnerability and climate change are gendered (ii) adaptive capacity is gendered, (iii) vulnerabilities are inter-generational and youth are key human capital to transform for building resilience (iv) access to institutions that can help increase adaptive capacity is also gendered. There are strong merits in this approach *'since extensive research has shown that women commonly face higher risks and greater burdens from the impacts of climate change in situations of poverty and 70% of the world's poor are women'*³⁷ and the LoGIC project interventions to a certain extent been successful in addressing these.

LoGIC has adopted a 'gender transformative approach' since 2017 following a change in the strategy to focus almost exclusively on women as beneficiaries under the CRF – 98% of its 17,000 beneficiaries are women. The program beneficiaries are from the most vulnerable and marginalized communities such as the Kamar, Bagdi, fisherfolk, etc., and face regular climate stresses because of their geographical location and remoteness. Moreover, many of the LoGIC beneficiaries are unique and excluded from other NGO programs. LoGIC has facilitated the opening of bank accounts, leading to the financial inclusion of these women for the first time.

With respect to adaptive capacity, our review suggests CALO options suggested and practiced by the beneficiaries are mostly gender-sensitive. Although the CALO options are not unique, the LoGIC process of combining individual and group approaches increases accountability and gives confidence to first-time beneficiaries. Along with CALO training, meetings and facilitation support on group formation have also helped these women exchange views and have built confidence in negotiation and market access. As mentioned earlier, the new livelihood practices have helped increase household income. The awareness sessions on climate adaptation have sensitized and enabled them to adopt some climate adaptive practices like raised chullah, storage, and storage of fresh rainwater for drinking during climate disasters, and in the FGDs, beneficiaries mentioned that these have been useful learnings.

The PBCRG-funded projects are largely gender-neutral except perhaps where drinking water-related facilities have been set up. While the identification of the intervention may not have been overtly gender dictated, these drinking water plants have contributed to reducing the burden on women and girls from the drudgery of fetching water. However, the National Project Director has mentioned that 75% of the PBCRG schemes are gender-sensitive according to the gender budgeting norms of GoB – the evaluation team has not investigated this, although it is likely that the definition may be open to some interpretation.

On intergenerational climate vulnerabilities, since 2021, LoGIC has started engaging with the youth. Around 13,000 youths have been identified and sensitized on climate adaptation and project interventions. The LoGIC team feels that engagement with the youth will help in reinforcing climate-adaptive messages at the community and household level and ensure improved transparency and accountability at the local government institution level for building climate resilience.

On access to institutions and voice, the evaluation team has observed that LoGIC facilitated meetings at the community level see a high percentage of women in attendance and voicing opinions – as corroborated in the FGDs. However, women's participation in the UP meetings is low – only 26% of participants in the Wardshavas are women³⁸ but there is no information on their 'voice' in these meetings. In the FGD discussions, 50% of respondents stated that some men might participate in the UP meetings, but they were unsure. However, there was unanimity across all the FGDs that women are largely absent from the UP planning meetings. In discussions with the chairpersons of UPs, it was reported that women's participation is generally low; however, they were unanimous in their support for the inclusion of women.

Curiously, for a project that has a gender transformative approach, LoGIC does not have a Gender Focal Point in the core team and could benefit from such skills to strengthen the narrative. Overall, gender awareness is high in Bangladesh, especially among the elected representatives, and the local government system has reservations for women ward members. There is also no evidence that LoGIC processes have influenced the planning or increased gender sensitization in projects funded by other departments.

³⁷ Annual Report Draft 2021

³⁸ Quarterly Reports

4.5 LIKELY IMPACT

This section assesses LoGIC's contribution to creating an enabling environment for local climate adaptation through new planning and financing mechanisms at the local government level as well as wider policy influencing. It also evaluates the impact or likelihood of LoGIC outputs towards strengthening the livelihoods of the most vulnerable and marginalized women living in areas of high climate risk.

LoGIC has contributed to improving climate-adaptive planning and financing of community infrastructure at the UP level and adaptive livelihoods at the household level to boost resilience to climate stresses. At the UP level, while there has been an incremental shift towards climate adaptive solutions, it is still too early to assess the actual degree of climate resilience and climate additionality. Furthermore, nearly all stakeholders felt that the quality of infrastructure provided under PBCRG is substantially better due to very close monitoring and intense involvement of the LoGIC team. At the same time, the evaluators have found no evidence of Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs being considered as a part of the PBCRG allocation, jeopardizing the sustainability of PBCRG investments – unless the LGSP is to cover them per design.

During the field-level discussions, all beneficiaries agreed that general household incomes and disposable income have increased. **The evaluation team has concerns about the sustainability of the CALO activities given the risk perceptions of the beneficiaries as well as their low self-reported confidence levels.** This also evinces the need for more training as also requested by most beneficiaries. Also, there is substantial scope for improving the market linkages and access to sustain the results.

On national policy advocacy and influence, progress thus far has been limited. Overall, decentralization in Bangladesh has very strong central overtones and the very limited advocacy for policy influence undertaken by LoGIC is a concern as it may not change the equation sufficiently in favor of devolved action for local climate adaptation.

To what extent are LoGIC results on track to contributing to better planning and financing for community-based CCA beyond the program life-cycle?

As discussed earlier, LoGIC has improved climate adaptive planning and financing of community infrastructure at the project UP levels and adaptive livelihoods at the household level to increase local resilience to climate stresses. Significant efforts have been made to improve the ADPs of the UPs through a blended bottom-up and top-down approach to encourage more climate-resilient infrastructure solutions. Here, there has been an incremental shift towards more climate adaptive solutions at the project UP level although it is still too early to assess the actual degree of resilience and hence the climate additionality.

LoGIC progress reports highlight that in several cases funding has been leveraged from other sources for climate-resilient infrastructure, however, the evaluation team has not been able to verify the climate aspects of additional funding. Some UP chairpersons³⁹ claimed they had invested in water treatment/rainwater harvesting solutions in a departure from the more traditional infrastructure that PBCRG has supported based on community demands arising from the LoGIC process. The drinking water plants funded under PBCRG are perhaps the most successful examples of adaptive infrastructure as they are specifically designed to address the problem of saline intrusion into groundwater and provide clean drinking water and enhance resilience to climate shocks, especially in districts such as Bagerhat, Barguna, and Patuakhali.

The evaluation team has found no evidence of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) costs being considered as part of the PBCRG allocation although, the project team mentioned that they were forming committees to monitor construction. In the absence of the inclusion of O&M costs, the sustainability of PBCRG investments is at risk as is their long-term effectiveness. In a case study document shared by the project team, there is a description of a water treatment plant in Dacope Union Parishad in Khulna where USD 1,200 has been earned from water sales in one year but, there is no clarity on who collects the amount, where it is used or who administers its use. The continued success of the water treatment plants depends on regular O&M and the project needs to set in place demonstrable processes that could be continued in the future and replicated by other UPs. Project documents have also mentioned that in some cases, beneficiaries are unwilling to pay for water from these plants – this raises questions on the effectiveness of awareness generation and whether benefits will truly accrue to the most vulnerable.

³⁹ KII Union Parishad Chairmen in Bagerhat, Khulna

Evidence from the 'Amphan induced Loss and Damage Assessment' (May 2020) shows that infrastructure constructed using PBCRG funds and design specifications in the affected areas of Khulna and Bagerhat did prove resilient with 34 kilometers of roads, embankments, and infrastructure damaged. The evaluation team has found no comparator in terms of the total length of roads constructed under PBCRG or the total length of roads damaged to be able to assess this accurately. In Patuakhali, 2 of the PBCRG schemes were totally damaged. A similar assessment done in the wake of the Yaas cyclone in 2021 in the same districts reported that 9 PBCRG schemes were fully damaged, 15 were partially damaged and 28kms of the embankment were damaged/lost – the caveat on the comparator also applies here. These figures would seem to imply that the PBCRG infrastructure continues to remain highly vulnerable to climate shocks.

The improved climate science-informed planning process along with the technical support now available with the appointment of LoGIC project engineers should result in the delivery of more climate-resilient infrastructure and solutions in the future. There is a possibility that initial infrastructure costs could be higher because of design specifications being based on projected climate risks that are now available from the Climate Risk Atlas. While LoGIC's PBCRG could fund the additional costs, it may not be welcomed by the UP because the decision-makers may not experience the climate risk during their time in office and could find it difficult to explain the additional costs in some cases compared to others for similar infrastructure. Additionally, the siloed approach to project implementation at the UP level and limited own-source revenues to provide effective O&M are all continuing risks. In addition, there are still significant challenges in properly embedding and mainstreaming the LoGIC processes on climate-informed decision making for community infrastructure and for enhancing the resilience of directly impacted and vulnerable individuals into government systems which could hamper the process in the future.

To what extent is the program on track to supporting, or likely to support, macro, meso, and micro-level impacts for resilient community functions and infrastructure and resilient households and individuals?

Through its gender transformative approach, LoGIC has been supporting the most vulnerable women to develop more resilient livelihoods. The focus on livelihoods stems from the rationale behind the LoGIC design that the creation of public goods must synchronize with the inclusive production of private goods to deliver resilient outcomes. The uniqueness of LoGIC's approach was on the beneficiary selection and in terms of impact, it has brought in high levels of transparency and objectivity and managed 'elite capture' dictated by political interferences.

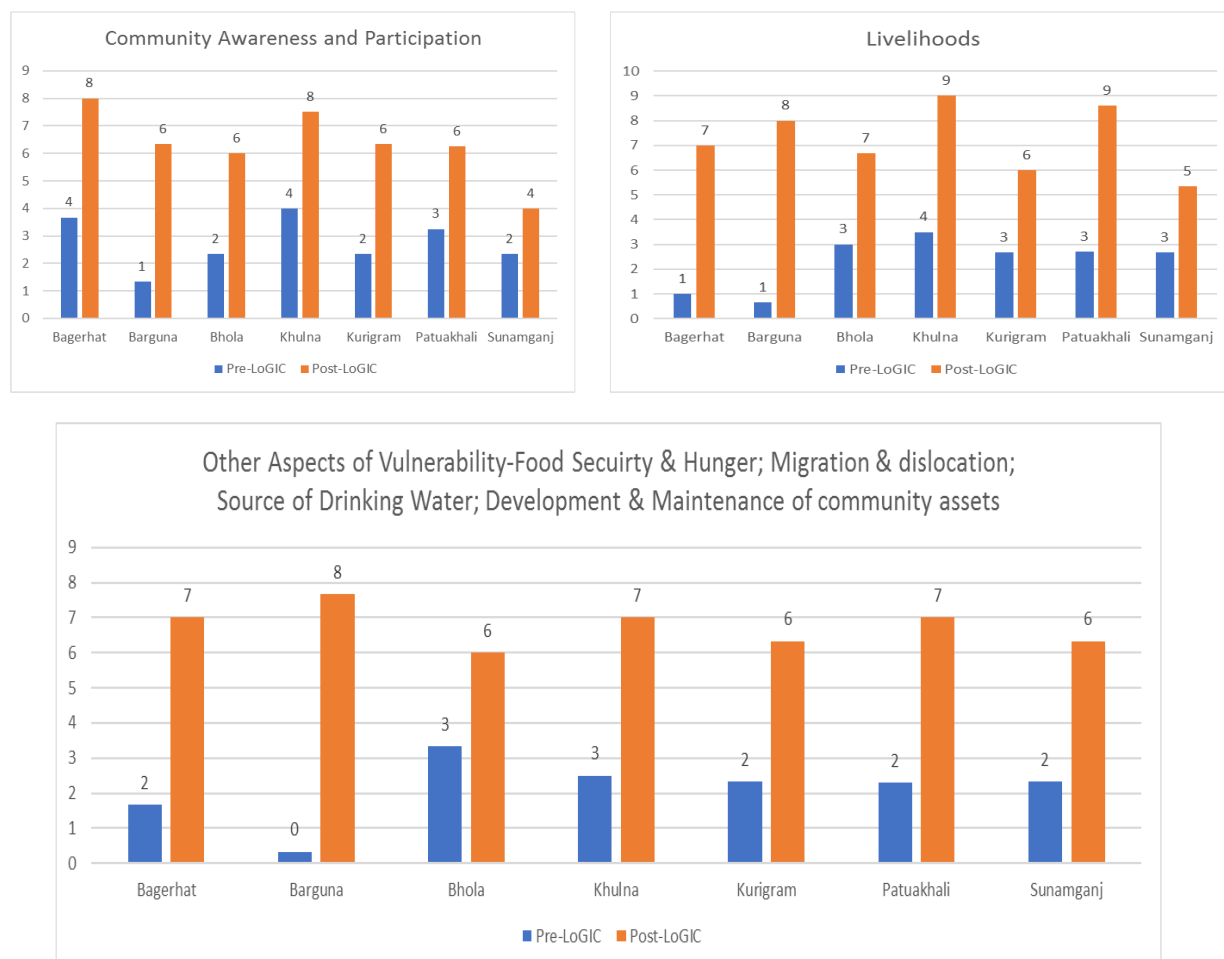
There have been many projects in Bangladesh that have been supporting climate-adaptive livelihood options that bring together farmers, staff from various government line agencies, national research institutes and civil society organizations. These programs have helped to integrate actions across various climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, water resources, environment, and ultimately food security whilst linking bottom-up livelihood perspective and top-down guidance⁴⁰. Building on these projects, LoGIC has been supporting similar livelihood diversification in its project areas – the key difference in the approach being that LoGIC is attempting to demonstrate community-based climate change adaptation that can be driven through government institutions while the other examples are more civil society-based approaches. The combination of outcomes from the PBCRG and CRF interventions is likely to strengthen the case for the stronger involvement of local government institutions in climate change adaptation.

LoGIC has supported market linkages and these combined inputs have brought about improvements in the livelihoods of the beneficiaries who will continue to benefit should they continue to pursue adaptive activities. In the FGDs conducted as part of the evaluation, there was a unanimous response among the beneficiaries that LoGIC has created alternate livelihood options for their beneficiaries, and they have benefitted from the trainings, but various respondents also expressed the need for more skills training. Respondents also said that there has been an increase in diversification in crop cultivation because of LoGIC. Prior to LoGIC, respondents reported high dependence on paddy cultivation however, because of LoGIC there has now been diversification into fish, vegetables, and fruits as well as uptake of *amon* and *boro* rice varieties which are salt-tolerant and can be harvested before the typical flood/cyclone season. LoGIC has contributed significantly to the diversification of livelihoods and the grants have been most useful for beneficiaries to pursue new options.

⁴⁰ Examples include (not exhaustive): 'Livelihood Adaptation to Climate Change in Bangladesh' project of Ministry of Food & Disaster Management funded by UNDP, DFID, and EU in 2005; 'Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change' funded by Canadian CIDA and implemented by CARE Canada via CARE Bangladesh in 2006; Practical Action, etc.

Participants in the FGDs all agreed that in general household incomes have increased as has disposable income but, there is little evidence on whether LoGIC has enabled beneficiaries to obtain business loans to start their own enterprises. The PRA exercises conducted as part of the evaluation show the following responses presented on the subsequent page.

Figure 8. LoGIC beneficiaries self-rating of their life conditions on various parameters, pre and post becoming a part of LoGIC; Rating was to be done on a Scale of 0-10 with 0 being the worst and 10 being the best



The PRA questions were intended to assess community perception pre and post-LoGIC, although there is a high possibility of ‘desirability bias’ in some of the responses considering that the beneficiaries have never before been exposed to the kind of support that LoGIC is providing. Despite this, the evaluation team concludes that LoGIC has had a positive impact on the lives of the beneficiaries.

However, the evaluation team has concerns about the sustainability of the activities and the probability of beneficiaries continuing to pursue diversified livelihoods in the absence of the LoGIC support. The project has reported⁴¹ that CRF beneficiaries were affected differently by both climatic and non-climatic hazards such as COVID-19. As a result, 21% of beneficiaries were unable to start the next cycle of their CALO, and 21% had to abort the livelihood activities that they had started. This experience has made beneficiaries more cautious about restarting future CALO. There is some degree of reluctance among beneficiaries to adopt different/diversified livelihoods as reported in the Annual Report Draft 2021 and corroborated in the FGDs that were conducted as part of the evaluation, given their lack of economic resources and risk perceptions associated with unfamiliar activities. The move to group activities and federations of groups would seem a sensible modality for helping to address this issue.

One of the issues that the evaluation team has identified is the absence of any clear linkage between the PBCRG schemes (especially irrigation) and adaptive livelihoods. There are examples in the project documents of lands being drained and

⁴¹ Annual Report Draft 2021

made fit for agriculture and of SMART boats being provided under PBCRG schemes. However, this raises a question on public versus private goods. PBCRG benefited lands that are currently being used by CRF beneficiaries through favorable lease agreements negotiated by the project team or beneficiaries engaged in fishing again through lease agreements that are all time-bound. Whether groups that have been recently formed will be able to renegotiate such leases in the future is debatable. If this does not materialize, there is a strong possibility that assets improved with PBCRG funds could revert to the private owner.

We perceive that there is a risk that the beneficiaries will discontinue the diversified livelihoods once LoGIC ends – as has been noted in the Annual Report Draft 2021 – unless the project can demonstrate the benefits of strong market linkages and some degree of insulation in livelihood practices from climate shocks. In the FGDs, various respondents spoke of the need for project support for more traditional livestock rearing although the LoGIC team has attempted to create awareness on the adverse environmental impacts of certain livestock rearing. The fact that this request has been reiterated after such awareness-raising shows that there is more to be done for changing the mindsets.

Since the livelihood activities are all-natural resource-based, the skills generated have limited portability. Going forward LoGIC could highlight the value of multi-use skills around basic micro-business planning, management, finance, and marketing which could be adapted to other non-farm activities in the future if required. This will help to bring in an element of portability of skills and potential long-term sustainability should the target beneficiaries need to move from their present location. The LoGIC approach of first identifying the beneficiaries through a very robust process, discussing CALO and getting group consensus on the type of activity to be pursued brings with it the risks of infighting within groups and requests for reallocation⁴² making the livelihood training redundant in some cases. To address these risks, the project could consider a different approach. LoGIC could start with a resilient enterprise and value chains and invite potential beneficiaries to participate in the enterprise and provide access to funds to those who are interested and meet the beneficiary qualification criteria – a change in focus to climate economics from the present climate justice.

How is the program contributing to influencing the national and international agenda on community-based CCA solutions through local governments?

At the local government level, awareness on climate change and changes in the types of projects being included in the ADPs have been noted. The main successes of LoGIC to date lies at the UP and community level. At the District level, while the DDLGs are aware of the project, they attributed success to the presence and extensive involvement of the project teams. Likewise, the fact that the demonstrable gains of the project are clearly attributable to the project team was also echoed by the Union Parishad chairpersons.

Whilst this approach has been necessary to ground the project from the outset and set operating standards, LoGIC will now need to focus on a more systematic sharing of knowledge and learning both horizontally and vertically. Other UPs and Upazilas are not aware of the LoGIC processes, and neither are they actively pursuing climate adaptation in their plans and programs⁴³ thus, influencing climate adaptation at the district level is limited/absent. At the national level, policy advocacy is very much an unfinished agenda. The fact that LoGIC is a nationally implemented project should have contributed to some embedding within LGD and government systems. However, the post of National Project Director is part-time and as such an additional responsibility. Given this limitation, LoGIC should have a plan to utilize the position and the reach in an optimally strategic manner. Here, the role of the NPD should be focused more on scalability and policy influence for mainstreaming and convergence. To ensure the LGD's involvement in the more detailed management aspects of the project, LGD could consider appointing a subordinate officer to act as the LoGIC coordinator.

In terms of 'influencing national policy', the only evidence that the evaluation team found was the Policy Dialogue held in October 2020 from where the recommendation on the preparation of the Climate Vulnerability Index emerged. The project has identified five areas of advocacy at the national level – (i) the issue of fund allocation from the national government to include weightage on climate risk (ii) the Local Climate Fiscal Framework developed by the Finance Division to be scaled up across all climate-vulnerable divisions (iii) the issue of insufficient credit guarantee to climate risk enterprise and working with the Banking Division on this (iv) advocating for lower insurance in case schemes are climate adaptive and (v) design PPP model at local government level to demonstrate how the poor may benefit through a grant/lending instrument. From this list, a study has been commissioned to develop a Climate Vulnerability Index that may be used to decide on the allocation of grants from the national government. We did not find evidence that the Local

⁴² Annual Report Draft 2021

⁴³ KIIs with DDLGs

Climate Fiscal Framework is being piloted in the project areas and, work is to start on the other three areas identified. The Annual Report Draft 2021 mentions that the project plans a series of workshops/policy dialogues on various issues, but we found no evidence of a clear strategy on policy advocacy and no nodal person in the project team tasked with this responsibility. The sustainability of LoGIC depends on embedding within government systems to enable the processes to filter to the lower levels of government. Overall, decentralization in Bangladesh has very strong central overtones and the very limited advocacy for policy influence undertaken by LoGIC is a concern as it may not change the equation sufficiently in favor of devolved action for local climate adaptation.

At the international level, LoGIC does undertake a regular exchange of information with the LoCAL program but has not demonstrated any other actions, although there is mention of accessing the GCF in the LoGIC Annual Report 2020. The timelines mentioned in that report (i.e., wanting to put up the project to the meeting of the GCF in October 2022) seem difficult and possible only with a lot of quick efforts. The evaluation team did not get any sense of a plan/roadmap for this and, this gap could prove to be a risk that current donor support for the project could go into budget support in the future and be utilized elsewhere⁴⁴ – although Bhutan is scaling up PBCRGs with BS which provides an opportunity for learning. From our discussions with key stakeholders, it was reflected that Bangladesh is one of the phase II countries under LoCAL and the learnings of it embedding the decentralized fiscal transfer model within Government systems can be important for other LoCAL country partners to emulate.

To what extent are LoGIC results likely to change attitudes and behaviors towards HR and GE within various stakeholder groups, and reduce the underlying causes of inequality and discrimination?

LoGIC's 'gender transformative' approach has ensured that 99-98% of its beneficiaries are women from the marginalized and most vulnerable groups of society. Targeted interventions for this group have delivered results with most experiencing some level of empowerment. Gender inclusion is an important consideration for the elected representatives as well and UP chairpersons were vocal about this. They did however feel that women's participation needed to increase as also voice. It has been reported that women are vocal about airing grievances on various aspects of the project and LoGIC has recorded an increase in the percentage share of grievances since the start. One of the DDLGs⁴⁵ interviewed as part of the evaluation mentioned this aspect as well and lauded the grievance mechanism of LoGIC and its efforts at empowerment that enabled women to speak out openly.

In the FGDs, women said that they were more regular and vocal in the meetings conducted by LoGIC. While the project reports that there has been 26% women's participation in UP meetings, there is no information on whether this increase in participation also includes an increase in 'voice'. Respondents to the FGDs said that very few of them attended although, some men from their families attended the meeting and they did not get opportunities to speak up at the UP meetings. Women also said that they knew the details of the PBCRG schemes because the project staff kept them informed and some also said that the UP displayed details of their schemes on noticeboards. However, it is important to note many of them are illiterate this was of limited value to them directly, but it has helped in building transparency. It may be possible for LoGIC to support more graphical devices to communicate scheme details. This could include a picture of what the scheme should look like and some symbols to represent cost and quality.

By the end of 2021, 74% of CRF beneficiary households had gained economic benefit, despite delays and disruptions caused by COVID-19 lockdowns and natural calamities. However, the sustainability of group and individual economic well-being requires longer nurturing of the groups and resolving problems within groups that have been noted both by the project team⁴⁶ and in FGDs. Some of the respondents said that they were unaware of the financial details of the group accounts although key group members (Secretary, Treasurer) were aware. We assume that these positions are held by those who have some education therefore, there is a risk of capture in the absence of the current intensive involvement of the project team.

Overall, LoGIC has improved the 'voice' of women on account of their economic empowerment. In one of the FGDs, a respondent said, 'my husband now helps with the housework so that I have more time to attend to tasks related to group activities and livelihood' This represents a very positive shift in gender empowerment, and with continued nurturing, the voices of women and the vulnerable can only become stronger.

⁴⁴ Discussion with the EU

⁴⁵ KII DDLG Khulna

⁴⁶ Annual Report Draft 2021

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROGRAM RESULTS

This section discusses the extent to which the net benefits of LoGIC are likely to continue beyond the life of the intervention

Presently, LoGIC's sustainability and mainstreaming in the government systems appear weak given that project delivery and monitoring are primarily driven by LoGIC project staff. There still exist substantial gaps in terms of LGIs' awareness of CCA as well as their capacity and resources to address the same. Additionally, there are gaps in understanding LoGIC interventions which threaten their embeddedness within government systems at the national level. **Thus, it will be critical for LoGIC to aggressively focus on advocacy and embedding it within the government systems and work closely with the LGD as well as other agencies** such as the Local Governing Engineering Division (LGED), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change as well as the Water Resources and Agriculture Ministries for mainstreaming locally-led climate-adaptive models. At the community level, while the CRF and CALO activities have proved to be beneficial, sustainability of results would require the facilitation of market access and the creation of instruments for additional financing for scale-up. Simultaneously, it is imperative for LoGIC to engage and capacitate local NGOs and CSOs to spur local-level demand and strengthen voice and participation to bolster sustainability.

To what extent are the changes in the capacity of local governments to develop and finance effective and inclusive local level plans integrating CCA and DRR likely to continue over time? To what extent are partners likely to institutionalize and scale up the financing mechanisms of LoGIC, such as CRF and PBCRGs?

In the current form, mainstreaming and sustainability appear to be challenging primarily due to the relatively short period of intervention and delivery disruption caused by the ongoing pandemic. The project is being delivered in NIM mode with the National Project Director and Deputy Project Director, seconded by the Government to assist with the administration of LoGIC within LGD and more widely across MoLG&RD. While counterpart staff from LGD have facilitated delivery across the 7 LoGIC districts, ownership of the project, that is, embedding it firmly within government and improving synergies with other LGD activities, rests predominantly with the NPD currently. At the same time, commitments to mainstreaming and scaling up will be required throughout the leadership team along with more devolved responsibility for project delivery at the district, Upazila, and UP levels. Strengthening ownership at the policy level will require a significant effort and focus going forward. At present, the project is heavily dependent on LoGIC staff for all aspects of delivery. Whilst this has enabled the delivery of a complex set of activities across 7 of the most vulnerable districts, it will be crucial to develop a roadmap based on a more delegated delivery structure within the government system.

Evaluation team discussions with the senior Government officials in LGD confirmed that there is a requirement for continuous and deep engagement to build a common understanding and a shared vision for local climate financing not only with the LGD but also with other line departments to facilitate mainstreaming and lasting sustainability.

Although the project has attempted to build institutional capacity at the UP level, mainly through the elected representatives, the human resource and capacity of UPs and LGIs remains low as was evident in field-level discussions. Moreover, there are serious limitations with the understanding, capacity, and incentives of UP elected members and local level officials, especially engineers, to engage proactively in prioritizing and designing schemes to enable the government to access alternate sources of climate adaptation funds.

Another factor that has limited the institutionalization of the process and systems to date is that LoGIC has been rolled out as a project with an independent bank account, implementation procedures, and reporting systems. This 'projectized' siloed approach to implementation is an issue regarding institutionalization. Moreover, whilst the LoGIC protocols/manuals and guidelines are robust in terms of ensuring adherence to LoCAL principles, they are somewhat complex to operate, especially for local-level institutions with no dedicated professional staff. Although the PBCRG manuals have been simplified by the project, UP elected representatives have reported that they still find these difficult and must depend on project staff for most record-keeping and compliance. Discussions with the UPs and UNOs have revealed that key stakeholders at the local level are not particularly confident to continue with these processes beyond the project period.

Mainstreaming within government systems requires LoGIC to influence departmental processes and ensure administrative directives are passed on to the DDLGs and UNOs to encourage local climate adaptation. This has not

happened thus far. Some of the DDLGs mentioned that if such directives were given it would be easier for them to get involved in helping mainstream processes on the ground.

At the same time, however, sustainability also requires a commitment from Government to continue funding from internal resources over the medium term. While the evaluation team accepts that it is still somewhat early to expect to see confirmation of clear funding lines, this is an area that LoGIC will need to address as a key part of its roadmap going forward. Although we understand that there is fiscal space at the national level to support climate financing initiatives, there is no specific demand at present from LGD to this effect. However, as discussed earlier in the report, there is an expressed interest in the development of a Vulnerability Index which could form part of a new allocative formula for fiscal devolution that would include support for local climate adaptation. The adaptation and scaling up of the Climate Fiscal Framework might help in access to funds. Additionally, LoGIC could consider promoting itself as a 'mechanism' for incremental fiscal transfers to local governments to account for climate adaptation. This approach to explaining LoGIC to all stakeholders, especially at the national level may lead to greater support for embedding it into government systems. The most reassuring aspect is that both the donors, particularly the EU are open to providing additional funding support and continuation and embedding of the project in government systems.

At the beneficiary level, the skills-building efforts have been very useful, and many beneficiaries may continue adaptive practices. However, for sustenance, it is important to connect them to the market and create instruments for additional financing for scaling up. Here, the project is working towards developing a federated cooperative business model at the district level to strengthen the sustainability of group livelihoods activities and improve access to markets and price realization. If this happens, this might be a more sustainable model. However, cooperatives often fail in the absence of professional support and development, and this will require a lot of capacity building, time, and investment to develop the necessary leadership and business skills at the federated level. The proposed cooperative model also carries an additional risk of elite capture considering that most beneficiaries are not literate and may not understand the details.

For sustainability, changes in the ecosystem around the voice, participation, and capacity of local CSOs are equally important. Although we have observed and heard anecdotal evidence on voice and demand from field discussions, the participation and voice of vulnerable communities in the UP planning meetings remain low as evinced in the end-beneficiary and LGL discussions. This needs to be addressed and more focus may have to be given to capacity building to strengthen the empowerment of CSOs/NGOs to foster local level demand. While this intended capacity building of local CSOs and NGOs is a part of the project design, it has yet to be rolled out.

For sustainability, there is a need for more training, awareness, and capacity building of UP chairpersons and executive assistant/secretary of the UPs on the identification and prioritization of appropriate climate-resilient schemes, ensuring climate-resilient design, construction, and monitoring of projects, and ensuring greater accountability. This appears to be weak barring a few exceptions. The prospect of changes in elected representatives because of the election cycle is a big challenge for sustainability and therefore the training and capacity building needs to be sufficiently broad-based to cover this eventuality. Along with the UPs, it is also important to continue to sensitize and build the capacity at the meso level with cadres or officers at Upazilla and district level on scheme selection and the design of effective engineering or nature-based solutions.

The challenges related to accessing GCF or other climate funding for local climate financing mean that the continuation of the PBCRG and CRF will be mostly dependent on donors or national government resource transfers, as mentioned by the stakeholders. At the macro level, it is important to build influence and engagement with LGD and other agencies such as the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Ministry of Finance, Environment and Forest, Water Resources, and Agriculture to synergize, complement, and mainstream many of the components of the LoGIC project within the line department's schemes and intervention. For example, the agriculture department's interventions in climate-vulnerable areas can focus more on providing training and extension services on climate adaptive agriculture practices to the climate-vulnerable people; LGED's construction can incorporate more climate-resilient design that complements the PBCRG schemes or the various social safety net programs could target the climate-vulnerable population, all of which would help to build capacity for sustained cooperation and support.

The discussion with the project team reflects that the focus thus far has been on implementation and on setting and building capacity and processes at the local level for sustainability. We feel that LoGIC now also needs to change gears and focus aggressively on policy advocacy and influence, creating momentum and demand for local climate-adaptive

5. Gender, Human Rights, Disability & Other Cross-Cutting Issues

Evaluation Methodology

As is required in all United Nations-commissioned evaluations, Human Rights and Gender Equality (HRGE) with a strong focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups was a key underlying theme of this evaluation. **In line with this, we abided by the *Leave No One Behind (LNOB)* objectives of the SDGs and included HRGE-focused questions throughout our evaluation matrix and tools.** These indicators covered aspects such as:

- The extent of women centrality of LoGIC and focus on the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized populations
- Economic empowerment of women and vulnerable groups (livelihood and income levels, livelihood diversification, and financial inclusion)
- Social empowerment of women and vulnerable groups (voice, participation, awareness and knowledge, skills and capacity to deal with climate change)

As highlighted earlier, 99% of LoGIC beneficiaries are women⁴⁷. As a result, most of the field-level respondents recruited were women. The sample of beneficiaries included representation from women-headed households, marginalized groups, Persons with Disabilities (PwD), and small and marginalized occupational groups. 38 FGDs and 19 PRA activities were conducted. Each of these saw the participation of 8-10 beneficiaries thus covering a total of 455 to 570 respondents for these exercises.

Project Design

From a gender and social inclusion perspective, LoGIC has adopted a **'gender transformative approach'** keeping in mind that the impacts of climate change exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and deeply entrenched regressive gender norms. Women and marginalized populations lack control over capital, have limited economic opportunities, and also lack a voice in household and community decision-making. This further limits their ability to adapt to and overcome climate change challenges. **Thus, CRF funding has been almost exclusively focused on women with 98-99% of CALO beneficiaries being female.**

From a vulnerability perspective, LoGIC is being implemented in some of the remotest parts of the country supporting the most-climate vulnerable marginalized populations in each district. LoGIC also scores well on addressing exclusion as most households are from marginalized communities. Rough data analysis of the beneficiaries list reflects that 14% are women-headed households and MIS data shows that about 2% of the beneficiaries are PwD, similar to the national comparison.⁴⁸ However, stakeholder discussions also revealed that even though LoGIC targeted the vulnerable sections of the population, it still left out many, especially the climate migrants and the poorest who did not have minimum adaptability to participate in the CALO.

Allocation of resources to gender and human rights

The budget analysis reflects that 100% of the CRF grants are to women. To date, the CRF amount that has been spent has reached 17,000 beneficiaries, equivalent to USD 350 for each beneficiary. The amount of funds disbursed to each beneficiary is based on evidence of similar livelihood programs in Bangladesh.

For PBCRG schemes, the evaluation team could not ascertain the percentage of funds allocated for women-centric projects and how many women benefited from the PBCRG schemes. Also, it was not possible to determine the degree to which prioritization of schemes reflected women's choice and voice, although LoGIC has reported that 26% of those participating in planning are women, implying relatively low involvement.

⁴⁷ LoGIC Annual Reviews

⁴⁸ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Census, 2011

Gender-related outputs and outcomes

The MIS data reports the CRF and CALO training has led to a return of more than 1.15 (that is, for every USD 1 grant received, beneficiaries were able to generate an income of USD 1.15) **culminating in an incremental effect on household income and expenditure**, as also highlighted in the ATM survey results.

Along with the CALO training, LoGIC has also sensitized and enabled beneficiaries to adopt climate adaptive practices raised *chullah*, storage, and storage of fresh rainwater for drinking during climate disasters. Beneficiaries have mentioned that these have been useful. **While the menu of livelihood options is not unique, the LoGIC CRF is supporting the most marginalized women who have been excluded from other programs therefore, it is improving their socio-economic conditions. The evaluation finds that interventions are indeed contributing to their economic empowerment, financial inclusion, and some changes in household dynamics that could lead to better coping mechanisms for climate shocks.** However, there are certain concerns with respect to the sustainability of the CALO activities given the risk perceptions of the beneficiaries as well as their low self-reported confidence levels, especially in Bhola and Patuakhali districts. This also evinces the need for more training as also requested by most beneficiaries.

The PBCRG-funded projects are largely gender-neutral except perhaps where drinking water-related facilities have been set up. While the identification of the intervention may not have been overtly gender-dictated, these drinking water plants have contributed to reducing the burden on women and girls from the drudgery of fetching water. However, the National Project Director has mentioned that 75% of the PBCRG schemes are gender-sensitive according to the gender budgeting norms of GoB – the evaluation team has not investigated this, although it is likely that the definition may be open to some interpretation.

In the FGDs, women said that they were more regular and vocal in the meetings conducted by LoGIC. While the project reports state that women's participation in UP meetings stands at 26%, there is no information on whether this increase in participation also includes an increase in 'voice'. Respondents to the FGDs said that very few of them attended although, some men from their families attended the meeting and they did not get opportunities to speak up at the UP meetings. Women also said that they knew the details of the PBCRG schemes because the project staff kept them informed and some also said that the UP displayed details of their schemes on noticeboards. However, it is important to note many of them are illiterate this was of limited value to them directly, but it has helped in building transparency.

From the management perspective, the evaluation team felt that the program could significantly benefit by having a dedicated gender expert. LoGIC should also consider adding awareness and training sessions for the UP Chairmen on how they can better encourage and incentivize greater participation of women and vulnerable people in the UP-planning meetings. Furthermore, in the selection of the PBCRG schemes, **there is scope for further mainstreaming of investments that disproportionately benefit women and strengthen the gender narrative along with the CCA rationale.**

6. Conclusions, lessons learned & Recommendations

6.1 OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

The above sections highlighted the performance and progress of the overall project and its various components. Given the pandemic and relatively short implementation period (considering that field-level physical interactions were curtailed because of pandemic-induced lockdowns), **LoGIC has initiated and delivered results in many areas**. It has introduced risk-informed LDP planning for UPs as well as helped to integrate CAA-DRR into the 5-year annual plans of LGIs. It has also piloted a model for decentralized performance-based fiscal transfers to 72 UPs for climate-resilient infrastructure and livelihoods, with strong fiduciary risk measurement to reduce leakages and nepotism. However, **LoGIC (both PBCRG and CRF) is yet to be properly institutionalized at the national and local levels and needs to build strong multi-sector partnerships**.

One of the main challenges reflected during the evaluation interactions with LoGIC stakeholders relates to the confusion around its dichotomy of purpose in terms of the demands related to maximizing delivery coverage and creating an impact at the local level on the one hand and, the specific requirements related to building a robust model of devolved planning and financing of local climate adaptation for mainstreaming and scale-up through government systems. This is important to clarify and agree upon since it has ramifications on the project delivery structure, approach, and results framework.

If LoGIC considers that it is a demonstration model or that it is developing a pathway as its key objective, scaling-up and institutionalization indicators should be defined in the results framework at the outcome level with sufficient attention and focus. If LoGIC is viewed through a systems transformation lens rather than a project delivery lens, the delivery approach needs to change with more emphasis on technical assistance support for the facilitation of delivery rather than pure project delivery.

Going forward, continued technical support, especially on building capacity at the local level, embedding LoGIC in LGD, and support in scaling up across UPs will all remain relevant and important. Although Bangladesh has several policies and programs on climate change and adaptation, these are mainly driven by the line departments with low cascading effect and low involvement of the Local Government Institutions and communities. Although there are some successes due to LoGIC in intervening with UPs to ensure adequate opportunities for continued participation of and contribution of marginalized and vulnerable populations in climate adaptation dialogue and interventions remain and require strengthening. Going forward, LoGIC needs to focus more on transferring skills and knowledge to local institutions and building local ownership. For this, it is also equally important to strengthen engagement with NGOs and CSOs to develop their capacities on climate adaptation, social audit and amplifying the voice and demand of the communities, and ensuring accountability at local levels.

LoGIC has successfully piloted a systematic mechanism to transfer climate finance at the local level with strong fiduciary standards, but it has not been able to address the challenge of limited public finance options to promote climate change adaptation at scale, especially related to access to international climate finance for local climate adaptation. This is challenging and as yet, a relatively uncharted territory, but it is essential to focus on how to go about leveraging alternate funding sources to ensure longer-term sustainability.

While the project has improved the life and immediate livelihoods context of many climate vulnerable beneficiaries within the most climate-vulnerable districts in the country, it is essential to focus more on consolidating the gains by building resilience and greater portability of skills to sustain livelihood opportunities in the relatively likely event of future climate-related displacement. Finally, it will be important for LoGIC to devise a mechanism to strengthen the complementarity of the PBCRG and CRF schemes and PBCRG and CRF investments at different geographic and administrative scales. This will help to ensure that LoGIC is positioned to deliver more significant impacts and outcomes.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As has been mentioned in the narrative above, LoGIC's success is primarily due to the intensity and active engagement of the project staff in planning, delivery, and monitoring. However, to ensure sustainability and scaling up, the focus going forward will need to be on **mainstreaming the project within the government system**. Although the project is being implemented under the National Implementation Mode, there is a need to embed it successfully within the parent LGD department. This can be done by:
 - a. **Deepening the level of awareness of LoGIC amongst the senior officials of LGD** and issuing directives to the district and Upazila officials to monitor, facilitate, and mainstream climate adaptation within the existing LGD programs and schemes implemented at the local level.
 - b. **Using the Climate Risk Atlas as a tool to embed climate adaptation in planning LGSP works at UP, Upazila, and district levels.** The LGD/LGI should encourage and support UP chairpersons and elected representatives to adopt the Atlas for planning both LGSP the ADP. LoGIC can provide structured support for this in the remaining time to strengthen the embedding process.
 - c. **Streamlining and simplifying LoGIC processes** (Processes here include: Beneficiary selection for CRF; reporting formats for use of PBCRG funds) for sustained use and training on the institutionalization of these processes at the UP level.
 - d. Supporting LGD to leverage additional resources from the Finance Ministry during the **budget preparation process for local climate-adaptive projects and schemes**, which would complement or supplement LoGIC funding and help scale up.
2. **LoGIC should simultaneously build strong linkages and engage with other relevant line departments at the national and local levels.** These include LGED and the Environment and Water Resources Ministries amongst others. The engagement will create synergies with other departmental schemes or programs to deliver holistic climate outcomes and resource optimization. LoGIC has demonstrated strong engagement with line departments at the local level, especially with Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries with their officials leading on the CRF training at the Upazila level. However, these mechanisms need to be formalized. There are some instances of engagement with officials of the Environment, Water Resources, and LGED departments at the local levels, **but these have been ad-hoc and based on individual project staff's own initiatives** - it needs to be formalized with structured engagement involving the active participation of the UP chairperson and representatives of beneficiary groups for building sectoral synergies and complementarities.

Similarly, deepening engagement at the national level will help influence policies and schemes for improved resilience and impact at the local level. The engagement with the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Environment & Forests might also help the local institutions and LoGIC access global funds for climate adaptation through existing climate funds channeled through the various departments, ministries, and or bilateral or multilateral financing agencies. There is an opportunity to strengthen the engagement and effectiveness of the PSC with a greater focus on strategic aspects of LoGIC.

One of the essential aspects of the project's sustainability is building local ownership and capacity by way of complementarities and synergies between policies, programs, and funding for climate adaptation that is targeted at common stakeholders and climatic areas. The project has delivered training and capacity-building for beneficiaries and elected representatives; however, many stakeholders suggested that these "capacities will not be sustained in the current format and scenario". Discussions with all groups of stakeholders reflect that more needs to be done here.

Along with capacity building, it is equally important to build ownership of the UP chairpersons and elected members by incentivizing them within the context of the political economy. For example, giving awards and recognition through monetary and non-monetary incentives to high-performing UP chairpersons and members might induce them to take ownership and adhere to the process and systems whilst generating wider political credit, all of which would help deliver quality climate-resilient infrastructure and support to the most climate-vulnerable people. Along with the capacity of UP elected representatives, awareness, and capacity building of the local officials, including UNOs

and DDLGs on climate adaptation, is essential for sustainability and institutionalization. Also, building the capacity of the local CSOs (which has not been a major focus to date) would help in mobilizing and amplifying the voice of the most climate-vulnerable in planning and decision making. This needs to be a focus in the remaining project period. This would help create demand for climate-resilient infrastructure and services and improve transparency, accountability, and quality. At the beneficiary level, it is equally important to facilitate market linkages, access to low-cost capital, and build portable skills for sustaining and scaling up their individual or groups' livelihood options. **The current plan of building a cooperative model is an excellent idea but needs a substantial investment of time and capacity building. An alternate option could be linking some of the existing groups with the existing well-functioning cooperatives/federations/other networks that may be promoted by CSOs in the region.**

3. Given that LoGIC is being conceived and developed as a proof of concept for local climate adaptation, it **needs to generate and share learnings of both process and implementation across other UPs for scaling up.** This aspect has been largely missing. Here, learnings and experiences could be shared among the piloted UPs, which might help them adopt best practices and avoid the pitfalls. It is also equally important that the lessons and experiences be shared with other UPs in the district and across other wards within the same UP to create the demand for such instruments and programs to improve lives and reduce the climate vulnerability of marginalized populations. Also, the project should engage with the National Institute of Local Government and World Bank's Horizontal Learning Program to ensure that the learnings and best practices of the LoGIC project and local climate adaptation modules are incorporated within the UP's training curriculum and shared with other UPs in the country.
4. The other important area for the project to invest in over the remaining period is **policy advocacy and influence.** This is an essential component of LoGIC and would help in institutionalization, scaling up, and sustainability. There has been some progress on developing the Climate Vulnerability Index, but corresponding work needs to speed up. Similarly, engagement and work on other identified policy focal areas such as piloting the Local Climate Fiscal Framework in 72 UPs, financing climate vulnerability enterprises, deepening insurance, and financial instruments for climate-adaptive schemes - needs to start at the earliest. Along with deepening the engagement with the Government for policy advocacy, **it is also essential that the project develops a policy influencing strategy that could lay out the issues, approaches, mode, and responsibilities. Based on the evaluation team's experience and stakeholders' discussions, this work needs to go beyond workshops.** Here, LoGIC could explore other approaches such as developing policy briefs, hosting talk shows, engaging with the media, and reaching out to key influencers or advisors in government to influence policy. Also, broadening the policy dialogue platform to incorporate and create more space for donors to engage on relevant policy issues might be helpful since they also have other funding and strategic political leverage that could help in taking forward the agenda.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

5. To achieve the intended objectives and impact, **it is important to address some of LoGIC's operational challenges.** Specifically,
 - a. **It is essential to strengthen the climate science⁴⁹** in the risk atlas through further analysis of exposure, damage modeling, and assessment of risk to design appropriate climate-resilient works at the district, Upazila, and UP levels
 - b. To enhance the project's impact, it is important to **build synergies between PBCRG and CRF projects** and ensure that the PBCRG projects complement larger climate-resilient projects planned or implemented in the district for enhanced impact and sustainability
 - c. The project's success on policy influence and scaling-up will be dependent on the quality of evidence generation. While LoGIC has invested in a field-level team for Monitoring and Evaluation to collect data online, **it is essential that it also pays attention and provides the necessary technical support to strengthen data quality and**

⁴⁹ Decisions based on interpretation of climate models at local levels that include considerations of vulnerabilities, exposures and risks, both present and future

data analysis for the recently launched ATM. This will help in improved data for reporting and decision-making.

- d. LoGIC should focus on its **ways of working and deepening engagement with the Steering Committee** to ensure that the platform provides strategic policy directives and facilitates embedding the project within LGD and GoB systems

6.3 LESSONS LEARNED

In addition to the specific recommendations, the evaluation findings also give rise to some general lessons that may be relevant more widely to other programs, donors, and governments implementing similar initiatives elsewhere.

- **Political Ownership:** One of the major learnings from LoGIC is that incentive-based systems such as the minimum conditions-performance measures of the PBCRG to improve efficiency and effectiveness would be more effective if there is political ownership at both the national and local levels of and the systems/structure facilitates the political economy context. Failing this, there is a high risk that efficiency and effectiveness gains in the project lifetime will dissipate if the program is being majorly driven by the project staff.
- **Policy Influence and Agenda Steering:** It is also important to note that having a National Project Director with a 50%-time commitment and a governing board with different government stakeholders does not necessarily lead to policy influence and embedding in government systems unless the Secretariat takes a more proactive approach to engage and steer the governing board for strategic decision-making.
- **Convergence with Larger Sectoral Programs:** Another key learning emerging from LoGIC is that the selected schemes or interventions should consciously seek synergies and complementarities with large sectoral programs and projects for improved and cascading impacts. For instance, our discussions highlighted that though drainage systems were developed to facilitate sunflower cultivation, the absence of local embankments or dykes in the area led to large-scale flooding which ultimately exposes the LoGIC PBCRG solution to risk.
- **Efficiency:** To ensure lower overheads, it is important to build/mainstream LoGIC within the existing fiscal transfer mechanism of local governments. Otherwise, it creates complexity and silos along with duplication of efforts required for maintaining separate accounts and reporting formats. Alignment with the existing fiscal transfer mechanisms helps strengthen the existing system and also enhances sustainability within the government system.

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