MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK
Danida

Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chittagong Hill Tracks, (SID-CHT), Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs

AND

United Nations Development Programme

Final Report

Final Evaluation of "Support to Host Communities Affected by the Rohingya Influx (SHARIP)"

September 2023

PMID
Participatory Management Initiative for Development

Participatory Management Initiative for Development

Prepared for: United Nations Development Programme

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PROJECT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION DETAILS

A. Project Information		
Project Title	**Support to host communities affected by Rohingya Influx Project Bangladesh (SHARIP)**	
Project No. (Astas ID).	000111449	
Project outcomes	Outcome 1: Agricultural production increased and diversified in targeted communities Outcome 2: Agroforestry production increased sustainably Outcome 3: Social cohesion increased	
Country	Bangladesh	
Region	Ramu, Ukhia and Teknaf Upazilas in Cox's Bazar and Naikhyangchari, Lama and Alikadam in Bandarban- 6 upazilas and 35 Unions. Extended phase -10 Upazila, 55 Unions (4 additional upazilas of Bandarban in extended phase)	
Date project document signed	15/07/2018	
Project dates	**Start**	**End**
	01 July, 2018	31 December 2022
Total committed budget	DKK 58 million	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	Total fund Received: **USD 8,883,284** Total Project Expenditure upto Dec'22: **USD 8,879,667**	
Funding source	Danida	
Line Ministry	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA)	
Executing Agency	Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts (SID-CHT), UNDP Bangladesh	
Implementing Partners	Practical Action and ACLAB in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban Hill District Council and GRAUS in Bandarban	

UNDP	Final Evaluation Report of the *"Support to Host Communities Affected by the Rohingya Influx Project"* (SHARIP)

B. Final Evaluation Information

Evaluation type	Project	
Final Evaluation	Final Evaluation	
Period under evaluation	**Start**	**End**
	01 July, 2018	31 December, 2022
Evaluators	Participatory Management Initiative for Development (PMID)	
Evaluator email address	info@pmidbd.com	
Evaluation dates	**Start**	**Completion**
	May 2023	August 2023

Acknowledgement

SHARIP was closed and all its field staff were phased out in December 2022. There was no project staff available during conducting this final evaluation. However, few former Farmers Facilitator and FFS farmers volunteered their time, knowledge, experiences, and supported conducting this evaluation and provided valuable comments to the final evaluation team. Several Partner staffs of ACLAB and GRAUS also contributed inputs to the evaluation. Some of the DAE and DLO officials who were involved with SHARIP also provided necessary information to the evaluation team. PMID wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude to the concerned personnel of the Support to Host Communities Affected by the Rohingya Influx (SHARIP), representatives of SID-CHT, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Despite many challenges, the final evaluation was conducted smoothly. Thanks to all representatives of DAE, DLO, DoF of GOB and; implementing partners GRAUS, ACLAB of SHARIP for facilitating and contributing to this evaluation.

PMID expresses its gratitude to Mr. Shareful Hassan, Team Leader, PMR SID-CHT Office, Mr. Supriya Tripura, Programme Officer-Livelihoods, SID-CHT, UNDP, Mr. Uchi Mong Chowdhury, the then Program Officer (Justice and Confidence Building), Gender and Cohesion Component, District Farmers Field School Officer of Cox's Bazar Mr. Mehadi Hasan, District Farmers Field School Expert of Bandarban Sk Md. Nazim Uddin and for facilitating and guiding this evaluation.

Last but not least, the PMID gives special thanks to its valuation team for their untiring effort to complete this evaluation.

PMID

List of Acronyms

ABN	Agri-Business Network
ACLAB	Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh
ADP	Agroforestry Development Plan
AFSP	Agriculture and Food Security Project
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BHDC	Bandarban Hill District Council
CPD	Country Programme Document
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CLW	Community Livestock Worker
CNRS	Center for Natural Resource
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
DoF	Department of Fisheries
DSK	Dushtha Shasthya Kendra
DTW	Deep Tube Wells
DWA	Department of Women Affairs
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
ET	Evaluation Team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FF	Farmer Facilitators
FFS	Farmer Field School
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GDP	Gross domestic product
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GRAUS	Gram Unnayon Sangathon
HHs	Households
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IDI	In-Depth Interview

IFM	Integrated Firm Management
JRP	Joint Response Plan
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LGI	Local Government Institution
LLP	Low-Lift Pumps
LNOB	Leaving no One Behind
LVMF	Local Volunteer Mediator Forum
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFIs	Micro Finance Institutions
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MoCHTA	Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
MT	Master Trainers
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAB	Practical Action Bangladesh
PDF	Portable Document Format
PMID	Participatory Management Initiative for Development
PPEs	Personal Protective Equipment's
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
RFP	Request for Proposal
RR	Rural Route
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEG	Strategic Executive Group
SHARIP	Support to Host Communities Affected by Rohingya Influx Project
SID	Strengthening Inclusive Development
SMS	Short Message Service
SO	Strategic Objectives
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
STW	Shallow Tube Wells
ToR	Terms of Reference

ToT	Training of Trainers
TPP	Technical Project Proforma
UFFSC	Upazila Farmers' Field School Co-ordinator
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UP	Upazila Parishad
USD	United States Dollar

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive Summary

The Support to Host Communities Affected by Rohingya Influx Project (SHARIP) played a significant role in contributing to government development priorities and SDGs by improving the socio-economic conditions of 54,000 poor and vulnerable farmers through 1,800 Integrated Farm Management – Farmer Field School (IFM-FFS) and by enhancing knowledge and skills of host community residents to strengthen social cohesion in seven Upazilas of Bandarban Hill District and three Upazilas in Cox's Bazar District. The objective of the project is to strengthen the socio-economic conditions of the poor households of the host communities affected by the recent Rohingya influx in ten Upazilas of Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts. SHARIP was managed by the SID-CHT project of UNDP with the Ministry of CHT Affairs through the National Execution (NEX) Modalities, where the GOB took the lead role in implementation and monitoring. The project has 3 components- i) IFM-FFS, ii) agroforestry, and iii) social cohesion. UNDP managed the implementation of this project in partnership with Bandarban Hill District Council (BHDC), the key implementing partner for this project in Bandarban. An NGO named ***"Practical Action"*** was the implementing partner for the IFM-FFS and agroforestry components In Cox's Bazar. *GRAUS (Gram Unnayon Sangathon*) in Bandarban and ACLAB *(Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh)* in Cox's Bazar were the implementing partners for the social cohesion component.

UNDP engaged PMID to conduct the final evaluation of the project. The scope of final evaluation covers the project implementation from July 2018 to December 2022. The evaluation was done during the period May- June 2022.

A mixed-method of the qualitative and quantitative methods was followed for this final evaluation. While the quantitative survey at the household level was conducted with a structured questionnaire using the digital platform (Kobo toolbox), the qualitative assessment was done in a consultative way in which the project stakeholders, i.e., target beneficiaries, staff of the project implementation agencies, government officials of the line departments and concerned UNDP project personnel participated in the evaluation process; The study was participatory in nature with a focus on learning and appreciative inquiry. The evaluation used the different tools, techniques, and analytical approaches that were deployed to collect data and capture facts about SHARIP's progress in different interventions, including IFM-FFS, promotion of agricultural production and agro-forestry, and promotion of social cohesion.

The number of beneficiaries covered under 6 Upazilas for the quantitative survey is 27,360. This comprises the treatment population for this proposed quasi-experimental study design. Only the treatment group was selected for the survey, and the evaluation findings were compared with findings of mid-term evaluation and available baseline data. A sample size of **425** from the beneficiary group was randomly selected through the standard statistical procedure from 15 (6 from Bandarban and 9 from Cox's Bazar) out of 40 unions for the execution of the survey.

Key Findings from the Evaluation

Relevance

The project was found most relevant to the target communities as all the interventions fulfil their urgent needs (food and income). In the communal conflicting situation of CHT, the promotion of community cohesion through awareness building, motivation and mediation process was the right strategy to bring peace and stability. The project rightly adopted this strategy, which was found relevant to the local needs and priorities.

Effectiveness

Achievement of 3 outcomes is satisfactory. The UNDP efficiently managed the implementation of the project in partnership with BDHC and other NGOs and in linkage with relevant government line departments. To address gender equality, the project design strongly emphasizes women's inclusion. Most of the capacity-building efforts seemed effective and driven toward making the intended results.

The project has achieved its results under outcome 1. Agricultural production was increased and diversified in targeted communities through the Establishment of 1800 Integrated Farm Management – Farmer Field Schools (IFM-FFS) with the participation of poor and marginalized farmers, of which 79% were women. It was found that the production of vegetables, fruits, eggs, chicken meat and fish, the major 5 items of result framework, has significantly increased respectively by 90.9%, 327.6%, 90.7%, 91.3% and 174% for FFS farmers (Fig 6).

92.5% of FFS respondents in Cox's Bazar and 82.0% in Bandarban increased additional farming components after getting training from the project farmer field schools. Overall, 87.2% of FFS farmers increased additional farming components (Fig-2).

47.4% of COVID-affected FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 43.9% of affected farmers in Bandarban received agricultural input packages mainly from the project partners, and 92.3% resumed their agricultural production. The farmers were introduced to high-quality seeds and much benefited by getting very good production in the field (Fig 12, 13).

The project facilitated the access of IFM-FFS farmers to marketing through the establishment of collection points. These collection points linked the farmers with the market traders and input suppliers and encouraged the farmers to group marketing. As learned from the UNDP staff, except for a few wrong selections of locations for the collection points in Cox's Bazar, all the collection points are running well (Fig 18, 19).

The survey data reveals that the growth of seedlings in the nursery, vegetation, and bamboo bushes increased respectively by 50.0%, 17.2% and 92.2% for FFS farmers. In total, the average increased land coverage under agroforestry is 20.4 decimal per FFS farmer. The total estimated land coverage is 2568 hector, much higher than the target set in RF (1000 hector). (Fig 20)

As per primary survey data, 82.8% of FFS farmers had their own agroforestry plan, of which 70.5% implemented the plan, meaning 58.3% of the total FFS farmers implemented it. Considering delayed implementation due to COVID and early closing of the project due to resource constraints, the progress achieved in the implementation of ADPs is moderately good. (Fig 21 and 22).

Youth Forum was found both structurally and functionally disorganized, having no visible activities even at the end of the project, and all the youths involved with this Forum are now scattered.

Martial Arts training for school girls is indeed a good initiative of the project for women's empowerment, which can reduce social crimes like domestic violence, eve-teasing and GBV. The project took the initiative at the girls' high school level, but the institutional mechanism to continue martial art practice at schools is lacking. No linkage was developed as yet with Martial Arts Federation or any other voluntary organization.

These LVMF committees are functioning as an effective non-violent peaceful civic movement with the participation of all communities and relevant stakeholders, including high level government officials, local government representatives and traditional community leaders. In the absence of project support, the activities of the LVMFs have slowed down after Dec 2022 and the regular meetings of the

Forums and promotional events are not being held. Institutional arrangement to continue LVMF activities without project support has not been worked out. (Section 6.3.3).

Efficiency

Based on the results of performance levels, the final evaluation considers that the project was very much on track, and the level of efficiency of output and outcome achievement was satisfactory, although implementation was delayed due to the long prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic and extended lockdown periods, which necessitated adjustments and flexibility in implementation modality. Despite many adversities and challenges, the implementation of the project was effiently managed.

The project established a systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanism in all places, i.e., Para level committee at community, Upazila, District (at HDC) levels, and finally at SID-CHT District and regional levels. The project M&E system was good and effectively supported management to assess progress in terms of output and outcome assessment, which was well reflected in the project reporting system.

Impact

The annual net agricultural income of the FFS farmers at the end of Dec 2022 increased sharply, more than four times from baseline income and double from MTE income, which is indicative of the positive impact of the project on the agricultural income level of the project beneficiaries.

The household data collected for final evaluation (Fig 38) demonstrates 83.9% of Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 68.2% in Bandarban (Average 76.5%) feel that they are now much empowered by joining IFM-FFS, which exceeded the 50% target in RF. According to the detailed data on empowerment indicators (Fig 39), project impact on FFS farmers' control over income from agricultural production, participation in decision-making regarding production and sales, and sharing knowledge with husbands is significant, while the impact on control over female FFS farmers' mobility, imparting knowledge to other farmers and holding a leadership position is still very low.

Despite negative feelings of deprivation of rights and social benefits and insecurity of life and properties, a good number of the FFS farmers (around 30%) still look at the Rohingya crisis as an opportunity to sell local agricultural products. The comparative data analysis reveals that FFS farmers are at the end of Dec 2022 more adapted to the crisis of Rohingya influx and not feeling so affected and hold a more positive view of the Rohingya crisis (Fig 26, Section 6.3.3)

Sustainability

FFs were selected from the target communities and developed as model farmers, who are expected to contribute to improved knowledge sharing and on-job support to the FFS and non-FFS farmers. The DAE and DLO offices prioritize the FFs and entrepreneurs developed by the project who maintain links between the line departments and the FFS farmers. These FFs and Master Trainers are now working as "Contact Points" to get further support from the FFS farmers.

The project enhanced access of IFM-FFS farmers to agricultural services through the engagement of Government Line Departments (DAE, DLS, DoF). The FFs and FFS farmers are still maintaining close relations with the DAE and DLO offices and some linkages have already been established to access services under different on-going projects of these line departments (Fig 9, 10 and Qualitative assessment). This functional linkage is still working, and through this linkage, the FFS farmers have got access to improved technological information and input support provided by DAE.

The collection points established by the project to link FFS and non-FFS farmers with the input sellers (e.g. company dealers and retailers) and market traders (e.g. Beparies), are still functioning well and are being well managed by the management committee.

UNDP took initiatives to continue support to the activities of LVMFs through "CHT Co-watershed Management Activities" an on-going project in CHT, "Enhancing community safety, peaceful Co-Existence and Access to Justice Project" and Community Recovery and Resilience project (C2RP), another two projects under implementation in Cox's Bazar. But no institutional arrangement was made with any concerned government line department and other stakeholders to make activities of LVMF and the youth forums sustainable over a longer-term as MTE observed.

Leave No One Behind

The project mostly targeted women from the marginalized population for inclusion in IFM-FFS program. It also included female headed households in the beneficiary groups. Ethnicity and disability were also addressed in the FFS farmer selection process.

The beneficiary households are extremely land-poor, which is manifested by only average agricultural landholding per household of 26.8 decimal in Cox's Bazar and 75.4 decimal in Bandarban. On average, the annual income of FFS farmers are BDT 106,640 (Fig-47), which is much below the national average[1] and the international poverty line (USD 2.15 per capita per day), indicating that poor and marginalized farmers have been targeted for the project intervention.

Key Lessons Learned

i) IFM has been proven as a good model for benefitting marginal farmers who have no particular land but can produce multiple crops, particularly vegetables, and fruits, by using their homestead. The model has been successfully replicated by many non-FFS farmers in the project area. This could be a replicable model to support marginal farmers elsewhere in the country through mainstreaming.

ii) Although technical, farmers can better understand and learn from project field school and adopt improved practices at their homestead. Group learning through study plot demonstration is a good technique for learning and adapting, and the same technique can be adopted elsewhere for agricultural extension work.

iii) The FFS sessions were more relevant to the local contexts and growing interest in the farmers, and the farmers easily adopted the learnings. This was proved as a good technique to transfer technology from school to field in remote and backward areas.

iv) Accessing quality farming inputs continues to be a challenge in the project area. But organizing input-related coordination meetings at the Union level between farmers and input sellers worked well. These have the potential to be replicated, making the collection points a hub for interaction between farmers and the input sellers.

v) Developing linkage with the line departments and involvement of DAE and DLO officials to attend FFS sessions and visit FFS farmer's fields largely benefitted farmers in terms of accessing diverse technological information and quality input support provided by different projects of DAE and DLO.

vi) LVMF committees and local CBOs can help to encourage more involvement of the youths in social cohesion-building activities. Encouraging youth to use social media to engage other

[1] Per capita GNI for 2021 as estimated by World Bank Atlas method is USD 2570)

youth and spread awareness messages has also turned out to be an effective way to reach youth in the project areas more broadly.

vii) In some events and groups in the social cohesion component, it was a challenge to ensure female participation, particularly in culturally and religiously conservative areas of Cox's Bazar, where female participation in public events is generally not encouraged. The strategy of planning female-only events (e.g., martial art training and football tournaments) and making alliances with gender-equality sensitive teachers has proved successful.

viii) The project developed a good number of model farmers, entrepreneurs for agri-businesses, youths for the social movement against anti-social activities, martial arts for self-defense against eve teasing and GBV, and conflict mediators through training and skill development, who are now the social resource and playing volunteering role in the society and contributing to improved agricultural practices and increased cohesion in the host community.

Key Recommendations

i) FFS farmers and non-FFS farmers, entrepreneurs and input suppliers developed in the SHARIP project area may be linked with 2 big projects- EU supported "Partnership for Resilient Livelihoods in the CHT Region" project to be implemented in 3 CHT districts and FAO supported "Building resiliency and promoting integrated agri-economic growth" in Cox's Bazar for sustaining their improved farming practice.

ii) In order to mainstream IFM-FFS model, there is scope to have a "technological exchange" between FFS Farmers of SHARIP and model farmers of DAE through the engagement of FFS Farmers with Community Interest Groups (CIG) formed under the ongoing "National Agricultural Technology Programe (NATP)"-II of DAE. This could be a win-win situation and UNDP may undertake such collaborative arrangements with GoB line departments for designing its future intervention in the sector.

iii) The collection points need to be established as a market mechanism and one-stop trading center for farmers and traders. Based on SHARIP learning, the collection points need to be located in strategic points and equipped with all facilities, including transportation, storage, sorting, and packaging. These collection points can be used by other projects as marketing outlets and even be used for export processing purposes.

iv) As a self-defense tool against eve teasing and GBV, Martial Arts may be popularized among young girls, and school-based practice may be promoted with the active involvement of school management. The martial art schools may be registered with Bangladesh Karate Federation so that the martial art trainees can take part regularly in national sports events. This kind of initiative will encourage school girls to join Martial arts.

v) To ensure the sustainability of the youth-related activities, the youth forums need to be developed as institutions and should have structure at different levels- union, Upazilla, and district and trained youths under the project should be enlisted with this Forum. UNDP or other social organizations can engage Youth Forum as an institution in social mobilization and cohesion programs.

vi) LVMFs played a good role in the project area to mitigate social conflicts and restore peace and stability. Its voluntary, informal approach towards conflict mediation needs to be maintained to promote social cohesion, and its activities need to be supported and strengthened by new projects dealing with cohesion programs.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Understanding of the Project

1.1.1 Background and Rationale

More than 943,000[2] Rohingya refugees from Myanmar have settled across the border in what is commonly known as *'the world's largest refugee camp'* in Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh. They live in densely populated camps, currently facing the triple threat of fires, monsoons, and COVID-19 – with little prospect of returning home. Bangladesh continues to face a complex humanitarian emergency with them[3]. On the other hand, Rohingya refugees put an immense strain on the surrounding host communities. Therefore, one of the four strategic objectives in the Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis aims to support sustainable livelihoods for host communities and mitigate potential tensions.

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the UN aim to end poverty and protect the planet from environmental degradation, and food security is a central concern. Moreover, SDGs also align with GOB's goal to increase agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women. The Support to Host Communities Affected by Rohingya Influx Project (SHARIP) played a significant role in contributing to government development priorities and SDGs by improving the socio-economic conditions of 54,000 poor and vulnerable farmers through 1,800 Integrated Farm Management – Farmer Field School (IFM-FFS) and by enhancing knowledge and skills of host community residents to strengthen social cohesion in seven Upazilas of Bandarban Hill District and three Upazilas in Cox's Bazar District.

A substantial area of hill forests was cleared to accommodate over a million displaced Rohingya nationals from Myanmar in this narrow land strip and to meet the fuel demand for both Rohingya and host communities (UNDP, 2018[4]). Besides, the Rohingya influx negatively impacted forests, biodiversity, hill streams, and local livelihoods (UNDP, 2018). It caused flooding in monsoon, landslides (FAO, 2018[5]; SEG, 2018:42[6]), soil erosion, water scarcity, human health problems (SEG, 2018:48), reduced agricultural and aquaculture production, food insecurity (FAO, 2019[7]), loss of income of host communities, and most importantly lowering aquifer layer due to forest denudation and narrowing of streams that reduced percolation (UNDP, 2018). Consequently, tension and conflicts within and between host communities and Rohingya refugees intensified. The COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 aggravated the situation, which increased social frustration due to disruptions in essential services such as education and health and raised the possibility of a breakdown in social cohesion. The importance of the SHARIP project was further accentuated by addressing key impacts of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, i.e., food insecurity, reduced income, and social tension.

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[2] 1 Report on Rohingya Refugee Crisis Feb 2023, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OCHA

[3] UN OCHA, Till March 2021

[4] UNDP Bangladesh and UN WOMEN Bangladesh. 2018. Report on Environmental Impact of Rohingya Influx. Dhaka, Bangladesh, p 106 (including cover).

[5] FAO.2018. Briefing Note on Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh. http://www.fao.org/3/i8776en/I8776EN.pdf

[6] SEG. 2018. JRP for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis. Strategic Executive Group Report.

[7] FAO.2019. Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis 2019. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ca3252en.pdf

1.1.2 Brief on the Project Profile

UNDP pioneered the IFM-FFS in 2009 in Bangladesh. Over the years, it has developed a proven model for improving livelihoods and empowering women through IFM-FFS activities. Based on lessons learned from UNDP's model, the DAE developed the IFMC project. UNDP has implemented the DANIDA-funded Agriculture and Food Security Project (AFSP) in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which also worked towards an FFS curriculum that integrates the crops, aquaculture, livestock, poultry sector, and fisheries. SHARIP is built on the lessons learned from this project and adopted IFM-FFS.

This IFM-FFS approach has some significance in relation to its implication with climate change effect on CHT. To meet the increased demand of the population, forest resources are decreasing day by day. Deforestation, particularly in CHT areas, makes a negative impact on environmental conservation and climate change effects like low rainfall, increased temperature, drought, soil erosion, depletion of the groundwater layer, increased salinity, and increased natural disasters. The recent Rohingya influx further worsened the situation and ruined the forest resources. IFM-FFS approach considered this increased climate change effect due to deforestation and included the agroforestry component in designing the SHARIP. This new component contributed to environmental improvement, restoration of the ecosystem, recovery of forest resources, and reduced the negative effect of climate change.

It was learned through SHARIP's IFM-FFS approach how different ministries, departments, and community-based organizations could work together on Integrated Farm Management. Depending on the outcome of these IFM-FFSs, decisions were made on how to continue developing and implementing FFSs in Bandarban and Cox's Bazar under the SHARIP project.

1.1.3 Objectives and Outcomes

The objective of the project is to strengthen the socio-economic conditions of the poor households of the host communities affected by the recent Rohingya influx in ten Upazilas of Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts.

In the early 1990s, FAO's rice IPM programme, funded by UNDP, introduced **Farmer Field Schools** (FFS) in Bangladesh. DANIDA has, since 1997, supported the up-scaling and further development of the Farmer Field School approach. The Regional Fisheries and Livestock Development Components organized FFSs on aquaculture and livestock in Barisal and Noakhali. Not only the technical content but also the implementation process and FFS approach were quite different in different Districts. As a very much effective process for farmers, this IFM-FFS approach has been incorporated in the SHARIP project's outcome -1, which spells:

Outcome 1: Agricultural production increased and diversified in targeted communities through:

- Establishment of 1,800 Integrated Farm Management – Farmer Field Schools (IFM-FFS) (813 IFM-FFS in Cox's Bazar and 987 IFM-FFS in Bandarban) with the participation of 54,000 poor and marginalized farmers, of which at least 50% are women.
- Building the capacity of 563 Farmer Facilitators who will act as model farmers and facilitate learning in the IFM-FFS.
- Facilitating group learning for IFM-FFS farmers on new farming components and improved techniques focusing on homestead production.
- Enhancing access of IFM-FFS farmers to agricultural services through the engagement of Government Line Departments (DAE, DLS, DoF) and local Government Institutions as resource persons and monitors and through training of Community Livestock Workers.

- Enhancing access of IFM-FFS farmers to marketing through the establishment of 56 collection points.

Outcome 2: Agroforestry production increased sustainably through:

- Developing and implementing 1,800 IFM-FFS community Agroforestry Development Plans and 54,000 individual household Agroforestry Development Plans.
- Enhancing access to quality input, amongst others, through training nursery growers, establishing 65 community nurseries, and distributing 133,200 samplings.

Outcome 3: Social cohesion increased through:

- Forming/reactivating and providing support to 10 Local Volunteer Mediators Forums (LVMFs) that offer mediation services in the project areas.
- Courtyard sessions for IFM-FFS farmers on leadership, conflict management, gender equality, etc.
- Events that raise awareness and boost the confidence of youths include 1-month long martial art training, youth camps, debating competitions, etc.
- Sensitizing events on social cohesion topics for the population in the project areas, including religious dialogues, street drama, and international world day celebrations.

1.2 Project Location

The SHARIP project was implemented in 6 Upazilas and 38 Unions under Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts in the first phase (Lama, Alikadam, and Naikhyongchari of Bandarban Hill District and Ramu, Ukhiya, and Teknaf of Cox'sBazar District). However, the program was extended to another 4 Upazilas covering 18 more unions of Bandarban (Bandarban Sadar, Ruma, Thanchi, and Rowangchari) in the extended phase (started in May 2021). The list of the project upazillas and unions are given below:

District	Upazila	No. of Unions	Name of Sample Unions
Bandarban	Bandarban Sadar	6	Bandarban sadar, Kuhalong, Rajbila, Suwalak, Tankabati, and Jamchari.
	Alikadam	4	Alikadam sadar, Chaykhong, karakpata, and Noyapara
	Lama	7	Lama sadar, Aziznagar, Faitong, Fashiyakhali, Gojalia, Rupashipara, and Sarai
	Naikhyongchari	5	N. sadar, Baishar, Dochori, Gumdhum, and Sonaichari
	Ruma	4	Paindu, Ruma sadar, Ghalangya and Remakri,
	Thanchi	4	Balipara, Remakry, Thanchi sadar, and Tindu
	Rowangchari	4	Alikhong, Nowapatang, Rowangchhari, and Tarachha
Sub-Total		**34**	
Cox's Bazar	Ramu	11	Chakmarkul, Kacchapia, Dakkhinmithachhari, Eidghar, Fotekharkul, Gorjoniva, Jouarianala, Kauwarkhop, Khuniapalong, Rajarkul, Rashidnagar

District	Upazila	No. of Unions	Name of Sample Unions
	Teknaf	6	Baharchara, Hnila, Saint martin, Subrang, Teknaf sadar, Whykong
	Ukhiya	5	Holdiapalong, Jaliapalong, Palongkhali, Ratnapalong, Rajapalong
Sub-Total		**22**	
Grand-Total		**56**	

1.3 Project Management and Partnerships

SHARIP was managed by the SID-CHT project of UNDP with the Ministry of CHT Affairs through the National Execution (NEX) Modalities, where the GOB takes the lead role in implementation and monitoring. From MOCHTA, a National Project Director (NPD) directly oversaw the project activities along with a National Project Manager (NPM) engaged in implementing the project from UNDP's side.

Bandarban Hill District Council (BHDC) was the key implementing partner for this project in Bandarban. In Cox's Bazar, an NGO named ***"Practical Action"*** was the implementing partner for the IFM-FFS and agroforestry components. For the social cohesion component, the implementing partners are *GRAUS (Gram Unnayon Sangathon*) in Bandarban and ACLAB *(Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh)* in Cox's Bazar.

A team of SID-CHT, UNDP led by the Chief- Livelihoods and NRM, as well as the Chief-Gender and Community Cohesion, were fully involved in supporting implementation, monitoring, and guiding the field activities. Other team members based in Rangamati also provided support to SHARIP, including a Programme Officer-Livelihoods, a Programme Officer-Monitoring and Evaluation, and a Technical Coordinator-FFS training and quality.

In Bandarban, the District Manager and District FFS Expert of SID-CHT, and in Cox's Bazar, a District FFS Officer, a Livelihoods and IFM Expert, and an Upazila Facilitator worked under the overall guidance of the Advisor on Women and Youth Resilience in CHT to carry out technical backstopping support to implementing partners as well as the day-to-day supervision and monitoring of field activities in the districts.

The district project team in BHDC consisted of 18 full-time staff, and Practical Action had 20 full-time staff *(Master Trainers, Market Development Officers, Upazila FFS Coordinators/Mobilizers, M&E Officers, and social cohesion coordinator)*. They worked on the agriculture/agroforestry component.

GRAUS and ACLAB (partner NGOs) also had teams of 18 and 15 staff members in the extended phase, respectively (*Project Coordinators, Community Mobilizers, M&E Officers,* and others.), implementing the social cohesion component and assisting in monitoring learning support to the IFM-FFS (the latter is applicable for ACLAB in the first phase only).

1.4 Structure of the Report

The report consists of introductory chapter, description of the intervention, evaluation scope and objectives, evaluation approach and methodology, findings, theory of change and lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2: Description of the Interventions

The field implementation of SHARIP was started in July 2018 by providing training to the "*Master Trainers" (**MT**)* on project activities, implementation modalities, guidelines, and IFM-FFS, including agroforestry. In Bandarban, the implementing partners were Bandarban Hill District Council (outcomes 1 and 2) and GRAUS (outcome 3), and in Cox's Bazar, the implementing partners were Practical Action (outcomes 1 and 2) and ACLAB (outcome 3). Despite restrictions on mobility and physical gatherings imposed by the Government due to the widespread covid-19 Pandemic, which resulted in the halting of almost all the planned field-level activities from March until December 2021, interventions continued as planned, and intended results were achieved during the project period as reflected in Progress Report (July 2018- December 2022).

2.1 Livelihood Improvement Through IFM-FFS

The project mainly supported grass-root level farmers to replicate Farmer Field School Knowledge by recruiting Farmer Facilitators (FF), who received backstopping support from technically sound Master Trainers (MT).

At the beginning of the project, the village and para were selected by the respective para/ village selection committee headed by Upazilla Nirbahi Officer by following some criteria as indicated in the guideline, and an overall orientation on the project was given to the para community people. Simultaneously Farmers Field Schools (FFS) were established in the selected para consisting of 30 farmers (50% female) who were selected as per guided criteria. Only the real farmers who were disadvantaged, such as landless, widows, vulnerable women, women-headed families, and from ethnic communities, got priority for the school. The Farmer Facilitator (FF), who is a model progressive farmer in the community, was employed to carry out grass-root level training in the field school on homestead agricultural production (Agri/livestock/fisheries/forestry/poultry), including basic nutritional concept, agroforestry, and social cohesion. The FFs received ToT by Master Trainers (MTs) on the FFS curriculum for a duration of a total of 30 days, splitting into 3 spells, each spell consisting of 10 days. A curriculum consisting of 12 modules and 43 sessions was developed for the FFS, of which 5 sessions were compulsory, and 38 sessions were optional. The sessions for a particular school were selected based on the needs of the area in consultation with the farmers in the school. The FF ran the school for 7 months in which s/he completed at least 28 sessions (4 sessions in a month) and followed up for another 2 months in which the farmers' groups were visited, and technical support was provided for the application of the learning in the field. In the course of these FFS activities, the FFs were provided regular backstopping support by the MTs and UFFSC to discharge their duties and transfer knowledge and technology from school to field. The school and farmers' fields were often visited by the field officials of the line departments (DAE, DLS, and DoF), who provided technical advice to the farmers. The FFs provided their services voluntarily but received remuneration only for conducting the FFS sessions. A small amount of funds (BDT 22,000) was budgeted for each Farmer Field School only to meet costing of training materials and study plot preparation.

The FFS played a vital role in educating the farmers about improved agricultural practices, transferring knowledge into practice in the farmer's field, and promoting increased agricultural production, which supported the improved livelihood of the marginal farmers. This FFS intervention had long been functioning as a successful strategy for agricultural extension through different UNDP and Danida supported projects. Based on past experience and learning, SHARIP adopted the same strategy, which worked well to support the marginal farmers to practice integrated farming based on their available homestead land and increase agricultural production.

2.2 Application of New Knowledge and Skills Through FFS

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) consisted of groups of farmers-male and female, with a common interest, who used to get together on a regular basis to study the "how and why" of a particular topic. The topics covered considerably – from IPM, organic agriculture, animal husbandry, and soil husbandry to income-generating activities. The FFS was particularly adapted to field study, where specific hands-on management skills and conceptual understanding were required. Field School adopted Group Extension Method based on adult education methods. It is a "school without walls' that teaches basic agroecology and management skills that make farmers experts in their own farms. In an FFS, the participants used to get together on a weekly basis. The FFS approach relied on participatory training methods to convey knowledge to field school participants to make them confident pest experts, self-teaching experimenters, and effective trainers of other farmers. FFSs were developed as a "bottom-up" approach to extension with a focus on participatory, experiential, and reflective learning to improve the problem-solving capacity of farmers through highly trained facilitators working with farmer groups, particularly involved with the production of vermicomposting and farmyard manure, ***hazol*** (chicken hatching pan using Naphthalin) to increase hatchability of eggs and hand pollination to increase fertilization of flowers.

2.3 Involvement of Government Line Agencies

The project involved government line agencies as technical experts in monitoring the IFM-FFS work, in the identification of quality local resources persons (Farmers Facilitators, Community Livestock Workers, and nursery growers), in linking up farmers with government support services, and in linking farmers with local input service providers and buyers. However, it remained a challenge to secure relevant and timely support for small-scale farmers. Department of Agriculture Extension and other government line departments focus mainly on large farmers who cultivate vast land and produce in larger volumes. The SHARIP project focuses on marginalized small farmers where farming options are relatively limited. For these farmers, the learnings on improved/new small-scale farming techniques through IFM-FFS make a big difference in the absence of other support initiatives. The relevant government officials were invited to the IVM-FFS sessions, where they disseminated information about new technologies and government programs and how they could get support from the government program. They used to make monitoring visits to farmers' fields with a monitoring format and gave their observations on how farmers adopted the learning in practice and how they were making progress in their farming practices.

These line departments often included these IFM-FFS farmers in their training program, where they could learn about new agricultural technologies. Particularly, farmers were more dependent on the agricultural extension department for receiving linked services of quality seeds and fertilizer and on the livestock department for vaccination services. The project trained Community Livestock Workers (CLWs), who were linked with the district livestock departments and played an important role in fulfilling the increased demand for vaccinations, thereby increasing production and decreasing the animal mortality rate. These CLWs trained by the project are now treated as the supporting hand of GOB officials to provide vaccines in rural areas.

2.4 Market Linkage and Access to Quality Farming

The project provided market linkage services to the FFS farmers by establishing collection points near the Farming Producers' community. These collection points are run by a 7-member committee responsible for facilitating and establishing linkage between the farmers and the traders and fixing the reasonable price of agricultural products through the bargaining process. In the Bandarban area, Agri-

Business Network (ABN) committees have also been formed, comprising representatives of farmers and agricultural input dealers. The collection points are considered key locations for IFM-FFS farmers and buyers/traders, benefitting both actors with storage facilities and bulking agricultural produces, thereby ensuring a demand-supply chain. The project attempted to improve the facilities of the collection points by adding more services and making these points better functional to attract more traders/buyers. The improved market linkages ultimately benefited farmers to get a better price for their produces and increase their income.

2.5 Promotion of Agroforestry

Agroforestry was considered one of the key components of the project, along with IFM-FFS. The project provided training on agroforestry to the FFs, and FFs provided training to the target farmers through IFM-FFS sessions. The trained participants became aware and knowledgeable about agroforestry concepts, importance, models, planning, and management of agroforestry.

The agroforestry component involved two things: each FFS developed an ADP for social agroforestry (community-level), and each FFS farmer developed an individual ADP for their own farm. The project made efforts to engage IFM FFS farmers in developing their site-specific Agroforestry Development Plans (ADPs) in a participatory way, prioritizing actions, and implementing their preferred agroforestry systems at the community level. Hence, more results were expected as IFM-FFS farmers gradually utilized their knowledge of agroforestry and started implementing their ADPs.

2.6 Promotion of Social Cohesion

The social cohesion component aimed to reduce social conflicts that emerged mainly due to the Rohingya influx and increased cohesion through community sensitization, awareness building, and conflict mediation. The project undertook a three-dimensional strategy to work with three target

groups in promoting social cohesion: youth, IFM-FFS farmers, and Local Volunteer Mediators' Forums (LVMFs), comprising locally elected leaders and influential members of the community in the project areas. The project attempted to mitigate conflicts, which in fact, created an enabling environment for the farmers to increase production through agriculture/ agroforestry, which led to increased income and supported the livelihood of the affected host community, and this again strengthened social cohesion between local and Rohingya communities.

A multi-stakeholder (Upazila Administration, Union Parishad, educational institutions, and members of Local Volunteer Mediator's Forums and youth forums) approach was adopted to create a wider scope to promote social cohesion interventions in the project working areas. The implementing partners organized events involving students to focus on different conflicting issues. The youths were sensitized on issues such as natural resource conservation, early child marriage, gender-based violence, drug abuse, and human trafficking through organizing events like youth camps, youth campaigns, debating competitions, and sports events. The school girls were trained in Martial Arts by engaging professional Martial arts instructors, and this enabled the girls to have self-defense against any eve-teasing and gender-based violence.

The significant contribution was that the project reduced social conflicts and increased social cohesion through the intervention of LVMF, which in fact, worked as an informal body between the community and the Union Parishad to mediate/ resolve internal conflicts of the host community members and to some extent conflicts with Rohingya community. The project provided training to the LVMF members on the social conflict mediation process, which developed sufficient skills to play an active role in the conflict mediation process. As found in the final progress report of SHARIP, a good number of social conflicts in the project area were mediated through LVMF.

2.7 Gender Equality & Women Empowerment

The project promoted gender equality and women empowerment by ensuring women's participation in the IFM-FFS and providing backstopping support to them in their farming practices. Similarly, women's participation was encouraged in FF selection and the formation of LVMF. The project organized training on gender and leadership for the FFS farmers.

As a women-friendly approach, the IFM-FFS focused on homestead production, meaning that women were very keen to join *(77% of the IFM-FFS members are women*). The project provided backstopping support to the female FFS farmers to successfully apply new knowledge and techniques, which led to visible results in increased and improved production. The project also facilitated female farmers to establish linkage with the government line department officials to receive technical support for their improved farming practices, which created scope to increase women's status in the households and sometimes also in the community. The women's participation was also remarkable in LVMF and the youth forums and they were in many cases playing the role of a conflict mediator and social mobilizer.

2.8 Facilitating Recovery from the Effect of COVID-19

In order to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood of FFS farmers, the project distributed a solidarity package comprising agricultural input (summer and vegetable seeds and equipment), food and hygiene items, and cash (only in Cox's Bazar). Numerous COVID-19 awareness-raising activities were carried out. The project covered very remote communities not covered by the government safety net program.

Chapter 3: Evaluation Scope and Objectives

3.1 Introduction

The Participatory Management Initiatives for Development (PMID) conducted the final evaluation of SHARIP. The duration of evaluation was 2 months commencing from 27 May to 30 June 2023. During evaluation, survey and investigation was conducted as per evaluation scope. The evaluation team was fully engaged and dedicated their time and effort to assess project progress and achievements.

3.2 Evaluation Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To assess the performance of SHARIP since its commencement in 2018 to date[8] against the outcome and outputs indicators as set out in the Results Framework.
- To assess how far SHARIP has come in achieving the development engagement objective measured through the impact indicators identified in the Results Framework.
- To draw the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen changes and effects driven by project-supported interventions.
- To examine the assumptions embedded in the Theory of Change of SHARIP and assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability drawn from its design and implementation.
- To assess the extent to which the rights-based approach and gender mainstreaming are applied; and
- To draw lessons learned and good practices for the GoB and UNDP replication and/or up-scaling and provide forward-looking recommendations for the next programming phase.

The scope of final evaluation covers the project implementation from July 2018 to December 2022.

3.3 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation uses OECD evaluation criteria (Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability, and Coherence) and UNDP's evaluation criteria which include Human rights, gender equality and leave no one behind. The project's final assessment aims to analyze and determine what aspects have been performed successfully objectively, what difficulties have been encountered, and what lessons may be drawn to enhance execution in the coming months. The review will also produce information with broader applications, evaluate the potential for expanding the existing project, and act as a tool for quality control for both upward and downward responsibility.

3.4 Evaluation Questions

As part of the evaluation, the following evaluation questions were addressed.

Relevance

- To what extent is the design of SHARIP as well as implementation approach/ methodology relevant to the current Bangladesh contexts, including both national context and local conditions of the project intervention areas?

[8] For the IFM-FFS component, the focus will be on the first phase as the new FFS are still in the initial stages.

- How relevant is the project to UN/ UNDP strategies in Bangladesh (i.e. CPD, UNDAF), UNDP Strategic Plan, and SDGs?
- To what extent has the project design and implementation taken cross-cutting issues into account, such as gender equality, human rights-based approach (HRBA), and Leaving no one behind (LNOB)?
- To what extent has SHARIP's Theory of Change been helpful to achieve the results? Is there any gap between the project reality and a pathway to achieve the results, hypothesis, assumptions, and risks identified when developing the Theory of Change?

Efficiency

- How efficiently has the project spent available budget so far as per Prodoc and annual work plan?
- Is budget allocation well considered to achieve the results to date in terms of cost efficiency?
- To what extent is financial management efficient and effective?
- Are the project's institutional and implementation arrangements appropriate, effective and efficient for the successful achievement of the project's objectives? How effectively has the project been managed?
- To what extent has the M&E system supported effective project management and implementation?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the project been on track so far towards achieving its planned outcomes and outputs as per approved Results Framework? This includes critical analysis of the project's achievements of indicators and targets.
- What factors have contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of the outcomes and outputs?
- To what extent are the activities of SHARIP adopting a gender responsive approach and making gender equality an integral part of the project?
- What would be bottlenecks and changes if the project is not achieving the results as planned? (It should consider both external and internal factors)

Coherence

- How do government policies and priorities in relation to enhancing the livelihood of small-scale farmers and development in host communities support or undermine the SHARIP project, and vice versa?
- In which ways are there coherence between the SHARIP project and other UNDP interventions in the project areas?

Impact

- What are the significant changes that the SHARIP project has brought in the lives of the direct beneficiaries and their communities so far? (this should include case studies)

- Is there any positive/ negative change in target beneficiaries, their communities, and duty bearers as a result of the projects? How many were to benefit?

Sustainability

- To what extent are individual and institutional capacities improved through SHARIP's interventions sustainable?
- What is the probability of the benefits of the interventions under SHARIP continuing in the long term?
- Has the project considered necessary institutional arrangement of the government stakeholders'/partner organizations to be set up to make the project's impact sustainable over a longer term?

Leave No One Behind

- To what extent have the projects' response and recovery initiative(s) been inclusive in supporting the most vulnerable and marginalized group in the implementing area.

Lessons Learned

- What are the lessons that the projects have had learned so far?
- What are the challenges that the projects have faced during their implementation?
- What measures have already been taken to mitigate those challenges?

Gender Equality

- To what extent have gender equality and women's empowerment been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?
- Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

Human Rights

- To what extent have poor, indigenous, and physically challenged women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?

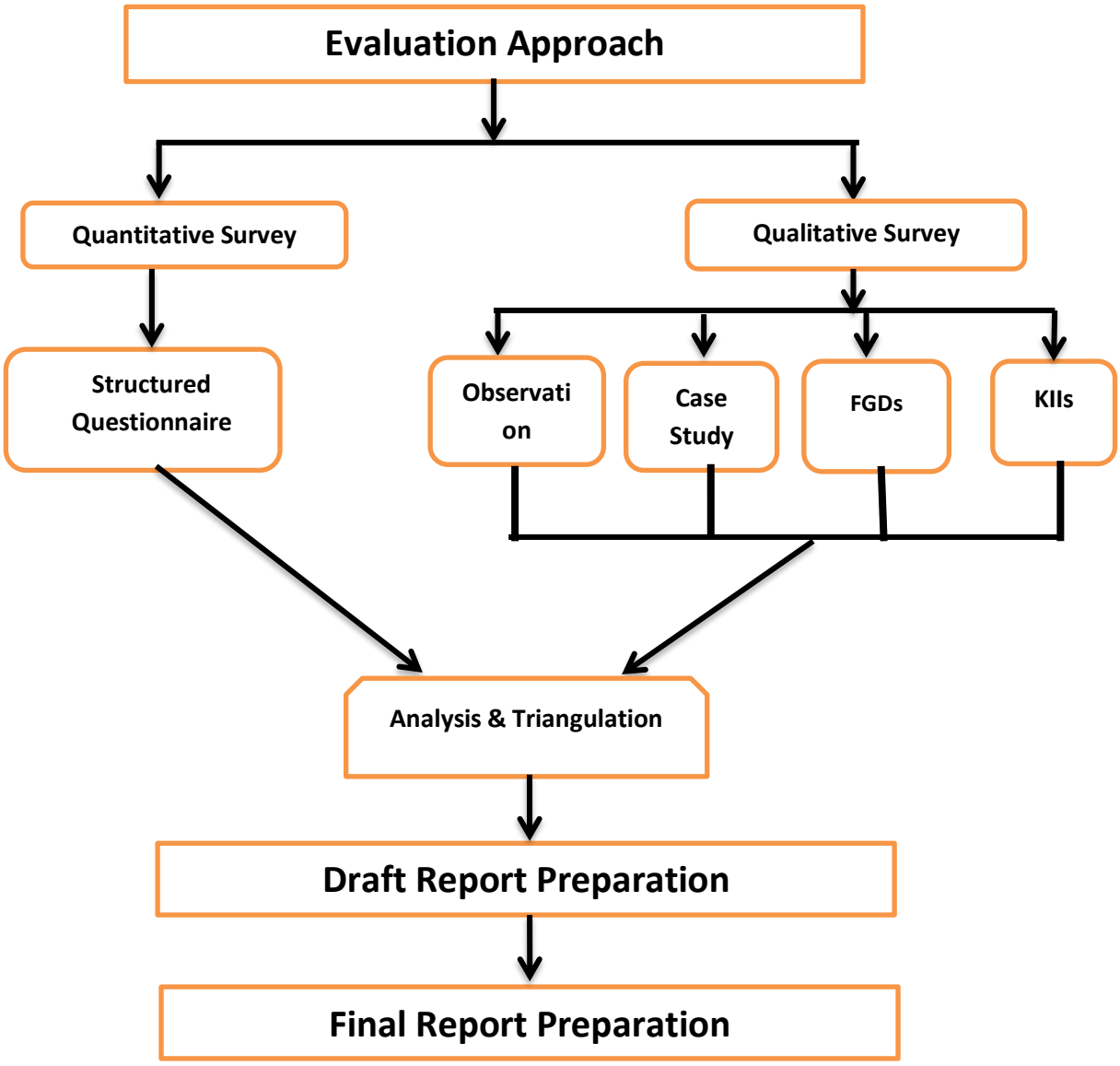
The ToR of the final evaluation is given in **Annex-1**

Chapter 4: Evaluation Approach and Methodology

4.1 Evaluation Approach

A mixed method of qualitative and quantitative methods were followed for this final evaluation. While the quantitative survey at the household level was conducted with a structured questionnaire using the digital platform (Kobo toolbox), the qualitative assessment was done in a consultative way in which the project stakeholders, i.e., target beneficiaries, staff of the project implementation agencies, government officials of the line departments and concerned UNDP project personnel participated in the evaluation process; The study was participatory in nature with a focus on learning and appreciative inquiry. The evaluation used the different tools, techniques, and analytical approaches that were deployed to collect data and capture facts about SHARIP's progress in different interventions, including IFM-FFS, promotion of agricultural production and agro-forestry, and promotion of social cohesion. The data collection methods were followed to ensure maximum representation and validity of the data sources.

The following diagram demonstrates the overall approach of finalevaluation



4.2 Data Collection Method

Pursuant to the objectives of the assessment, the data collection followed both: i) Quantitative methods and ii) Qualitative methods. The quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires and checklists, while qualitative data was collected through Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Key Informant Interviews (KII), and case studies. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied for data that complemented each other to reflect the facts. The triangulation of different techniques maximized the required information, improved the quality of the data, and reduced the chance of biased findings. These methods and tools of data collection were designed in consistency with the study objectives, the preset objectives of the SHARIP, and internal assessment tools evaluation and sampling number.

Secondary data for the study was collected through the review of the SHARIP Project Document (Pro-Doc), Baseline report, Final progress report, mid-term evaluation report, and relevant study reports. The list of the documents reviewed is given in **Annex-4**.

Primary data for the study was collected through household surveys, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), individual interviews during field visits, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and Case studies**.** The evaluation tools are given in **Annex-2**.

4.3 Evaluation and Sampling Method

The evaluation adheres to the UNEG Norms and Standards & follows the *"UNDP EVALUATION GUIDELINES"*- Revised edition: June 2021. Throughout the evaluation process, the Evaluation Team has adopted a consultative and transparent approach and built upon the perspectives of the different stakeholders, namely the leaders and members of Village Based Organizations, agricultural producers, particularly the women farmers, representatives from the partner organizations in particular from the GRAUS, ACLAB, government official from the concerned line Departments and UNDP field and management staff. A list of persons interviewed/meetings held is given in **Annex-3.**

The number of beneficiaries covered under 6 Upazilas for the quantitative survey is 27,360. This comprises the treatment population for this proposed quasi-experimental study design. Only the treatment group was selected for the survey, and the evaluation findings were compared with findings of mid-term evaluation and available baseline data. A sample size of **420** from the treatment group was randomly selected through the standard statistical procedure from 15 (6 from Bandarban and 9 from Cox'sBazar) out of 40 unions for the execution of the survey.

The sampling technique, sample size calculation for the treatment and control group, and union-wise sample distribution are given below:

4.3.1 Sampling Technique

A two-stage sampling technique was followed for farmer household selection. At first, unions from each Upazila were selected using the PPS (Probability Proportional to size) method based on the no. of FFS farmers in each union, and in the next stage, the farmer HHs were selected randomly from selected unions. For wide coverage of unions, about 38 % of the unions were selected from each Upazila. Based on the highest number of FFS farmers, as given in annex-1, the unions in Table-1 are selected as sample unions.

Table 1: Name of selected sample Unions by Upazila

District	Upazila	No of Total Unions	No. of Sample Unions	Name of Sample Unions
Bandarban	Bandarban Sadar	6	2	Kuhalong, Sadar union
	Lama	7	2	Gojalia, Rupashipara
	Naikhyongchari	5	2	Sonaichari, N.Sadar
Sub-Total		**18**	**6**	
Cox's Bazar	Ramu	11	2	Chakmarkul, Kacchopia
	Teknaf	6	2	Baharchara, Hnila, Ratnapalong
	Ukhiya	5	2	Ratnapalong, Rajapalong
Sub-Total		**22**	**6**	
Grand-Total		**40**	**12**	

4.3.2 Sample Size Calculation for Beneficiary Group

For determining the sample size for the household survey under this study, the following formula is used to determine the sample size for each Upazila:

$$n = \text{Design Effect} \quad X \quad \frac{z^2pqN}{e^2(N-1) + z^2pq}$$

Where,

p = Female proportion of each upazila (0.5)

q = 1- p

z = Standard Normal value associated with confidence level (at 95%=1.96).

e = desired precision, i.e., the maximum permissible difference between the sample statistics and population parameter, which is considered 5% (0.05)

n = size of sample

N = size of participating households in 2 project districts (54,000)

In this study, p is the proportion of males and females in each upazila, and the design effect is used 1.1 for two-stage sampling.

Using the above formula sample size of beneficiary group of two districts is found to be 419. To minimize sampling error, few more samples were taken, and the total sample size was 425. These 425 samples were distributed proportionately among the selected unions of respective districts.

Therefore, Upazila and union-wise sample distribution is given in Table 2:

Table 2: Union-wise sample distribution

District	Upazila	Union	Sample Size
Bandarban	Bandarban Sadar	Sadar Union	35
		Kuhalong	36
	Lama	Gojalia	36
		Rupashipara	35
	Naikhyongchari	Sonaichari	35
		N.Sadar	35
Cox's Bazar	Ramu	Chakmarkul	35
		Kacchopia	37
	Teknaf	Baharchara	35
		Hnila	36
	Ukhiya	Ratnapalong	35
		Rajapalong	35
Total	**6**	12	**425**

From the above calculation, the sample size for Cox's Bazar and Bandarban District beneficiary groups was 213 and 212, respectively.

A 12-member experienced and trained enumerators' team under the supervision of a Survey Coordinator was engaged for the execution of the survey. The data quality was ensured by using KoBo Toolbox, efficient field management, supervision, and monitoring. The necessary precaution was also taken in the data management process.

4.4 Primary Data Analysis Method

The primary data collected through the household survey were analyzed by comparing with available baseline and midterm evaluation data to measure their contribution toward achieving project objectives and outcomes.

The data were also compared between two main geographic areas- Cox's Bazar and Bandarban to find geographic factors responsible for comparative advantages and disadvantages. The status of target beneficiaries before and after the project was also compared in selective indicators to measure the direct impact of the project on the target beneficiaries.

4.5 Safety Measures Declaration on COVID-19

The field staff assigned for data collection at the field level, both quantitative and qualitative, were oriented on personal safety measures and safety measures of beneficiaries (How to wear and dispose of Mask and Gloves, Wash or sanitize hands, maintain physical distance during data collection and conduct session). They filled up a declaration form before engaging in the field-level data collection works.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

PMID followed several ethical guidelines throughout the study-

Participatory Approach: Participatory approach was followed to involve allowing the respondents to express their views without any fear of consequences or interference.

Inclusiveness: Given the nature of women and girl centeredness of the project, it was selectively inclusive for all categories of marginalized girls and women deprived from the benefits of education and skills.

Other considerations: The evaluation was guided by the principals outlined in the UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation" (UNEG, 2020). They include, but are not limited to:

- **Sensitive:** Women and girls' empowerment, human rights, security against violence, and inclusion
- **Integrity:** Honest and truthful in communication and actions. Emphasis on objective reporting of facts without the use of any coercive measures, or attempting to extract desired responses through influencing.
- **Accountability:** The entire process of the evaluation was carried through close collaboration and interaction with the concerned UNDP staff at both central and field level through regular uninterrupted two-way communication.
- **Respect:** All the stakeholders who participated in the evaluation did so on a voluntary basis and were treated with all the social norms and values of showing respect to others.
- **Beneficence:** Considerations were given to risks and benefits to be derived from the evaluation processes, in order to ensure that the evaluation outcomes are able to add better value to the project's objective of empowering girls and women.
- **Confidentiality and data protection:** Necessary measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality of respondents in order to avoid putting any of the respondents at risk.

4.7 Limitations of the Evaluation Process

The Evaluation Team experienced certain limitations in relation to conducting the evaluation, mainly because of the following:

- The limited time available (30-day work) in comparison to the project size and the two different districts: Bandarban and Cox's Bazar, which are located a long distance from one another;
- It was not possible to interact with non-members of the FFS in order to gain a better understanding of their perspectives and their farming practices;
- The final evaluation was conducted 6 months after the closing of the project when there was no field staff to facilitate the household survey and evaluation. So the survey was limited to the intervention area, and no sample was drawn from the control group. A small sample size was considered due to resource constraints. No partners' staff were available for interviews, and stakeholder consultation was limited.

- No written records/accounts were kept by the FFSs or any of the families of the financial benefits accrued through the livelihood activities taken up through project support. This was a constraint in drawing conclusions about on-farm economics; and
- The language was sometimes a barrier to the conversation, as Bangla or English was the second or third language for all concerned Respondents of the questionnaire survey.

4.8 Background Information on Evaluators

Name and Position	Professional Experience in the Required Areas
A. K. M. Waliul Islam (Team Leader)	Mr. AKM Waliul Islam has more than 30 years of working experience in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, urban sanitation, waste management, gender, governance, environment health & nutrition, agriculture industry etc. Since 1984, he has been involved in strategic and operational program designing and planning on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in line with government policy and organizational perspective plan, WATSAN situation and community need analysis for providing effective WSS services towards disadvantaged people. Currently, he is working as a Team Leader for Baseline Study in 4 City Corporations and 8 Municipalities under Sustainable Urban Water Cycle Project in Bangladesh, SNV Netherlands Development Organization. He worked as WASH Expert, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Assessment for the CWISE Project in Bangladesh, SNV Netherlands Development Organization. He conducted the mid-term review of "Supporting the Enabling Environment for better WASH services in Northern Bangladesh Project as team Leader. He works as consultant for developing national operation and maintenance strategy for WASH, UNICEF- ITN-BUET. He worked as National Adviser (Capacity Building) of GoB-Danida HYSAWA (WSS) Project from February 15, 2010 to December 2011 where he was responsible for leading capacity building activities of the project covering 247 union 44 upazilas under 6 coastal districts and 3 north-western districts of the country; contributing to central level planning and guiding program implementation by local Government Support Unit (LGSU). developing training modules intended for capacity building of UP and other stakeholders; facilitating planning and implementation of the program by Union Parishad (LGI); facilitating agencies engaged for program facilitation and capacity building of Union Parishad Perform Contract management with program facilitating agencies based on PPP; supporting program operation, monitoring and evaluation of the program. He facilitated process monitoring and report writing on HYSAWA pilot modalities from April 2010 to June 2011 for PMID. The monitoring work was sponsored by Policy Support Unit of LGD, MoLGRD&C. He attended annual Review and Planning Workshop of GoB-Danida HYSAWA Project. He has long working experience in promotion of sanitation marketing and private sector development, community based rural piped water management through PPP, benchmarking performance of rural piped

	water utilities, participatory monitoring system designing for WATSAN projects; program implementation and management through capacity building of Local Government Institutions (LGI) and community organizations, intervention package development including tools, method and materials for improved hygiene practice and health at community, school and growth center. He participated in several socio-economic baseline surveys particularly in WASH and prepared reports using statistical software packages. He was involved with designing of rural piped water supply integrated project with private sector business model, participatory monitoring system designing for the WATSAN projects, managing stakeholder capacity building for. establishing linked services. He has good knowledge on SPSS, (Statistical software), Windows, (Operating system) and Microsoft Office, Open Office (Document Processing).
Shafiqul Islam (Data Management Expert)	Md. Shafiqul Islam completed a Bachelor of Social Science (BSS) degree from the esteemed National University, Dhaka, in 1998. He is a highly qualified Water and Sanitation Survey and Data Management Expert, boasting with extensive experience and expertise in his field, he has played significant roles in several crucial projects focused on water supply, sanitation, and sustainable urban water management. As a Survey Tools Developer and Data Management Expert, he has excelled in his responsibilities, particularly in the development of online survey forms. Using advanced tools like Kobotoolbox, he has created comprehensive and user-friendly survey instruments in both English and Bengali languages. Moreover, he has showcased his leadership skills by providing effective training to enumerators, ensuring they are well-equipped to conduct surveys accurately and efficiently.By providing timely feedback and support to enumerators, he ensures data quality and integrity, making the overall survey process more effective and reliable. Through his dedication and expertise, Md. Shafiqul Islam has made significant contributions to projects like the "Baseline Study in 4 City Corporations and 8 Municipalities under Sustainable Urban Water Cycle Project in Bangladesh," supported by the SNV Netherlands Development Organization, and the "Endline Survey 2023 for Kushtia and Jhenaidah Pourashava under CWISE Programme" also funded by SNV Netherlands Development Organization. Additionally, his involvement in the "Final Evaluation of Support to Host Communities Affected by the Rohingya Influx (SHARIP)" further highlights his commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of communities in Bangladesh. Overall, Md. Shafiqul Islam's key qualifications lie in his exceptional skills as a survey tools developer, data management expert, and data analyst. His in-depth understanding of water and sanitation issues, combined with his technical proficiency and dedication, make him an invaluable asset to projects focused on improving water resources, sanitation facilities, and sustainable urban water management in Bangladesh.

Md. Rahadujjaman (Study Coordinator)	The Study Coordinator, Mr. Md. Rahadujjaman, possesses a profound area of expertise in Engineering Project Management and Problem Solving. With a solid foundation in engineering, exemplified by his BSc in Engineering, and a demonstrated track record of successfully applying his knowledge to various projects, Mr. Rahadujjaman excels in overseeing the coordination and execution of complex studies. His aptitude for analyzing intricate engineering challenges and formulating effective solutions sets him apart as a specialist capable of driving projects to successful completion. Through his extensive experience, he has honed his abilities to navigate the intricacies of engineering projects, ensuring seamless collaboration between multidisciplinary teams, efficient resource allocation, and adherence to project timelines. Mr. Rahadujjaman's expertise empowers him to provide valuable insights, mitigate risks, and optimize processes, making him an invaluable asset as a Study Coordinator in the realm of Project Management and Problem Solving.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

As mentioned in the evaluation methodology, evaluation was conducted through a primary survey of FFS farmers[9] and a qualitative assessment of project outcome and output through FGD, KIIs, and case studies. The survey data were collected and analyzed using KoBo Apps and analytical tools. The data output tables of both treatment and control groups are given in **Annex-6.**

5.1 Data Processing and Analysis Plan

Proper care was taken at every stage of data management. Categorization of responses and allocation of codes were done under the supervision of the Data Manager. A data entry package in accordance with the questionnaire with self-edit facilities for response code range and skip instruction (as mentioned in the questionnaire) was developed. Data was downloaded in Excel sheet, and all analyses were done using the Excel. Inconsistencies and out-of-range errors were checked before the analysis of data.

The analysis plan for the proposed study was planned to clearly address the objectives set in the ToR. Mostly univariate and bivariate analysis was performed using descriptive statistics. The findings were presented in tables and graphs, as appropriate. Household Data of samples beneficiaries & all qualitative data (FGD, KII, & Observation) were processed through triangulation. The key findings gathered from document reviews, qualitative and quantitative surveys were triangulated for report preparation.

5.2 Quality Control

Since the quality of the survey data is of utmost importance, sufficient care have been taken to ensure the quality of data collection at different stages of the survey, such as the development of questionnaire/tools, recruitment, and training of enumerators, field management, supervision, and monitoring and data processing. The survey instrument was shared with UNDP, field-tested, and finalized. Field staff were mobilized from qualified and experienced Field Facilitators. They were provided extensive training before engaging them in data collection. Besides these, quality control in data collection was ensured through efficient field management, supervision, and monitoring. Necessary precautions were taken in the data management activities.

5.3 Triangulation

The findings from document review, quantitative and qualitative data analysis were checked and triangulated to identify data inconsistencies and get a conclusive finding. This triangulation process was followed in analyzing progress in achieving each outcome and output in the result framework.

5.4 Data Storage and Management

Household survey data (quantitative) were collected through mobile devices using KoBo App. The data uploaded by the enumerators were screened daily for removing data inconsistencies and incompleteness and cleaned data was stored. When exporting data for analysis, the PMID consultant ensured that data was stored on a secure server as per KoBo guidelines. Additional data gathered as well as through qualitative data collection (e.g., transcripts, field notes) also followed guidelines for appropriate data storage and use.

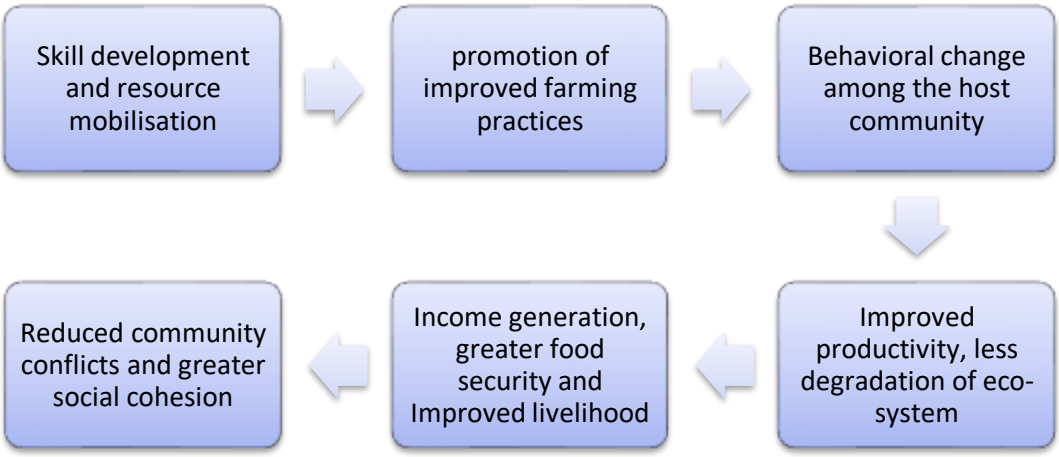
[9] FFS farmers are project beneficiaries, who are covered under the survey.

Chapter 6: Findings

This is the core chapter of the final evaluation. The criteria are a combination of evaluation criteria used by OECD and UNDP. In the following evaluation has been done on the basis of data collected from the field with subsequent analysis, interpretation, lessons learned, conclusion and recommendations along with a brief reflection on theory of change.

6.1 Project Theory of Change

The 'theory of change' is explicit in three inter-linked project components, which are expected to achieve project outcomes and objectives. The change process, as outlined in the 'theory of change', is as follows:



The above change process was logically set to achieve the project outcomes and objectives. However, the change process is very long and to reach the final goal through a single time bound project is highly ambitious and challenging. MTE highlighted the following uncontrolled factors/ challenges that were needed to be addressed to achieve results at an objective level:

- Proper application of knowledge and skill by the project beneficiaries in farming practices, agroforestry growing and social conflict mediation process. The long-term project facilitation and follow-up through the engagement of FFs and frontline project staff are essential to ensure the proper application of knowledge and skill by farmers, Youth Forums and LVMF.
- Developing functional linkage and collaborative arrangement with the relevant GoB line departments and agencies to ensure support services accessible by the project beneficiaries for improved agricultural productivity and agroforestry growing for improved eco-system
- Developing functional linkage with the input sellers and market traders to ensure uninterrupted farming practices and marketing of agricultural produces.
- Ensuring food security during natural disasters and increasing resilience against the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Reinforcing conflict mediation process through developing institutional linkage of Youth Forum and LVMF with relevant government line agencies and non-government social service institutions.

During final evaluation it was observed that the project provided intensive training to farmers and Farmers Facilitators (FFs) developed FFs as model farmers who are still living in the Farmers community and helping FFS farmers for proper application of their knowledge and skill for improved farm production. Functional Linkage was established between the FFS farmers and the line departments, particularly DAE and DLO, who provided support to the farmers as and when needed, although long-term collaborative arrangements could not be established through an exit plan to continue supporting the farmers. The project also attempted to develop functional linkage with the input sellers and traders by using a collection point, a hub. This worked well in many cases depending on the active role played by the management committee of the collection points. The project provided input support (Solidarity package) to the FFS farmers who were badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which incentivized farmers to resume their agricultural production, which ensured food security during the pandemic and increased to some extent resilience against the negative impact of COVID-19. The project further attempted to institutionalize the conflict mediation process through the formation of LVMF and Youth Forum. The LVMF committees seem structurally strong with the engagement of LGIs and government officials, but functionally weak, not being supported by any relevant government line agency. Youth Forum was found both structurally and functionally disorganized, having no visible activities even at the end of the project, although the project organized many social mobilization and awareness-raising events by using Youth Forum.

Despite the above challenges, the project has had many successes, and the change process worked moderately well toward achieving its outcomes and objectives.

6.2 Relevance

The project is most relevant for the current development priorities declared by the Government of Bangladesh, food Security, SDGs, and the Strategic Objectives for UNDP. The project is directly contributing to the SDG, which is the priority of the SHARIP-UNDP. The project directly addresses 3 priority sectors, namely (1) Agriculture and food security (2) Human development, with particular reference to agriculture production (3) land use and natural resource management. The project is also in line with GOB's commitment to the cross-cutting issues of women's empowerment and vulnerable groups.

The project is relevant to the Strategic Objectives (SOs) for UNDP, namely "Help eliminate hunger", "Food insecurity and malnutrition", "Make agriculture, forestry, and fisheries more productive and sustainable", and "Reduce rural poverty". For the fifth Strategic objective, "Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems and increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters", there are no specific project interventions, but the project will indirectly create resilience in its area, which will minimize the impacts of disasters UNDP's competitive advantage of being associated with GoB on similar projects and proven FFS approach is not only relevant but crucial for this project. However, the project works with a high number of women who are often not recognized as farmers and with a high number of ethnic communities, hence contributing to this strategic objective.

The project is most relevant for the current development priorities declared by the Government of Bangladesh, Food Security. The Government of Bangladesh is working in collaboration with UNDP to address it through several projects. The government (since 2009) has taken up a pro-agriculture stand and aims to achieve Food Security at the national, household, and individual levels. The Country Program Framework (CPF) and UN Development Assistance Funds (UNDAF) provide an opportunity to revitalize the agriculture sector development programs. While it is recognized that agriculture can play a significant role in the growth and stability of the economy in Bangladesh, for it to be remunerative,

market linkages are critical and must be backed by diversification of income sources to cope with risks. This is exactly what the project aims to achieve.

The project focuses on the disadvantaged rural population, particularly small and marginal farmers and women – which is a priority of all the partners in the project. The project is given more importance as it is expected to come up with a model of self-sustaining people-led institutions that will take care of local development priorities, including food production and income generation, but not limited to these. The project is relevant to the target communities as all the interventions fulfill their urgent needs (food and income). In the communal conflicting situation of CHT, the promotion of community cohesion through awareness building, motivation and mediation process is the right strategy to bring peace and stability. The project rightly adopted this strategy, which was found relevant to the local needs and priorities.

As experienced, the IFM-FFS is a reasonable strategy to adopt when: a) the goal was to increase production through the transfer of technology, and b) activities were being carried out in areas that were difficult to reach or where there was limited private sector activity. So this project rightly adopted IFM-FFS as the relevant key strategy to help the poor marginal and inaccessible farmers in hard to reach areas of Bandarban and Cox's Bazar.

6.3 Effectiveness

The effectiveness of a project has to do with the extent to which a project has been able to achieve its objectives and, consequently, its outcomes.

6.3.1 Outcome-1: Agricultural Production Increased and Diversified in Targeted Communities

Under this Outcome, a number of interventions, as listed in Chapter-3, were implemented. These interventions included the establishment of IFM-FFS to educate the selected farmers' group, training, and capacity building of FFs to run the FFS, group learning and application of knowledge for improved farming and homestead production of new components, establishing linkage with the local government and GoB line departments to access input services, establishing linkage with the market through collection points. The data analysis and findings are as below:

6.3.1.1 Farmers' Education in IFM-FFS

As per progress data available from the project, 1800 FFSs were established against a total target of 1,800 FFSs (100%) by December 2022. 53,340 farmers completed all the sessions and are now applying their knowledge in their fields. The primary survey data shows that 99.5% of the respondents, FFS farmers in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, received training on integrated farming from project IFM-FSS. However, some farmers also received training from DAE, DWA, other NGOs, and private sectors.

Figure 1: Contents of training received

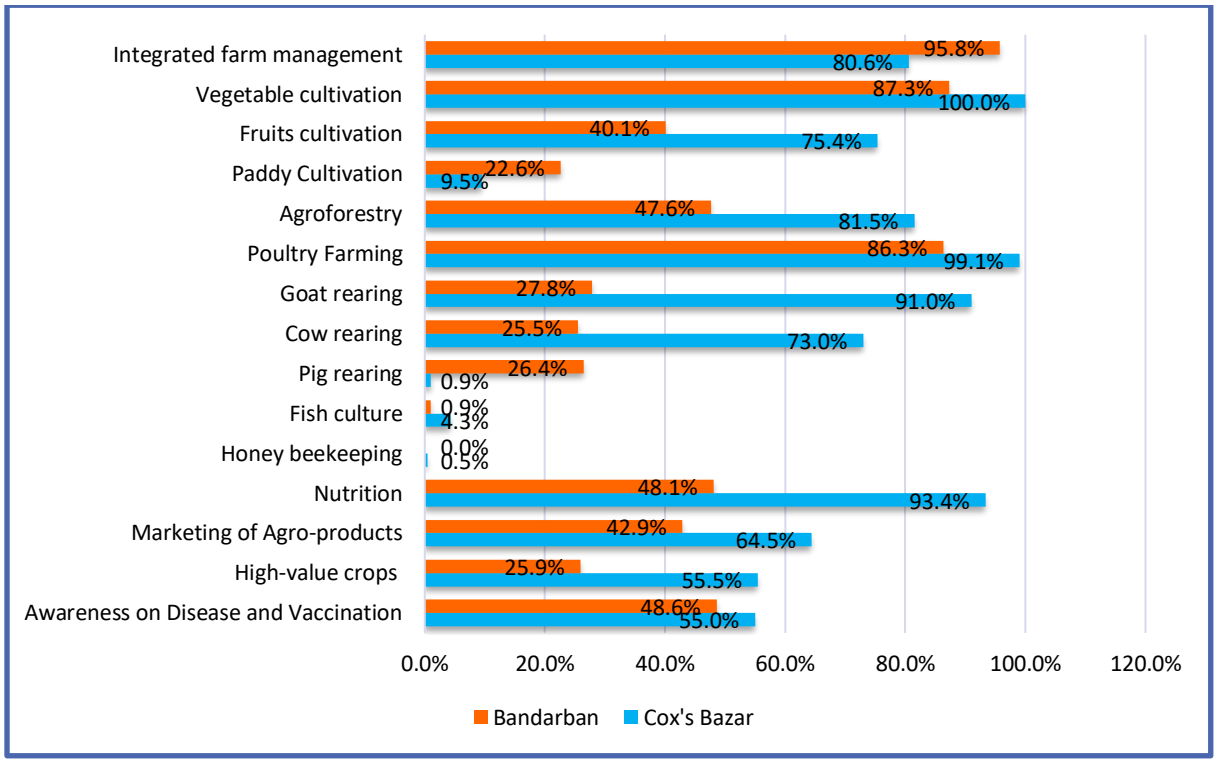


Fig 1 shows that the major contents of the training received from IFM-FFS include Integrated farm management (Cox 80.6%, BBN 95.8%), vegetable cultivation (Cox 100%, BBN 87.3%), fruits cultivation (Cox 75.4%, BBN 40.1%), paddy cultivation (Cox 9.5%, BBN 22.6%) agroforestry (Cox 81.5%, BBN 47.6%), poultry farming (Cox 99.1%, BBN 86.3%), goat rearing (Cox 91.0%, BBN 27.8%), cow rearing (Cox 73.0%, BBN 25.5%), pig rearing (Cox .09%, BBN 26.4%), fish culture (Cox 4.3%, BBN 0.9%), honey bee keeping (Cox 0.5%, BBN 0.0%), nutrition (Cox 93.4%, BBN 48.1%), marketing of agro products (Cox 64.5%, BBN 42.9%), high-value crops (Cox 55.5%, BBN 25.9%), awareness on disease and vaccine (Cox 55.0%, BBN 48.6%). The sessions, mostly attended by the FFS farmers in Cox'sbazar and Bandarban, integrated farm management, vegetable cultivation, and poultry farming. Due to area potentiality, FFS farmers in Cox' Bazar attended with a significant difference from Bandarban's other sessions like fruit cultivation, agroforestry, goat rearing, nutrition, agro-product marketing, and high-value crops. The sessions the FFS farmers in Bandarban attended with significant differences from Cox's Bazar were paddy cultivation and pig rearing. The least attended sessions in both Cox' Bazar and Bandarban were fish culture and honey beekeeping.

It was found at the farmers' level that they have applied the IFM knowledge in their homestead gardening and agricultural practices and improved their vegetable production, fruit production, poultry production, and goat and cow rearing. The FFS graduates have not only improved farming practices but also their confidence levels and communication. They have good relations among themselves and share knowledge and good experiences from which they all benefit. They have developed a linkage with the input suppliers and traders and have good access to the local markets. They also maintain contact with the Agricultural and Livestock office for new ideas or if they face any problem with their existing farming practices. It can be confidently said that IFM-FFS has been effective, popular, and transformative among FFS farmers.

6.3.1.2 Additional Farming Components

The IFM-FFS plays a good role in educating the marginal farmers and motivating them to undertake new farming components, which greatly impacts FFS farmers in the project area. Fig-2 shows that 92.5% of FFS respondents in Cox's Bazar and 82.0% in Bandarban increased additional farming components after training from the project field school. Overall, 87.2% of FFS farmers increased additional farming components. The MTR figures were 97.4% for Cox's Bazar and 92.2% for Bandarban and overall 93.7%. The decrease in final evaluation is perhaps due to different household group selection through random sampling and smaller sample size in final evaluation.

Figure 2: Additional Farming Components

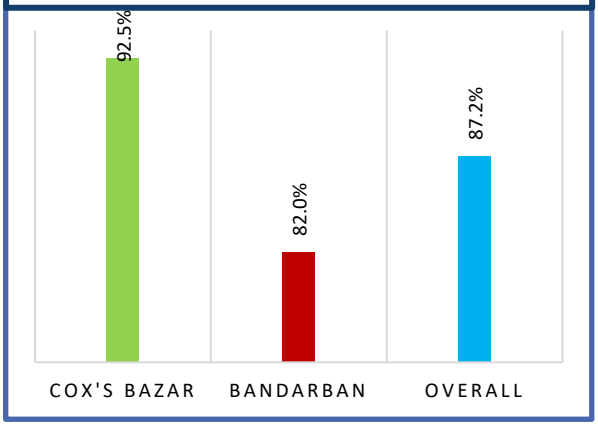
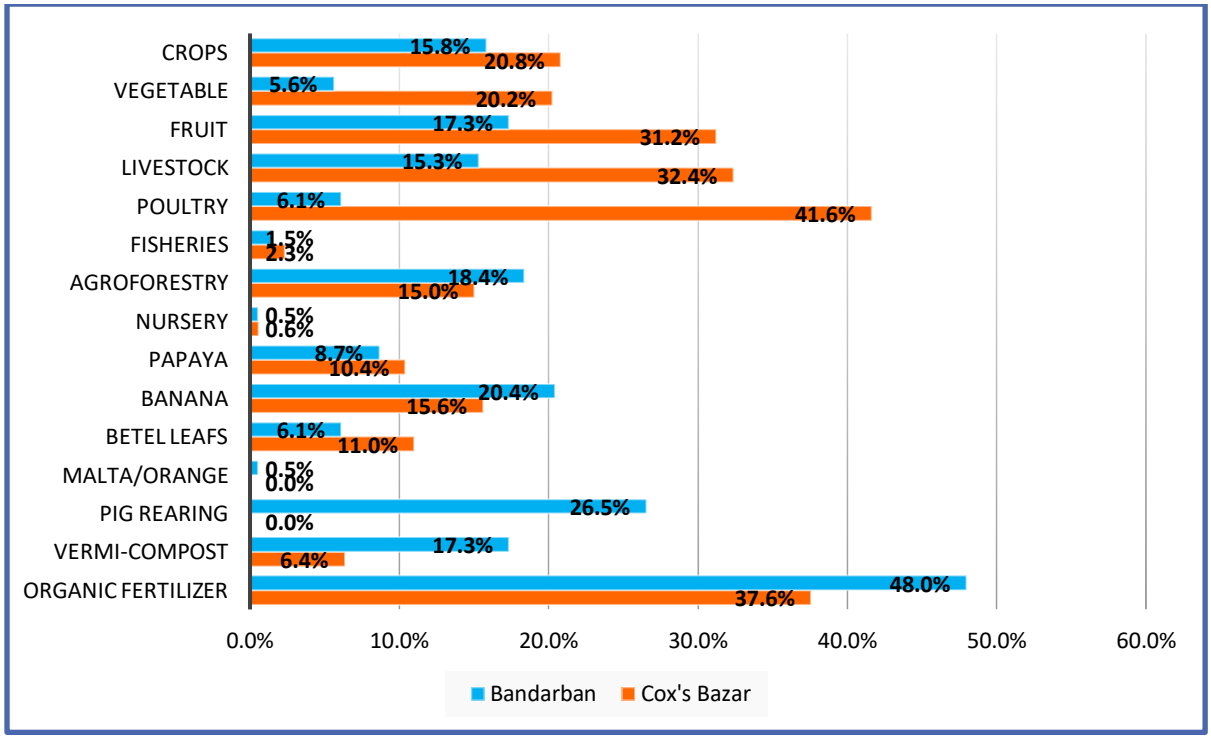


Figure 3: New additional components



As shown by Fig 3, the additional components, which became popular among the FFS farmers were vermicomposting (Coxs 6.4%, BBN 17.3%), organic fertilizer (Coxs 37.6%, BBN 48.0%), vegetable (Coxs 20.2%, BBN 5.6%), crops (Coxs 20.8%, BBN 15.8%), fruits (Coxs 31.2%, BBN 17.3%), poultry rearing (Coxs 41.6%, BBN 6.1%), Livestock (Coxs 32.4%, BBN 15.3%), pig rearing (Coxs 0.0%, BBN 26.5%), fish culture (Coxs 2.3%, BBN 1.5%), papaya (Coxs 10.4%, BBN 8.7%), banana (Coxs 15.6%, BBN 20.4%), agroforestry (Coxs 15.0%, BBN 18.4%) and betel leaf (Coxs 11.6%, BBN 6.1%). Data shows that the FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar progressed much in adopting the new components like vegetables, fruits, livestock, and poultry, while FFS farmers in Bandarban progressed much in vermicomposting, organic fertilizer, pig rearing bananas, and agroforestry.

6.3.1.3 Application of Improved Farming Techniques/Technologies

As observed during the field visit and reflected in progress reports, IFM-FFS introduced low-cost demand-driven agricultural technologies to marginalized farmers, especially women. The farmers could practically learn from the school session and practical work in the study plot and could easily apply these technologies in their production field. The technologies which were mostly applied by the farmers are composting, vermicomposting, chicken egg hatching (Hazol), hand pollination, homestead agroforestry, mulching, and vegetable cultivation with bedmada, etc. The application of these improved technologies resulted in improved production in terms of quantity and quality and reduced cost. Particularly, the use of vermicompost and organic fertilizer worked as a good soil conditioner and increased the fertility of the land by reducing the use of chemical fertilizer. These technologies are very simple and environment-friendly, and also women-friendly. Most of the women farmers were found to have familiarized themselves with these technologies, and they were highly motivated as they got increased production and became economically benefitted. The neighboring farmers also observed, learned, and adopted these technologies and also became benefitted. The household survey data also confirm this observation.

Figure 4: Farmers who could apply improved technologies

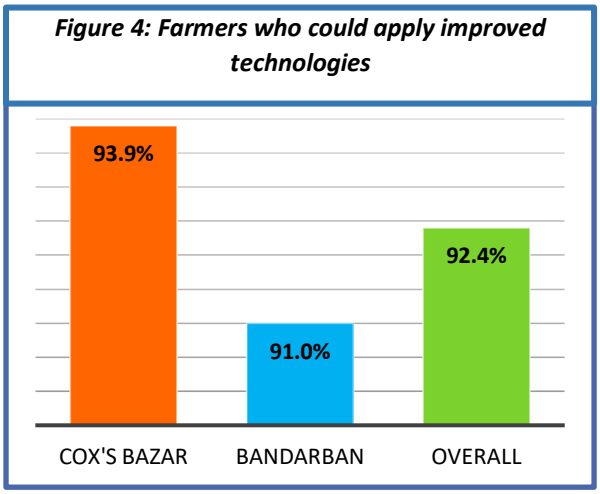
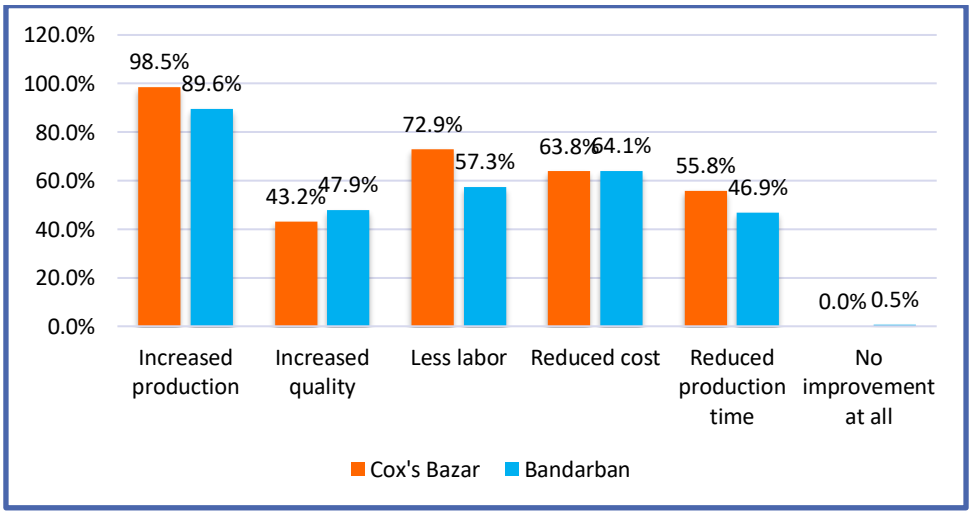


Fig 4 shows that 93.9% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 91.0% in Bandarban could apply these improved farming technologies. Overall, 92.4% FFS farmers could apply improved farming technologies. As a result, 98.5% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 89.6% in Bandarban experienced increased production. The other benefits that were resulted are increased quality of the farm products (Cox 43.2%, BBN 47.9%), less labor (Cox 72.9%, BBN 57.3%), reduced cost (Cox 63.8%, BBN 64.1%) and reduced production time (Cox 55.8%, BBN 46.9%). There is no significant difference between FFS Farmers in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban in obtaining these benefits of applying improved technologies. Those FFS farmers who could not apply are mainly due to a lack of means/ resources to apply the technologies (Cox 92.3%, BBN 73.7%).

Figure 5: Results of the application of improved technologies



6.3.1.4 Agricultural Production Before and After the Project

The IFM-FFS project model has successfully worked in educating the farmers and transfer of improved technologies from FFS to farmer's fields. The farmer's survey data shows that due to the successful application of the technologies, the agricultural production of FFS farmers has been markedly increased, estimated at 86%, as described in the final progress report.

Table 2 shows that the production of crops, vegetables, fruits, chicken eggs, chicken/ duck meat, milk, papaya, and banana from FFS farmers' fields has much increased in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban during the evaluation period. Only the production of crops in the Bandarban FFS field and pig rearing in Cox's Bazar has been reduced after the implementation of the project, which might be due to the shift of production to other items. However, the production of most of the items has been more increased in Cox's Bazar than in Bandarban.

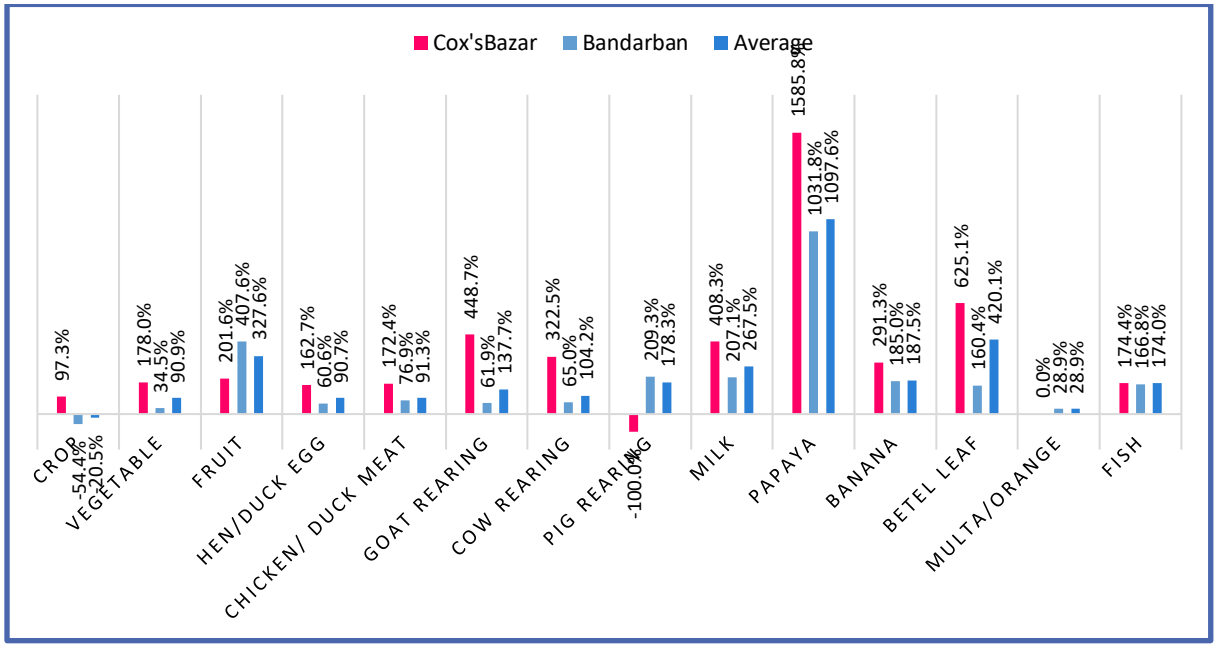
According to the target set in outcome indicator 1.1 in the resulting framework, hen egg production of FFS farmers was increased by 162.7% in Cox's Bazar and 60.6% in Bandarban against the target of a 20% increase. On average, per household annual egg production was 55 at the end of 2022, which was only 29 before joining FFS, and the percentage increase is 90.7%. Similarly, the average annual production of chicken meat per household was 32 at the end of 2022, which was 17 before joining FFS, and the percentage increase is 91.3% against the target of 30%. The average annual production of vegetables per household was 154 kg at the end of 2022, which was 80 kg before joining FFS, and the percentage increase is 90.9% against the target of 25%. The average annual fruit production per household was 121 kg at the end of 2022, which was 28 kg before joining FFS, and the percentage increase is 327.6% against the target of 20%. The average annual fish production per household is 25 kg at the end of 2022. which was 9 kg only before joining FFS, and the percentage increase is 174% against the target of 30%. Hence the rate of production increase is much higher in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban.

Table 2: Comparative Increase in production of different agricultural items of FFS farmers during the evaluation period

Agricultural items	Unit	Target increase (%)	Cox'sBazar			Bandarban			Average		
			Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)
Crop	Kg		537	1059	97.3	1869	852	(54.4)	1202	956	(20.5)
Vegetable	Kg	25	63	175	178.0	98	132	34.5	80	154	90.9
Fruit	Kg	20	22	66	201.6	35	176	407.6	28	121	327.6
Hen/duck egg	Nos	20	17	45	162.7	41	66	60.6	29	55	90.7
Chicken/ Duck meat	Nos	30	5	14	172.4	29	51	76.9	17	32	91.3
Goat rearing	Nos		0.18	1.00	448.7	0.75	1.22	61.9	0.47	1.11	137.7
Cow rearing	Nos		0.19	0.79	322.5	1.05	1.74	65.0	0.62	1.26	104.2
Pig rearing	Nos		0.03	0	(100.0)	0.25	0.79	209.3	0.14	0.39	178.3

Agricultural items	Unit	Target increase (%)	Cox'sBazar			Bandarban			Average		
			Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)
Milk	Lit		0.06	0.29	408.3	0.13	0.41	207.1	0.09	0.35	267.5
Papaya	Kg		0.56	9.5	1585.8	4.2	48	1031.8	2.38	28	1097.6
Banana	Kadi		1.03	4.02	291.3	44	124	185.0	22	64	187.5
Betel leaf	Ati		9.15	66.38	625.1	7	19	160.4	8	43	420.1
Multa/orange	Kg		0	0	0.0	0.21	0.27	28.9	0.11	0.14	28.9
Fish	Kg	30	17	46.67	174.4	0.98	2.62	166.8	9	25	174.0

Figure 6: Increase in production of different agricultural items



6.3.1.5 Availability of FF Support and Services of Local Input Service Provider

According to the course design of FFS, the FFs provided follow-up support for two months in each para to help the farmers properly adopt the improved technologies, after which they were assigned running of FFS in other para. There was a group learning system based on different study plots, and the farmers mostly learned from those study plots. It was expected that since the FFs stay within the community, the farmers would be in contact with them. Fig-8 demonstrates that in 82.2% of cases in Cox's Bazar and 35.8% of cases in Bandarban, the FFS farmers are still in contact now with the FFs for any technical assistance. This finding of the primary survey has been confirmed when discussed with the FFs, and the FFS farmers in FGD. The contact is low in Bandarban because the survey area was phased out a long time ago, and the FFS farmers learned and can apply knowledge confidently without frequent contact with the FFs. The higher increase in production in Cox's Bazar, as demonstrated in Table-2,

further indicates that the farmers rather feel fully confident to apply the learnings, which decreases the need for FF support after phase-out.

Figure 8 : FFS farmer's contact with FFs

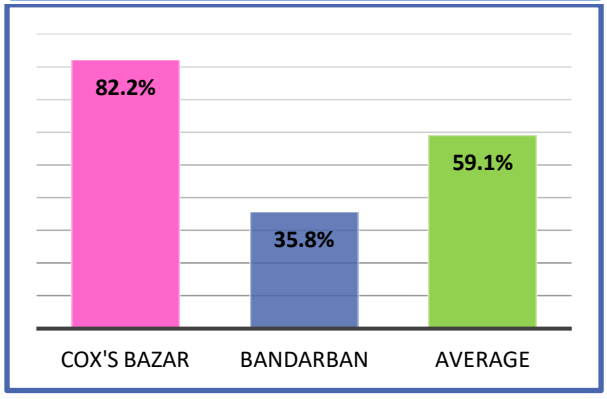
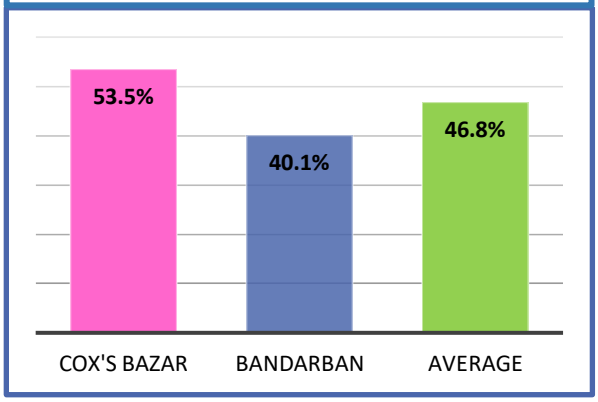


Figure 7: Availability of services of local service providers



Regarding the availability of the services of the local service providers, 53.5% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 40.1% in Bandarban indicated that services are available from community agriculture workers, community livestock workers, and nursery growers. The vermicompost producers are also in contact with the farmers. However, it was learned from the project field staff that they had trained a good number of community livestock workers (CLW) who are well connected with the government livestock departments and provide technical advice/ services to the farmers, including deworming and vaccination services, which have high demand among the FFS farmers. The project also provided training to the input traders for providing good quality agricultural inputs, including seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides to the farmers. But it was learned during the discussion with project staff and input sellers that dealers and sub-dealers of agricultural inputs are available at the Upazila and union level, and farmers have a link with them, although service is not available at the doorstep of the farmers.

6.3.1.6 Availability of the Support Services from GoB Line Departments

The final progress report elaborated in detail on the monitoring visits and support services provided by the GoB line departments to the IFM-FFS members. According to the report, the government officials, particularly the Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers, Upazila Agriculture Officers, Upazilla livestock officers, and Forest Range Officers, often made monitoring visits to the FFS sessions as resource persons, which improved the Farmer Facilitators' performance, and they provided technical advice to the IFM-FFS members. According to the report, 3,767 monitoring visits were organized from different government line departments (DAE, DLS, DoF). Through these visits, the farmers also learned about the available services from the government line departments, and the farmers, particularly in the remote, got access to agricultural support services. During the discussion with the Upazilla Agricultural Officers and Upazilla Livestock Officers, they also appreciated the IFM-FFS program of the project, claimed to have good relations with the FFs and CLWs of the project, and expressed their interest in collaborating with the program.

However, the primary survey reveals that 46.9% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 71.7% of FFS farmers in Bandarban received some support services from the GoB line departments, which indicates that FFS farmers are still maintaining good relations with the GoB line departments. The UNDP local project expert further explained that services available with the government line departments sometimes go beyond what the project is addressing. In terms of getting necessary advice, training, and visits (which is what the project addresses), FFS farmers are in a much better position than non-FFS farmers.

Figure 9: Farmers who received services from GoB line departments

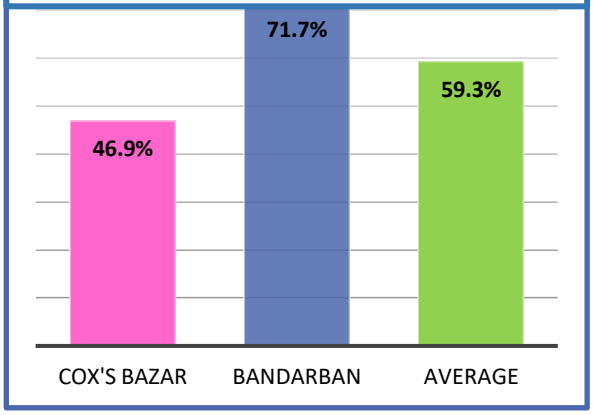
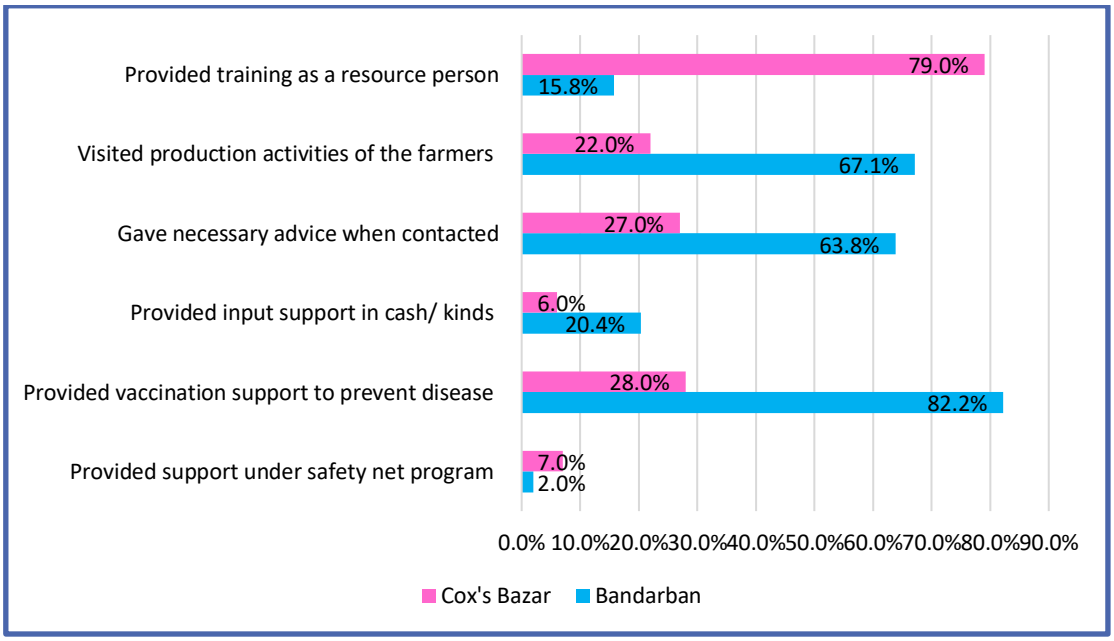


Figure 10: Support services received from GoB line departments



The service category available from the GoB line departments included i) providing training as a resource person, ii) visiting production activities of the farmers, iii) giving necessary advice when contacted, iv) input support in cash/kind, v) vaccination services; vi) safety net services. Fig-20 shows that the FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar mostly received training services (79%), and the farmers in Bandarban received visits from the line departments in their production field (67.1%), received technical advice when contacted (63.8%) and vaccination support to prevent diseases (82.2%). The technical advice, input, and vaccination services were improved in Bandarban due to the active partnership role played by BHDC.

It was learned from discussion with Upazilla Agricultural Extension Officers and Upazilla Livestock Officers that they usually deal with big farmers, and technical support mostly goes to them. Still, they have accommodated many females FFS farmers in on-going family nutrition gardening projects and safe crop production projects under DAE. Both husbands and wives got training and received material support (nursery plant, net, seeds and cash) under this project. The husbands of the female FFS farmers are also involved with the demonstration field and incentive program of DAE. So DAE has good relations with the FFS farmers since they are also the target farmers under their on-going programs. Coordination between NGO supported the project and DAE takes place in UDCC meetings. However,

they can also provide technical services to the FFS farmers if they are contacted or linked by the project, which was not properly established by the project before closing. There is much scope to strengthen linkage with the GoB line departments and access available services under different similar types of projects in implementation by the line departments.

It was also learned from the livestock office in Bandarban that they attended FFS sessions and disseminated messages to the FFS farmers regarding their different services, including livestock deworming, vaccination, fattening, improved sillage, artificial insemination, castration and supply of livestock medicine. They provided these services to the FFS farmers who approached the Livestock office.

However, it was observed that the project was closed much earlier than scheduled, and no exit plan was undertaken to systematically hand over the FFS farmers program to DAE and DLO to continue support to the FFS farmers after phasing out of the project activities.

6.3.1.7 Impact of the COVID-19 Response Program

As reported by the project, the beneficiary FFS farmers were much affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to the discontinuation of agricultural farming practices along with the marketing of products following the government-declared lockdown situation. To reduce the negative effects of COVID-19, the project provided emergency response services and distributed solidarity packages to disadvantaged farmers in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. A total of 3,300 small-scale disadvantaged farmers in Cox's Bazar and 49,300 farmers in Bandarban received this solidarity package. This solidarity package consisted of farming inputs like good quality summer and winter vegetable seeds and equipment, hygiene kits, essential food items, and some cash support. As part of COVID-19 awareness-raising activities, important messages were disseminated through community radio, public service announcement miking, local dish TV channels, social media, etc.

Figure 11: Disruption of agricultural production due to COVID-19

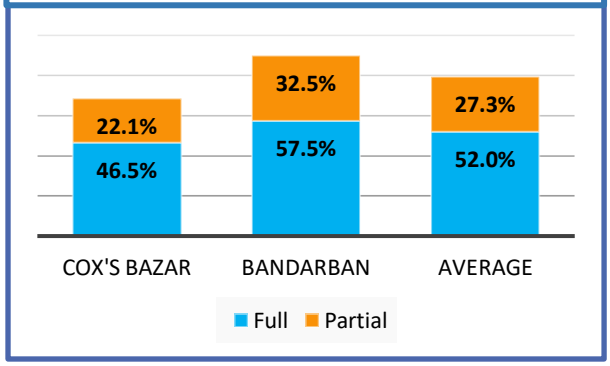
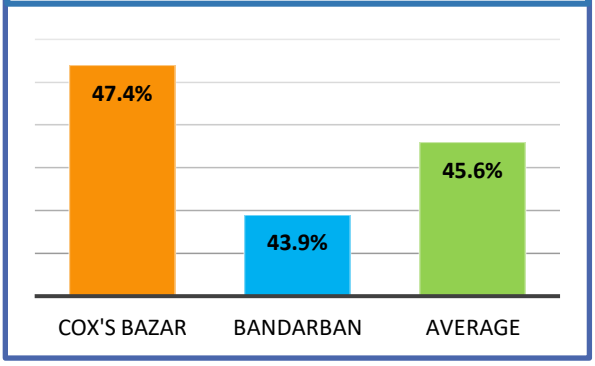


Figure 12: Percent of farmers who received COVID-19 input package



The primary survey data reveals that in 46.5% of cases in Cox's Bazar and 57.5% of the cases in Bandarban (Average 52.0%) the agricultural production of the FFS farmers was disrupted completely. Similarly, 22.1% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 32.5% in Bandarban (Average 27.3%) experienced partial disruption in agricultural production. But 47.4% of affected FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 43.9% of affected farmers in Bandarban (Average 45.6%) received agricultural input packages mainly from the project partners (BHDC, PAB, GRAUS, and ACLAB), UP, and DAEs. These input packages included seeds, equipment, cash support, food, and COVID PPEs.

Figure 13: FFS farmers who resumed agricultural production

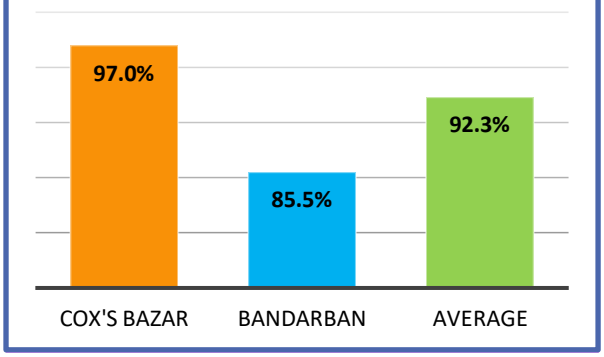


Figure 14: Farmer's satisfaction level for solidarity package

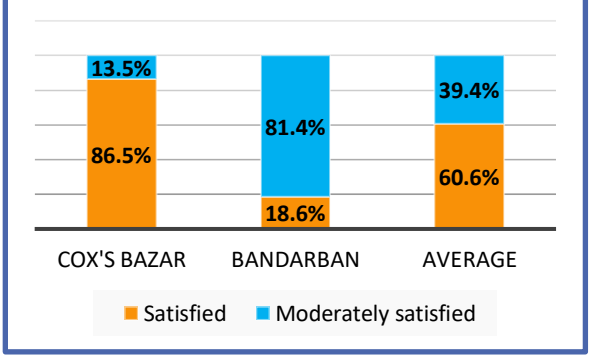
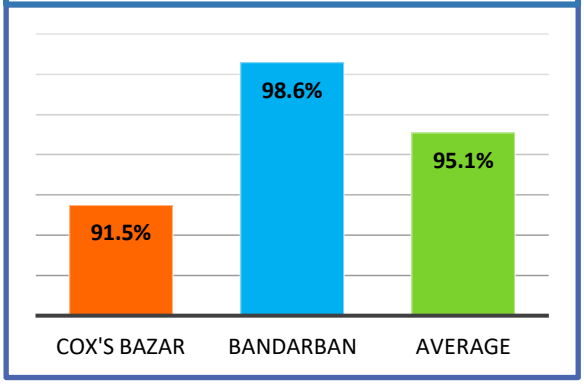


Fig 13 shows that 97% of the FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 85.5% in Bandarban (Average 92.3%) resumed agricultural production after receiving the solidarity package and successfully met the target of 80% in the result framework (Outcome indicator 1.3). FFS farmers who received Solidarity Package from the project partners expressed their satisfaction (Cox 86.5%, BBN 18.6%, Average 60.6%) and moderate satisfaction (Cox 13.5%, BBN 81.4%, Average 39.4%), which is consistent with the progress report and physical verification in the field while discussing with the farmers. With this result, the project successfully met 80% of the target, as reflected in outcome indicator 1.3. This COVID-19 response of the project was very effective because it provided mainly farming inputs which contributed to increased production of vegetables during the COVID-19 pandemic and supported the livelihood of the disadvantaged farmers. According to the final progress report 2022, the solidarity package was distributed to 61,280 households, which is 126.8% of the cumulative target (the target was 48,300 according to outcome indicator 3.4)

Figure 15: Percent farmers who received information on negative impact of COVID-19



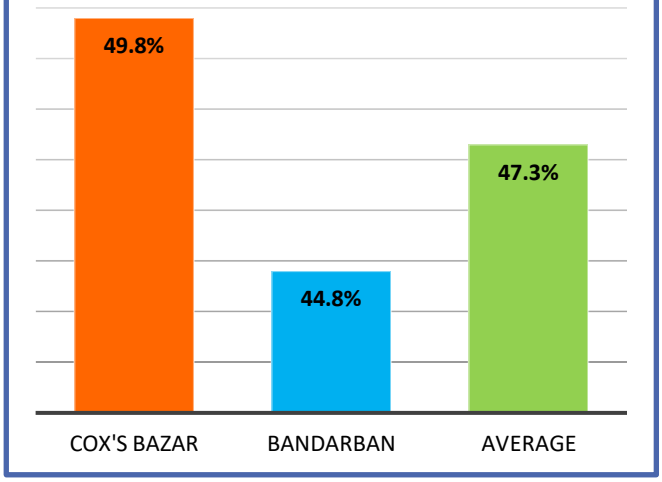
Regarding COVID-19 information dissemination, 91.5% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 98.6% in Bandarban received information mainly from IFM- FFS (Cox 99.5%, BBN 66.5%), Other NGO (Cox 19.0%, BBN 10.0%), Volunteer (Cox 25.6%, BBN 11.0%), radio (Cox 9.7%, BBN 18.7%), television (Cox 47.7%, BBN 78.5%), and mobile SMS (Cox 37.4%, BBN 87.6%), which built awareness among the survey respondents about the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic. It appears that the project could successfully manage the COVID-19 response program and could reach the farmers severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Outcome indicators 3.4 and 3.5 of RF have been satisfactorily achieved through this COVID-19 response program.

6.3.1.8 Access to High-quality Farming Inputs

As learned from project staff, FFs, and farmers, the availability of high-quality inputs, particularly seeds, fertilizer, insecticide, and pesticide, was a great challenge because the input sellers and the farmers were not knowledgeable about the quality inputs and traders often supplied low-quality inputs at a cheaper rate to increase sales and make a profit. Due to poor quality inputs, the farmers often experienced crop failure or low yield. To ensure the accessibility of the farmers to high-quality

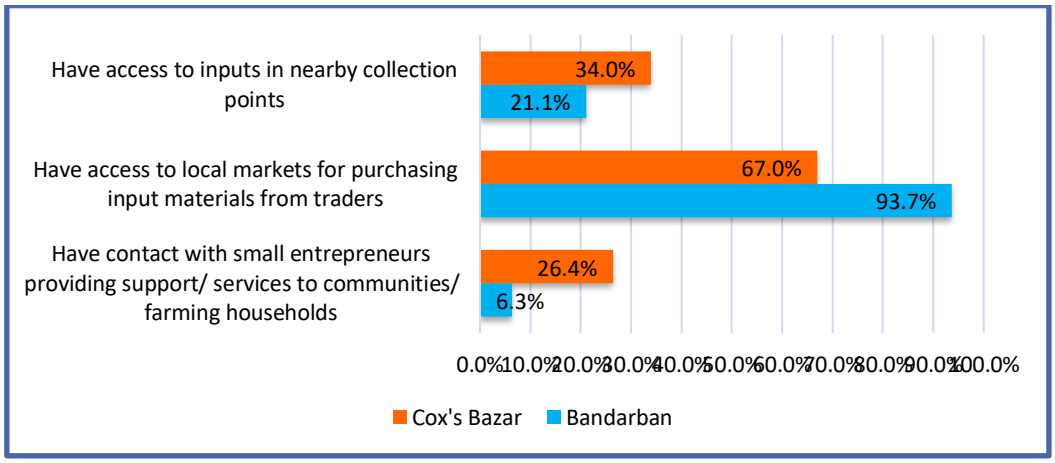
farming inputs, the project organized training for the input sellers and nursery growers in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. The participants were trained on several topics, i.e., how to identify high-quality farming inputs like quality seeds, quality fertilizers, bio-pesticides, pheromone traps, day-old chicks, quality feeds, etc. The participants also received training on nursery management, grafting, quality saplings, etc. The farmers also learned about high-quality inputs from IFM-FFS and GoB officials, which developed a cooperative relationship between the farmers and input sellers. The FFS farmers, with the help of FFs, collected quality inputs from the trained sellers, which contributed significantly to the increased yield rate.

Figure 16: Access to high quality farming inputs



The primary survey data reveals that 49.8% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 44.8% in Bandarban have access to high-quality farming inputs. The figure is slightly less than MTR (CXB-68.8% and BN-56.7%), which might be due to different household group selection through random sampling and smaller sample size in final evaluation. Regarding the source of high-quality farming inputs, 34.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 21.1% of FFS farmers in Bandarban have access to collection points for purchasing quality inputs. But 67.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 93.7% in Bandarban purchase quality inputs directly from the traders in the local market. Only 26.4% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 6.3% in Bandarban have contact with small entrepreneurs/ traders to collect quality farming inputs. The data clearly shows that linkage has been better established between FFS farmers and trained quality input sellers, i.e., traders in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. Collection points are also used for selling and purchasing farming inputs, as shown in Fig 17, but to a lesser extent, because they are still not attractive to the traders or input supplying companies if they cannot sell bulk quantity. They prefer local markets to sell agricultural inputs.

Figure 17: Access to different sources for high-quality farming inputs



In fact, the project encouraged input sellers to use collection points established by the project to sell their farming inputs to the farmers living around the collection points, but the input sellers are more interested in selling their inputs from their storage. The increased use of collection points for selling and purchasing inputs largely depends on proactive communication of collection point management with farmers and traders.

6.3.1.9 Market Linkage with Buyer/Traders to Sell Agricultural Produces

The project established market linkage between the FFS farmers and the traders through collection points. This is a good market strategy to build a storage structure nearby FFS farmers where farmers can easily bring their agricultural produces (e.g. fruits like banana, papaya, grapefruit, jackfruit, lemon, tamarind, etc. and vegetables (e.g. sweet gourd, brinjal, tomato, cucumber, green chilli, bean, gourd, pumpkin, Jhinga, Chichinga etc.) and spices (e.g. ginger) with or without incurring any cost to transport those to the local market. The traders also can collect a bulk quantity of produces from a single point with minimum collection/ transportation cost. Thus, the mechanism works in a win-win situation. The collection point has an institutional set-up run by a 7-member management committee which facilitates the fixing of reasonable prices for the goods through a bargaining process, where there is less chance of exploiting the farmers by the traders. The connection points are well connected with all IFM-FFS and the market traders.

According to the final progress report 2022, 43 collection points were established in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban, 84% of which are still functional. Around 35% of the collection points management committee members are women.

Figure 18 : Linkage with Buyers

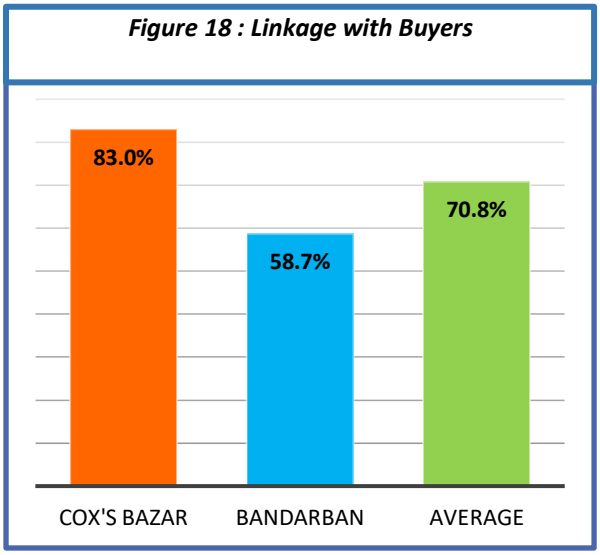
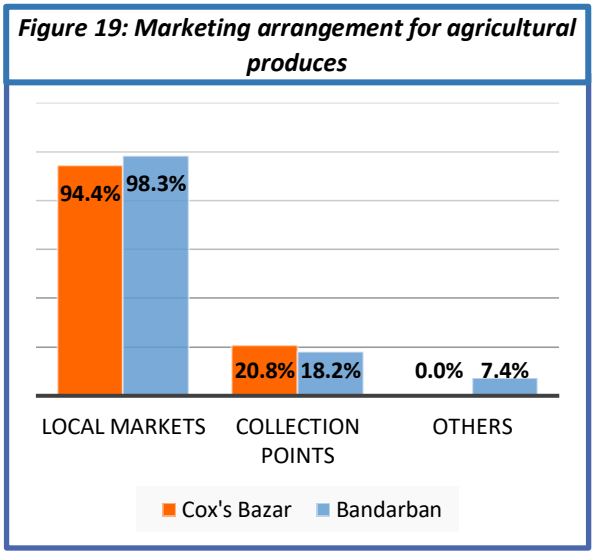


Figure 19: Marketing arrangement for agricultural produces



The primary survey data shows that 83% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 58.7% of FFS farmers in Bandarban are linked with buyer/traders and sell their agricultural products to them. However, 94.4% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 98.3% of FFS farmers in Bandarban mainly sell their products directly in the local market. Only 20.8% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 18.2% in Bandarban use collection points to sell their produce. The data indicate that farmers still like to sell their products directly in the local market, particularly in Cox's Bazar, and the use of collection points is far behind the local market.

The discussion with the project field staff and the FFs further reveals that due to transportation problems, collection points are becoming gradually popular in Bandarban, but only one collection point in a union doesn't give many benefits to the farmers who are a little bit away from the collection points. Moreover, farmers like to go to the local market because they can sell their products and purchase farming inputs and their daily consumables from the same local market, which they cannot by using the collection points. In Cox's Bazar, due to easy transportation and accessibility, many farmers prefer to go to the local market instead of collection points. According to them, input sellers need to be connected with the collection points, and more facilities, including transportation of goods, need to be developed in the collection points. However, during field verification, particularly in Bandarban, it was observed that farmers and input sellers are increasingly using collection points.

Farmers get the benefit of low transportation cost, use the collection point as temporary storage and can also get price benefits through the bargaining process. Beparies are now well connected to the collection points. The collection points in many places have now been converted into an agricultural business centers and now earning from service charges from farmers and Beparies.

6.3.2 Outcome-2: Agroforestry Products Increased Sustainably

Agroforestry was considered as one of the key elements of the project, along with IFM-FFS. It is an integration of crops and vegetation, both fruits and firewood, to make effective use of farmers' land, which largely contributes to rural agricultural production and economic activities in the rural areas keeping ecological balance. But it was a new component and visible progress has not been noticed yet. Under this component, the project promoted the planned growth of fruit trees, nurseries, bamboo bushes, and beekeeping in the homestead and community. The major interventions included conducting training sessions on agroforestry for the farmers in FFS, developing agroforestry plans for the group and individual farmers, and establishing linkage with nursery growers and the government Department of Forest.

6.3.2.1 Increase in Area of Land (in hector) under Firewood, Bamboo, Vegetation Coverage

The target coverage of land for agroforestry until December 2022 was 1000 hector and according to the final progress report 1005 hectares of land were brought under the agroforestry plan, with more than 88.5% of beneficiaries i.e. 53,340 farmers adopting homestead food production.

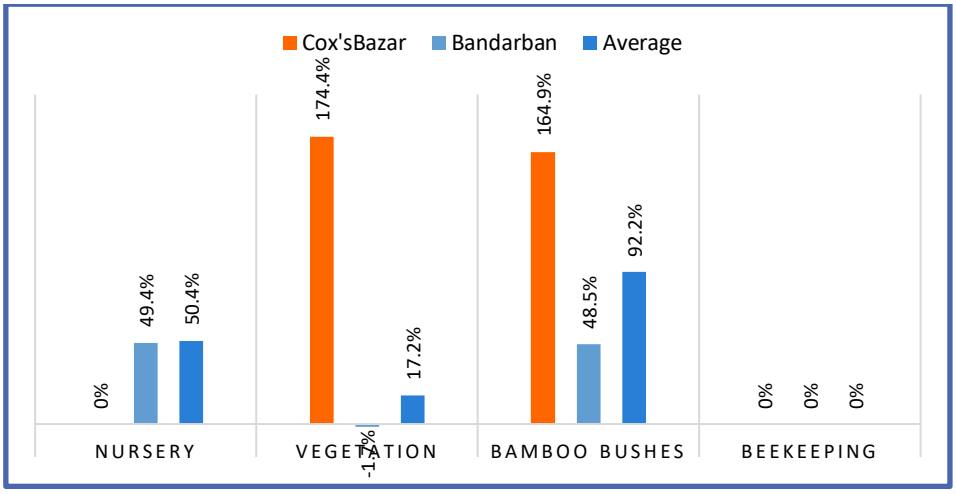
Table-3 shows that the growing of vegetation and bamboo bushes by FFS farmers were much increased in Cox's Bazar and growing of nursery and bamboo bushes was increased in Bandarban during the evaluation period of the project. No increase of nursery is found in Cox's Bazar and vegetation in Bandarban. Beekeeping was not at all practiced by the respondent FFS farmers. On average, nursery growing was increased by 50.4%, vegetation by 17.2%, and bamboo bushes by 92.2% during the evaluation period. The average land covered by each FFS farmer is 18.8 decimal for nursery at the end of 2022, which was 12.5 decimal before joining FFS, 31.3 decimal for vegetation at the end of 2022, which was 26.7 decimal before joining FFS, and 19.8 decimal for bamboo bushes at the end of 2022, which was 10.3 decimal before joining FFS. In total, the average increased land coverage under agroforestry is 20.4 decimal per FFS farmer. In consideration of 53,340 FFS farmers adopting ADPs and 58.3% implementing the ADPs (survey findings in section 6.3.2), the estimated land coverage becomes 2568 hactor, which is much higher than the coverage reported in the final report (1005 hector). It is likely that the household respondents during the survey overstated the agroforestry land coverage, which in fact, could not be verified by the survey enumerators.

Table 3: Comparative Increase in agroforestry by FFS farmers during the evaluation period

Agroforestry items	Unit	Target increase (decimal)	Cox'sBazar			Bandarban			Average		
			Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)	Production (2019)	Production (2022)	Increase (%)
Nursery	Decimal	1000	0.0	0.2	0	25.1	37.5	49.4 %	12.5	18.8	50.4 %
Vegetation	Decimal		5.8	15.8	172.4 %	47.7	46.9	(1.7) %	26.7	31.3	17.2 %
Bamboo bushes	Decimal		7.7	20.4	164.9 %	13.0	19.3	48.5 %	10.3	19.8	92.2 %

Beekeeping	Decimal		0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0

Figure 20: Increased growing of agroforestry



The final progress report highlighted that 75 nursery growers, 30 women entrepreneurs, 30 high-value crop producers, 29 honey beekeepers and 63 vermicompost producers were developed under agro-forestry component by providing training, supply of inputs and supervision provided by the FFs. This project supports the impacted-on agroforestry growing, although nursery growers in cox's bazar and honey bee keepers are not appropriately covered under the survey.

6.3.2.2 Agroforestry plan

Agroforestry plans were developed at the community and individual farmer's level. This plan was developed for all IFM FFS members through FFS training sessions. The farmers gained knowledge from the IFM-FFS session on improved agroforestry system, developed a plan, and implemented the plan with support from the FFs. In fact, FFs helped individual farmers to develop homestead-based agroforestry plans as to how they can effectively use the homestead areas as well as common community areas for agroforestry.

Figure 22: Percent farmers having community Agroforestry plan

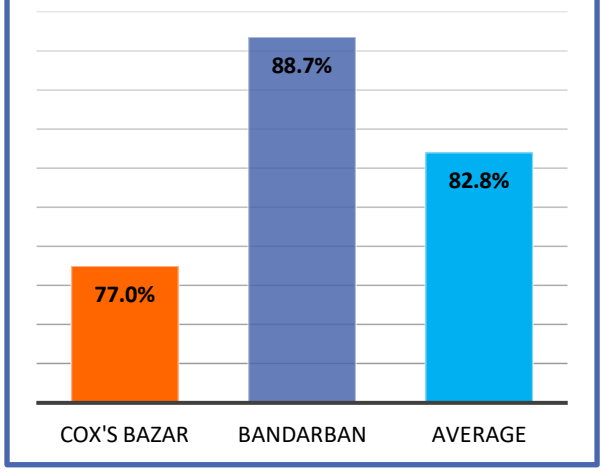
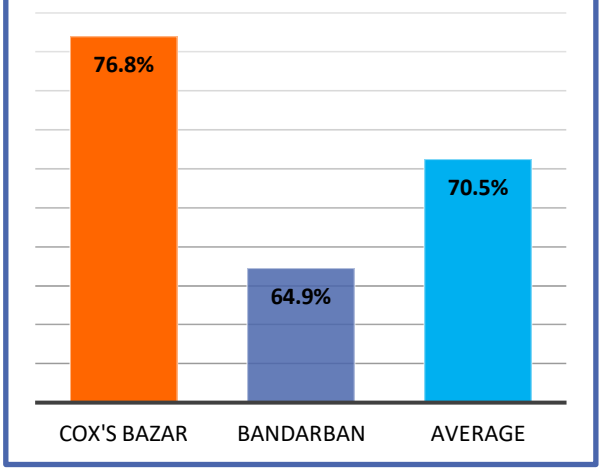


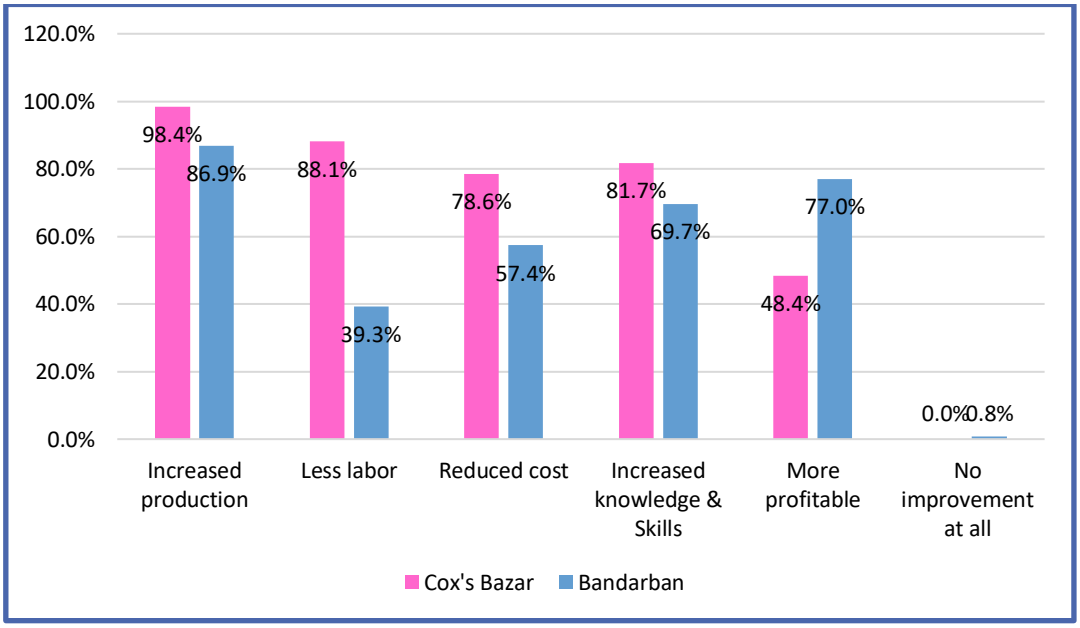
Figure 21: Extent of Agroforestry plan implementation



According to output 2.1 of RF, the Development of 1800 agroforestry development plans (ADP) were targeted to be developed, with 80% of farmers having improved agroforestry systems. According to the final progress report, all the planned 1800 ADPs were developed, and the farmers started implementing the plan. The project distributed 35,746 saplings to support the implementation of farmers' ADP in their households. Other initiatives included cultivation in fallow land and water body, tree planning, and establishing linkages with local nursery growers. With the support of the FFs, 53,340 trained farmers prepared their individual ADPs.

The primary survey data (Fig 21) shows that 77% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 82.8% of FFS farmers in Bandarban had their community agroforestry development plan, but 76.8% of FFS farmers having a plan in Cox's Bazar, and 64.9% of FFS farmers having a plan in Bandarban implemented agroforestry as per their plan. On average, 82.8% of FFS farmers had their own agroforestry plan, of which 70.5% implemented the plan, meaning 58.3% of the FFS farmers implemented it. In consideration of delayed implementation due to COVID and early closing of the project due to resource constraint, the progress so far achieved in implementation of ADPs is moderately good.

Figure 23: Types of improvement experienced in implementing individual ADPs



Regarding the type of improvements experienced in implementing the agroforestry plan, FFS farmers both in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban have mainly experienced increased production, reduced cost, and increased knowledge and skill. But Cox's Bazar looks in a better position to experience improvement in implementing individual ADPs while Bandarban looks to make more profit from agroforestry growing. Those who couldn't adopt an improved agroforestry system mainly indicated a lack of means/ additional resources for investment and lack of access to agroforestry inputs (seedling/ sapling).

6.3.2.3 Annual Income from Agricultural Production

Figure 25: Annual net agricultural income

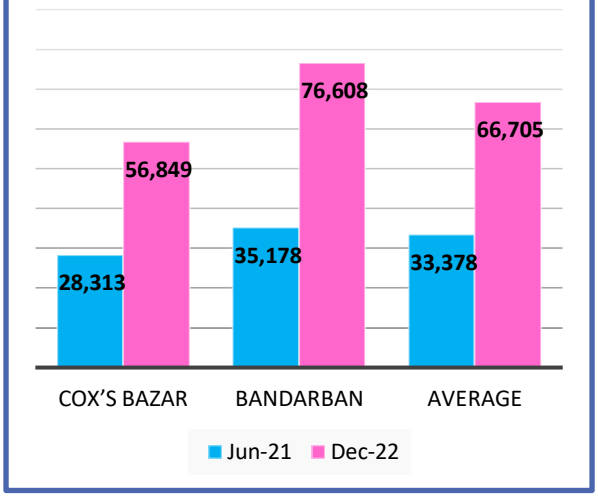


Figure 24: Contribution to annual household income

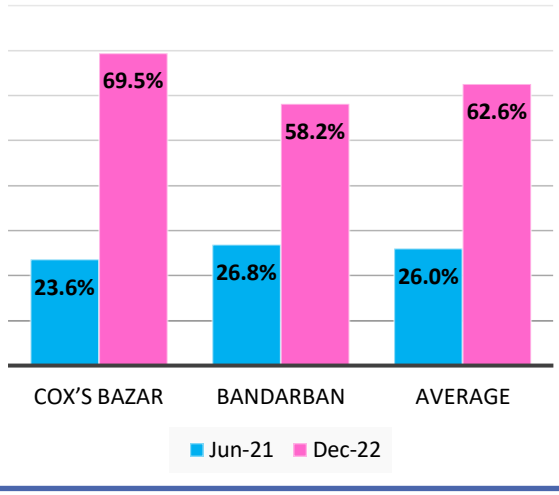


Fig-24 shows a primary survey estimate of the average net annual income from agriculture in Jun 2021 (Midterm) and Dec 2021 (End Line) from agricultural production of FFS farmers in the project area. According to the estimate, the FFS farmers in Bandarban earned higher than FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar. The average annual income in Dec 2022 (BDT 66,705) markedly increased almost double that of in June 2021 (BDT 33,378) and 4.76 times than baseline income (BDT 14,000) before joining IFM-FFS. As per impact indicator-1 of RF, 66.1% of FFS farmers have more than 20% increased average annual net agricultural income over baseline income, and it is slightly below the targeted 75% of total FFS farmers benefitted from the project. So, in consideration of many environmental challenges and resource constraint, this achievement is highly satisfactory.

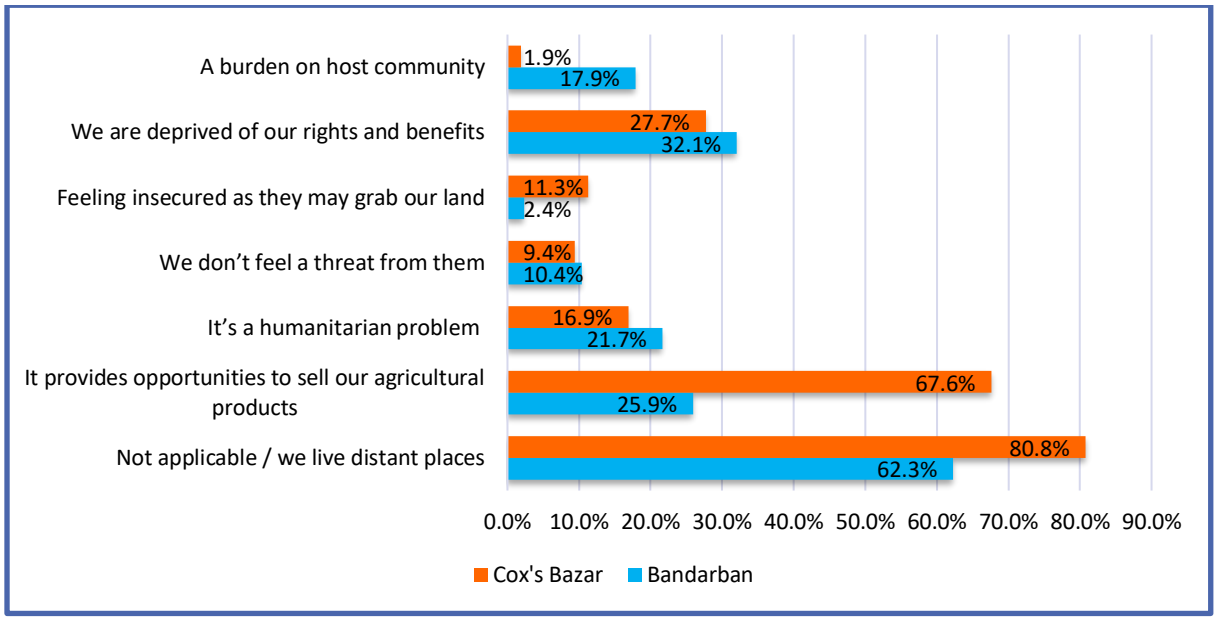
As Fig. 25 indicated, this average annual net agricultural income estimated in Dec 2022 contributed to 69.5% of the total annual household income of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 58.2% in Bandarban. On average, the contribution of net income from agricultural production is 62.6% for FFS farmers, which was only 26.0% during midterm (Jun 2021). The Data clearly indicates that FFS farmers during final evaluation are in a better position than that was during midterm evaluation to make increased agricultural income, which also empowered female FFS farmer's position in their respective households due to their higher contribution to the household income.

6.3.3 Outcome-3: Social Cohesion Increased

6.3.3.1 Perception of the Rohingya Problem

Due to the Rohingya influx in the project area and their continuous presence, the host community was much affected and faced many social and economic problems. The project attempted to reduce the tension and conflicts between the Rohingya and the host community and increase social cohesion through awareness building and conflict mediating process. The perception of the host community about the presence of the Rohingya community has been largely shifted from negative to positive through organizing community mobilization and awareness-building events and involving youths in the mobilization process. Moreover, the involvement of local stakeholders, including LGIs and community leaders, in the mediating process reduced not only the conflicts between Rohingya and the host community but also reduced internal social conflicts with the neighbors.

Figure 26: FFS Farmer's perception about Rohingya crisis

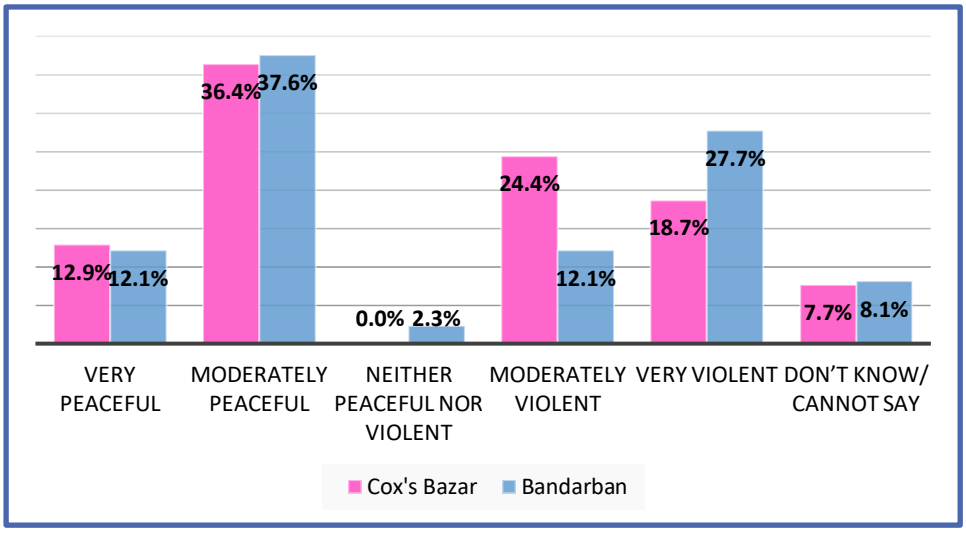


The primary survey data (Fig 26) shows that 80.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 62.3% in Bandarban have not been affected by the Rohingya crisis as they live in a distant place from the Rohingya. This rate was 47.0% in Cox's Bazar and 99.9% in Bandarban during midterm evaluation, while some FFS farmers have been newly affected in Bandarban due to the dispersal of Rohingyas from Cox's Bazar to Bandarban. However, 27.7% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 32.1% in Bandarban think they are being deprived of their rights and social benefits due to the presence of Rohingya, which was 51.0% in Cox's Bazar during midterm evaluation. Again, 1.9% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 17.9% in Bandarban think the Rohingyas are a burden on the host community, which was 24.4% during midterm evaluation. The feeling of insecurity among the FFS farmers is 11.3% in Cox's Bazar and 2.4% in Bandarban, which was almost the same during midterm evaluation. In contrast, 16.9% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 21.7% in Bandarban think of the Rohingya crisis as a humanitarian problem, and it is the responsibility of the host community to support them with food and shelter and this positive view was almost absent during midterm evaluation. A good number of the FFS farmers (67.6% in Cox's Bazar and 25.9% in Bandarban) look at this Rohingya crisis as an opportunity to sell local agricultural products and number of these positive viewers was only 1.4% during midterm evaluation. The comparative data analysis reveals that FFS farmers are at the end of Dec 2022 more adapted to the crisis of Rohingya influx and not feeling so affected and holding a more positive view of the Rohingya crisis.

As indicated by Fig 27, the FFS farmers who are affected in Cox's Bazar termed their relationship as 'Very peaceful' (12.9% in Cox's Bazar and 12.1% in Bandarban), 'moderately peaceful' (36.4% in Cox's Bazar and 37.6% in Bandarban), 'neither peaceful nor violent' (0% in Cox's Bazar and 2.3% in Bandarban) and 'moderately violent (24.4% in Cox's Bazar and 12.1% in Bandarban) and 'very violent' (18.7% in Cox's Bazar and 27.7% in Bandarban). During midterm evaluation, the situation was 'Very peaceful' (2.3% in Cox's Bazar and 1.9% in Bandarban), 'moderately peaceful' (44.2% in Cox's Bazar and 22.4% in Bandarban), 'moderately violent (10.2% in Cox's Bazar and 6.5% in Bandarban) and 'very violent' (40.4% in Cox's Bazar and 60.7% in Bandarban). So, compared to the time during midterm evaluation, the situation at the end of December 2022, is more peaceful and less violent, which means

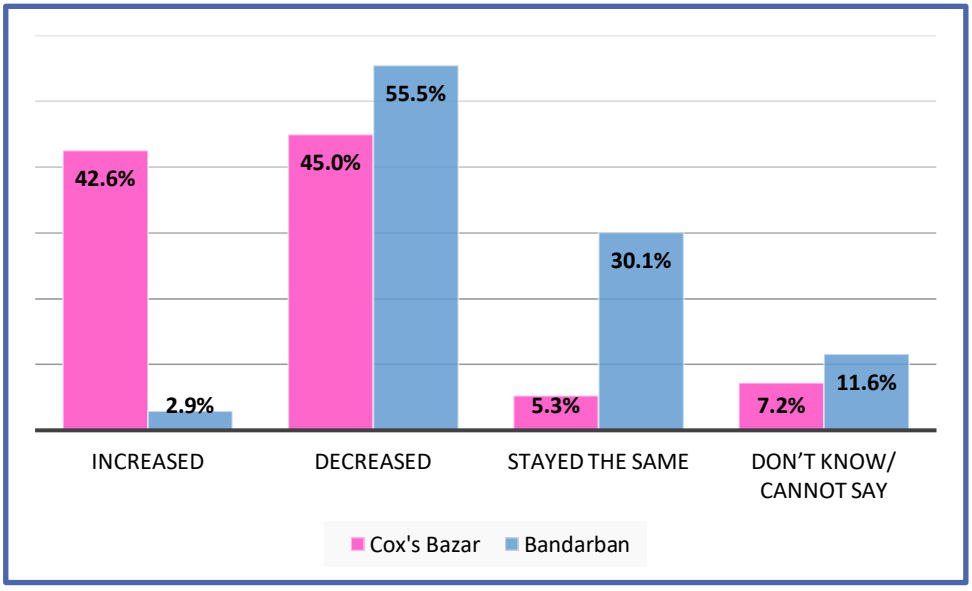
that the situation has much improved due to the coexistence of the host and Rohingya community and the impact of the social cohesion program.

Figure 27: Relation of host community with Rohingyas



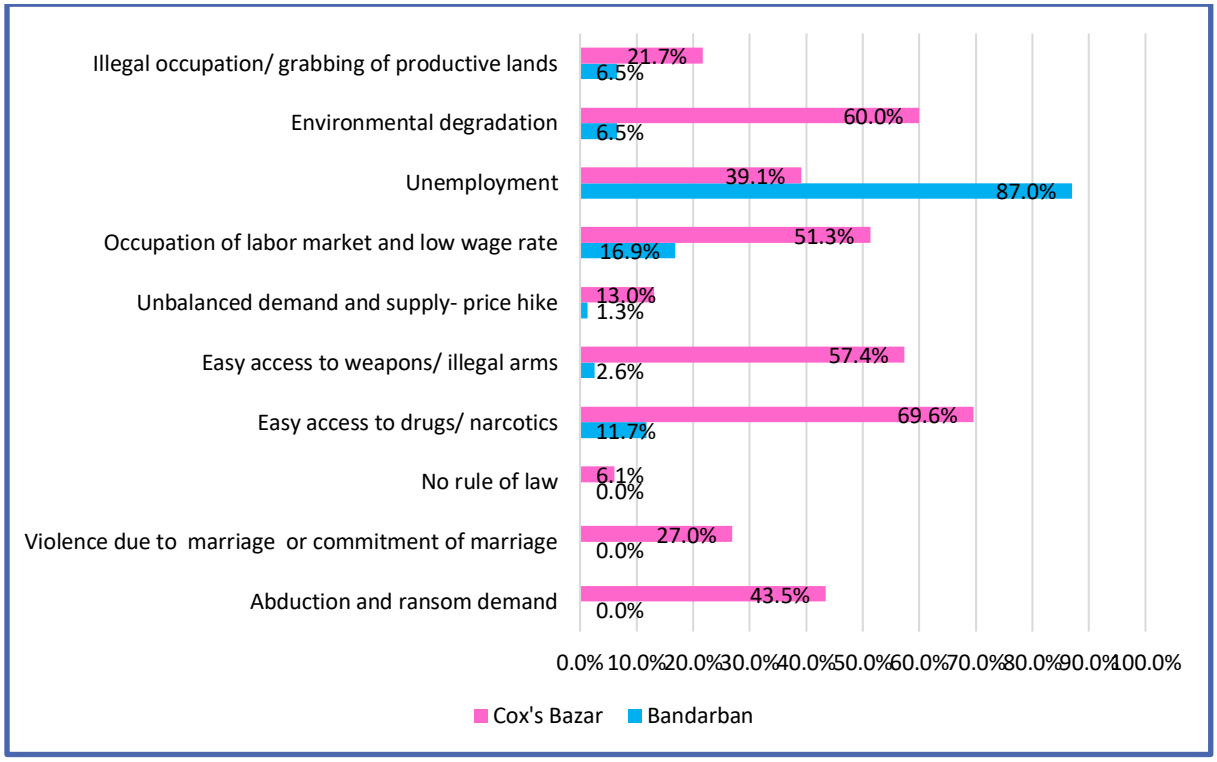
However, compared to the situation before joining IFM-FFS, the level of dissatisfaction as the FFS farmers described has 'increased' (42.6% in Cox's Bazar and 2.9% in Bandarban), 'decreased' (45.0% in Cox's Bazar and 55.5% in Bandarban) and 'remained the same' (5.3% in Cox's Bazar and 30.1% in Bandarban). During midterm evaluation, the level of dissatisfaction was 'increased' (5.3%), 'decreased' (45.3%) and 'remained the same (42.3%).

Figure 28: Level of dissatisfaction over the project period



As indicated by Fig 28, the level of dissatisfaction at the end of Dec 2022 has much decreased than that during the mid-term evaluation, which means the relationship of the host community with Rohingyas in the project intervention area has much improved at the end of December 2022 as the level of dissatisfaction is gradually reducing, and there is reason to believe that this improved relationship between the host community and the Rohingyas and the reduced dissatisfaction is the result of the contribution made by the project.

Figure 29: Identified causes of community conflict



As indicated by Fig 29, the major causes of conflict between the two communities, as the FFS farmers identified, are 'environmental degradation' (60.0% in Cox's Bazar and 6.5% in Bandarban), 'unemployment' (39.1% in Cox's Bazar and 87.0% in Bandarban), 'occupation of the labour market and low wage rate' (51.3% in Cox's Bazar and 16.9% in Bandarban), 'easy access to illegal arms' (57.4% in Cox's Bazar and 2.6% in Bandarban) and 'easy access to drugs/ narcotics' (69.6% in Cox's Bazar and 11.7% in Bandarban). The causes identified are similar to the causes identified during midterm evaluation and still prevail in the project intervention area.

As mentioned above, 'unemployment', 'environmental degradation, 'occupation of labour market and low wage rate' and easy access to illegal arms/ drugs are the main causes of conflict between host and Rohingya communities. The project adopted two approaches to address these causes of conflict and increase social cohesion. It undertook sensitization of the host community about the conflicts and their mediation process through organizing courtyard sessions. This perhaps changed their mindset, and they became more tolerant of the presence of the Rohingya community on humanitarian grounds. This gradually reduced the dissatisfaction level among the host community, and they coped with the situation of the Rohingya influx. On the other hand, the engagement of the FFS farmers in more productive activities through IFM-FFS intervention increased their income, which provided more livelihood security to them against the negative impact of the Rohingya influx. This also contributed significantly to reducing the dissatisfaction level and improving social cohesion.

6.3.3.2 Specific Conflicts Experienced by FFS and Non-FFS Farmers

The primary survey data clearly indicates that there is hardly any conflict experienced by the host community with Rohingyas living in the project area or with neighbors. Fig-40 shows that 78% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 98.8% of FFS farmers in Bandarban experienced no direct conflict with the Rohingya community or with neighbors, which is likely due to the fact that the Rohingya are confined to the camps, and there is less scope to have a direct interaction between these two communities. Only in a few cases, particularly in Ramu, Ukhyia and Teknaf, conflicts were experienced by FFS farmers.

Figure 31: Percent FFS farmers experienced conflicts with Rohingyas and neighbors

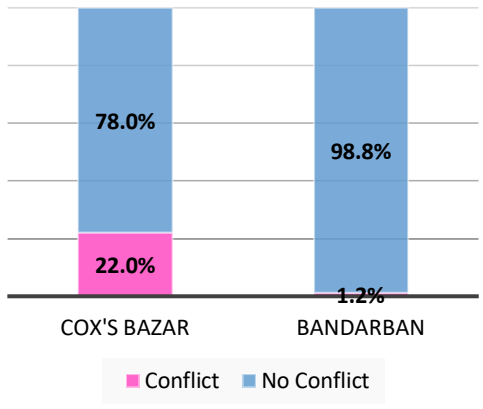
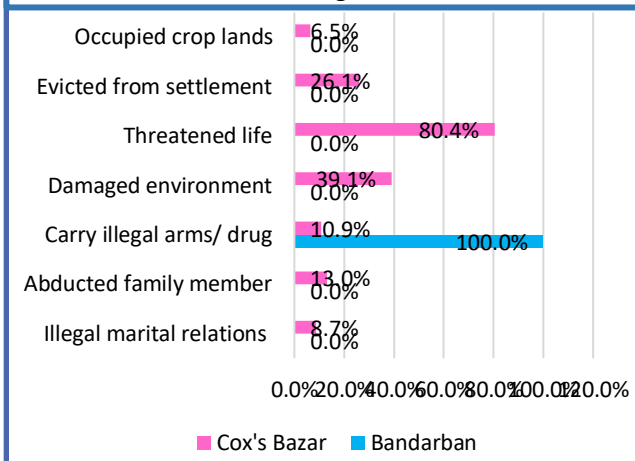


Figure 30: Specific conflicts experienced with Rohingyas and neighbors



As indicated by Fig 31, the major conflicts experienced by FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar were threatening to life (80.4%), damaging the environment (39.1%), and eviction from the settlement (8.7%). The other specific conflicts experienced in a few cases were the occupation of croplands (6.5%), carrying of illegal arms/ drugs on the premises (10.9%), abduction of family members, and demand of ransom (13.0%) and establishment of illegal marital relations between host and Rohingya community (8.7%). In Bandarban, the only conflict encountered by the FFS farmers were the Rohingya miscreants carrying illegal arms and drugs.

Figure 33: Percent FFS farmers experiencing conflict resolution

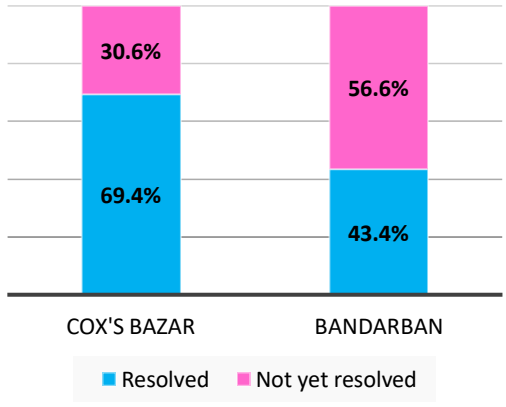


Figure 32: Percent FFS farmers got conflicts resolved by different mediators

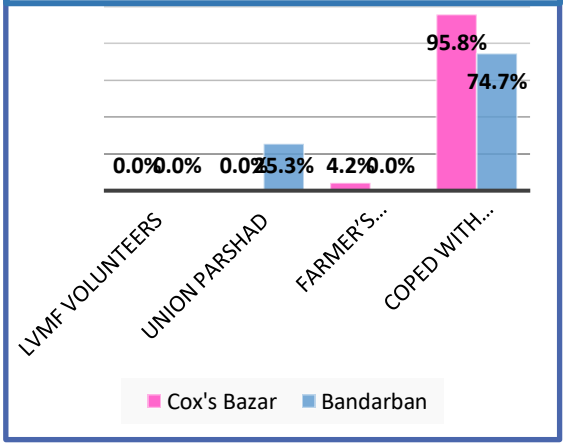


Fig 32 shows that 69.4% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 43.4% in Bandarban resolved their conflicts with Rohingya and neighbors, and the remaining FFS farmers are yet to resolve their conflicts. Fig 33 indicated that only 4.2% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar got their conflicts resolved through FFs, and the

remaining 95.8% of FFS farmers coped with the situation. In Bandarban, 25.3% of FFS farmers got their conflicts resolved through Union Parishad, and the remaining 74.7% of farmers coped with the situation. This means that the coping capacity of the FFS farmers has markedly improved

6.3.3.3 Conflicts Mediation by LVMF

LVMFs formed/reactivated by the project play a vital role in the conflict mediation process in the project area, and they have already gained popularity among the local community for solving disputes locally in an informal way. As reported by the project, a good number of disputes were solved by LVMF. Those conflicts are mostly related to internal conflicts in the host community.

Figure 34 : Percent farmers know about LVMF

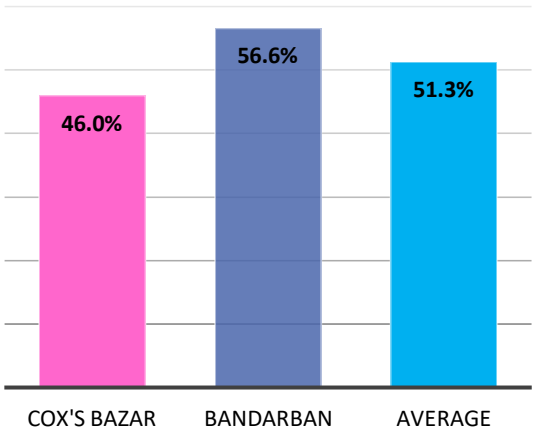
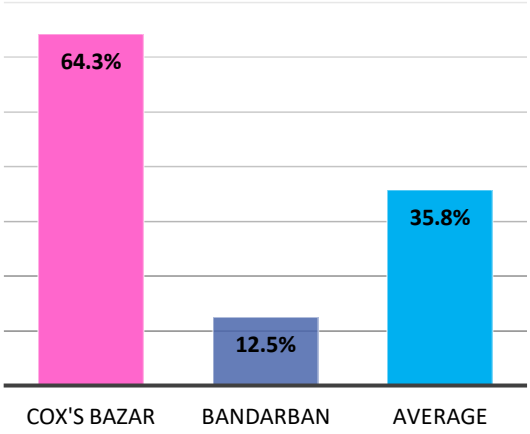


Figure 35: Percent farmers approached to LVMF for solving disputes



The primary survey data (Fig 34) shows that 46.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 56.6% in Bandarban know about LVMF. The data further shows that 64.3% of FFS farmers who know about LVMF in Cox's Bazar and 12.5% of FFS farmers who know about LVMF in Bandarban approached LVMF to resolve local disputes.

Regarding the satisfaction level of the farmers to get solutions to their disputes, 19.0% and 81.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 33.3% and 78.2% of FFS farmers in Bandarban expressed respectively their 'high satisfaction' and 'moderate satisfaction' for the mediation done by LVMF. Thus, the high acceptance of LVMF in the host community indicates that these Forums may work sustainably as a functional social mechanism for conflict resolution through their impartial, friendly, and credible mediation process.

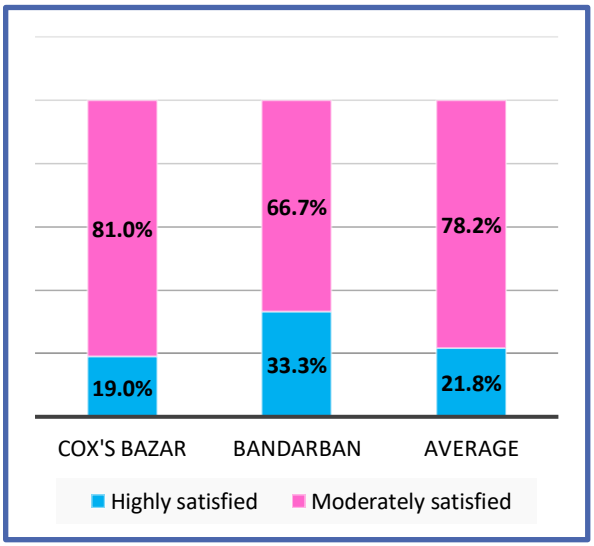


Figure 35: Level of satisfaction for resolving conflict by LVMF

Regarding the achievement of outcome indicator 3.1, a total of 1754 disputes were mediated through LVMF against a cumulative target of 1000 by Dec 2022[10]. Achievement is 175.4% as per report. However, no such data was collected

[10] Progress Report, SHARP, Dec 2022.

through the survey because the survey was conducted among the FFS Farmers- not among the LVMF.

The study on LVMF and KII with the UNDP staff and LVMF chairperson reveals the fact that almost all LVMF committees formed at union and upazilla levels in the project area are still functional. In the conflicting situation in CHT and Cox's Bazar at the emergence of the Rohingya crisis, these LVMF committees are functioning as an effective non-violent peaceful civic movement with the participation of all communities and relevant stakeholders, including high-level government officials, local government representatives, and traditional community leaders. They build allies and work on the promotion of community cohesion; introduce and activate early warning of conflict and response systems to prevent potential violence; organize discussion sessions at educational institutions on peace education; mediate local conflicts and mitigate disputes at the local level; organize different public awareness building events (cultural, fair, drama, etc.) on the promotion of community cohesion. Most importantly, LVMF deals with information chain management and maintains regular contact with the local administration and law enforcement agencies about potential crimes and community conflicts to take timely action and preemptive measures. However, in the absence of project support, the activities of the LVMFs have slowed down since Dec 2022, and the regular meetings of the Forums and promotional events are not being held. It was learned that the "Community Recovery and Resilience Project (C2RP)" and "Enhancing community safety, peaceful Co-Existence and Access to Justice Project (ESPC)" of UNDP are now working on LVMF in CHT and Cox's Bazar and providing necessary support.

6.3.3.4 Impact of Cohesion-related Courtyard Sessions on Conflict Mediating Process

The cohesion component conducted a number of courtyard sessions in each IMF-FFS community for awareness building and educating the farmers about social conflicts and their mediation process. 97.2% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 69.8% in Bandarban attended these sessions.

Table 4: Percent of FFS farmers attended the courtyard sessions

Sessions	Cox's Bazar (N=98)	Bandarban (N=104)
	FFS (%)	FFS (%)
Conflict management	99.0	91.3
Communication	67.3	1.0
Leadership	80.6	44.2
Gender	85.7	90.4
Covid-19 awareness	19.4	8.7

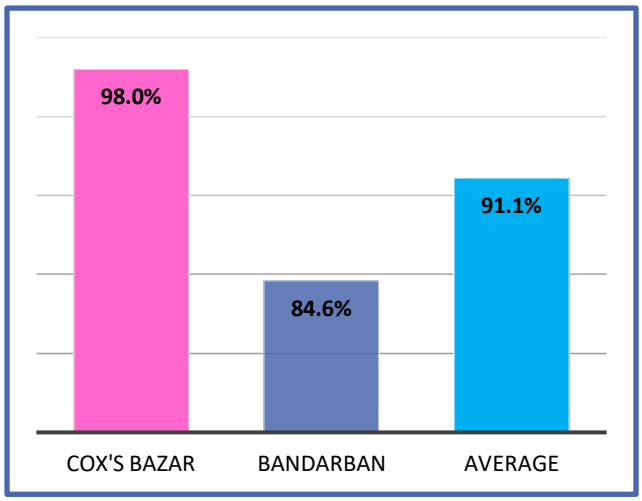


Figure 36: Percent farmers confident to apply knowledge and address disputes

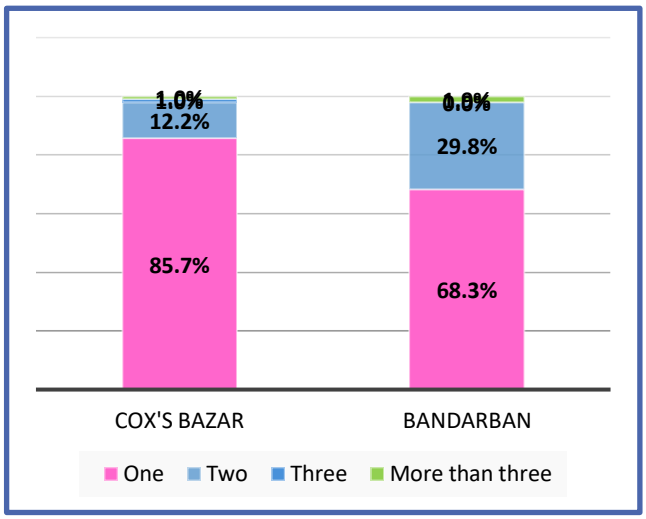


Figure 37: Percent farmers settling number of disputes

As indicated in Table 4, a good number of FFS farmers both in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban attended these sessions and learned about social cohesion and the conflict mediation process. Fig 36 discloses that 98.0% of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar, 84.6% of FFS farmers in Bandarban and overall 91.1% who attended the courtyard session changed their behavioural patterns and expressed their confidence in applying knowledge to address disputes at their community level which proves that these sessions were effectively conducted at the community level and made an impact on the participants who played later a positive mediating role in their respective communities to settle disputes. This finding also satisfied 70% target achievement of outcome indicator 3.2.

Fig 37 demonstrates the different percentages of FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban who could apply knowledge of courtyard sessions and settle internal disputes in the community up to three and more than three cases. It further demonstrates that FFS farmers, particularly in Cox's Bazar, progressed more in settling the disputes of single cases, while FFS farmers in Bandarban progressed more in settling the disputes of 2 and more than 3 cases.

The project targeted to cover 54,000 farmers through IMF-FFS, and 98.8% were covered. The families who received FFS training was found to be genuinely needy; the project has successfully enrolled more women than men as members, trainees, and recipients of IFM-FFS benefits; many new IGAs have been started; the families interviewed by the evaluators reported an increase in income and reported satisfaction about the project introduced interventions. However, in the absence of any records of production/income earned before and after the project interventions, the effectiveness of the interventions cannot be reported with evidence. The MTE observation is still valid during final evaluation.

The imparting of knowledge about improved agricultural technologies and transfer of knowledge into practice through well designed IFM-FFS system, the proactive role FFs in facilitating the knowledge transfer and adoption process, backstopping support of MTs and UFFSC at the farmers level, marketing linkage provided through the establishment of collection points and establishment of conflict mediation process through formation of LVMF are the major factors which contributed to the achievements of the above outcomes. All 3 (three) outcomes effectively contributed to the achievement of project objectives of strengthening the socio-economic conditions of the poor households indicated by increased agricultural income, which contributed 69.5% to annual household

income in Cox's Bazar and 58.2% in Bandarban at the end of Dec 2022. This contribution was less during MTE (23.6% in Cox's Bazar and 26.8% in Bandarban). Hence, the project achievements at the level of outcomes are good.

However, similar to the MTE observation, the project's effectiveness was significantly challenged by several issues such as a delayed start, the worldwide COVID 19 pandemic situation, unavailability of field facilitators due to insufficient incentives, resource constraints, language barrier, and communication problems in Bandarban.

6.4 Efficiency

The overview of output progress data available from the final progress report of the project covering the project up to December 2022 is given in **Annex-6**.

As detailed throughout the progress data, almost all the targets for the first phase and extended phase of SHARIP and important results have been achieved. Even in a few cases, the achievement exceeded the target. In a few cases, targets were not set in the first phase but later set in the extended phase. The project was very much on track, and the results so far achieved as per the result framework are satisfactory, although implementation was delayed due to the long prevalence of COVID-19 pandemic and extended lockdown periods, which necessitated adjustments and flexibility in implementation modality. Despite many adversities and challenges, the implementation of the project was efficiently managed.

Regarding cost, the Evaluation Team had less scope to go in-depth analysis of budget and expenditure. The 4 years interim financial report shows that the project has made an expenditure of USD 8,879,667.33 at the end of Dec 2022. As per the fund received and expenditure statement available from project offices**,** the total fund received was USD 8,883,284.29. The burn rate is 99.96% indicating very high cost-efficient project financial management.

Regarding cost management at the implementation level, the project has allocated BDT 22,000 for the operation of IFM-FFS, BDT 2,000 for each of its members after completion of the training, BDT 5000 per month for Farmer facilitators at Bandarban, BDT 7,000 per month for Farmer Facilitators at Cox's Bazar, and BDT 50,000 for the establishment of each collection point. The allocated budget was disbursed on time, which facilitated the implementation of the project on time. It was observed by MTE that all the beneficiaries and stakeholders showed their concern about the adequacy of the allocated money for the smooth implementation of the project activities. Particularly the incentive money given to FFS farmers after completion of their training was too inadequate to invest in improvement in existing farming practices or to start a new component. The final evaluation observed that inadequacy of the fund prevailed, and further, due to the cut down of the fund by Danida, some incentive money could not be paid to the FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar.

The project partnership with BDHC and GRAUS in Bandarban and Practical Action and ACLAB in Cox's Bazar functioned smoothly, and all the partners moved actively for project implementation. The project was well-staffed, and the staffing positions at the partner's level were found adequate for program implementation and management. The FFs were the frontline staff and played a vital role in educating the farmers and engaging them in integrated farming. However, their education level was not enough to efficiently handle the learning and communication of the FFS session contents to the farmers, as MTE observed. However, the direct supervision and backstopping support by Upazilla FFS Coordinator Master Trainers and MT were found effective. The UNDP efficiently managed the implementation of the project in good linkage with BDHC and relevant government line departments.

The project established a systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanism in all places, i.e., Para level committee at community, Upazila, District (at HDC) levels, and finally at SID-CHT District and regional levels. The project M&E system was good and effectively supported management to assess progress in terms of output and outcome assessment, which was well reflected in the project reporting system.

6.4 Impact

SHARIP had a vast impact on agricultural production by marginal farmers in the project area of Bandarban and Cox's Bazar. It adopted IFM-FFS, a proven approach for integrated farming in homesteads and small pieces of land to increase agricultural production and income. Through experiential learning, the marginal farmers adopted this approach and got increased agricultural income. The project emphasized women's participation in IFM-FFS, which impacted women's empowerment in terms of their increased knowledge and skill, control over household income, decision making, and mobility. The project also impacted social cohesion through awareness building and conflict mediation process.

The impact of the project was measured by the following three indicators in the resulting framework:

- % of participating households have increased annual net agricultural income, with at least 50% of IFM-FFS members being women
- % of female farmers enrolled in the IFM-FFS report feeling more empowered
- % of participating households with improved capacities to cope with the situation of Rohingya influx

The evaluation survey data reveals the following findings:

i) Before joining the project (2018), the net average income from the sale of agricultural produce was BDT 14000[11]. During MTE (June 2021), it was BDT 33,378 (Cox's Bazar BDT 28,313, Bandarban BDT 35,178) and during final evaluation the net annual income sharply increased to BDT 66,705 (Cox's Bazar BDT 56,849, Bandarban BDT 76,608), which is indicative of the positive impact of the project on the agricultural income level of the project beneficiaries.

ii) The household data collected for final evaluation (Fig 38) demonstrates 83.9% of Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 68.2% in Bandarban (Average 76.5%) feel that they are now much empowered by joining IFM-FFS, which exceeded the 50% target in RF.

[11] RF, Development Engagement Document, Extension of SHARIP July 2021- Dec2022

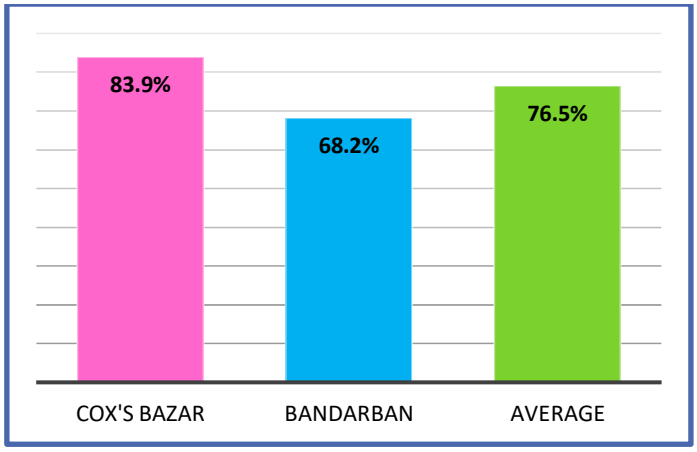


Figure 38: Impact on women empowerment

To explain more explicitly the indicators of women empowerment as given in RF, 66.0% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 59.3% in Bandarban have control over household and particularly on agricultural production related income, 46.9% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 63.3% in Bandarban have increased participation in decision making regarding production and sales in household or in farmers group, 45.1% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 59.3% in Bandarban Share knowledge and practices with their husband and other family members and take decisions jointly about improved practices, 11.1% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 50.0% in Bandarban have access to mobility to local input and sales market, 9.3% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 19.5% in Bandarban are able to impart knowledge on improved agricultural practice/ agroforestry techniques to non-FFS farmers, and finally 3.1% Female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar and 2.5% in Bandarban hold a leadership position in a community group and can influence decision making.

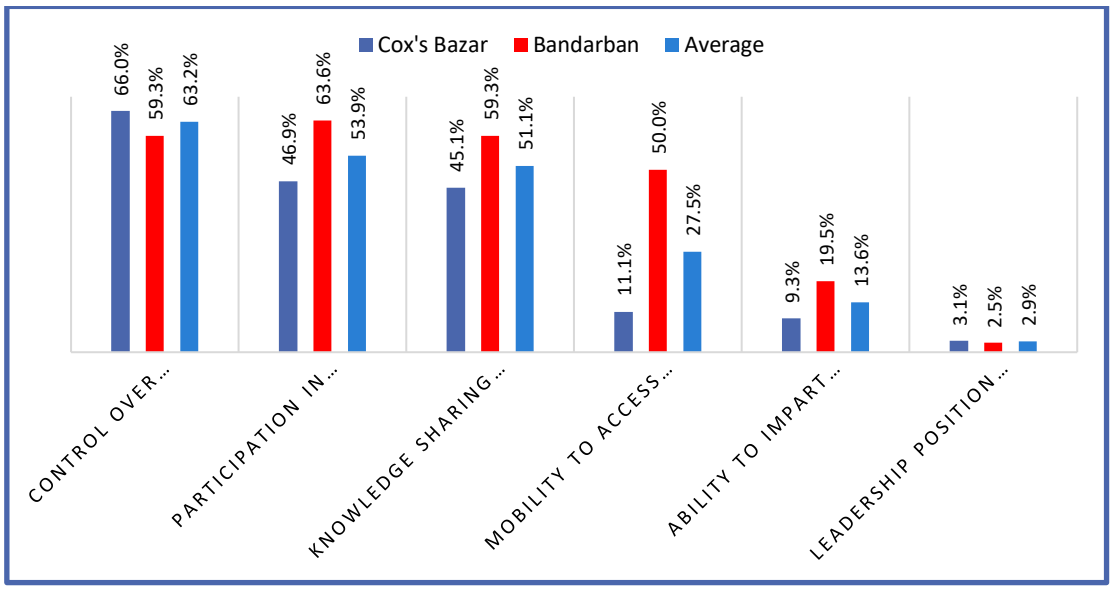


Figure 39: Impact on Women's empowerment indicators

According to the above-detailed data on empowerment indicators (Fig 39), project impact on FFS farmers' control over income from agricultural production, participation in decision-making regarding production and sales, and sharing knowledge with husbands is significant, while the impact on control over female FFS farmers' mobility, imparting knowledge and holding a leadership position is still very low.

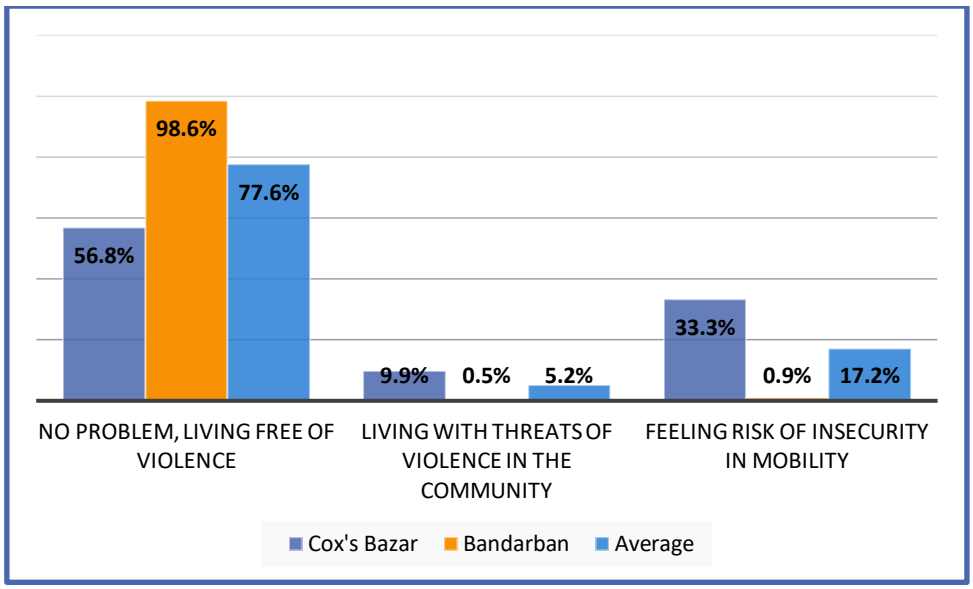


Figure 40: Impact on GBV, Safety, and Security of Women's Mobility

Fig 40 reflects the impact of women empowerment on Gender-based Violence (GBV) and the safety and security of female FFS members' mobility. It is found that 56.8% of female FFS members in Cox's Bazar and 98.6% in Bandarban are free of violence. Still, 33.3% of female FFS farmers in Cox's Bazar feel the risk of insecurity in mobility due to the Rohingya influx.

iii) Though 71.5% of respondent FFS farmers think that Rohingyas are a burden on the host community, 46.8% think that they are deprived of their rights and benefits due to the Rohingya influx, the capacity of the household to cope with the situation of Rohingya influx has increased significantly after the project interventions and as 30% of the respondents still think positively about Rohingya influx. The survey data shows that at present, nearly half of the respondents (49.5%) think the relation of their community with the Rohingya community is "very peaceful" to "moderately peaceful" (Fig 27). Moreover, 49.7% of people responded that the level of dissatisfaction between the two-community people "decreased" (Fig. 28). Further, 24.6% of people responded that the level of dissatisfaction between the two-community people has increased compared to the last three years.

The above results of the indicators suggest that there is a positive increase in agricultural income in the project intervention area, a positive impact on gender equality and women empowerment, and a positive impact on the capacity of the FFS members to cope with the situation of Rohingya influx.

Most of the families with whom the evaluators interacted expressed satisfaction over increases in production or/and income from the project-supported interventions. The extent of the increase in production could be verified from the survey data, but it was slower in the first 2 years due to the covid-19 pandemic and recovered in the next two years. In fact, the negative impact of the Rohingya influx on the livelihood of the host community was counterbalanced by the positive impact of increased agricultural income. Again, women's empowerment through project interventions developed the knowledge and skill of the women and improved their confidence level to protect themselves from any event of gender-based violence. So, the project made a significant contribution to achieving its objectives of strengthening the socio-economic conditions of the poor households of the host communities affected by the Rohingya influx.

Some cases are described below, which reflect project impacts at the beneficiary level. Some of these cases are mainly referred to by the project field staff and verified by the ET.

Case-1: Miraj Begum- a Successful FFS Farmer

Miraj Begum (45 years) from Gonapara village 5 No. ward, Bandarban Sadar, lives with her husband Shiraj Mia and 3 sons and 3 daughters and 2 grandchildren. She was a housewife, and her husband had a village grocery shop, and they hardly maintained their livelihood with a small income of shops. Finding no other means, Miraj Begum joined FFS (*Farmer's Field School)* through BHDC, the key partner of SHARIP. She completed the 7-month FFS course and became highly inspired to start integrated farming in her own homestead and cropland. With the support of the Field Facilitator, she made a plan and started to grow vegetables and fruit trees and also started producing vermicompost, poultry rearing, and goat rearing. Finding good potential for agricultural production, her husband Shiraj Mia also joined her family's agricultural business. BHDC helped to form a neighborhood women's group through the FFS approach. The approach used participatory learning and action among often low-literacy and marginalized poor women of Bandarban. Female Group members understood the reasons behind barriers to enhancing agricultural products and developed local initiatives to overcome those barriers. Their group successfully organized themselves to produce vegetables, rear poultry, and livestock for milk and meat. They learned by doing, where success in small projects and management of local conflicts gives them experience and confidence to tackle larger issues.

This year she produced Pumpkin, gourd, Jhinga, chichinga, cucumber, bitter gourd, and cockle. She had 2 cows earlier, and the number increased to 6. She is also rearing 2 goats. Under the poultry shed, she now has 5 ducks, 3 hens with 30 chicks. Last year, 80 ducks died due to extremely hot temperatures, and this year she took some precautionary measures for the safe rearing of ducks with technical advice from the livestock office. She also planted fruit trees, including mango, jack fruit, lichis, guava, olive etc. Earlier, she consumed all vegetable items, but this year she has got a good yield from homestead vegetable gardening and sold in the market. She got a total income of BDT 16,200 only from vegetables, and she is expecting more income from livestock rearing and fruits in the coming days. Her husband also helped her in growing and nursing all these items. He has separately produced a nursery of teak seedlings in 40 decimal lands where he has

grown 300,000 seedlings. He is expecting to supply seedlings to the farmers growing agroforestry. They use organic fertilizer and vermicompost, which they produce themselves, and hence they are minimizing the cost of production of the agricultural items. In the coming year, they expect an income of around BDT 2 laks from agricultural production. They sell their items to Beparis directly from their garden. They have good contact with Beparies and know about market prices.

Miraj Begum is now a model farmer in the village, and her neighbors and other non-FFS farmers often visit her garden and take her advice on how to grow all these items in an integrated way in a small landholding. Her hard days of poverty are over; with increased agricultural income, both wife and husband can manage the household expenditure well. She plans to grow banana and papaya tree, which can be produced quickly with high-value sales. When she was asked about her feelings about her success in agricultural farming, she expressed with excitement, *"….. It is learning from IFM-FFS which opened my eyes and supported me to step in agricultural farming and get huge income. I can now understand how to grow more and feeling empowered….."*.

Case-2: Agricultural Commodity Collection Point, South Goalkhola Para, Bandarban Sadar

This collection point was established on May 25, 2020 with support from SHARIP. The collection point is housed in a tin shed structure located beside a road in Ward No. 3 of Sadar Union. The land is offered by Abul Bashar, who is the president of the 7-member management committee of the collection point. Earlier, he worked on the project as Field Facilitator and is now taking care of the operation of this collection point. Every day all nearby farmers come to the collection point to stock their agricultural products and sell them to the 'Beparies' who also visit the collection point to purchase stocked items from the farmers. The collection point caretaker facilitates the selling of the products by contacting directly with the 'Beparies.' The items are sold to the Bepari, who offers the highest price, and the price is set through the bargaining process. The name and contact number of the Beparies and their offered price for different agricultural items are noticed on the collection point's display board for information about the farmers. The vegetables are stocked and sold daily, while the dry items like Bean seeds, dry pepper, spices, etc., are stocked daily but sold two times a week. Packaging is also done in the collection point, and the Beparis bear the cost. Farmers also contact the collection point for supply of agricultural inputs (e.g., seed, vermi-compost, pesticide etc.), and the collection point contact with the input suppliers. After collection, the inputs are distributed among the farmers who gave requisition. The vegetable items which are normally collected and sold in the collection points

are Brinjal, green chili, pepper, tomato, Barbati, bean, gourd, sweet pumpkin, jhiṅgā, ciciṅgā, Ladis finger, cauliflower, cabbage, bitter gourd, Coriander, etc. Fruit items are mango, lichis, Malta, banana, papaya, and other seasonal fruits. The livestock and poultry items are often sold at this collection point. During the season, the daily sales are around BDT 1.00 lakh. During the off-season, it comes down to BDT 50,000. The collection point charges farmers for using a measuring scale only and charges Beparies a percentage of their purchase and with this income, it maintains the operation cost of the collection point, including labour costs. A total of 250 farmers and 8 Beparies are connected with this collection point.

When asked about how the collection point is running, Abul Bashar informed that the collection point is running well and providing marketing services to the farmers and traders. Both farmers and traders are benefited from this collection point, he added. The farmers don't need to carry all its products to the local market as this collection point is very nearer to them and they can save transportation cost; also, they can store their products free of cost in the collection point until those are sold, which they don't get in the local market. They don't have to look for Beparies to sell their products and don't need to bargain prices. Collection point caretaker facilitates connection between farmers and Beparies and offered market prices are known to the farmers. On the other hand, the traders can make bulk purchases from one point with minimum transportation cost and get fresh items directly from the farmers. So, considering all these benefits, the number of connected farmers and traders is increasing daily and the collection point has now gradually become an important village trading center. Abul Bashar has a plan to expand the collection point structure to increase its storage capacity and separate sitting arrangement for the farmers and traders. According to Abul Bashar, more collection points need to be established in this village because the transportation of agricultural commodities from farmers' fields to remote markets is difficult for farmers in Bandarban. Collection points thus make the farmer's life easy.

Case-3: Satul Barua a Successful Mediator

Satul Barua is a member of Alikadam Upazilla Local Volunteer Mediator Forum (LVMF). He is 55 years old now. He lives with her wife Lipi Borua and they have 1 son and 2 daughters. His father's name is Tejendro Barua and mother's name is Parul Barua. He is from Shil Boniyapara which is very close to Refarpara of Choikhyang union under Alikadam Upazila. He studied up to HSC. By occupation, he is a seasonal vegetable businessman.

As a member of Alikadam Upazila LVMF, he regularly attended LVMF meetings and events like day observation, courtyard sessions, Inter-religious dialogues, and LVMF member training. He learned how to mitigate conflict and improve social cohesion by attending the training program. In the training, he learned about conflict management, the roles and responsibilities of a leader, the characteristics of a good leader, social values, gender differences, and various gender-related issues. Participation in these training sessions and the program helped develop his skills, and he became inspired to do something for his local area. Since then, he prepared himself to deal with conflicting issues with courage and determination.

Moreover, he attended courtyard sessions conducted by Community Mobilizer Mr. Uthowai Prue Marma, where he built rapport with the Field Farmer School members and solved their problems.

Until today, he solved a number of social disputes, including preventing divorce between shah Alam and his wife and between Mr. Aungching Hla Marma and his wife. He also gave an effort to maintain social harmony by preventing family and personal conflicts. These conflicts include disputes between Desey Barua and his brother, U Aung Chai, and his neighbor Chaingching Marma, Mitali Mro, and Dhan Barua. Moreover, in most of these cases, both parties couldn't come to an agreement which led to further complications. However, right at that moment, he played an important role by being a mediator and decided to solve the issues. He managed to solve the disputes by talking to them and motivating them and also finding out the sources of conflicts. Moreover, he made them realize in the IVMF meeting the importance of tolerance and the existence of peace in society.

Finally, participation in the Local Volunteer Mediator Forum run by the GRAUS Social Cohesion Project helped him develop and present himself as a skilled decision-maker, advisor, and mediator. Moreover, the knowledge from these sessions also helped to solve various numerous disputes and conflicts. In such circumstances, he believes the refresher training may help to create and develop positive attitudes among common folks. Hoping this for the future, he expressed his thanks and gratitude to GRAUS and UNDP CHT SHARIP for taking such a good initiative for providing services to the people in disputes.

6.5 Sustainability

The findings of the primary survey and discussion with the farmers reveal that the capacity of the FFS farmers has much increased than what they had before joining FFS. Now the farmers are more knowledgeable, have adopted improved integrated farming practices, and are producing more agricultural produces. Some farmers, particularly the FFS farmers, have developed their entrepreneurial capacities, establishing linkage with GoB line departments and markets and supporting agricultural extension work. According to survey data, most of the FFS farmers have enough capacity to sustain their learned improved agricultural practices for a long time without project support, which was evidenced by 87.2% FFS farmers adopting additional farming components (Fig 2) and 92.4% applying improved knowledge and skill for diversified increased production (Fig 4). Again, 47.3% FFS farmers have full access to the input market (Fig 16) and 70.8% have market linkage for selling their products (Fig 8). Further, 59.1% FFS farmers have regular contact with the FFs (Fig 7) and 59.3% maintains relations with the GoB line departments (Fig 9). On the other hand, some of the FFS and LVMF members are demonstrating their capacity to deal with social conflicts and solve them through an efficient mediating process and have already gained the trust of the community. However, as a body, this LVMF needs further backup support for the project to establish its linkage with UPs, government, and social organizations for further mobilization of the community and awareness building about the conflicting social issues.

It was learned from UNDP management staff that from a sustainability point of view, the project made some good initiatives, including the followings:

- FFs were selected from the target communities and developed as model farmers, who are expected to contribute to improved knowledge sharing and on-job support to the FFS and non-FFS farmers. The DAE and DLO offices prioritize the FFs and entrepreneurs developed by the project who maintain links between the line departments and the FFS farmers. These FFs and Master Trainers are now working as "Contact Points" to get further support from the FFS farmers.
- To mainstream the IFM-FFS process, linkages were established with the concerned line departments of the Government i.e., DAE and DLO. The officials of these line departments visited the farmers field during the project period, monitored their activities, and provided

necessary technical information. These departments also involved some of the female FFS farmers in their Family Nutrition Gardening Project" of DAE and also involved husbands of the female FFS farmers in demonstration plots, where DAE provides technological and input support. According to SAEO, Cox's Bazar, and Bandarban, this functional linkage is still working, and through this linkage, the FFS farmers have got access to improved technological information and input support provided by DAE. It was further learned that there is scope to have a "technological exchange" between FFS Farmers and model farmers of DAE as recommended by MTE through the engagement of FFS Farmers with Community Interest Groups (CIG) formed under on-going "National Agricultural Technology Programme (NATP)"-II.

- The "Partnership for Resilient Livelihoods in the CHT Region" project was officially launched on 14 June, 2023 at a city hotel in Dhaka, with funding from the European Union in collaboration with UNDP Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of extremely low-income households in the Chattogram Hill Tracts (CHT). This project fully adopts the IFM-FFS model, and UNDP will promote this model in other areas of CHT through policy advocacy. FAO undertakes a mega project, "Building resiliency and promoting integrated Agri-economic growth" in Cox's Bazar, which is working to create and support livelihoods and to build resilience to food insecurity and natural disasters at the household and community levels. Agricultural transformation activities for local communities include support for food production, agricultural mechanization, farmer field school (FFS), business support for farmers, aquaculture, livestock production, and animal health management. There is a chance for the FFS farmers to join these new projects and get further benefitted.
- UNDP shared all project information including its resources to Coordination Forum of Food security sector. All UN agencies and development partners can use this information for the use of project resources in their existing or future projects.
- The project established collection points to link FFS and non-FFS farmers with the input sellers (e.g. company dealers and retailers) and market traders (e.g. Beparies), and strengthen the capacity of the management committees of these collection points to independently deal with the farmers and market traders and make these collection points as community based agricultural business entity or trading center to run sustainably in future. Most of these collection points are crop-based and located near the agricultural producers, including FFS farmers, and are still functioning. SAEOs also visit these collection points and use them to disseminate technical information to the farmers.
- The project formed youth forums to organize issue-based events and LVMF to increase social cohesion. The LVMF committees were formed with representatives from LGIs, local leaders and government officials and these committees are led by UP chairman at union level and Upazilla Chairman at upazilla level. All these persons are highly influential and involved with conflict mediation process. Under the umbrella of LVMF these persons in coordination with each other are expected to continue mediation activities toward promoting social cohesion after phasing out of project support. UNDP took initiatives to continue support to the activities of LVMFs through "CHT Co-watershed Management Activities" an on-going project in CHT, "Enhancing community safety, peaceful Co-Existence and Access to Justice Project" and Community Recovery and Resilience project (C2RP), another two projects under implementation in Cox's Bazar. But no institutional arrangement was made with any concerned government line department and other stakeholders to make activities of LVMF

and the youth forums sustainable over a longer-term as MTE observed. However, it was learned that government has some reservations about peacekeeping by LVMF through the mediation process, and hence, institutional arrangement for the continuation of LVMF activities needs to be carefully handled.

6.6 Leave No One Behind

The project in principle seeks to ensure no one is left behind. Given the limited resources, the project could not reach everyone for practical reasons. However, as human rights, the project mostly targeted women from the marginalized population for inclusion in IFM-FFS program. It also included female headed households in the beneficiary groups. Ethnicity and disability were also addressed in the FFS farmer selection process.

Figure 41: Sex of Respondents

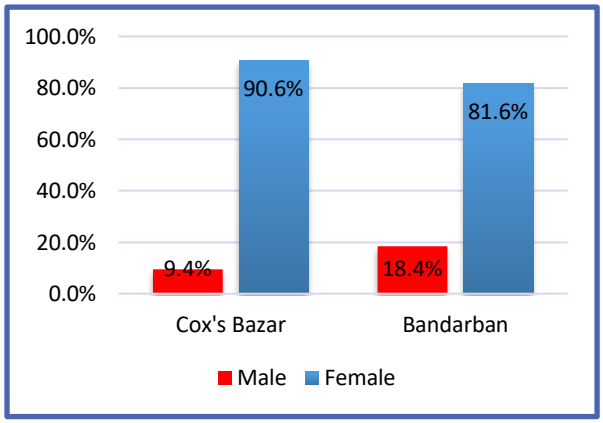
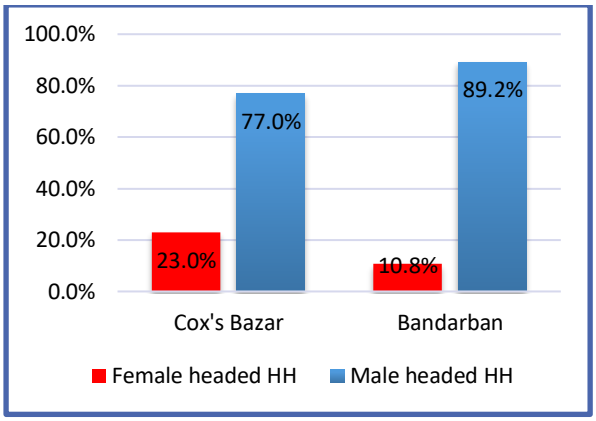


Figure 42: Household category



As indicated by survey data (Fig-41), 90.6% of respondents in Cox's Bazar are female, while that of in Bandarban is 81.6%. As per output progress data in Annex-6, the participating female FFS farmers are 76.1%. Again, the female-headed[12] households were found only 23.0% in Cox's Bazar and 10.8% in Badarban (Fig-42), indicating that Bandarban is a more patriarchal society and as per farmers' selection criteria, all available female-headed households could not be included in the FFS group due to consideration of other criteria.

Figure 44: Ethnicity

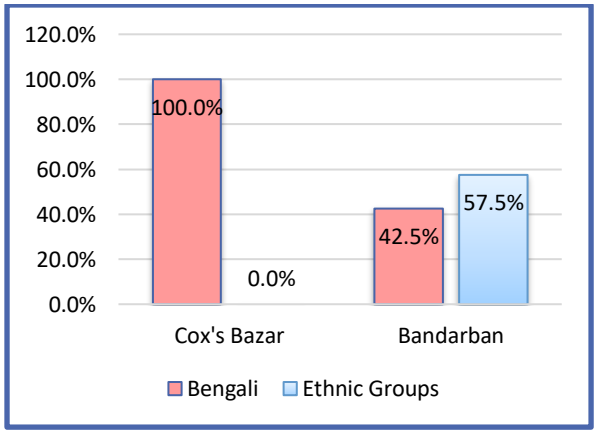
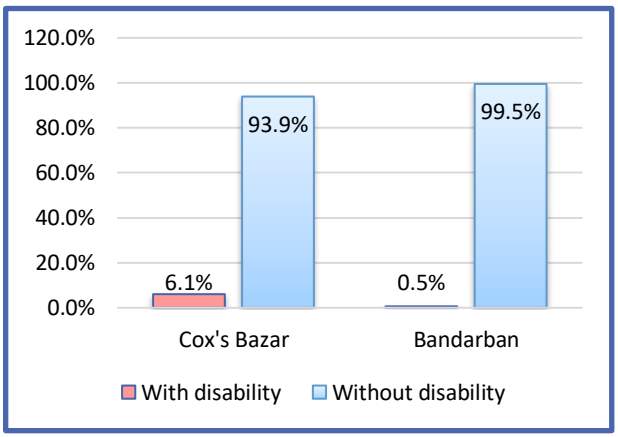


Figure 43 : Disability

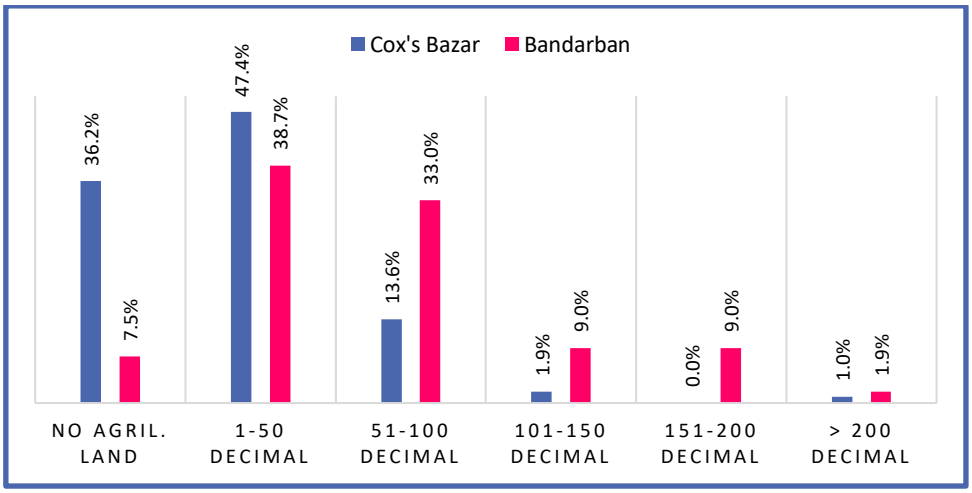


Regarding the inclusion of ethnicity, data shows that the surveyed FFS farmers are 100% Bengali in Cox's Bazar, while 57.5% of FFS farmers in Bandarban belong to the ethnic community (Chakma 0.5%,

[12] Female is widow or the main earning and decision-making person in a household or the household which have no male earning person.

Marma 50.9%, and Tanchangya 6.1%). Ethnicity is more addressed in selecting FFS farmers and geographically more addressed in Bandarban, which is consistent with selection criteria and the actual percentage of Bengali and ethnic communities in Bandarban. Regarding disability, 6.1% of the beneficiary respondents in Cox's Bazar and 0.5% in Bandarban were found to have some disability.

Figure 45: Agricultural landholdings



Regarding agricultural land holding, 36.2% of FFS farmers are landless, 47.4% have land less than 50 decimals, 13.6% have land between 51-100 decimals, 1.9% have land between 101-150 decimals, and only 1.0% have lands more than 150 decimal in Cox's Bazar, which are respectively 7.5%, 38.7%, 33.0%, 9.0% and 10.9% in Bandarban. The average agricultural landholding per household is 26.8 decimal in Cox's Bazar and 75.4 decimal in Bandarban. Thus, the average agricultural landholding of FFS farmers is much higher in Bandarban. However, the landless percentage is much higher in Cox's Bazar; hence, these households are extremely land-poor.

Figure 47: Distribution of Household annual income of FFS Farmers

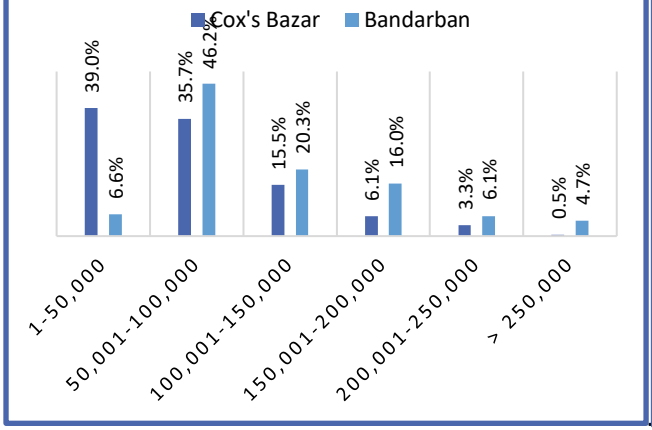
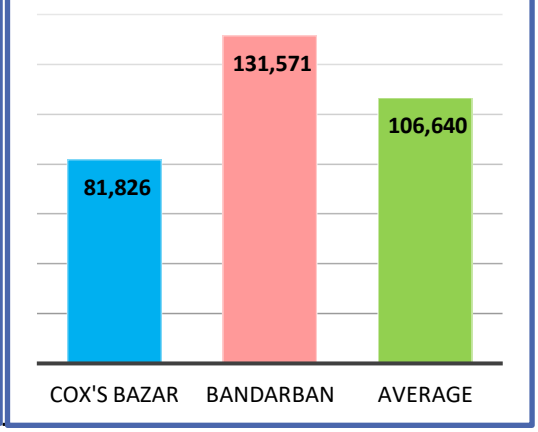


Figure 46: Average annual household income



Regarding household income, the average annual income of FFS farmers is BDT 81,826 in Cox's Bazar and BDT 131,571 in Bandarban, thus having higher income in Bandarban. On average, the annual income of FFS farmers are BDT 106,640 (Fig-47). The income level is much below the national average[13] and the international poverty line (USD 2.15 per capita per day), indicating that poor and marginalized farmers have been targeted for the project intervention.

[13] Per capita GNI for 2021 as estimated by World Bank Atlas method is USD 2570)

Chapter 7: Lessons Learned and Good Practices

During the evaluation, the consultants reviewed the lessons learned reflected in the final progress report, and MTE report of the project, and those lessons were also verified during their field visit. The followings are a few lessons that need to be taken into consideration for designing/redesigning a similar type of project in the future.

i) IFM has been proven as a good model for benefitting marginal farmers who have no particular land but can produce multiple crops, particularly vegetables and fruits, using their homestead. They can also rear poultry and livestock on their homestead. The model has been successfully replicated by many non-FFS farmers in the project area. This could be a replicable model to support marginal farmers elsewhere in the country through mainstreaming.

ii) Although technical, farmers can better understand and learn from project field school and adopt improved practices at their homestead. The learning model is flexible; farmers can identify their needs and make their own choice, and the co-learning approach works well to apply their learning in practice. Group learning through study plot demonstration is a good technique for learning and adapting, and the same technique can be adopted elsewhere for agricultural extension work.

iii) The school sessions other than 5 compulsory sessions (preparatory, IFM, nutrition, agroforestry, and marketing) were selected in consultation with the farmers based on local demand. Therefore, the sessions were more relevant to the local contexts and growing interest in the farmers, and the farmers easily adopted the learnings. This was proved as a good technique to transfer technology from school to field in remote and backward areas.

iv) The organization of Farmer Field Days has proven to be an effective way to inspire neighboring farmers (non-IFM-FFS members) to adopt improved agroforestry practices.

v) Engagement of the female FFs from the local community has proven to be highly effective as the dropout rate was minimal. As most of the IFM-FFS members are women, having female FFs as role models helped build up the confidence of the female IFM-FFS members.

vi) During COVID-19 and lockdown, support was provided over the phone, through video calls and Union-wise online meetings organized in Messenger groups, which proved to be a workable substitute for field-level backstopping support.

vii) Accessing quality farming inputs continues to be a challenge in the project area. Despite training provided by the project to the farmers and input sellers on quality farming inputs, many farmers are not eventually linked with the sellers, mainly due to the distance between farmers' homes and the sellers' shops. But organizing input related coordination meetings at the Union level between farmers and input sellers worked well. These have the potential to be replicated, making the collection points a hub for interaction between farmers and the input sellers.

viii) Developing linkage with the line departments and involvement of DAE and DLO officials to attend FFS sessions and visit FFS farmers field largely benefitted farmers in terms of accessing diverse technological information and quality input support provided by different projects of DAE and DLO.

ix) The involvement of local political leaders in LVMF has worked positively to influence the disputant parties and gain their trust to approach LVMF for the solution. This also mitigated

political conflicts threatening the safety and security of the local people and reduced the threats or harassment of LVMF members.

x) LVMF committees and local CBOs can help to encourage more involvement of the youths in social cohesion-building activities. Encouraging youth to use social media to engage other youth and disseminate awareness messages has also turned out to be an effective way to reach youth in the project areas more broadly.

xi) In some events and groups in the social cohesion component, ensuring female participation was challenging, particularly in culturally and religiously conservative areas of Cox's Bazar, where female participation in public events is generally not encouraged. The strategy of planning female-only events (e.g., martial art training and football tournaments) and making alliances with gender-equality sensitive teachers has proved successful.

xii) The project developed good numbers of model farmers, entrepreneurs for Agro businesses, youths for social movements against anti-social activities (e.g., drug trafficking, polyethylene, dowry, child marriage, violence, Rohingya conflicts, etc.), martial arts for self-defense against eve teasing and GBV and conflict mediators through training and skill development, who are now the social resource and playing volunteering role in the society. Hence they are contributing to improved agricultural practices and increased cohesion in the host community.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusions

SHARIP was a very relevant project in consideration of current development priorities declared by the Government of Bangladesh, food Security, SDGs, and the Strategic Objectives of UNDP.

The project was very much on track, and the results so far achieved as per the result framework are satisfactory, although implementation was delayed due to the long prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic and extended lockdown periods, which necessitated adjustments and flexibility in implementation modality. Despite many resource constraints and challenges, the implementation of the project was efficiently managed.

The project achieved clear results under Outcome 1. Agricultural production was increased and diversified in targeted communities through the Establishment of IFM-FFS with the participation of poor and marginalized farmers, majority of whom were women. The Farmer Facilitators were developed to act as model farmers, who are now supporting farmers homestead based agricultural production in the locality through sharing knowledge, disseminating information and maintaining contacts with the GoB line departments. As the field survey demonstrates, the FFS farmers are increasing production in different items by adopting the improved farming technologies learned from IFM-FFS. So, it can be attributed that improved farming technologies have been successfully transferred from school to farmers' production fields.

Livelihood diversification, market access development, collection points, broadening income opportunities, creation of individual or group enterprise, and development of market infrastructure are still in the stage of growing to be self-sustained and need further support. Similarly, the entrepreneurship development based on agricultural input services, including vermicomposting, organic fertilizing, vaccinating and deworming, and nursery growing, are in a good stage of growing and supporting integrated farming and increased agricultural production of the FFS farmers.

The results of the impact indicators clearly demonstrate much higher agricultural income in the project intervention area, a positive impact on gender equality and women empowerment, and a positive impact on the capacity of the FFS members to cope with the situation of Rohingya influx.

A multi-stakeholder involvement (Upazila Administration, Union Parishad, educational institutions, and members of Local Volunteer Mediator's Forums and youth forums) created a wider scope to promote social cohesion interventions in the project working areas. The project used existing and organically formed youth forums for organizing different events to increase social cohesion, which could be a potential body to carry on these activities in the future.

The young school girls were trained in Martial Arts and this enabled the girls to have self-defense against any eve-teasing, bullying, and gender-based violence and increased their self-confidence to speak up against bullying and eve-teasing and GBV. This was indeed a good initiative of the project for women's empowerment, which can reduce social crimes like domestic violence, eve-teasing, and GBV. The initiative needs institutional mechanism to continue martial art practice at high school level.

The project concept and design were appropriate. The change process designed in the "Theory of Change" worked moderately well toward achieving its outcomes and objectives. The outcome achievement was also satisfactory. And all 3 (three) outcomes effectively contributed to the project objectives of strengthening the socio-economic conditions of the poor households indicated by increased agricultural income.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic interrupting implementation at the beneficiary level, the project

achieved promising results, which include the formation of FFS, the introduction of integrated farming, the adoption of improved technologies at the farmers' level, and value addition, the inclusion of poor, marginalized, and vulnerable groups, increased women participation and empowerment, linkage building with the government line departments, establishing a market mechanism through collection points and establishing a social conflict mediating process. Based on the results of performance levels, the final evaluation considers that the efficiency level of output and outcome achievement was satisfactory.

The exit strategy of the project was not made. The mainstreaming of project results through functional and effective linkage building with the GoB line departments, the institutionalization of the market mechanism through strengthening collection points, and the expansion and sustenance of social mediation and conflict resolution process through strengthening youth forums and LVMF are some of the issues need to be carried forward for designing new intervention in future. However, the results achieved under components 1 and 2 are expected to be self-sustained by the targeted farmers depending on value addition and contribution to increased annual income. The results achieved under component 3 are expected to be sustained through institutionalization and activation of the social mediation process to be revitalized under other ongoing projects of UNDP.

8.2 Recommendations

The evaluation team reviewed the MTR recommendations and their implementation status and identified the scope and extent of further implementing those recommendations at the end of the project. The MTR recommendations and their implementation status are given in **Annex-8**.

SHARIP is already closed, but it has many successes and good practices, which can be carried forward and replicated in other similar types of projects to add value to the sector. Hence, in consideration of the merits of the MTR recommendations, UNDP may consider following specific recommendations to undertake new initiatives or intervention for improving the socio-economic conditions and overall development of poor marginal farmers and the poor households of the host communities affected by the Rohingya influx.

8.2.1 Agricultural Production

Sl.	Key findings	Recommendations
1	IFM-FFS model was successfully adopted and implemented by SHARIP and the FFS farmers were largely benefitted in terms of increased agricultural production and income and were empowered with knowledge and skill of integrated farming practices. The model is already adopted in 2 big projects- EU supported "Partnership for Resilient Livelihoods in the CHT Region" project to be implemented in 3 CHT districts and FAO supported "Building resiliency and promoting integrated Agri-economic growth" in Cox's Bazar. FFS farmers and non-FFS farmers, entrepreneurs and input suppliers developed in the SHARIP project area may be further benefited from these 2 projects for sustaining their improved farming practices.	In order to use the knowledge skill and experience of the FFs, FFS farmers, entrepreneurs and input suppliers of SHARIP and to sustain their improved farming practices, these resources may be accommodated in the new projects launched by EU and FAO.

Sl.	Key findings	Recommendations
2	In order to mainstream IFM-FFS model, there is scope to have "technological exchange" between FFS Farmers of SHARIP and model farmers of DAE as recommended by MTE through engagement of FFS Farmers with Community Interest Groups (CIG) formed under on-going "National Agricultural Technology Programe (NATP)"-II of DAE. This could be a win-win situation	UNDP may undertake such collaborative arrangements with GoB line departments (DAE, DLO) to design its future intervention in the sector.
3	Climate change is increasingly affecting agricultural and agro-forestry production and as a result farmer are affected.	Therefore, climate change effect on cropping pattern needs to be considered in selecting farming components in an area and accordingly FFS course model needs to be adjusted for replication in new area.
4	The collection point was a good approach and mechanism for marketing the farmers produces from one point, which is very close to the farmers. These collection points linked the farmers with the market traders and input suppliers and encouraged the farmers for group marketing. The project strengthened the capacity of the management committees of these collection points to independently deal with the farmers and market traders and make these collection points as community based agricultural business entity or trading center to run sustainably in the future. Except a few wrong selections of locations for the collection points in Cox's Bazar, all the collection points are running well.	The collection points need to be established as a market mechanism and one-stop trading center for farmers and traders. Based on SHARIP learning, the collection points need to be located in strategic points and equipped with all facilities including transportation, storage, sorting and packaging. These collection points can be used by other projects as marketing outlets and even for export processing.

8.2.2 Social Cohesion

Sl.	Key findings	Recommendations
1	The young school girls were trained in Martial Arts by engaging professional Martial arts instructors, and this enabled the girls to have self-defense and speak up against any eve-teasing, bullying, and gender-based violence. This was indeed a good initiative of the project for women's empowerment, which can reduce social crimes like domestic violence, eve-teasing, and GBV. The initiative was taken by the project at girls' high school level, but the institutional mechanism to	As a self-defense tool against eve teasing and GBV, Martial Arts may be popularized among young girls, and school-based practice may be promoted with the active involvement of school management as part of women empowerment and social movement against GBV. The martial art schools may be registered with Bangladesh Karate Federation so that the trainees can take part regularly in national sports events. This kind of initiative will encourage school girls to join Martial arts.

Sl.	Key findings	Recommendations
	continue martial art practice at schools is lacking. No linkage was developed with Martial Arts Federation or any other voluntary organization.	
2	The project used existing and organically formed youth forums for organizing different events to increase social cohesion, which could be a potential body to carry on these activities in the future. However, Youth Forum was found both structurally and functionally disorganized, having no visible activities even at the end of the project, and all the youths involved with this Forum are now scattered.	To ensure the sustainability of the youth-related activities, the youth forums need to be developed as institutions and should have structure at different levels- union, Upazilla, and district and trained youths under the project should be enlisted with this Forum. UNDP or other social organizations can engage Youth Forum as an institution in social mobilization and cohesion programs.
3	The LVMF committees are functioning as an effective non-violent peaceful civic movement with the participation of all communities and relevant stakeholders, including high-level government officials, local government representatives, and traditional community leaders. Most importantly, LVMF deals with information chain management and maintains regular contact with the local administration and law enforcement agencies about potential crimes and community conflicts for timely action and preemptive measures. However, in the absence of project support, the activities of the LVMFs have slowed down after Dec 2022 and the regular meetings of the Forums and promotional events are not being held. Institutional arrangement to continue LVMF activities without project support has not been worked out.	LVMFs played a good role in the project area to mitigate social conflicts and restore peace and stability. Its voluntary, informal approach towards conflict mediation needs to be maintained to promote social cohesion, and its activities need to be supported and strengthened by new projects dealing with cohesion programs. However, its role should be strictly limited to the mediation process at the community level to mitigate social disputes and not to be involved anyway with arbitration or judiciary of criminal activities for which they are not mandated. UNDP may consider further engagement and supporting of Youth Forum and LVMFs through the ongoing "Partnership for Resilient Livelihoods in the CHT Region" project and "CHT Co-Watershed Management Activities" in CHT areas and "Enhancing community safety, peaceful Co-Existence and Access to Justice Project" and "Community Recovery and Resilience project (C2RP)" another two projects under implementation in Cox's Bazar.