

# National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP)



## MID-TERM EVALUATION



by  
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UNDP Bangladesh  
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Project/Outcome Information		
<b>Project/outcome title</b>	National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP)	
<b>Atlas ID</b>	00084928	
<b>Corporate outcome and output</b>	<p>Outcome 1: Increase opportunities, especially for women and disadvantaged groups, to contribute to and benefit from economic progress;</p> <p>Output 1.1: The Government has the knowledge and skills to target the remaining pockets of poverty better and expand opportunities for women to contribute to and benefit from economic progress.</p> <p>Output 1.2: National and local governments have the capacity to implement urban and rural poverty policies and programmes</p> <p>Outcome 3: Enhance effective management of the natural and man-made environment focusing on improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable individuals and groups</p> <p>Output 3.1: Government institutions have improved capacities and institutional and legal frameworks to respond to and ensure resilient recovery from earthquakes, weather extremes, and environmental emergencies</p>	
<b>Country</b>	Bangladesh	
<b>Region</b>	RBAP	
<b>Date project document signed</b>	04 January 2017	
<b>Project dates</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Planned end</b>
	15 August 2018	30 June 2023
<b>Total committed budget</b>	\$ 97 Million	
<b>Project expenditure at the time of evaluation</b>		
<b>Funding source</b>	FCDO, GoB and UNDP	
<b>Implementing party<sup>1</sup></b>	UNDP and LGD, MoLGRD&C	

Evaluation information		
<b>Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)</b>	Project	
<b>Final/midterm review/ other</b>	Midterm Review	
<b>Period under evaluation</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
	2018	June 2022
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<b>Evaluation dates</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Completion</b>
	July 2022	September 2022

<sup>1</sup> This is the entity that has overall responsibility for the implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Besides coordinating the meetings, the town team members in the cities provided immense support during the discussions and interviews with key informants.

The team would also like to record the inputs and insights from development partners, academia, and national and non-governmental organisations.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AOM	Annual Outcome Monitoring
BIP	Bangladesh Institute of Planners
CAP	Community Action Plan
CCVA	Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
CDC	Community Development Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHDF	Community Housing Development Fund
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease of 2019
CPC	Community Purchase Committee
CRMIF	Climate Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund
CWAP	City-Wide Action Plan
DPP	Development Programme Proposal
EFM	Early and Forced Marriage
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
IFCA	Institutional and Financial Capacity Assessment
HDRC	Human Development Resource Centre
KII	Key Informant Interview
LG	Local Government
LGD	Local Government Division
LGED	Local Government Engineering Division
LGRD&C	Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
LIUPCP	Livelihoods Improvement for Urban Poor Community Project
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LTAP	Land Tenure Action Plan
M4i	Managing for Impact
MAB	Municipal Association of Bangladesh
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
N&WBC	Nutrition & Women Friendly Business Corner
NPD	National Programme Director
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUP	National Urban Policy
NUPRP	National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme
PG	Primary Group
PIC	Programme Implementation Committees
PWD	People with Disability
RMS	Revenue Management System
SAC	Social Audit Committee
SCG	Savings and Credit Group
SEF	Socio-Economic Fund
SIF	Settlement Improvement Fund
TLCC	Town Level Coordination Committee

TM	Town Manager
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TPB	Town Programme Board
TSC	Town Steering Committee

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) is Bangladesh's premier urban poverty reduction programme which is being implemented by the Local Government Division (LGD) under the Ministry of LGRD&C, managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and financed by the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). The Programme aims to support the initiatives undertaken for a "balanced, sustainable and pro-poor development". The programme is targeted to cover up to four million urban poor living in slums and low-income settlements in 19 urban areas and ensure sustainable living conditions and livelihoods for them. The programme's response is at three levels: (i) community level, (ii) municipal level and (iii) national level. NUPRP is aligned with the national five-year plans, the UN development assistance framework and the UNDP's strategic plan and country priorities.

The NUPRP, given its significant development agenda, consists of three outcome indicators with a prime focus on the urban policy environment and is designed to promote effective and inclusive urbanisation in Bangladesh. It is being achieved inter-alia, through five outputs. The output indicators measure the project's performance based on the evaluation criteria: Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, and sustainability. They are:

- i. Improved coordination, planning and management
- ii. Enhanced organisation, capability, and effective voice of poor urban communities
- iii. Improved well-being and security of the urban poor, particularly women
- iv. More secure land tenure and housing
- v. More and better climate-resilient and community-based infrastructure

The indicators are used to measure the project's relevance based on evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

The main objective of the Midterm Evaluation (MTE) is to undertake a Performance Evaluation and Process Evaluation of the NUPRP as it reaches its fourth year of programme implementation. The scope of the MTE is to track the performance against the annual work plan (AWP), review the programme and operational processes, and make recommendations for improvement and correction. The evaluation aims to enable decision-makers and operational staff to evaluate their strategies, provide for mid-course correction, help define the way forward for future operations, and prepare an exit strategy.

The approach has primarily used *qualitative* methods. The assessments are based on *data triangulation*, combining primary and secondary data collection validated through a participatory process. The evaluation is based on programme reports and field-level validation of reported constraints and performance. The MTE covered seven cities, and in each local government (LG), discussions were held with the communities, local political representatives, Mayor, and city and programme officials. Central-level discussions were held with the LGD and other partners engaged in the development field apart from the programme management team.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dhaka North City Corporation, Narayanganj City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation, Khulna City Corporation, Chittagong City Corporation, Cox's Bazar Pourashava, and Chandpur Pourashava

The project's relevance is high as it contributes to achieving the target aimed at benefiting 3.1 million poor people through socioeconomic and infrastructure interventions against a planned target of four million.<sup>3</sup> The project also enabled localising 10 sustainable development goals (SDGs) (**Goals 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,10,11, and 13**). The actions aim to reduce poverty through economic grants for upgrading skills, establishing businesses, providing nutrition support to lactating mothers and children for up to 1,000 days, and improving access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene, and on-site basic and off-site climate resilient infrastructure.

The project has efficiently delivered all activities at cost and on time through the intensive use of technology from forming groups, targeting inputs based on evidence, and ensuring value for money. The community structures, facilities and systems, analytical application, and climate assessments have been relevant to the LGs and select development partners in defining their interventions and targeting national programmes.

In terms of effectiveness, the findings suggest that the programme is structured around a community platform, with community development clusters led by women who prepare community action plans (CAPs) and provide support in identifying project beneficiaries based on a robust information base for evidence-based targeting, monitoring and implementation. Essentially, the emphasis is on leaving no one behind (LNOB) as the design is participatory and the implementation responsive to the community's needs. The evaluation team finds that the project effectively enables dialogue on national policy priorities, and fulfils the climate agenda. This agenda consists of adopting city-level and community-level assessments and providing off-site infrastructure interventions (SIF & CRMIF).

The impact in terms of the transformation of women as leaders at community and city levels in a major change, reflecting the strength inputs provided by mobilization, women-led inclusive planning and in implementation. This has enhanced the pride of women in being relevant in addressing the local needs and in their ability to lead the communities.

The level of coherence of the project is reflected in its aim and scope to achieve the national plan agenda of LNOB. The project demonstrates a multi-dimensional approach to targeting poverty, adherence to inclusivity in planning and budgeting, design and implementation, and integration of select concepts with other UNDP and development partner programmes. The NUPRP has built and manages a database of 706,507 urban poor households, under 3146 community development committees (CDCs), 258 CDC clusters, and 19 Town Federations.

The project's impacts have been substantial, with women being empowered to the extent that a few women cluster leaders represent the community as elected leaders in the LG council, a platform developed for their voices to be heard, and the inclusive process from identification to implementation, women-led and ensuring the safety of women, child and persons with disabilities.

From a sustainability perspective, the evaluation team finds that the community housing development federation (CHDF) and SCGs are sustainable independently. However, the sustenance of the CHDF is linked to reforms in land tenure and landholdings and regulatory support from the LG. The overall sustainability element in the project design was addressed through LG revenue enhancements but is constrained due to low realisation in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and a not-so-robust revenue management system (RMS).

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<sup>3</sup> The target set in 2016 is based on the project covering 36 towns. This includes 3.1 members of primary groups (PG) and 0.9 of non-PG members.

The evaluation has observed that the project has attained most of its desired outputs despite the time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NUPRP supported the government in addressing COVID-19 priorities with its database and community groups created to guide actions aimed at the affected members. The advocacy efforts include propagating better hygiene practices.

The project design and contributions are significant in addressing the national priorities of better management of urbanisation through a targeted approach to socioeconomic and infrastructure priorities. NUPRP has demonstrated the relevance of participatory planning and evidence-based implementation decisions. The key findings of the evaluation are:

- i. The project is comprehensive in its approach, focused on socioeconomic, health and infrastructure.
- ii. The community- and women-led approach to the definition and implementation of actions significantly contributes to addressing development priorities. There has been a shift in the LGs' responsiveness to the needs of the communities.
- iii. The project has carried out poverty and vulnerability assessments for all cities. As most towns are prone to disaster, it is critical to convert these into implementable programmes and explore the convergence of resources from various departments responsible for specific components such as irrigation, environment and forest. There is a need to scale up support for citywide infrastructure assessments.
- iv. Overall, the project is on track. While most of the targets are close to achievement, a reduction in the budget of around 20% may impact committed investments, especially in infrastructure components and operational budgets of the projects, especially when the project is trying to cope with the time lost due to the pandemic. Reducing costs should ensure support for institutionalising the systems, procedures, and practices.
- v. Reduction in funding and the possibility of no extension to the project calls for a safe and responsible exit, given the expectation of the LGs and the reputational risk to stakeholders. For instance, the low-cost housing programme is in its early stages of implementation. So, arrangements should be made for the transfer of the programme to the LGD to implement the remaining tasks after the project's closure.
- vi. An upfront approval of a policy framework mainstreaming lower-income settlements and balancing socioeconomic and infrastructure priorities will enable resource allocation as part of the national plan process and scaling up the effort countrywide.
- vii. The use of information technology for analysis-based interventions is key to efficient management and response.
- viii. Community contracting to implement infrastructure must be institutionalised in the LG as this mechanism, besides resulting in cost savings, can generate employment locally and create a pool of small contractors.
- ix. While the focus of the NUPRP has been on poverty mitigation and addressing climate vulnerability in a limited way, resource allocation for citywide response would have helped transform the project's scope to include climate change and environmental sustainability. An associated aspect is financial sustainability. Resource allocation for LGs in the annual development budget is critical.
- x. The project's success is also due to the support from an entrenched town team. While the transfer of skills is on, the town team, with external support, will enable the institutionalisation of approaches and scaling up to more towns.

The key recommendations of the evaluation are

- i. From a closure perspective, continued support will be needed to advance the policy dialogue and focus on the SIF and CRMIF components, given their higher investment outlay and priorities in addressing climate-related vulnerabilities. The unfinished agenda will include the socio-economic components and housing and low-cost housing-constrained by land tenure/ security.
- ii. Scaling up/ sustaining the momentum with regard to community mobilisation, one of this project's key drivers, is critical. This would require strengthening the capacity within the LG to support such tasks in data collection, management, and evidence-based decision-making. In this regard, the results need to be revised.
- iii. As most of the socio-economic and safety net aspects are not directly obligatory functions except in city corporations, there is a need to integrate and allocate additional resources as part of social safety programmes to address urban skill development, incentivise education, especially that of the girl child and, maternal and child health.
- iv. This closure would significantly impact the low-cost housing component as the work commenced recently, and there has been progress in select cities regarding land allocation/ transfer. This is critical, as it is a policy priority of the GoB. While the LGD would continue to implement the component, the transfer mechanism must be initiated through a tripartite agreement to negate any reputational risk to agencies.
- v. There is a need to continue to transfer skills and knowledge in the remaining part of the project and support the LGD on the way forward and in the closure of the project. In this regard, sufficient operational budget would have to be ensured.
- vi. During the remaining phase operationalising the revenue management system in one town and upgrading the CCVA to a city-wide investment programme will benefit future interventions.
- vii. As demonstrated by the project, the design at the local level needs to be inclusive-led by women-led at the community level and stakeholder responsive at the city level, data-driven with community and municipal level information management to support evidence-based planning of interventions and use of community contracting for on-site infrastructure in lower-income settlements. This should include GIS mapping of services and facilities.
- viii. Focus on complete comprehensive response in a city than partial coverage in a town. The choice of interventions be defined by LGs based on needs.
- ix. Address city-wide climate resilient infrastructure to be built on CCVAs addressing resilience –Disaster responsive actions considering environmental dimensions such as afforestation, conservation through direct measures such as protection, restoration of natural bodies, and better land (land use planning) and of solid waste management. This would also mean revisiting the City Master Plans and cross-cutting interventions from other Central Ministries such as environment, irrigation forest and Revenue, and human resource management (use of existing LG structures or strengthened LGs, reflecting the strengths of the town team).
- x. UNDP/Project Manager- must move from implementation to facilitation- strengthen LGD/LG capacities to plan, design, implement and monitor. This would ensure the institutionalisation of skills and process upfront.
- xi. Under the leadership of the LG Division- build on the NUPRP to evolve a national framework or a national facility to address direct and indirect poverty reduction components and city-wide infrastructure. This would require an alignment of national priorities with those of development partners for a common understanding of interventions, possible pooling of resources into the facility, and streamlining ADP allocations to target actions as agreed upon as part of the national framework. This could

also mean a new facility or restructuring existing institutions such as the Bangladesh Municipal Development Fund. As necessary, the facility/ framework should include financial and technical support (“concept to commissioning”) in mobilisation, project development, and implementation support.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) is Bangladesh's premier urban poverty reduction programme which is being implemented by the Local Government Division (LGD) under the Ministry of LGRD&C, managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and financed by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). The Programme aims to support the initiatives undertaken for a "balanced, sustainable and pro-poor development". The programme covers four million urban poor living in slums and low-income settlements in 19 urban areas (11 City Corporations and eight Poaurashava). It contributes toward ensuring sustainable living conditions and livelihoods for them. The programme's response is at three levels: (i) community level, (ii) municipal level, and (iii) national level.

The programme is designed to respond to the increasing rate of urbanisation and the attendant problems such as urban poverty, the strain on urban centres with more and more people migrating to them, and the need for access to essential urban services and resources, particularly for the marginalised communities and women and children.

The basis for the NUPRP's design is the National Sustainable Development Strategy (2010-2021) and Outline Perspective Plan (OPP), aimed at improved access to adequate housing and essential services, social safety coverage, livelihood support, and the LGs' capacity to manage the response to the emerging urban demands. These development priorities, which are part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (7FYP), remain relevant in the ongoing 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (8FYP). Besides achieving improvement in governance, the primary target is to enhance access to water and sanitation for the urban population and reduce the population living in slums by 25 per cent in 2025.

The 8FYP is structured around six core themes: rapid economic recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic; accelerating gross domestic product (GDP) through employment generation, poverty reduction and inclusiveness; sustainable development pathway resilient to disaster and climate change; sustainable use of natural resources and successful management of the inevitable urbanisation transition, and development and improvement of critical institutions; and attaining sustainable development goals (SDG) targets and coping with the challenges of graduating out of the least developed country (LDC) status in 2026 to a developing nation. The programme is aligned with the core themes of the plan as well as some of the cross-cutting themes such as climate resilience and reduction of gender and social vulnerabilities.

### **B. OBJECTIVES OF THIS EVALUATION**

The main objective of the Midterm Evaluation (MTE) is to undertake a performance and process evaluation of the NUPRP as it reaches its fourth year of programme implementation. The scope of the MTE is to measure the performance against the AWP, review the programme and operational processes, and make recommendations for improvement and correction. The scope includes focal areas for the remaining period of the project and exit options with a focus on institutionalising the approaches.

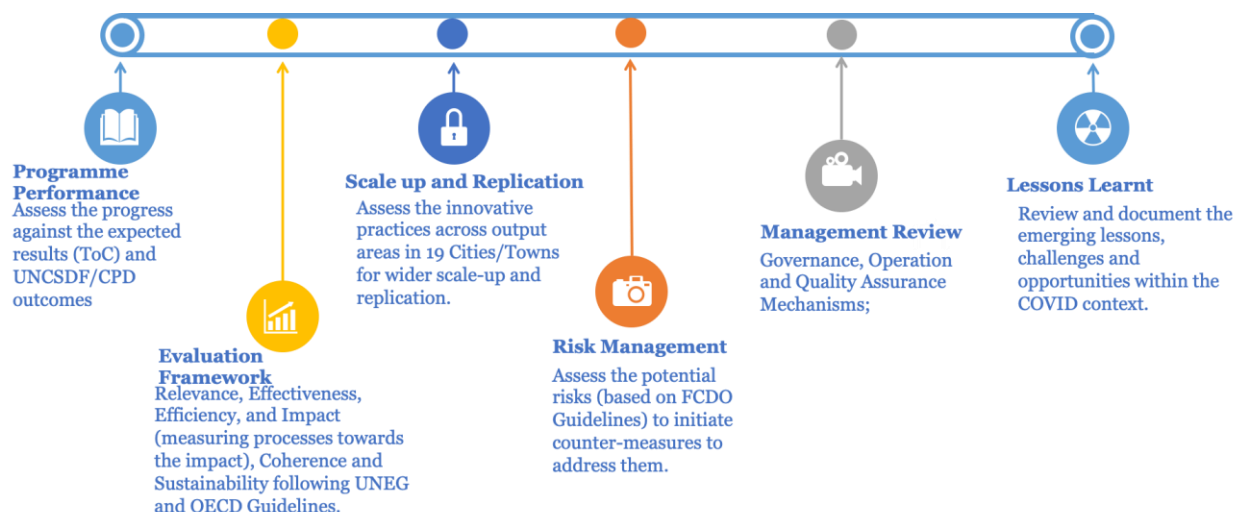


Figure 1-Specific Objectives

More specifically, the objectives of the MTE include (Fig 1):

- a. **Programme Performance:** Assessment of the progress made towards achieving the expected results since the programme's inception in August 2018 against the approved Results Framework and its contribution to the UNSDF/CPD outcomes.
- b. **Evaluability:** Assessment of the Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, (measuring processes towards the impact) coherence, and sustainability, coherence and sustainability of the programme within the country context.
- c. **Programme Design:** Assessment of the relevance of the Theory of Change and Programme Strategies in the evolving context of changing socioeconomic developments caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- d. **Sustainability:** Review of and recommendations for the sustainability of output-wise strategies. While this has been attempted, the NUPRP as a programme focuses on interrelated tasks with the community platform as a base.
- e. **Partnership and Coordination:** Assessment of quality and effectiveness of the existing partnership arrangements across output areas, operations and cities, and recommendation of potential partnerships to strengthen the coordination and sustainability of activities after the NUPRP is phased out.
- f. **Scalability/Replication of Good Practices:** Assessment of innovative practices across output areas in 19 cities/towns for scaling up and replicating the project and their relevance for future programmes.
- g. **Risk Mitigation:** Assessment of potential risks (based on FCDO Guidelines) to develop countermeasures.
- h. **Governance, Operational and Quality Assurance Mechanisms:** A rapid assessment of management, operational and quality assurance mechanisms at the HQ/City level to strengthen the internal processes and recommend measures to reduce the operating costs to respond to the overall budget revision.
- i. **Lessons Learned, Challenges, and New Opportunities:** Review and document emerging lessons, challenges and opportunities within the COVID context.
- j. **Recommendations** to enhance the implementation and sustainability of the programme.

**Table 1-Programme Overview**

Programme Period	2016-2023	
Start as Planned	August 2016	
Actual	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2018 Delayed due to approval of the Development Programme Proposal (DPP) by GoB.	
Current Status	In Progress	
Phasing Phase I- August 2018 Phase II- October 2018 Phase III-April 2019	7 Cities 3 Cities 9 Cities	
History of Change in Scope		
<b>Change in scope in relation to outputs</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Impact on Programme and Budget</b>
Multipronged COVID-19 emergency response	May 2020	Communication and outreach; establishing hand washing facilities and hygienic packages; strengthening coordination function; food assistance; sensitisation and capacity building of health officials; data, research and third-party monitoring and operations.
Change of scope to cover livelihoods as part of LIUPCP	Jan 2021	The fundamental change has been the inclusion of a housing component financed by the Government of Bangladesh

**C. TARGET AUDIENCE:**

The report is primarily directed at the Management Team of the UNDP and the programme besides the FCDO, the GoB and other stakeholders such as development partners and NGOs. The primary focus is on course correction and prioritisation of activities for the remaining phase of the programme, in view of the recent reduction in the programme budget and the possible closure of the programme, as planned, by 2023.

The programme is in the penultimate year of implementation and has seen a budget reduction of 20 per cent in the current year. It is considered for closure by 2023 with a possible budget cut.

**D. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

This report is structured into five sections.

Section I presents an overview of the project.

Section II describes the interventions.

Section III presents the scope and objectives of this evaluation.

Section IV provides an overview of the approach and methods.

Section V presents the key findings, recommendations and lessons learnt.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTIONS

Urbanisation is rapid in Bangladesh and stands at 31.5 per cent.<sup>4</sup> Besides natural growth, migration to urban Bangladesh is mainly due to economic and climate-related impacts.<sup>5</sup> Most areas in the country are prone to hazards (Fig-2), and cities covered under the project have limited capacities to respond to the new wave of migrants and the new poor post-pandemic.

The NUPRP is designed to promote effective and inclusive urbanisation in Bangladesh and better understand the need to address climate vulnerability. NUPRP's objectives are designed to be achieved inter-alia through five outputs (Table 2). Besides reflecting the national priorities regarding poverty reduction and managing urban growth, the design is aligned with UNDAF stated aim (Outcome 2) of enhancing and effectively managing the natural and manmade environment, focusing on improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable individuals and groups. As well as the CPDs intended outcomes of increasing opportunities for women and the disadvantaged and outcome 2 of UNDAF.<sup>6</sup> From a strategic plan perspective, the design, while focused on progress on the SDGs, supports the



Figure 2-Major Hazards in Bangladesh

GoB commitment at the urban sector level to structural and systemic transformation through inclusive planning, responsive governance and enhanced delivery of services; leaving no one behind and building resilience capacities of community and institutions to respond to crisis and external shocks.

<sup>4</sup> BBS (2022) Population & Housing Census 2022- Preliminary Report

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.adb.org/publications/bangladesh-climate-disaster-risk-atlas-volume-1>

<sup>6</sup> **Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework: UNDAF Outcome 2:** Enhance effective management of the natural and manmade environment focusing on improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable individuals and groups.

### CPD Outcome:

1. Increase opportunities, especially for women and disadvantaged groups to contribute to and benefit from economic progress;

3. Enhance effective management of the natural and man-made environment focusing on improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable individuals and groups

### Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan:

Output 1.1.2 (Poverty) Marginalized groups, particularly the poor, women, people with disabilities and displaced are empowered to gain universal access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets to build productive capacities and benefit from sustainable livelihoods and jobs;

Output 3.3.1 (Resilience) Evidence-based assessment and planning tools and mechanisms applied to enable implementation of gender-sensitive and risk-informed prevention and preparedness to limit the impact of natural hazards and pandemics and promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies

### CPD Outputs:

Output 1.1. The Government has knowledge and skills to better target remaining pockets of poverty and expand opportunities for women to contribute to and benefit from economic progress

Output 1.2: National and local governments have the capacity to implement urban and rural poverty policies and programmes

Output 3.1.: Government institutions have improved capacities and institutional and legal frameworks to respond to and ensure resilient recovery from earthquakes, weather extremes, and environmental emergencies

As outlined, besides the five-year plan priorities, the project component of housing is one of the government's priorities. Since most urban poor in slums do not have land tenure, component is of significance.

While the FCDO is a major financing partner, the project has an agreement with UNICEF on select health aspects. It has partnered with the University of Dhaka on issues relating to gender.<sup>7</sup> Human Resource Development Centre supports the project on outcome monitoring, Alive and Thrive on aspects relating to nutrition, including the efforts of Bangladesh National Nutrition Council. The Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) and the Bangladesh Urban Forum are partners in the capacity assessment of the MAB, areas for institutional strengthening and advocacy, and a policy to address slum improvement. The Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) is engaged with the project in advancing the urban sector policy, documentation of best practices, and municipal financial management issues.

Given the extensive development objectives, the NUPRP consists of three outcome indicators (**Annex 5**). The outcomes primarily focus on the overall framework addressing policy aspects to enable better positioning of future interventions, addressing resource allocation issues towards poverty measures and health, addressing climate vulnerability through investments and aspects relating to empowerment and leadership and the ability to influence local priorities and decisions. Except for the policy measures, elements of influencing outcomes are reflected in the output indicators. These output indicators (**Annex 6**) are used to measure the project's performance concerning the objectives pertaining to Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, and sustainability (**Table 3**). The measurements are based on various project reports. The five outputs are:

- i. Strengthened pro-poor urban management, policy and planning;
- ii. Strong community organisations and an effective voice for the urban poor;
- iii. Improved economic and social well-being for the urban poor;
- iv. More secure tenure and housing finance for the urban poor; and
- v. Improved resilient infrastructure in, and serving, low-income settlements

The intervention by each output includes:

**Table 2-Actions by Key Outputs**

Output	Tasks/ Key Actions
Strengthened pro-poor urban management, policy and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engagement of LGs for inclusive climate-resilient urban development</li> <li>▪ Poverty mapping</li> <li>▪ Community Action Planning (CAP)</li> <li>▪ City urban poverty profiling</li> <li>▪ Functional decentralised committees</li> <li>▪ Climate change vulnerability assessments</li> <li>▪ Urban resilience strategies</li> </ul>
Enhanced organisations, capabilities and effective voice of the urban poor.	<p>Formation of community platforms (i.e., CDC, CDC clusters and Town Federation) and build their capacity.</p> <p>Preparation and Implementation of community inclusive plan (CAPs)</p>

<sup>7</sup> A framework for cooperation, facilitate and strengthen collaboration between UNDP and UNICEF, on a non-exclusive basis, in areas of common interest, based on a work plan. The focus is to strengthen the synergy and create scope for future scale up of collaborative programming aimed at improving the nutritional status of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children in Bangladesh.

Output	Tasks/ Key Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhancing community governance by implementing SACs, CPCs and CSCs.</li> <li>▪ Mobilising Savings and Credit groups (S&amp;CG)</li> <li>▪ Strengthening capacity of community platforms to manage community led savings &amp; credit programme.</li> </ul>
Improved economic and social wellbeing for the urban poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Socioeconomic support:</li> <li>▪ Education grants</li> <li>▪ Nutritional support for pregnant and lactating mothers and children (7-14 months)</li> <li>▪ Functional Safe Community Committees (SCC)</li> <li>▪ Business grants</li> <li>▪ Apprentice/skill grants</li> <li>▪ Awareness, capacity building and education on VAWG and Nutrition</li> </ul>
More secure tenure and housing finance for the urban poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishment of Community Housing Development Federation and access to housing loans</li> <li>▪ Access to low-cost housing</li> <li>▪ Mapping of vacant lands</li> </ul>
Improved resilient infrastructure in, and serving, low-income settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to basic services such as safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, drainage, pathways, staircases, and Community Resource Centres through SIF</li> <li>▪ Climate resilient infrastructures as a locally led adaptation to mitigate the climate shock and stresses through CRMIF. This also serves as an evacuation route for vulnerable communities. Typically, the infrastructure includes elevation of RCC roads above the highest flood level, RCC drains to mitigate the waterlogging issue, slope protection infrastructures such as RCC palisading, retaining walls, brick mattresses with riprap, DEWATS (decentralisation of waste-water treatment system), wooden bridge repair, tree plantation, cross-drainage structures, and sluice gate. To mitigate salinity, RO technology (reverse osmosis) is incorporated. CRMIF interventions include rainwater harvesting, slope turfing, and palm tree plantation as a defence against lightning strikes.</li> </ul>

Evaluation primarily focuses on the relevance of a multidimensional approach in managing urban poverty and urbanisation through a women-led approach at the national level. At the LG level, the focus is on the relevance and effectiveness of participatory women-led approaches and governance measures to address local development priorities and the LG being responsive to needs. At the community level, the focus is on the effectiveness of the inputs and approaches in defining the community's socioeconomic and infrastructure priorities and demanding their implementation to ensure a better quality of life and recognition within the city.

The residents of low-income neighbourhoods and city authorities are expected to reap the maximum benefit from the project. Women, men, boys, girls, and people with disabilities were considered during the project's planning stages. The project's goals include providing

women opportunities to gain new skills, start businesses, and increase their income, and grants for education and apprenticeship programmes. The expectation was that improving the quality of life for people in slums and other low-income communities would decrease the burden on local governments.

**Design Weakness:** While sound in terms of addressing national objectives through the outputs and evidence-based targeting, the design covers roughly a third of the urban poor in each town, and the resources are spread too thinly over 19 towns. The design would reflect the intention if the objective were to demonstrate an integrated approach. However, the design also intended to enable LGs using own sources to scale up (sustainability) is an aspect that has been overestimated. A related issue pertains to the institutionalisation of the mechanism. While the programme implementation arrangement is sound; the tasks are managed by the project team (town team) and with limited participation from the LGs. While this arrangement is effective from a demonstration perspective, a different arrangement will be needed to scale up and institutionalise.

### III. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

**Scope of Evaluation:** In response to the objectives, the MTE is fact-based, sound and objective. The approach has been primarily *qualitative* in nature, and the assessments are based on *data triangulation*, combining primary and secondary data collection validated through a participatory process. The three stages of this MTE included a desk review, stakeholder consultations, and a dual validation process through a debriefing event, where the evaluation team presented its preliminary findings and recommendations and circulation of the draft report for comments (Annex I).

The evaluation applied a *results-based* approach to reflect on the ability of institutions (capacities) to fulfil their mandates and functions according to the agreed plans and strategies (baseline). Any improvement over time in the ability of supported institutions to fulfil their mandate serves as a *proxy* for improved institutional capacity. Comparing the baseline and results achieved since the start, the assessment reflects causal links between these results and the support provided by the programme.

The evaluation process to understand the trajectory of the relevance of the NUPRP/LIUPCP is well within the overall political context of the country in general and the urban government in particular. This relevance assessment has been enhanced by assessing the bigger picture of development partner support and the ability of the UNDP to capture these efforts and explore synergies and complementarities in results dissemination and scale-up. In this context, discussions were held with the relevant stakeholders.

#### Objectives of the Evaluation

With the NUPRP is in its fourth year of implementation since its commencement in August 2018, the primary goal of the MTE is to conduct a Performance Evaluation and Process Evaluation. The MTE's remit extends to checking in on the performance in comparison to the annual work plan (AWP), examining the programming and operational processes, and suggesting recommendations on areas of attention for the remainder of the project's duration and potential exit strategies with emphasis on institutionalisation of the approaches.

#### Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The MTE was conducted using the OECD's standard framework. To date, the framework has successfully met all of the goals of the midterm evaluation. Relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, coherence, and sustainability are the six pillars on which this theory-based paradigm rests. Each criterion under the OECD framework serves a distinct function and investigates a unique facet of the project. To determine the project's relevance, considerations include its significance or justification.

This evaluation aimed to demonstrate efficient resource management using the criterion of efficiency. The MTE used impact analysis to determine the most significant shifts following the project's intervention. The potential for double counting with other initiatives and the establishment of collaboration have been examined at length. Using the sustainability criterion, the evaluation team has tried to determine how well the UNDP, the LDG, and the FCDO can keep the productive processes going. Coherence has been referred to as the degree to which and the manner in which the NUPRP has remained consistent with various institutions and groups. Effectiveness is inferred by weighing the current state of affairs against predetermined benchmarks and data. Table 3 demonstrates each criterion, key questions, data sources, data collection methods, and tools. Indicators or success standards

and data analysis methods have guided the evaluation team in finding the answers to the main objectives of the evaluation.

**Table 3-Evaluation Framework: Key Issues to Address**

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevance in the context of the government's development objectives, the UNDP's priorities in sectors and country focus, and cross-cutting themes.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the NUPRP influenced urban priorities is defined under the 8FYP (basically, this includes the review of ProDoc developed in the 7FYP).</li> <li>▪ The implementation strategy and approach reflect the needs of beneficiaries and stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Responsiveness of the design/procedures to the change in demands of the beneficiaries/stakeholders. Change in the scope processes to respond to changing times, levels of decision making on change—technical and financial. Levels of delegation in response mechanisms.</li> <li>▪ Effectiveness of inclusivity and governance.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which needs of the beneficiaries, empowerment and emergency response have been addressed so far.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the NUPRP has influenced development partner/GoB programmes regarding approach/financing methodology.</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document Review, In-depth Interview KII	Achievement of national objectives through interventions such as poverty reduction measures, women empowerment, LNOB and access to services. Level of inclusivity in planning and delivery. Adaptation of approaches internally and by development partners	Theme generation and data triangulation

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent to which the NUPRP has demonstrated cost efficiency in project implementation concerning cost and time overruns. This is based on discussions with PMU and select Local Governments.</li> <li>▪ Programmed budget versus actual utilisation.</li> <li>▪ Convergence of programmes/budgets.</li> <li>▪ Programme management. Resource allocation, innovation, responsiveness and skill development.</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document review, in-depth Interview KII	On-time completion of interventions and timing of delivery of social services.	Coding, pattern, theme generation and data triangulation
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Performance against outputs – Results and log frame-based.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the targeted outputs have been delivered so far and the extent of contribution to expected immediate and intermediate outcomes are expressed as a change toward the targets of stipulated indicators in the log frame.</li> <li>▪ Policy interventions and inclusive planning were initiated.</li> <li>▪ The extent of institutionalising NUPRP approaches (local and national) into mainstream local government programmes and budgeting</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the inputs have addressed cross-cutting themes of environment, social and gender dimensions, and UN Global Compact strategy.</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document Review, In-depth Interview KII	As per indicators mentioned in Annex 5 and 6 concerning outcomes and outputs.	Coding, Pattern, Theme Generation and data triangulation

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent to which the targets are met is set in each of the five components of the project (during the midterm-update of the bi-annual report information of 2022).</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has strengthened pro-poor urban management, policy and planning; review of the plan and associated policy directives/ programme and financing.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has been able to promote citizen participation and community mobilisation; any contribution, cash or kind, from Local Governments/communities.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has facilitated improved economic and social well-being of the urban poor; review of livelihood and skill development programmes and conversion of inputs in sustained employment and enhanced incomes; sample discussions in towns.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has secured tenure and housing finances for the urban poor and its impact on their living conditions: community consultations and sample individual-level discussions.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has facilitated the improvement in climate-resilient infrastructure for the people living in low-income settlements- reduction/reduced</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document Review, In-depth Interview KII FGD	Levels of progress on outcomes and achievement outputs. robustness of community-led measures in achieving the objectives	Coding, Pattern, Theme Generation and data triangulation

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>impact during climatic events (such as days of flooding/monetary impacts; possible review of damage assessment reports of local body/GoB).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has contributed to gender equality and economic empowerment of women</li> <li>▪ The extent to which the project has addressed issues relating to persons with disabilities and LNOB</li> <li>▪ The extent to which government co-financing contributes to the achievement of the project outcomes.</li> </ul>				
Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent of compatibility of interventions with other UNDP/development-bilateral partner interventions in Bangladesh.</li> <li>▪ The extent to which this compatibility yields synergies in development results and impacts.</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document review, In-depth Interview KII	Synergies with ongoing LG programmes and those of development partners. Adoption of processes and systems in LG management/ service delivery	Coding, pattern, theme generation and data triangulation
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent to which the programme's objectives have been institutionalised (system-process), structure, and staff/ delivery</li> </ul>	Both primary and secondary	Document review,	Adoption of processes and systems	Coding, pattern,

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>arrangements as part of national programmes or local administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The extent to which the positive results of the support will continue or are likely to continue during the rest of the project tenure.</li> <li>▪ Influenced LG financing NUPRP approaches in other areas of town not covered under the programme or in non-NUPRP project towns.</li> <li>▪ The programme contributes to SDG-1 on poverty, SDG-5 on gender, SDG-6 on water and sanitation, SDG-10 on reduced inequalities, SDG-11 on sustainable cities and communities, SDG-13 on climate action and; SDG-16 on good governance/ strong institutions.</li> <li>▪ Institutionalise project-level staff as part of the local system and continuance of committees established as part of the project (town-level discussions).</li> <li>▪ The specific focus would be on the review of financing arrangements of the Settlement Improvement Fund (SIF), Climate Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund (CRMIF), Savings and Credit Groups (SCG), Skill and Business Development Grant (SDG and BDG), Community Housing Development Funds (CHDF) as well as infrastructure facility O&amp;M. The scope of discussions would involve support facilities (design,</li> </ul>		in-depth Interview KII	resource commitments/ inclusion of key features into LGs/ government in approaches to addressing poverty.	theme generation and data triangulation

Relevant Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions with Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standards	Methods for Data Analysis
	implementation support and monitoring) and investment/cash support/ O&M for specific actions.				

## IV. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS

### A. DATA INFORMATION SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

**Data/Information Sources:** The evaluation is primarily based on programme reports, progress and performance monitoring reports and field-level discussions. Additional secondary information in the field has been obtained to validate observations on constraints and performance as reported in the monitoring reports. To explore the impact of the programme on the livelihood of the community and to validate the inferences made from the secondary data, field-level discussions were held in seven towns. The list of documents reviewed includes the following:

- i. Pro-doc of the project
- ii. Development Project Proposal
- iii. Semi-annual monitoring reports
- iv. Annual Outcome Monitoring reports for 2020 and 2021
- v. Field inspection reports
- vi. Nutrition Strategy of NUPRP
- vii. Draft Urban Policy
- viii. Policy on mainstreaming informal urban settlements by the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP)
- ix. City Level Climate Change Vulnerability and Strategy for Cox's Bazar (physical and socioeconomic) and Infrastructure Assessments (2018)
- x. Social Protection in Bangladesh – A Common Narrative
- xi. Local tax revenue strategies for Cox's Bazar, Khulna and Narayanganj
- xii. Strengthening financial management by the BIP
- xiii. Socioeconomic impact assessment of COVID-19

#### **Stakeholders' participation:**

In each LG, discussions were held with the communities, the local political representatives, Mayor, and project officials (**Annex 4**). The Central-level discussions included the LGD and other partners engaged in the development field besides the programme management team. The selection of towns and respondents was based on the principle of purposive sampling. However, discussions were held with the project team to finalise the respondents. The following key stakeholders were consulted during the field visit.

- a. Senior management of UNDP and critical staff of the project team at Dhaka and town teams
- b. National Project Director
- c. Information from selected stakeholders through Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in seven LGs
  - KII – Mayor/ Panel Mayor – 7
  - Ward Councillors – Individually in the field as part of the city development (CDC) cluster and as part of mayoral-level discussions
  - Municipal Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and Planning Officers
- d. FGDs with 12 communities in 7 LGs
- e. FGDs, CDC Federations and CHDF Federations – 7
- f. Discussions with Development Partners – Asian Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency, KfW Development Bank and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

- g. NUPRP Partners – LGD, FCDO, Dhaka University, HDRC, MAB, BIP, InM, Alive and Thrive, United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF-Nutrition).

## B. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

This research was conducted using a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data gathering and analysis. The MTE team used an all-encompassing approach for each task to accomplish what was needed for this end-line study. Some examples of this methodology include document review, robust team mobilisation, and data collection. The research used various methods, relying not only on secondary data collected previously but also on primary data from select stakeholders at national and local levels through KII and FGD, respectively (Table 3, Annex 2 and 3 ).

## C. SELECTION OF CITIES

Field-level discussions were held in seven towns. The choice was based on geographic representation, local government category and climate resilience. The team spent the period between 18th July and 15th August in the field. It continued discussions with select development partners after August 15.

**Sample Cities:** The seven cities visited include Dhaka North City Corporation, Narayanganj City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation, Khulna City Corporation, Chittagong City Corporation, Cox’s Bazar Pourashava and Chandpur Pourashava (Fig 3).

**Data Analysis:** To achieve the MTE goals, the evaluation team conducted a theoretical and process analysis. The theory-based evaluation of the NUPRP’s theory of change allowed for comparing the project’s interventions with NUPRP’s theory of change. The data analysis process included developing ideas and patterns and reflecting on how the project has shaped changes.

In terms of the objectives of the MTE, the analysis/discussion covered:

- i. **Programme Performance:** The outcomes (based on the AOM 2021 and follow-up discussions with partners and specialists) and field-level observations on outputs and their relevance, implementation mechanisms and associated approval and monitoring processes. The base is Semi-Annual Progress Reports and validation through consultations with stakeholders in the field.
- ii. **Programme Design:** Regarding the relevance of the Theory of Change and Programme Strategies in the evolving context of changing socioeconomic developments and COVID-19 impact.
- iii. **Sustainability:** The attempt is restricted to an overall approach to sustainability rather than component-specific actions as they are interrelated. It must be mentioned that some of the outcomes envisaged are relevant.
- iv. **Partnership and Coordination:** In terms of coherence of partner actions.



Figure 3-Sample Towns

- v. Scalability/Replication of Good Practices: Carried out from a sustainability perspective.
- vi. Risk Mitigation: Focused on risks that are high in terms of probability and impact.
- vii. Governance, Operational and Quality Assurance Mechanisms: A rapid assessment of management, operational and quality assurance mechanisms at the HQ/LG level is carried out.
- viii. Lessons Learned, Challenges, and New Opportunities: Carried out from the perspective of tasks for the remaining period of the project and long-term relevance for future action.
- ix. Recommendations to enhance the programme implementation and sustainability for the remaining period of the project, long-term programmatic relevance and a responsible exit.

### **Ethical considerations**

The MTE consultants briefed the stakeholders and participants in the focus group discussion (FGD) that the information collected will be used solely for the purpose of evaluation by the research team, will not be shared with others and ensure anonymity. They were also advised to withdraw if they had any concerns (Annex 8).

### **Limitations**

The evaluation had to be carried out during the COVID-19 outbreak. The project is quite diverse in terms of its approach and interventions, and the FGD, KIIs, and interviews took a great deal more time than was initially anticipated. The scope of MTE was enhanced from four to seven to enable a diverse perspective of the efforts, and a significant limitation is in terms of time to comprehend a complex intervention by the UNDP.

**Background Information on Evaluators:** The MTE was conducted by a team consisting of Mukundan Krishnamachary (international consultant from India) and Dr Pranab Kumar Panday (National Consultant-Bangladesh).

Mukundan Krishnamachary is an urban and regional planner by training with over 30 years of experience in project development, programme design and loan administration focused on urban infrastructure and region-wide municipal reforms.

Dr Pranab Kumar Panday, faculty with Rajshahi University, is a specialist in governance, gender, public administration and management, and public policy and politics.

## V. KEY FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

### A. BACKGROUND

The evaluation of interventions within the overarching theory of change in urban development and urban poverty reduction has been from the perspective of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact. The premise of this theory of change is that a national policy framework, partnerships, enhanced governance focused on sustainability, and an organised poor community would enable better targeting of poverty reduction actions, enable better climate-responsive planning, and growth by the local governments. The assessments have been made as outlined in terms of reference.

The project performance is generally based on a set of outcomes and outputs. The latest outcome monitoring was carried out in 2021; most measures are a work in progress. However, the outcome set the theme for long-term engagement in the sector, addressing the need for a robust policy framework to base ongoing actions and requirements for the future. The dialogue on the urban policy and issues relating to low-income settlements are high on the agenda and present considerable progress. This also includes supporting the directions of the 8FYP of the GoB and strengthening partnerships between various urban stakeholders in the country, such as the municipal associations and the urban and planners' forum. Select outcomes are at the local level regarding resource augmentation and in responding to climate resilience issues through an understanding of the issues and in defining infrastructure, and at the community level on empowering women in addressing their priorities-socio-economic and health and managing vulnerabilities.

The outcomes are complemented by inputs (to address outputs) that have contributed significantly to moving towards desired outcomes despite unforeseen risks in the form of COVID-19 pandemic, the associated slowdown in the economy, increased costs of inputs due to geo-political crisis and project budget cuts.

### B. PROGRAMME FINANCES AND PERFORMANCE

The programme's size, spread over 2018 and 2023, is around USD97 million, with the FCDO contributing 85.6 per cent of the finance and the GoB 13.4 per cent towards the housing component (Tables 4 and 5).

**Table 4-Financing of NUPRP**

Institution	Financing in \$ Million	Share %
FCDO	83	85.6%
United Nations Development Programme	1	1.0%
Government of Bangladesh	13	13.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The progress on low-cost housing has been low due to constraints in the form of land tenure and the availability of government land for low-cost housing schemes. (Table 5).

**Table 5-Planned Versus Actual**

Outputs	Budget	Expenditure (April 2016- July 2022)	Progress (%)
	US\$	US\$	
1-Improved coordination, planning and management	4,966,250	4,199,662	85%

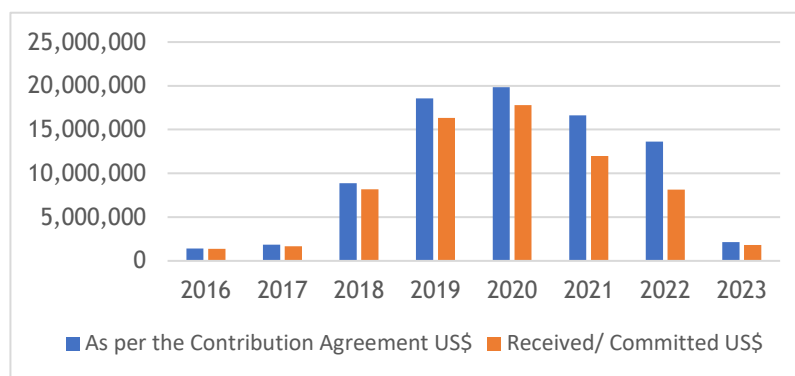
Outputs	Budget	Expenditure (April 2016- July 2022)	Progress (%)
	US\$	US\$	
2-Enhanced organisation, capability, and effective voice of poor urban communities	7,363,750	5,896,458	80%
3-Improved well-being and security of the urban poor, particularly for women	19,865,000	17,679,443	89%
4- More secure land tenure and housing	15,740,000	1,985,584	13%
5-More and better climate resilient and community-based infrastructure	22,605,000	19,776,032	87%
6-M&E and Management	10,960,000	9,293,738	85%
Grand Total	81,500,000	58,830,917	72%

\*Budget and expenditure include donor and government funding.

The overall reduction is expected to be to the tune of 20 per cent of the programme size. The reduction has been significant between 2020 and 2022 (Table 6 and Fig 4). This prompted the MTE team to focus on specific questions relating to the institutionalisation of the practices and systems and management team within the LGs, priorities for the remaining period with a lower budget, and requirements in the event of an extended period of the project or support in a different form with support from the GoB or a development partner.

**Table 6-Multi-Year Budget vs Expenditure**

Year	As per the Contribution Agreement	Received/ Committed	Deviation		Remarks
	US\$	US\$	US\$	%	
2016	1,428,571	1,370,009	(58,562)	(4%)	Ex. loss
2017	1,857,143	1,663,732	(193,411)	(10%)	Ex. loss
2018	8,857,143	8,195,537	(661,606)	(7%)	Ex. loss
2019	18,571,429	16,333,227	(2,238,202)	(12%)	Ex. loss
2020	19,857,143	17,794,015	(2,063,128)	(10%)	Ex. loss
2021	16,642,857	11,965,331	(4,677,526)	(28%)	Budget cut & Ex. loss
2022	13,642,857	8,160,780	(5,482,077)	(40%)	Budget cut & Ex. loss
2023	2,142,857	1,827,040	(315,817)	(15%)	Ex. loss
Total	83,000,000	67,309,671	(15,690,329)	(19%)	



**Figure 4-FCDOs Release against the Budget**

### C. RELEVANCE

The project and interventions are relevant from the point of view of achieving national objectives as outlined in the Five-Year Plan and in addressing a multidimensional mechanism for poverty reduction. The approach is relevant from the point of 8FYP priority of localising SDG targets of the GoB. The relevance of the intervention from an SDG localisation perspective, as well as the urban agenda of GoB or any nation, is that of inclusivity in design (community-based and led), evidence-based (poverty mapping-based identification of settlements and vulnerable populations), and prioritisation of socio-economic needs and levels of access to services by communities. Accompanied by enhanced oversight through bi-annual monitoring, spot check and annual outcome review-based corrections, as well as independent validation through external reviews of select actions.

As outlined in Section II, the project is relevant in improving community and LGs understanding of the relevance of climate vulnerability through CCVAs (addressing Outcome 2 of UNDAF), CPD outcome 2 of increasing opportunities for women and the disadvantaged, from UNDPs strategic plan perspective, the design, while focused on progress on the SDGs, supports the GoB at the urban sector level structural and systemic transformation through inclusive planning, responsive governance and enhanced delivery of services; leaving no one behind and building capacities of community and institutions in being resilient to respond to crisis and external shocks.

The implementation approach reflects inclusivity, and the definition of interventions has been through 2,310 community action plans (CAPs) (against an identified 2,935 CAPs). The CAPs are developed through the women-led communities and the mobilisation process is relevant (Fig 7) given the intensity of work and use of community organisers in the process to target priorities of GoB/LG. The fact that these CAPs are endorsed by the local councillors and accepted by the LGs reflects the responsiveness to the needs of the poor. Besides standard skills aimed at livelihoods, women have acquired skills in mobilisation and leadership (Box-1). It needs to be mentioned that the identified CAPs are about a third of the overall poverty settlements mapped (Table 7). On average, 25 per cent of the CAPs have been integrated with ward-level plans indicating the importance of inclusive priorities at the ward level (Fig 7). The project has used a multidimensional poverty index (MPI) built on initial poverty mapping of all settlements in the participating LGs, robust analytics enabling the preparation of long list beneficiaries (for access to Socio-economic components) and the definition of targeted beneficiaries based on community and local councillor confirmation.

<sup>8</sup> The information base is available for the town and could form the basis for city-wide planning interventions. Besides targeted socio-economic actions, the SCG have mobilised resources to be self-reliant and provide credit support to members for socio-economic uplift. Support includes for shelter improvements and grants to vulnerable primary group members for food, health and education.

The project has benefitted about 3.1 million poor people against a targeted four million poor, in addition to a further 600,000 who have indirectly benefitted from the development of community level climate resilient infrastructures. The programme is an effective vehicle for

#### **Box 1-Citizen participation and community engagement**

*“Before we got involved in the project, we did not know our rights. We had no decent home, no WatSan facilities and no income. We got engaged in issues concerning the community after joining the project. We have now learned to identify the concerns of the community, prepare budgets, and execute initiatives. We have built roads and drainage in slum settlements using project funding. We have clean toilets and safe drinking water now. We are now in a position to discuss our requirements with the ward councillors. We lead a decent life.” (FGD with CDC leaders of Dhaka North City Corporation, 2022)*

*“The urban poor are our resources. Some 46,000 urban families are impoverished. They are organised and active in identifying their needs and meeting them with the support of the project and the city corporation. We rely on their organisational strength and effort. We contact the CDC, cluster or federation leaders for a list of impoverished families to provide support when needed. We share their list of services. We trust them to identify the needy. Our mayor backs them. She encourages them to join municipal activities.” (Interview with male and female ward councillors of Narayanganj City Corporation, 2022)*

the localisation of SDGs for Agenda 30 and in contributing to **Goals (1,2,3,4,5,6,8,10,11 and 13)**. Amongst interventions on infrastructure, SIF and CRMIF have benefited 1.8 million people, including 0.3-0.6 per cent of the population with disabilities. From the completeness of interventions, the project introduced a housing component. Though constrained by land tenure issues, field-level discussions reveal that S&C groups have provided incremental support to households in the shelter upgradation of group members. (Box -3)

The NUPRP’s unique design combines cross-cutting elements to address poverty (Education/Livelihoods/Health Care/Gender Infrastructure/Governance), designed and is built on a community platform and implemented through community contracts using data-intensive mechanisms and evidence-based targeting of benefits.

The project is a community-based and women-led approach in defining socioeconomic and infrastructure priority and addresses the aspect of LNOB. Women are the beneficiaries of all socioeconomic components, and the design too has addressed the needs of persons with disability (Table 7- Outputs 2.3 and 3). While the support for the disabled has been direct through facilities to keep them mobile and other grant assistance as eligible, Chattogram city redesigned the approach to a street in hilly terrain by building a ramp instead of steps to enable a disabled person in accessing the main street. Other measures impacting poverty reduction are economic grants aimed at skill development and support in setting up businesses (Box-2).

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<sup>8</sup> The MPI consists of indicators reflecting health (2 indicators), Education (2 Indicators) and living standards 6 indicators) weighted evenly.

**Table 7-Select Targets and Performance by Outputs**

Target	Performance
<b>Output 1: Strengthened pro-poor urban management, policy and planning</b>	
<b>Indicator 1.1:</b> Level of engagement by Municipalities and City Corporations for inclusive climate-resilient urban development (Mahallah and poor settlement mapping, community action planning, city-wide plans and budgets). <b>Baseline:</b> 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor Settlement Mapping- 20 Cities/Towns.</li> <li>▪ Poor Settlement Maps incorporated into 2310 CAPs across 19 Cities.</li> <li>▪ Urban Poverty Profile (UPP)- 20 Cities/ Towns</li> </ul>
<b>Indicator 1.2:</b> Number of Pourashava with functional decentralized committees (Disaster Management Committee/Town Level Coordination Committee/Ward Committee) represented by Town Federation/CDC Clusters/CDCs. <b>Baseline:</b> 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Functionalised decentralised committees in all LGs, level of functioning varies</li> </ul>
<b>Indicator 1.3:</b> Number of Cities/Towns with Pro-Poor and Climate Resilient Urban Strategy under implementation <b>Baseline:</b> 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CCVAs and completed in all LGs</li> <li>▪ Urban Resilience strategy is under implementation in Cox's Bazar.</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2: Strong community organisations and an effective voice for the urban poor</b>	
<b>2.1</b> Percentage of Community Organisation s (a) CDCs, (b) CDC Clusters, and (c) Federations whose performance is judged "moderately and fully effective " on an objective and agreed upon on a scale to assess institutional effectiveness as a result of capacity-building. <b>Baseline:</b> CDC: 0.5% CDC Cluster: 0% Town Federation: 0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Created and level of functionality varies As per AOM 202182% of CDCs, 74.6% of CDC clusters and 84% Town Federations performance was moderate to effective. .</li> <li>▪ Play a major role in CAP, prioritisation, support in targeting beneficiaries, and providing support to vulnerable members in the communities.</li> <li>▪ SCG support for the community and in addressing vulnerable groups with Grant support as well as credit</li> </ul>
<b>2.2:</b> Percentage of CDCs implementing Community Actions Plans (CAP) based on the Guidelines. <b>Baseline:</b> 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 83% (2310/2771) of CDCs implemented the CAPs.</li> <li>▪ Performance in MTE sample towns 95%</li> </ul>
<b>2.3:</b> Number of Savings & Credit Group (SCG) members and effectiveness in addressing shocks and stresses. <b>Baseline:</b> SCG -27300, SCG member -3,26400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SCG-24296, SCG member-368,972</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3: Improved economic and social well-being for the urban poor</b>	
<b>3.1:</b> Percentage of education grantees completing the academic year in which they receive the grant (which contributes to prevention of Early Child Marriage Prevention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 100%</li> <li>▪ 20774 Education grants</li> </ul>

Target	Performance
<b>Baseline: 0</b>	
<b>3.2:</b> Number of (a) pregnant and lactating women up to 6 months (b) Children (7-24 months) accessing Nutrition Cash Transfer Grants. <b>Baseline:0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25,681 pregnant and lactating mothers received nutrition grants, and children aged 7-24 months received nutrition grants</li> </ul>
<b>3.3</b> Proportion of targeted pregnant and lactating mothers have improved knowledge and skill related to infant and young child feeding practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63% of lactating mothers and over 70% of the primary group members.</li> </ul>
<b>3.4:</b> Number of Safe Community Committees (a subset of CDC Cluster) working with social service providers to address VAWG and early marriage issues- <b>Baseline:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>214 SCC against a target of 206</li> </ul>
<b>3.5:</b> Number of people who have utilized (a) Business Development Grant; (b) Skill Building Grant. <b>Baseline:0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
Apprenticeship Grant-15,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15,994 (82.96%)</li> </ul>
Business Grant-39,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40,547 (109.09%)</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.</b> Number of Community Housing Development Funds (CHDF) established as legal entities. <b>Baseline: 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CHDF registered as legal entities) in three Cities (Chattogram, Narayanganj and Rajshahi</li> </ul>
<b>Output 4- More secure tenure and housing finance for the urban poor</b>	
<b>4.2.</b> Number of Households using their CHDF loan for climate-resilient housing (ICF KPI 4) <b>Baseline: 215</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>697 Households</li> </ul>
<b>4.3</b> Number of Households with climate-resilient housing (a) New Housing; (b) Upgraded Housing <b>Baseline: 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction activities for 609 housing units in Gopalganj, Kushtia, and Chandpur have begun. In all 264 beneficiaries have been preliminarily selected for Kushtia, Noakhali and Chandpur low-cost housing sites.</li> </ul>
<b>4.4:</b> Number of Cities/Towns with Land Tenure Action Plans implemented (based on Vacant Land Mapping for pro-poor housing) <b>Baseline: 0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed in all towns</li> </ul>
<b>Output 5: Improved resilient infrastructure in and serving low-income settlements</b>	
<b>5.1:</b> Number of people with access to climate-resilient (i) safely managed drinking water and (ii) sanitation facilities which are hygienic, gender & disabled friendly. <b>Baseline: 14,004</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water: 132,960</li> <li>Sanitation: 198,327 DEWATS in Chattogram and Gazipur</li> </ul>

Target	Performance
<b>5.2:</b> Number of people supported to cope with the effects of climate change through SIF and CRMIF (ICF KPI 1) <b>Baseline:0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>366,992 people.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3:</b> Number of cities/towns with an improved capacity of municipalities to manage climate resilient infrastructure Programmes. <b>Baseline:0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local authorities have provided training courses in all 19 towns/cities.</li> </ul>
<b>5.4:</b> Number of climate resilient infrastructure programmes in cities/towns (Climate Resilient Municipality Infrastructure Fund). <b>Baseline:0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 of 21 completed, others at various levels of progress</li> </ul>

The project has mainstreamed gender dimensions on a large scale. The entire project is structured around a community-based model led by women at all levels, inclusive in nature and technology-intensive. All beneficiaries of the socioeconomic grants are women.

#### Box 2- Impact of Skill Development Initiatives

*“Before joining the project, we struggled a lot. After joining it, I learned to sew and received a sewing machine from the project. I operate a home-based tailoring business making clothes for my family and neighbours. I earn BDT 2,000-2,500 a month. Now I am able to provide for my children’s education, which had been discontinued during the COVID-19 [pandemic]. I contribute towards meeting our household expenses, and this has reduced my husband’s [financial] burden.” (FGD with a skill development training recipient of Chandpur Pourashava, 2022)*

The multisectoral nutrition programme is a significant intervention in advocating nutritional knowledge and dietary practices for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under two years. This also addresses the problem of undernutrition among the primary group members.<sup>9</sup> The project provided cash grants to tackle the issue of malnutrition. In all, 25,681 lactating mothers and children have benefitted from the support. The programme has enhanced knowledge of such practices among the primary group members.

Technology intensive: Extensive primary information-based design and targeting of services as well as monitoring and reporting. The information base is substantial and of relevance to long-term planning of evidence-based interventions of governmental programmes and, combined with the Geographic Information System (GIS), would be of help in decisions to address spatial imbalances and in the mitigation of climate impacts.

<sup>9</sup> 222,734 Primary Group (PG) members received Nutrition Education Sessions which helped to improve their knowledge and practices related to health and nutrition

### Box 3-Land Tenure, Housing Finances and Living Conditions

*“Bangladesh Railway owns most of our vacant land. We have mapped the vacant land. We are talking to the railroad regarding the land transfer. We have begun building horizon [sweeper] community housing. If the railway gives us land and the project helps in building houses, We will build additional homes for the poor.” (KII with the Mayor of Chandpur, 2022)*

*“We are sweepers by profession. Although we own land, we did not have enough money to build our own homes. We lived in huts. We borrowed BDT 100,0000 from savings and credit group. We could build two rooms with the money, but the work is not yet complete. I have paid off my loan. Now I'll reapply for the loan to finish the work. We will have a brick home. Without a savings loan, I could not have built this house.” (FGD with the CDC group member of Rajshahi City Corporation, 2022)*

In terms of the implementation arrangements, especially at the local level, the town team plays an essential role from identification to implementation, including mobilisation with support from the local Mayor, Slum development officer, municipal engineer and councillor. The town team's role is intense as it provides hand-holding support all through with managerial assistance from the local body.

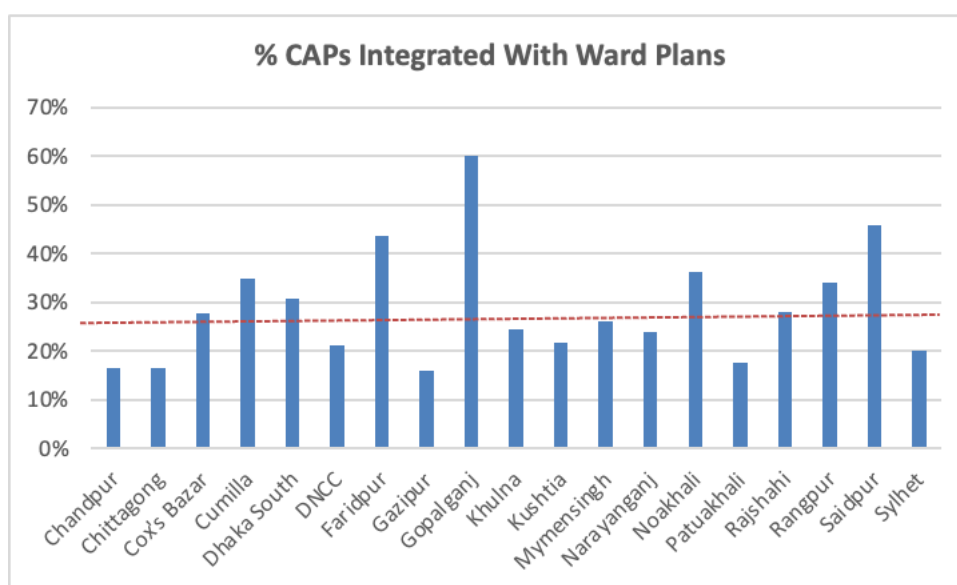


Figure 5-Integration of CAPs with Ward Plans

The project has been of relevance in influencing approaches. Within the UNDP, the NUPRP has helped the projects the district development plan of Cox's Bazar build on outputs such as climate vulnerability assessments (Cox's Bazar) and inclusive planning process., The communities mobilized as part of the project have been of relevance in advocacy with regard to city wide sanitation campaign in Khulna, of relevance in defining approaches of JICA and GIZ in their infrastructure programme and played a crucial role in assisting GoB in better targeting of COVID-19 benefits in urban areas. .

From a relevance perspective, the ongoing programmes of development partners were reviewed to understand the contribution of the NUPRP to the national agenda. Firstly, other development partners have focused on combining governance improvement measures and

heavy infrastructure. Secondly, their programmes are sector-specific such as housing, water/sanitation and roads and cover fewer towns, but they are complete in terms of coverage. Thirdly, the focus on soft components is limited, and the implementation is through management and implementation units housed in the LGD /LGs. Specific projects are implemented through quasi-government agencies (Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) and their partner organisations.

#### D. EFFICIENCY

Review and discussion reveal on-time and at-cost completion of works, enhanced targeting and electronic transfer of grants, and intense supervision and monitoring by the town and national team, including spot verification and community-based contracting (estimated savings of 10-15 per cent).

While there has been an increase in the cost of inputs post-COVID-19, LGs have demonstrated their support through enhanced contributions towards SIF and CRMIF (Chandpur and Narayanganj have contributed over 20 per cent as against a requirement of 10 per cent). In the past two years, Chandpur has allocated from its own funds BDT 1.5 crore to support poverty reduction among lower-income communities using the project implementation structure of the NUPRP.

The utilization of resources against the budget is on track except for output 4 (Table 5) and most achievements in relation to the outputs are on track (Table 7). The only constraint is the reduction in funding.

Value for money invested results in the use of community structures in targeting and distribution of benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic and local/ national campaigns. The project manages a database consisting of 706,507 households and created of 3146 CDC, 258 CDC Clusters and 19 Town Federations. The information generation is substantial and provides evidence-based planning and targeted interventions (Table 7). Additionally, spatial plans (Ward Atlas), poverty maps and data on mapping of vacant lands have been gathered for a possible information-based decision on land tenure.

The project mobilized an additional USD 4 million to address the response to COVID-19 pandemic and the community structures created under the project and the town teams supported targeting of benefits and in ensuring health sanitation and hygiene practices in the lower income areas of LGs.

Project management of the NUPRP involves a National Project Management Team under the leadership of the Project Director (LGD) and a National Team from the UNDP, with an implementation support team led by the town team that assists LGs in tasks ranging from "identification to implementation". The management structure, the process as defined from mobilisation to verification (Fig 7), and the use of information

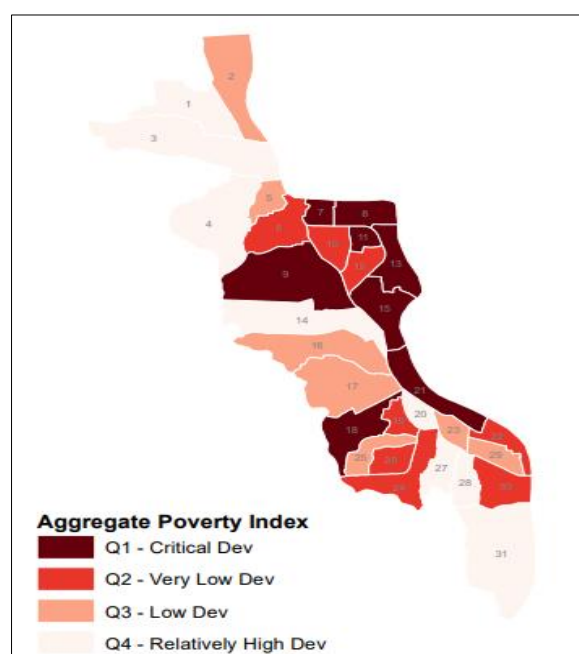


Figure 6-Poverty Map Khulna

technology (alignment of the process with information technology) is critical as the choice of communities from the city level and targeting of beneficiaries are based on evidence gathered from the primary group members. There have been periodic updates of information, and select LGs using their sources and with support from the town team, have mapped the poor in areas added to the LG. The town team was engaged full-time in the implementation process, and the intensity of support enabled in achieving the objectives and addressing issues identified as part of periodic monitoring and spot verification.

The intensity is reflected in corrective actions made concerning corruption-though nominal, and in supporting the communities in recovering dues to S&C from families that migrated to other areas in a town.<sup>10</sup>

The project has documented best practices on gender and socially relevant themes through periodic webinars to disseminate knowledge.

## E. EFFECTIVENESS

As outlined earlier, the project launch was delayed by two years because of the approval and signing of the DPP. Though delayed, the project has effectively supported and continued the dialogue on an Urban Policy critical to support and to scale up a multi-dimensional approach to managing urbanisation and poverty reduction. The project has demonstrated the need for an integrated approach to managing climate-resilient infrastructure and better management of local finances. While assessments have been carried out on local finances, the issue remains of the revenue management systems being fully functional, including the use/ upgrade of software developed (Web-based).

The process, as defined, has been effective in achieving the objectives. This ranges from a women-led inclusive planning process (integrating socioeconomic needs, infrastructure and cross-cutting themes) to implementation (LG-led and technical support from the project from identification to implementation of interventions) and effective monitoring.

As outlined in table 7, the outputs are on track in relation to the targets and in terms of resource utilization, except for components relating to secure tenure and access to housing finance.

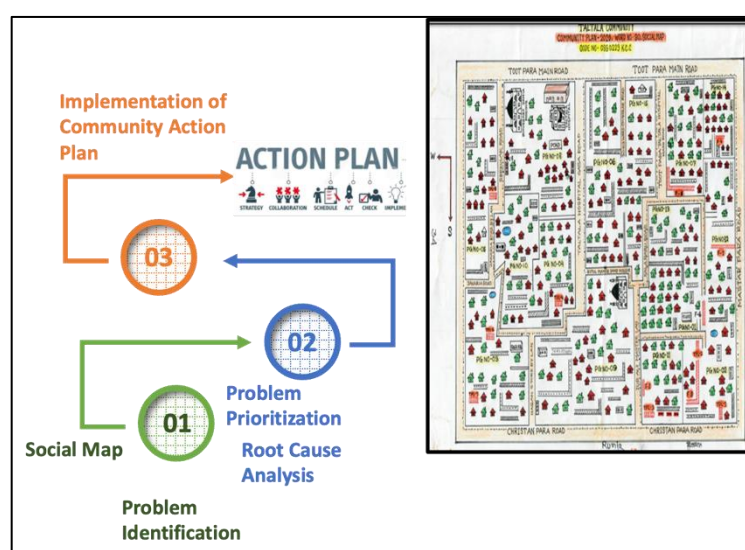


Figure 7-Community Action Plan

Community Action Plans evolved by the community form the basis for interventions (2310 CAPs), and about 25 per cent of the CAPs (Table 7) have been integrated with Ward Plans of cities (Fig 5). The CAPs based on consultation and benefits targeting based on information cover a base of 0.75 million members. The information sets include details of primary members, vacant land mapping (VLM), poverty profile and climate vulnerability assessments.

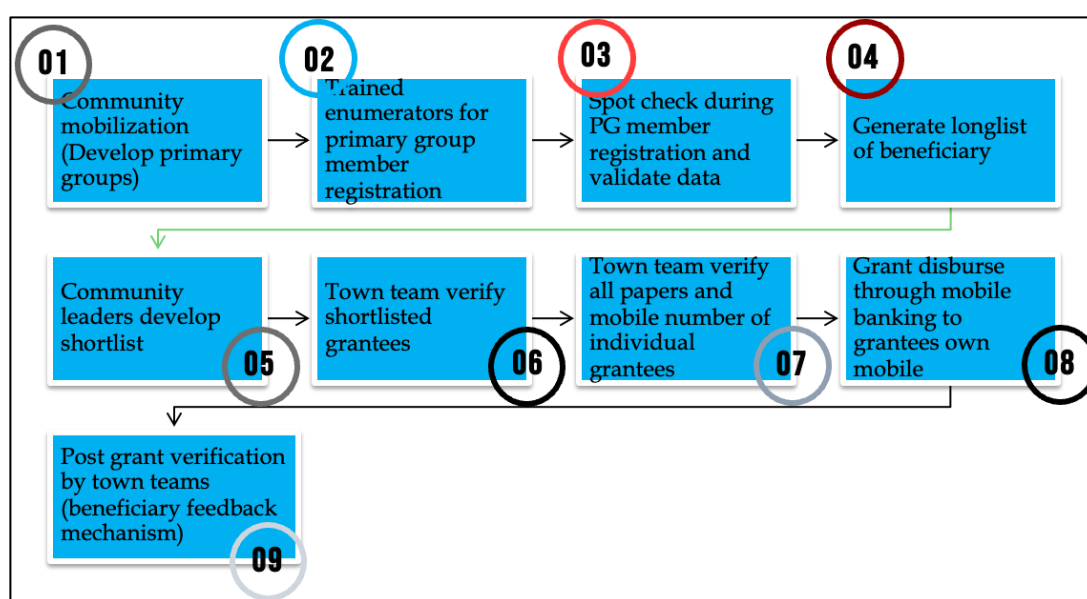
<sup>10</sup> The programme reported 41 cases to FCDO as of March 2022. FCDO has closed 19 (46%) cases so far 22 cases (54%) remain open as they are undergoing checks for follow-up actions.

The project, through women-led CDCs, has given them their voice in the LG system, and the CDC Federations participate in LG standing committee discussions. They are also part of the three committees constituted focused on (i) Women & Children, (ii) Disaster Management and (iii) Poverty Reduction and Slum improvement) and their co-option of CDCs as part of Ward Disaster Management Committees.

In terms of addressing cross-cutting themes on climate and disaster management, environment gender and LNOB, the project has been effective. While the environmental impacts are minimal, the project has enhanced the knowledge levels of communities and LGs on the need for climate-resilient infrastructure and preparedness in the event of disasters. Dialogue with the communities in participatory design of SIF and CRMIF sub-projects (For gender and select cross cutting dimensions, see section I) needs mention.

All components of the project have an element of training focused on all stakeholders and has been effective in the implementation of activities.

The likelihood of adoption of the NUPRP approach is constrained by limited internal resource mobilisation by the local bodies, just sufficient to meet their operational needs. It will need additional resources from the ADP budget allocated by GoB. Two of the sample local bodies have committed resources, but this will require further discussions with GoB on the issue of assigning a part of ADP. There will be a need to define the overall demands for city-wide scaling-up efforts to address poverty. This is critical from a sustainability viewpoint (See section on sustainability) and in institutionalising the approaches as defined by the project.



**Figure 8-The Process -Formation from Primary Groups to Verification**

## F. IMPACT

As outlined in table 7, the outputs are on track in relation to the targets and in terms of resource utilization, except for components relating to secure tenure and access to housing finance. The dialogue with GoB on urban policy and associated measures to address lower income priority is on and has progressed well as on date.

The relevance of inclusive planning and the link to the enhanced governance measures of LG's response to poor communities is a significant impact and a key lesson for defining local priorities. Around 25 per cent of CAP's have been intergraded with local plans and reflect the influence of communities and the response of the local councillors and the LG.

The project's effort in addressing cross-cutting themes such as gender and LNOB is significant (See Section I). The significant impact has been concerning women's transformation from homemakers to community leaders at the cluster level. Among the sample towns, three CDC leaders have become elected representatives. The project has provided a platform for their voices to be heard, and as a group, they have been in a position to demand services and influence local priorities. Councillors and Mayors have begun to realise the importance of

#### **Box 4-Education Grant Fulfills Kanon's Aspiration**

Kanon, 16, lives in New Munshipara, Saidpur. Lokman and Rokshana are her parents. Her mother is a PG member in the LIUPCP at New Munshipara CDC in Saidpur Pourashava's Ward 10. Kanon has a brother and two sisters. Her father found it difficult to support his family with his meagre income from daily wage labour. He got his two older daughters married off to minimise family expenditure. He then decided to pursue marriage plans for Kanon, his youngest daughter. But Kanon wished to pursue her education. She applied for a LIUPCP education grant and was awarded one. She has been studying with the grant money and is doing well academically. Since Kanon has personal experience in poverty and deprivation, she has developed an empathetic attitude. She wants to serve low-income communities since she has benefited from the LIUPCP initiative. She intends to attend medical school and help people for free or at a low cost. Kanon and her family are grateful to the LIUPCP, which has improved the quality of their life and given them hope. Kanon's story may resonate with thousands of women belonging to low-income groups. Low-income families may sometimes forgo school education for their children, particularly the girl child, to provide the family with food, shelter, and clothing. The change brought about in Kanon's life by the LIUPCP could encourage more young women to pursue education. (Document review, 2022)

these groups. The socioeconomic components such as skill development and other assistance have benefitted the members and there was a limited setback to their incomes during COVID-19. Since then, with additional support from SCGs as required, the business of the members have stabilized. There has been some setback due to COVID-19 on incomes and there have also been instances of SCGs providing support to vulnerable families through a grant for food, education, and health care services (There are 23,000 SCGs.). This mechanism of response by the community groups to the vulnerable population is a major impact for the community in responding to their common concerns.

This project has facilitated women in leadership roles and transformed them into becoming responsive to the community by defining its social and economic priorities and infrastructure. The (SCCs have contributed to reducing gender-based violence (GBV), preventing early child marriage and facilitating education grants for girls (Box-4).

The NUPRP's structure and processes ensured a harmonised approach in food distribution aligned with government relief agencies during COVID-19 and in promoting safe sanitation and hygiene practices, including material support.

The project and its structures have played a significant role during COVID-19 by adopting and disseminating safety measures and supporting the LG in targeting relief measures, including the management of the FCDO support.

UNICEF and the UNDP have an agreement on nutrition and basic health, The CDCs were relevant in Khulna city's campaign for a hundred per cent sanitation as part of an ongoing Asian Development Bank (ADB) drainage project. The development partners, JICA and GiZ have been interacting with LGs to understand the processes of the NUPRP. While ; there was no direct contact between the NUPRP team and the JICA and GiZ, the town team would clarify specific aspects of NUPRP and the LG, in turn, would respond to the development

partners. Efforts are on to scale up the multi-sectoral nutrition programme in cooperation with the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNCC).

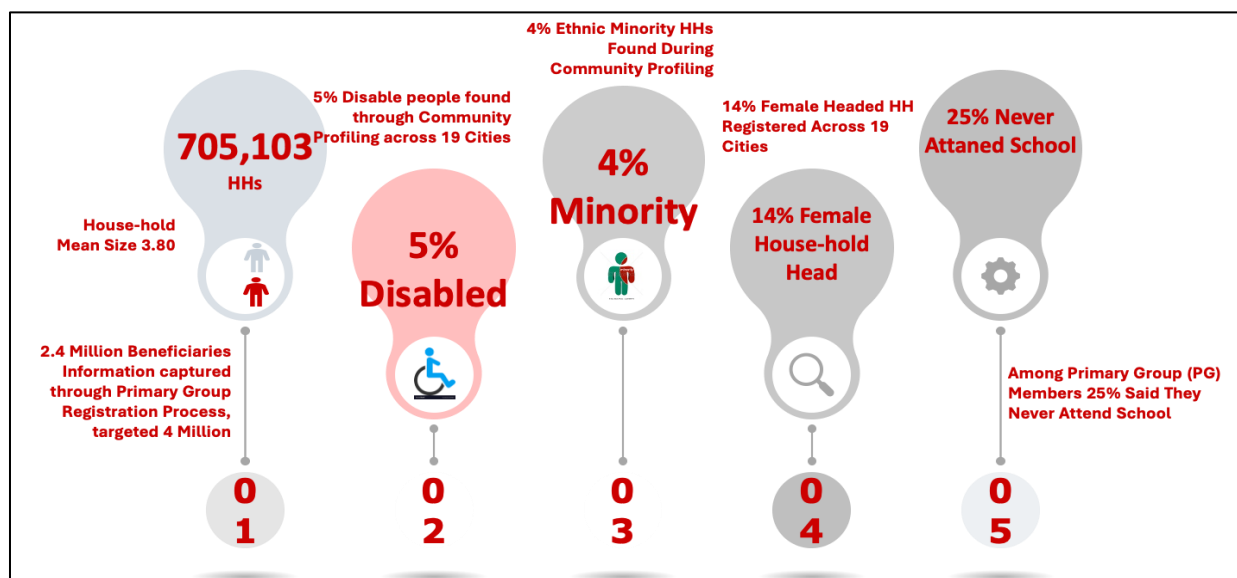


Figure 9- NUPRP Information Base

## G. COHERENCE

The project and approach are relevant to 7FYP and 8FYP in addressing poverty, urbanisation and localisation of SDGs. The design of outputs includes socioeconomic and infrastructure components and inclusivity in planning, design, implementation and management. The coherence is made possible through a community-led platform that has demonstrated an open style prioritisation of interventions and MPI-based targeting (support by project) confirmed by the community and municipal councillors. The role of the NPT and town team in ensuring the complementarity of outputs as per design is one of the key inputs in ensuring coherence.

Within the UNDP, the NUPRP has helped the projects build on outputs such as climate vulnerability assessments as part of district development priorities (DDP) for Cox's Bazar. It has addressed some ecological priorities by developing a circular economy approach for improved solid waste management, designing a facility to support LGs in defining priorities, and possible external support to advance implementation action. This task of DDP supports Cox's Bazar's + 1 SDG indicator of tourism development through better environmental sanitation. Cox's Bazar's District Development Plan has incorporated LG priorities on the NUPRP's CCVA, supported by a medium-term resource mobilisation framework. A participatory planning process is being extended to eight districts from an SDG localisation perspective.

The actions of the project have complimented the interventions of other development partners. While the focus of the development partners is in the non-lower income areas (city-wide water or sanitation), NUPRP has been addressing the priorities in targeted lower income areas. Besides project resources, select LGs have complimented NUPRP investments in infrastructure by providing select off-site missing links as demonstrated in a settlement in Narayangonj and Chattogram cities. The city of Chandpur has adopted the NUPRP approach and components, and has allocated own municipal resources in select slums.

## H. SUSTAINABILITY

The project has demonstrated that the approach is relevant in localising the SDGs- local solutions and approaches to local priorities. The design and institutional arrangements have been responsive to this approach – in terms of inclusive planning , project resources to respond to the demands and institutional arrangement to support from identification to implementation (town teams). The project has supported preparation of revenue enhancement. plans and is in the process of transfer of skills and processes to the LG.

The sustainability of initiatives has been evaluated from institutional and financial dimensions. The NUPRP inputs have been designed on an evidence-based community-led platform on a staged approach. This would require substantial support from mobilisation to data gathering and analytics, development support, implementation, and monitoring. The knowledge and skill developed are substantial and needs to be institutionalised. The town team is involved at the LG level, in roles ranging from identification to implementation. Substantial focus is given to achieving targets rather than skill and knowledge transfer. The interaction with the LGs is limited to the process of approval, and implementation support, as the key players are involved from a management perspective and not in operations. They are the Mayor, CEO, Municipal Engineer, Planning Officer, and Slum Development Officer. Substantial work needs to be carried out to transfer knowledge and skills and option is to co-opt the town teams into the municipal system. This would require policy measures and directive from the governments as this will have implication on LG finances.

### Box 5- Co-Financing in the Achievement of Project Outcomes

*“ I find community-based construction intriguing since it is less expensive and high-quality. Depending on the Pourasabha’s financial position, I want to provide more money for infrastructure and housing projects to improve the lives of the underprivileged.” (KII with the Mayor of Chandpur Pourashava, 2022)*

*“All project components cannot be financed after the phase-out. But I’m hopeful that I can carry out certain project components. As such, I’m boosting allocations for infrastructure. I have allocated more than 25% this year instead of the project requirement of 10 percent.” (KII with the Mayor of Narayanganj City Corporation)*

From a financial perspective, to sustain a comprehensive MPI-based poverty reduction programme and aspects that are not obligatory in an LG framework, policy directives for incorporation and support will be needed. The programme expected revenue enhancements to contribute towards sustenance. However, the enhancements have been sufficient to address municipal establishment, operation, and maintenance. Most LGs depend on Annual Development Plan (ADP) allocation for capital investments. The ADPs are directed to the extent that the share for each municipal function is specified, and there are no allocations for low-income priorities directly. Select LGs (Chandpur and Narayanganj) have confirmed additional support but will need a long-term view of GoB/Partners (Box 5). An independent assessment of Cox’s Bazar finances carried out indicates that simple measures such as reaching the maximum rate of house tax from the current permissible rate of 27 to 32 per cent, a possible levy of access on the hotels (Tourist tax) and improved collection would yield an additional 30 per cent revenue. This would require an understanding of the demand and support in revenue management concerning medium-term needs.

SCGs and the CHDF will be sustained beyond the programme and, with oversight by the municipal body, may continue supporting vulnerable populations in the community.

Currently, the support and oversight are from the town teams and such skills will need to be built within the LGs.<sup>11</sup>

The critical sustainability concern is the need to strengthen municipal revenue management systems. This, besides installing/updating the RMS, will need an objective assessment of property taxes (based on area location use/capital value), flexibility in taxation rates (the current limits are between 27 per cent and 32 per cent of annual rental value, with most of them levying lower rates), and ease of collection through the banking and digital platforms.

Most importantly, there is a need to devise a policy framework to support annual allocation for the NUPRP-style approach to poverty reduction.

## **I. GENDER DIMENSION AND LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

To ensure better coordination, planning, and management of interventions, the programme has been designed around a community-led structure facilitated by the local government. To enhance the capacities of the communities to engage with the LGs, the project has focused on the mobilisation and organisation of the primary members of communities into clusters and federations and built their capacity to plan, participate and implement project activities. To ensure well-being, the project has been designed to address gender-based violence, early marriage of the girl child, and the health of lactating mothers and children. The design of federated structures and SCGs encouraged access to finance for shelter and economic support, particularly by women (Box 6).

By design, the women-led communities are empowered to define, articulate and implement their socioeconomic and climate-resilient infrastructure needs, primarily through clusters and federations, and by being part of the committees mandated by the project to address poverty, and disaster management aspects. The LGs recognise them as a group of relevance in the town's growth agenda and have forged a partnership, enabling a long-term approach to a responsive and inclusive urban development framework.

The project design is structured around the policy of leaving no one behind, inclusive planning, community platform-driven actions, empowerment of women, an integrated approach to poverty reduction through socioeconomic inputs and infrastructure, and development management. Support includes facilities for them to be mobile, and in Chattogram, access in an undulating terrain was planned through a stair/step. It was modified into a ramp to address individuals with a disability.

Beyond planning, the role of women, beyond planning, includes support in targeting beneficiaries for components, community contract management, and support in social and safety audits of programme components.

The community platform comprises primary group members, creating a community development committee (CDC) and a group of CDCs forming a cluster and a federation at the city level. Women define community priorities and support targeting socioeconomic programmes, procurement lead, and implementation. In terms of gender mainstreaming and LNOB:

The project supported 214 SCC that addressed gender-based violence (GBV) and Early and Forced Marriages (EFM). A total of Seventy-Four of 101 cases have been resolved. The communities have extended access to district legal cells.

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<sup>11</sup> A draft savings and credit sustainability plan was developed in February 2022, in consultation with the project team and LGIs officials.

## **Box 6-Women Empowerment**

### **Impact on gender equality and or/economic empowerment of women**

Before this initiative came into effect, “our spouses did not appreciate us since we could not go to work. They harassed us and would not listen to us on matters concerning the family or children. We did not know our priorities and lacked self-confidence. People avoided us. But our spouses became more flexible when we started earning money. Now that we are contributing to the family’s income and spending for the family, they are listening to us. Respect for us within the community has grown. People respect us when we join a CDC, cluster or town federation. Even politicians respect us.”

(Views expressed by several women in FGD in Narayanganj City Corporation, 2022)

“The state of gender equality and women’s economic empowerment has improved significantly. These women had never stepped out of their houses unaccompanied before. Now they are going out alone. They are proficient and speak out against injustice in the community. We help them fight prejudice. Their children are going to school. They have become empowered socially and economically.”

(KII with ward councillor in Rajshahi City Corporation, 2022)

- i. Hundred per cent business grants for economic empowerment of women
- ii. Sixty-nine per cent of women and 55 per cent of girls received apprenticeship and education grants.
- iii. All savings and credit groups, Town Federations, and CHDF are managed by women. These women have been trained adequately to discharge their responsibilities.
- iv. Around 53 per cent of CRMIF and SIF beneficiaries are women.
- v. Targeting includes residents with disabilities.
- vi. 650 PWDs from the PG households have been included in the government social safety net services across the 19 project towns.
- vii. About 4,133 households with PWDs as PG members, and 132 PWDs have been nominated as PG leaders, 44 PWDs as CDC leaders, and 13 PWDs as Safe Community Committee members through the community mobilisation and empowerment efforts. Besides, 11 PWDs from the urban poor communities were included in Ward Project Implementation Committees as a member in Sylhet, Gazipur, Rangpur, Gopalganj and Patuakhali.
- viii. The livelihood improvement of the PWDs, included 1084 PWDs/HH in saving and credit programs, 241 PWDs/HHs for business start-up grants, 76 PWDs/HHs for education grants, 99 PWD/HHS for apprenticeship training,
- ix. 109 pregnant and lactating mothers with a disability, and 83 adolescent girls with disabilities have received nutrition voucher supports.

The project has supported infrastructure responsive to disabled persons, provision of wheelchairs, and apprentice and business grants. In special cases, infrastructure has been modified to enable the disabled to access services and facilities.

## **J. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

The project has defined 18 strategic, political, financial, organisational, social, and environmental risks. Further, the assessment concerns probability and impact and is rated low to high in both cases (Annex 7). While the focus is on high risks in terms of impact and likelihood, it needs to mention that the project has successfully overcome moderate dangers by responding to governance to ensure coherence with other development partners and evidence-based support for policies. Despite the moderate rating of select political risks, the

NUPRP has used the project forums to advance the sectoral agenda, enabling national and grassroots partners to ensure continuous dialogue focused on strategic issues and service delivery through the communities.

Through checks and balances, the project's robust monitoring reporting system addressed the fiduciary risks and ensured resources from the LGs for completion of project tasks.

As this project is the third intervention in this sector, the systems and processes ensure better targeting and delivery. There is, however, a concern over the land and housing component, which constrained by tenurial rights.

The design and delivery of the project are focused on a community and women-led framework and targeted to demonstrate the relevance of this approach for LGs to adopt. While this has been achieved, the issue of scaling up depends on the progress on urban policy and central level allocation of additional resources, besides augmenting own sources by LGs. The project has supported LGs in revenue enhancements. All though moderate, there will be a need for continued support in addressing the sustainability issues.

Key risks of high probability and impact and the redressal mechanisms are:

## STRATEGIC

- i. From a strategic perspective, the project had perceived the probability of peri-urbanisation and mechanisms to address the issues. The impact was expected to be limited to the larger centres of Dhaka and Chattogram, and there was a need for coordinated work with other development partners. During the project period, the jurisdiction of most of the LGs was extended to include adjoining urbanised settlements. The select LGs completed the mapping of urban poverty in these areas. The impact on the project is limited as the coverage, even within the erstwhile jurisdiction, was limited. Moreover, as per the GoB, transitional areas are improved within five years of their inclusion within the city limits. The mapping and discussions reveal that the issues, besides peri-urbanisation, also pertain to the extensive migration from the hinterland due to climatic impacts.
- ii. The COVID-19 pandemic and the global geopolitical crisis have posed unperceived risks to the project design. While COVID-19 delayed the physical implementation of sub-projects/components, the project utilised the time to prepare for the implementation. The structures and skills were used to support the GoB and the FCDO in providing targeted assistance to vulnerable groups within the local governments and distributing Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to contain the spread of COVID. The project lost around a year and a half of implementation time. The pandemic resulted in the emergence of "new poor" in the LGs, disruption of the businesses of the grantees and a setback to the economy of cities leading to a reduction in the LGs' sources of revenue. The geopolitical crisis and the global recession/sanctions led to increased cost of inputs and the programme's downsizing. While the cost escalation was managed by increased contribution from LGs and downsizing in constrained LGs, the financial impact is expected to reduce the overall coverage of the programme.

## POLITICAL

- iii. From a political perspective, with regard to instability and commitment to policy dialogue and implementation, while there has been substantial progress on the policy front, the continued support of the GoB and the Mayors of LGs has enhanced the quality of implementation of the project tasks.
- iv. Potential political challenges for the project could revolve around the upcoming 2023 national election. Possible instability in the country's political climate could negatively affect the project's completion. While it is difficult to predict the level of instability of the political environment, the will of the government to mainstream the project's success is uncertain, especially given the resources that would have to be allocated.
- v. The geopolitical crisis has, in a way, reduced the resources available for development support and has led to an increase in the cost of inputs for infrastructure projects. LG has managed to downsize projects and, in select cases, has enhanced their contributions to ensure coverage. The issue is critical from a medium-term perspective, especially with elections to the 12th Parliament in the latter half of 2023 or early 2024. The government may prefer to emphasise other political pledges that can give the ruling political dispensation an edge in the next election.
- vi. As the people's representatives of urban bodies have received the project positively, the political risk at the local level may not be so severe. As such, impediments to moving forward with the project will be limited.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

- vii. While most other risks were classified as medium in terms of probability or impact, the project categorised these as high from an environmental perspective and environmental risk management by way of better information management. The SIF and the CRMIF have demonstrated a "No harm approach" while designing and implementing the schemes, which ultimately reduced the vulnerability of the slums and low-cost settlements. For CRMIF schemes, as these are medium-scale infrastructures, the project also applied the environmental checklists (IEE-Initial Environmental Examination) and EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment), so infrastructure development does not hamper the environment.
- viii. Risks identified with medium probability and high impact were managed efficiently. These relate to better coordination between agencies, delivery despite political constraints, mainstreaming agenda of lower-income settlements in the form of a balanced approach to socioeconomic and infrastructure priorities, strengthened information technology-based targeting, review and monitoring framework, audit, and reporting.

## VI. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS

### A. FINDINGS

The project elements and approach are relevant for any targeted intervention in local governments. The main objectives of this MTE are addressing the relevance of components, arrangements and processes, sustainability, scalability and defining a responsible exit strategy. Based on the teams observations based on the evaluation criteria, the key findings are:

- i. The project is comprehensive in its approach, and is focused on socioeconomic aspects, health and infrastructure. Combining an inclusive approach and women-led and evidence- based definition of priorities is of relevance to any local development planning approach. The implementation of the project is aligned with the priorities of the GoB, the UNDAF and the UNDPs. While future designs would benefit from this integrated approach, flexibility in the choice of components would help in the city-specific design of interventions. Coverage will need to be citywide.
- ii. The inclusion of community and women-defined actions is significant in defining development priorities. There has been a shift in the approach of LGs in being responsive to the needs of communities. The interventions have ensured the realization of the goal of LNOB.
- iii. The project has carried out poverty and vulnerability assessments for all cities. While this is useful, there is a need for conversion of these assessments into implementable programmes citywide is critical, as most towns are prone to natural disasters in some form. The CCVA indicate a large segment of the cities being affected, and there is a need to scale up support for city-wide infrastructure assessments to address vulnerabilities. At least one of the towns should attempt to covert assessments to implementable actions and explore the convergence of resources from various departments responsible for specific components such as irrigation, environment, and forest.
- iv. Overall, the project is on track regarding the outcomes and achievement of output targets. While most targets are close to achievement level, any gap will likely result from a reduction in funds. A quick review of the resource availability as a result of a reduction in the budget would be around 20 per cent indicates that it may impact the committed investments, especially on the infrastructure components as well as the operational budgets of the projects. This is especially when the project is trying to cope up with the time lost due to the pandemic. The reduction in costs should ensure that the support for institutionalising the systems, procedures, and practices is not affected.
- v. This reduction in funding and possible non-extension calls for a safe and responsible exit. Given the expectations at the start of project activities of higher allocation, there is also a reputational risk for all stakeholders. The housing programme is in its early stages and is not likely to be completed by closure. Arrangements must be made to transfer the remaining tasks to LGD for implementation.
- vi. Community contracting as a mechanism to implement infrastructure has been significant and needs to be institutionalised within the LG system. Besides cost savings, such an approach will provide employment locally and create a pool of small contractors.

- vii. There is a need for an agreement on the policy as this is critical for future programmes. An upfront approval of a policy framework mainstreaming lower income settlements balancing socioeconomic and infrastructure priorities will automatically enable resource allocation as part of the annual development plan process. This will have enabled the project's continuation and scale up efforts' country-wide.
- viii. The intense use of information technology for mobilisation, analysis-based interventions, identification of beneficiaries and monitoring is crucial to efficient management and response. This is an effective way of managing interventions and of relevance for future interventions.
- ix. The implementation arrangement is strong with an entrenched town team. While the focus of the NUPRP has been on implementation to address the poverty assessment, and climate vulnerability in a limited way, resource allocation for city-wide response would have been of help in transforming the scope of NUPRP. This would enable focus on climate change and environmental sustainability.
- x. The project's efforts in local resource mobilisation have had some impact but are insufficient for LGs to enhance resource allocation for similar inputs in poverty reduction. In the short-term, there is a need for earmarked demand from the annual development plan.
- xi. The project's success is also due to the continued support from an entrenched town team. While the transfer of skills is on, an LG led action with support from town team will enable institutionalising approaches and scaling up to a larger set of towns.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The key recommendations of the evaluation are

- i. From a closure perspective, there will be a need for continued support to advance the policy dialogue and focus on the SIF and CRMIF components, given their higher investment outlay and priorities in addressing climate-related vulnerabilities. The unfinished agenda will include the socio-economic components and housing and low-cost housing- constrained by land tenure/ security.
- ii. Scaling up/ sustaining the momentum with regard to community mobilisation, one of this project's key drivers, is critical. This would require strengthening the capacity within the LG to support such tasks in data collection, management, and evidence-based decision-making. In this regard, the results need to be revised.
- iii. As most of the socio-economic and safety net aspects are not directly obligatory functions except in city corporations, there is a need to integrate and allocate additional resources as part of social safety programmes to address urban skill development, incentivise education, especially that of the girl child and maternal and child health.
- iv. This closure would significantly impact the low-cost housing component as the work on it commenced recently, and there has been progress in select cities with regard to land allocation/ transfer. This is critical, as it is a policy priority of the GoB. While the LGD would continue to implement the component, the transfer mechanism must be initiated through a tripartite agreement to negate any reputational risk to agencies.

- v. There is a need to continue to transfer skills and knowledge in the remaining part of the project and support the LGD on the way forward and in the closure of the project. In this regard sufficient operational budget would have to be ensured.
- vi. During the remaining phase operationalising the revenue management system in one town and upgrading the CCVA to a city-wide investment programme will benefit future interventions.
- vii. As demonstrated by the project, the design at the local level needs to be inclusive-led by women led at the community level and stakeholder responsive at the city level, data-driven with community and municipal level information management to support evidence-based planning of interventions and use of community contracting for on-site infrastructure in lower-income settlements. This should include GIS mapping of services and facilities.
- viii. Focus on complete comprehensive response in a city than partial coverage in a town. Choice of interventions be defined by LGs based on needs.
- ix. Address city-wide climate resilient infrastructure to be built on CCVAs addressing resilience –Disaster responsive actions considering environmental dimensions such as afforestation, conservation through direct measures such as protection, restoration of natural bodies, and better land (land use planning) and of solid waste management. This would also mean revisiting the City Master Plans and cross-cutting interventions from other Central Ministries such as environment, irrigation forest and Revenue, and human resource management (use of existing LG structures or strengthened LGs (reflecting the strengths of town team).
- x. UNDP/Project Manager- must move from implementation to facilitation-strengthen LGD/LG capacities to plan, design, implement and monitor. This would ensure the institutionalisation of skills and process upfront.
- xi. Under the leadership of the LG Division- build on the NUPRP to evolve a national framework or a national facility to address direct and indirect poverty reduction components and city-wide infrastructure. This would require an alignment of national priorities with those of development partners for a common understanding of interventions, possible pooling of resources into the facility, and streamlining ADP allocations to target actions as agreed upon as part of the national framework. This could also mean a new facility or restructuring existing institutions such as the Bangladesh Municipal Development Fund. As necessary, the facility/ framework should include financial and technical support (“concept to commissioning”) in mobilisation, project development, and implementation support.

## C. LESSONS

The MTE has observed remarkable achievements by the project in addressing the National Urban Agenda of addressing poverty and facilitating improved access to livelihoods and services. The integrated approach for targeted outputs by seeking to empower women and the community to define and address local priorities and participate in their implementation, achieving public health objectives and targeting benefits to the vulnerable population is significant in its reach and scope. While lessons from a national perspective can help improve programme design, the LGs will benefit from enhanced capacities and systemic improvements. The major achievement is in the mobilisation of communities, providing scope for transforming the groups into agents of economic change. Key lessons from the project are:

### **Level – National:**

- i. The project provides a policy framework/directive for including components such as housing linked to land availability and issues of tenure for better delivery of the component. While progress in policy dialogue is critical, a national directive pending acceptance of the policy is an option.
- ii. Build synergies by mainstreaming the NUPRP elements into urban programmes. There is a need for programme exposure through periodic cross-learning between development partners for a national approach to be defined under the leadership of the LGD with other development partners.
- iii. There is a need to manage resources from being spread too thinly across towns. A whole-town approach in development is called for. Most development partners carry out a pilot plan and scale up or focus on sectors citywide and scale up. Future programmes can follow either of the approach in a programme form or intermediation—a financing and development support facility open to any local government subject to self-selection criteria.
- iv. Using a matching grant mechanism instead of a limited contribution by the LG can enhance the prospect of scaling up the interventions that need to be explored.
- v. Project development/technical assistance support addresses long-term planning and investment requirements (technical assistance) such as operationalising priorities, revenue management, and citywide action plans (CWAP). Most facilities/financial intermediaries provide a combination of technical assistance for project development and investment/ investment mobilisation support. Such facilities are generally supported by a strong programme management team, as demonstrated by the NUPRP.
- vi. Relevance of IT-based project management from mapping and prioritising settlements and beneficiaries to monitoring and evaluation.
- vii. There is also a need for NUPRP project management structures to transform into facilitators from their current role in implementation.

### **Level – Municipal**

- i. While the process, management, and implementation of the project at the national and local levels are robust, there is a need to induct LG staff at the local level as full-time staff to sustain the programme and for skill transfer. Currently, it is UNDP driven.
- ii. While implementation and achievement of targets is critical, focus should be on upgrading climate-resilient strategy (addressing citywide climate resilient infrastructure needs, investment planning and project development), instead of a straight-jacketed five Outputs-based actions. The LG, using its own resources/technical support from the government's engineering departments, focuses on addressing citywide climate-resilient infrastructure (detailed design) and ensuring implementation by gathering other programmatic resources.
- iii. LGs to build on the value of community contracting: On time at cost completion using community structures also helps build local contracting and contract management capacities.

### **Level: Community**

- i. Robust community-empowered and women-led design of the programme at the same time addresses LNOB, relevant for any situation, be it rural or urban projects.

- ii. Community synergies are substantial and need to support building the federations for more prominent roles in banking, service delivery, small-scale marketing and manufacturing, and skill development.