



ENDLINE EVALUATION REPORT

NATIONAL URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Commissioned By:

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National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP)

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PROJECT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION DETAILS

Project/Outcome Information		
Project/Outcome title	National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP)	
Atlas ID	00092722	
Corporate Outcome and Output	<p>CPD Outcome 1: By 2026, more people in Bangladesh, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalised from all gender and social groups and those from lagging districts, benefit from sustainable livelihoods and decent work opportunities resulting from responsible, inclusive, sustainable, green and equitable economic development.</p> <p>CPD Output 1.2: Women and youth, especially those who own cottage, small and medium-sized enterprises, benefit from market-driven skills development, access to financial and non-financial services to adopt appropriate technologies, and innovative business models driving improved productivity, competitiveness, resilience and sustainability of enterprises and jobs.</p> <p>CPD Output 1.3: Policy and regulatory frameworks enabling greater access to and utilisation of inclusive, gender-responsive, resilient basic social and protection services are strengthened.</p>	
Country	Bangladesh	
Region	RBAP	
Date project document signed	4 January 2017	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	14 August 2018	30 June 2024
Total committed budget	USD 87 Million	
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Funding source	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Government of Bangladesh (GoB)	
Implementing party¹	Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C)	

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ Outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Programme	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final (Endline Evaluation)	
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	August 2018	June 2024
Evaluators	Prof. Arjun Singh Bedi, International Team Leader, Prof. Abul Barkat, National Quantitative Expert and Team of Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)	
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Undertaking a credible evaluation of the NUPRP, a six-year multi-dimensional poverty reduction programme with numerous interventions covering more than four million urban poor living in a large number of cities and towns across Bangladesh, was a challenging task. Evaluating the NUPRP was a mutual learning experience for all team members. We are thankful to NUPRP of UNDP for entrusting us with this important task.

We are thankful to the Steering Committee of FCDO, Dhaka, especially Mr A B M Feroz Ahmed, Livelihoods Adviser and Deputy Team Leader, Climate Change and Environment Team, for his encouragement and valuable guidance on the evaluation. We also acknowledge the contribution of Ms Farzana Mustafa of FCDO, Dhaka. We appreciate the forward-looking suggestions of Ms Sonali Dayaratne, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP, Bangladesh, to produce data and evidence for future policy-making on curbing urban poverty. We acknowledge Mr Anowarul Haq, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh, for his critical assessment at every stage of the evaluation, and Mr A Z M Saleh, Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst, UNDP Bangladesh, who supported us with preparatory suggestions on compliance issues regarding planning and reporting.

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We are thankful for the support of the Human Development Research Centre, especially to Mr Abu Taleb, Director of Finance & Administration, for arranging the logistics necessary for the smooth implementation of the project.

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International Team Leader

Prof. Abul Barkat
National Quantitative Expert

DECLARATION

The Evaluation Team of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC), Bangladesh, and The International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam (ISS-EUR), The Netherlands, has prepared this report based on field findings (through quantitative and qualitative surveys) and on information shared by NUPRP officials. The evaluation team could not access some of the programme documents as these were not ready at the time of the endline evaluation. Triangulated statements are based on primary and secondary data triangulation. Considering the size and complex design of the programme, the evaluation team would like to note the tight timeline, especially the short duration of time between gathering the survey data and putting together the endline report. The evaluation team had consultation meetings with the national and town officials of the programme from the planning to the implementation phase of the endline evaluation of the programme. The evaluation team has complied with the Evaluation Quality Assurance and Learning Service (EQUALS) of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP), the Evaluation Team of the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC), Bangladesh and the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam (ISS-EUR), The Netherlands skipped the joint exercise session of evaluation policy, strategy and standards offered by the Evaluation Quality Assurance and Learning Service (EQUALS) of Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom. However, lead evaluators of the endline evaluation are seasoned evaluators who have evaluated various development programmes and projects for over 20 years.

Prof. Arjun Singh Bedi
International Team Leader

Prof. Abul Barkat
National Quantitative Expert

REPORT ORGANISATION

Report Organisation: The report commences by providing an executive summary which contains the key points of the endline report. Thereafter, the introductory chapter (Chapter I: Introduction) describes the programme's background and objectives. The subsequent chapter (Chapter II: Description of Intervention) briefly describes the various NUPRP interventions. The next chapter (Chapter III: Evaluation Scope and Objectives) outlines the scope of the evaluation and its objectives. The chapter on evaluation methodology (Chapter IV: Evaluation Approach and Methods) outlines the evaluation approaches, sample and sampling frame, data sources, data collection procedures and tools, evaluation ethics and safeguards, and the limitations of the evaluation. The following chapter (Chapter V: Data Analysis) deals with data analysis. The findings chapter (Chapter VI: Evaluation Findings) provides responses linked to the evaluation questions (Annexe 1: Terms of Reference and Annexe 4: Evaluation Matrix) and, *in seriatim*, deals with relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and the cross-cutting elements. The final chapter (Chapter VII: Conclusion and Recommendation) outlines the conclusion, lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations. In addition, an Annexe Document comprising 13 Annexes contains further details.

Cover Photo Credit: The Evaluation Team captured images of beneficiaries and interventions with appropriate consent, including the images on the cover of this report.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOM	Annual Outcome Monitoring
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCR	Benefit-Cost-Ratio
BDP	Bangladesh Delta Plan
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BIP	Bangladesh Institute of Planners
B MDF	Bangladesh Municipal Development Fund
BNNC	Bangladesh National Nutrition Council
BUET	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
BUF	Bangladesh Urban Forum
CAP	Community Action Plan
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CC	City Corporation
CC&M	City Corporation and Municipality
CCC	Chattogram City Corporation
CCVA	Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
CDC	Community Development Committee
CDC-C	CDC Cluster
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHDF	Community Housing Development Fund
CMSNC	City-Level Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Committee
CO	Community Organisation
CPD	Country Programme Document
CP-WPM	City Poverty-Ward Poverty Mapping
CRMIF	Climate Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CUCC	Cumilla City Corporation
DEWATS	Decentralisation of Waste-Water Treatment System
DFID	Department for International Development
DiD	Difference-in-difference
DPP	Development Programme Proforma
DPP-r	Development Project Proposal
DNCC	Dhaka North City Corporation
DSCC	Dhaka South City Corporation
EFM	Early and Forced Marriage
EM	Early Marriage
ERD	External Resources Division
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GBP	British Pound Sterling
GED	General Economic Division
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HBRI	Housing and Building Research Institute
HDRC	Human Development Research Centre
HH	Household
HR	Human Resources
IDI	In-Depth Interview
IFCA	Institutional and Financial Capacity Assessment
IMED	Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam
KCC	Khulna City Corporation
KII	Key Informant Interview
KM	Knowledge Management

LF	Logframe/Logical Framework
LG	Local Government
LGD	Local Government Division
LGI	Local Government Institute/Institution
LIUPCP	Livelihood Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
LTA	Long Term Agreement
LTAP	Land Tenure Action Plan
MAB	Municipal Association of Bangladesh
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAU	Mutual Accountability Unit
MIS	Management Information System
MoDM&R	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH&PW	Ministry of Housing and Public Works
MoL	Ministry of Land
MoLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MSEF	Micro and Small Enterprise Fund
MSNP	Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHA	National Housing Authority
NPD	National Project Director
NPSC	National Project Steering Committee
NUP	National Urban Policy
NUPRP	National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme
NWFBC	Nutrition & Women-Friendly Business Corner
NPD	National Project Director
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development -Development Assistance Committee
PG	Primary Group
PIC	Programme/Project Implementation Committee
PIP	Participatory Identification of the Poor
PPB	Perspective Plan of Bangladesh
PPM	Participatory Poverty Mapping
Prodoc	Project Document
PWD	Person with Disabilities
RELU	Research, Evaluation and Learning Unit
RRF	Result and Resource Framework
S&C	Savings and Credit
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
SC	Standing Committee
SCC	Safe Community Committee
SCG	Savings and Credit Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDO	Slum Development Officer
SEF	Socio-Economic Fund
SIF	Settlement Improvement Fund
TF	Town Federation
TLCC	Town Level Coordination Committee
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference

ToT	Training of Trainers
TMSNC	Town-Level Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Committee
TPB	Town Programme/Project Board
TSC	Town Steering Committee
ULG	Urban Local Government/Governance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Framework
UPPR	Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction
UPPR-P	Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project
USD	US Dollar
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VfM	Value for Money
VLM	Vacant Land Map
WLCC	Ward Level Coordination Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) was launched in 2018 and builds on the experience gathered from the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project (UPPR-P). The bulk of financial support for the NUPRP was provided by The Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) of the British Government. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided design and management support for the complex programme of five Outputs and 13 independent and interconnected projects. The GoB's Local Government Division (LGD) implemented the programme, and a seasoned bureaucrat served as National Project Director (NPD). The six-year-long programme (2018-2024) was implemented at three tiers: community, municipal (11 city corporations and eight municipalities), and national to support about 4 million urban poor people through balanced, sustainable, and pro-poor development. The programme also supported GoB in achieving the SDG "Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)." The programme aimed to create impact by achieving more effective inclusive urbanisation in Bangladesh.

Evaluation Purpose and Objectives: The endline evaluation of NUPRP reviews and analyses the programme's overall performance. The evaluation examines the programme's relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria. It also examines the mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes: human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, and LNOB. Based on the analysis, the evaluation highlights findings, identifies lessons and provides recommendations.

Methodology: This endline evaluation report is based on a mixed-method approach and relies on data obtained from a variety of sources. These include administrative data and review of programme documents, a two-round household-level panel data- the primary source of quantitative data, and various methods to gather qualitative information. With a view to enable triangulation of findings, the evaluation ensured the participation of a wide range of stakeholders.

Document review covered the programme inception report, business case, VfM strategy, progress reports, research and diagnostic reports, annual reviews, strategy and operational documentation, reports from partners, and other relevant correspondence. The two-round (baseline and endline) household-level panel data gathered information on more than 4,000 households and used a difference-in-difference approach to identify impact. Qualitative information was gathered through Focus Group Discussions (30 FGD), In-Depth Interviews with CBO Leaders (35 IDIs), Key Informant Interviews (25 KIIs), and consultations with national and town officials of NUPRP in each town. Observation Checklists were used to document the state of community and municipal-level infrastructures developed through the project (190 randomly selected infrastructure projects).

Findings :

Based on our reading of various documents and scrutiny of data, this Executive Summary offers a set of relevant findings by OECD-DAC criteria encompassing NUPRP outputs. It is followed by a brief on lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations.

Relevance and Coherence²: The NUPRP consists of five interrelated Outputs and 13 different projects.³ In addition to providing direct individual and community grants, the NUPRP emphasises a participatory and inclusive approach designed to enable urban poor communities to participate actively in urban development planning. The approach adopted by NUPRP, the various Outputs and projects are clearly relevant and respond to housing crises, limited livelihood opportunities, lack of access to civic amenities due to rapid urbanisation, climate vulnerabilities such as natural disasters, climate change effects, inadequate climate resilient infrastructures, inadequate access to basic services such as primary healthcare, food and nutrition, safe drinking water, improved sanitation, gender inequalities and gender-based violence. Furthermore, underlining its adaptability, the programme successfully responded to the impacts of COVID-19 on poor urban communities.

With regard to coherence, at the national level, NUPRP engaged the Municipality Association of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Institute of Planners, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, and Local Government and Engineering Division to stimulate inclusive, gender-responsive and climate-resilient urban planning and governance reforms. At the municipal level, the programme's town offices advocated with Urban Local Government (ULG) agencies for pro-poor budgeting. They played a vital role in the increased allocation of resources for poverty alleviation, thereby enhancing marginalised communities' access to citizen amenities and strengthening social security, including the prevention of gender-based violence. At the community level, NUPRP supported town networks of community organisations to mobilise communities for their empowered engagement. These initiatives

included a capacity-building approach (Output 1), a community mobilisation approach (Output 2), a socioeconomic development approach (Output 3), a community-led costed housing approach (Output 4), and a climate-smart urban development approach (Output 5). Based on the review of documents and the qualitative information, it seems the programme successfully promoted interagency coordination, knowledge sharing, and strategic partnerships to address urban poverty and climate vulnerabilities. NUPRP also aligned its activities with pertinent national development directives such as the Perspective Plan of Bangladesh, the Five-Year Plan, the National Social Security Strategy and the National Adaptation Plan of Bangladesh (2023-2050) for poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation. The programme's theory of change is relevant, and although it is a large and complex project, the various elements appear to be well-integrated.

To conclude, the NUPRP design and theory of change are relevant and support pro-poor development in urban low-income settlements through the provision of direct grants and by enabling greater participation of the urban poor in municipal and local government. The programme has demonstrated adaptive capacity, especially in terms of dealing with the implications of the COVID-19 crisis. The NUPRP's design and strategy are consistent with national priorities, and the programme has promoted synergies and interlinkages with other interventions.

Efficiency⁴: Based on analysing the relevant data, it may be concluded that amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders, the programme is recognised for its on-time, high-quality deliverables, notably in infrastructure development. Although the programme experienced delays, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, due to effective programme management, the NUPRP was able to catch up and meet the original delivery timelines. By June 2024, all planned interventions had been completed except for the low-cost housing pilot.

The project demonstrates strong financial discipline with expenditures consistently meeting the (revised) budget figures, that is, no under or overspending. This applies across all Outputs except for the housing and land tenure component, where budget utilisation has been slow (42%), primarily due to significant challenges related to securing land tenure and gaining access to government land for low-cost housing schemes. This component is expected to be completed by December 2024.

At the outset, the available funding was deemed sufficient to achieve the programme's intended Outcomes. However, as the programme progressed, budget cuts and inflation increased procurement costs and strained the programme's financial resources. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges. In consultation with FCDO, the programme was forced to scale back on activities related to securing land tenure.

NUPRP has routinely generated financial progress reports to enhance transparency and accountability and has carefully tracked expenditures to ensure the efficient use of financial resources. Furthermore, NUPRP has strategically utilised government and local resources, including staff, facilities, and existing community structures, across all Outputs to minimise costs. In addition, the programme is well-targeted, with an 87% accuracy rate in selecting beneficiaries according to the established criteria. The programme also successfully increased the proportion of municipal budgets allocated to the urban poor from 1.6% in 2019 to 2.5% in 2023.

The programme's inclusive approach, targeting accuracy, and efficient resource management have resulted in a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of USD 3.4, which is not very different from the envisaged BCR of USD 3.75 in the business case assumption. The overall benefit generated through income increases, savings, livelihood opportunities, improved nutrition, and reduced climate-related losses is estimated at USD 262 million compared to the total programme cost of USD 77.2 million.

To conclude, analysis of the data supports the idea that NUPRP has delivered the bulk of its envisaged Outputs in a timely and efficient manner. Careful financial management with several checks and balances in place, the minimisation of inclusion and exclusion errors and the increased pro-poor allocation of municipal budgets promoted by NUPRP appear to have delivered value for money as captured by the benefit-cost ratio of 3.4.

Effectiveness⁵: NUPRP has four core objectives. These are to ensure pro-poor policy and planning by strengthening municipal capacity for improved urban development planning, community and women empowerment, enhancing climate adaptive capacity of low-income communities by constructing climate-resilient infrastructure, and enhancing land tenure and housing security for low-income urban residents. The analysis of the documents and data, specifically comparisons between the targets listed in the programme's logframe and achievements, suggests that the NUPRP has successfully achieved its targets along most dimensions except for targets related to land tenure security and activities relating to strengthening the BUF and MAB. These targets could not be met mainly due to budget cuts and the lack of commitment of the concerned government agencies.

NUPRP has operated at the national, municipal and local levels. Although challenging, the programme's capacity strengthening and policy advocacy activities at the municipal level have led to an increase in pro-poor municipal budgeting (see below under the impact criteria) in all 19 cities targeted by NUPRP. The CCVA, vacant land mapping, and ward priority mapping strengthened and capacitated the municipalities to adopt pro-poor climate-resilient urban planning. Consequently, all cities have developed and expect to implement costed climate-resilient infrastructure and multisector-nutrition plans.

NUPRP successfully activated decentralised committees, such as the Disaster Management Committees, Town Level Coordination Committees, and Ward Committees. The NUPRP's support for developing and reviving CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs has been instrumental in mainstreaming the voices of the urban poor in urban development and governance. NUPRP has facilitated a shared understanding of inclusive and climate-resilient urbanisation and the need for urban policy to address the challenges of rapid urbanisation. The increased participation of urban poor leaders, particularly women, in Ward-level Coordination Committees (WLCCs), City/City Corporation Development Coordination Committees (CDCCs), and other relevant bodies has been a notable achievement. Among the female FGD participants, 61% participated, and a large proportion of respondents (83%) perceived that their local representatives had the ability to influence pro-poor climate-resilient urban development.

The programme's Socioeconomic Fund (SEF) has successfully supported the livelihoods of poor urban women, supporting their socioeconomic development (education, nutrition) and fostering economic empowerment. Establishing personal and group businesses with NUPRP's financial assistance has increased household income, enhanced food security and led to poverty reduction (see below under impact criteria). The incidence of unemployment in beneficiary HHs decreased to 16.4% compared to 31.9% at baseline ($p < 0.001$), and more than 72% of the skill development grantees were employed within six months of completing training as opposed to the expected target of 33%. NUPRP-supported Savings and Credit Groups have helped enhance access to financial services. Both the SIF and Climate-Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund (CRMIF) have met their targets and effectively boosted low-income communities' climate-adaptive capacity by developing essential climate-resilient infrastructure. Consistent with the envisaged target, CHDF has been established as a legal entity in 3 cities.

To conclude, despite its strong achievements, the programme has faced challenges, and the sustainability of the interventions remains a concern (see below under sustainability). Due to financial constraints, the programme could not undertake certain capacity-strengthening activities. A large number of SCGs have dissolved before the end of the programme. Furthermore, tenure security remains a concern, as housing and tenure security interventions were dropped due to financial and political constraints.

Impact⁶: Given the scope of NUPRP and its design, it has the potential to impact a wide variety of Outcomes. NUPRP sought to address urban poverty by providing direct grants (among others, for education, skills training, business support, and nutritional support), by encouraging and supporting municipal governments to promote inclusive planning practices, strengthening community organisations representing the urban poor and enhancing their representation in city planning and decision-making authority and by providing funds to construct relevant infrastructure. Based on temporal comparisons between NUPRP beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries, these efforts have had a positive impact along several dimensions.

The perception of strong community leadership in NUPRP areas increased more than fourfold to 83% from 18.5% at baseline. The share of households expressing their ability to influence local decision-making rose to 79.2% among households (HHs) in treatment areas compared to 18% at baseline. On average, across the target towns, the budget share, which may be considered pro-poor, increased from 1.6% to 2.5%. While small in absolute terms, this change represents an increase of about 56%.

NUPRP activities have had a substantial effect on the living standards of the urban poor, with 98% of treatment HHs reporting that their living conditions had improved compared to 40.1% in non-NUPRP areas. The improved living conditions may be attributed to NUPRP's infrastructure-related activities, which led to reductions in the incidence of waterlogging, reductions in the overflow of open drains, and greater access to drinking water.

The DiD analysis shows that NUPRP's initiatives have translated into increased household income (35% net increase ($p < 0.001$)) and expenditure (7% net increase ($p = 0.08$)), although the effects are less pronounced for the latter Outcome. The prevalence of poverty based on the national poverty line declined (7.0% ($p = 0.07$) net impact), and the programme led to an increase in the proportion of households that rate themselves as food secure (13.9% net impact ($p < 0.05$)). While it is hard to disentangle the overall effect of NUPRP from its constituent elements, the exploratory analysis shows that amongst the various NUPRP grants, the business development grant and the skill apprenticeship grants played the most prominent role in influencing household income and food security. Additionally, NUPRP

encouraged saving habits and preparedness for climate-related crises and enhanced the ability to recover from climate shocks). NUPRP also had statistically significant effects on increasing school enrolment and reducing gender-based violence. The incidence of abuse and violence decreased by 9.4% ($p < 0.05$).

To conclude, the NUPRP has led to a wide range of statistically significant and substantial impacts on urban poor communities across 19 cities and towns in Bangladesh. Through direct grant support as well as through strategic advocacy, capacity building, community mobilisation and infrastructure development, amongst other effects, the programme has led to an increase in household income (35%), enhanced food security (13.9%), and contributed to poverty reduction (7%).

Sustainability⁷: NUPRP has laid a solid foundation for the sustainability of its interventions across environmental, social, and financial dimensions. The programme has effectively fostered a supportive policy environment at the national level through strategic collaboration with the Local Government Division (LGD) and by systematically developing a community, municipal, and national network. The programme's design is also well-aligned with national and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Bangladesh's Five-Year Plans.

Social sustainability has been a standout success of the NUPRP, mainly through its community mobilisation, leadership development, and the empowerment of marginalised groups. The programme has strengthened social cohesion and improved governance at the municipal level by establishing and revitalising Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). These CBOs have become critical platforms for the urban poor to voice their concerns, influence local policies, and ensure their needs are addressed. The Community-Based Organization (CBO) Network is expected to continue managing climate-resilient infrastructures and funds established under the programme. The CBO leaders expressed confidence in their continued ability to influence local government planning and governance.

As mentioned under the efficiency criteria, the programme's financial management has been commendable. Key to this success has been the establishment of revolving funds, co-sharing mechanisms, and the CHDF, all designed to provide ongoing financial support for housing and community needs. These financial instruments are intended to continue functioning beyond the programme's end, ensuring that communities can sustain and expand on the improvements made.

The programme's generation of valuable data through City Poverty-Ward Poverty Mapping (CP-WPM), Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA) are likely to continue to serve as critical resources for informed planning and actions to address poverty and climate change.

However, the sustainability of the gains achieved under NUPRP is by no means guaranteed. The lack of financial resources, particularly in areas requiring significant investment, such as housing and infrastructure, is likely to limit sustainability. Additionally, the lack of engagement with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) is a significant gap, as these agencies are essential for mainstreaming housing and tenure security for urban poor communities into national decision-making processes. Concerns remain about the sustainability of Community Development Committees (CDCs), CDC Clusters, and Town Federations (TFs), particularly with regard to management costs, fund management, continued mutual trust, and political support. The dissolution of nearly half of the Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) before the programme's end further highlights these challenges.

To conclude, through its multi-layered stakeholder engagement at the local, municipal and national levels, NUPRP has laid the basis for sustainable long-term impact. The institutional arrangements, capacity strengthening at the local level, mainstreaming of the urban poor in decision-making bodies and the technical tools are in place to support sustained pro-poor urban development. While obvious, it needs to be stated that without continued investment, mutual trust and political support, the benefits are likely to be short-lived.

Cross-Cutting Agenda⁸: NUPRP is a women-centred programme. Almost all primary group (PG) members are women as are the bulk of grant recipients (women and girls received around 87% of the grant benefits). The programme prioritised women and girls for education (reducing early marriage), nutrition, business and skill-development grants. NUPRP is also women-led as community organisations (CDCs, CDC Clusters and TFs) of urban women are the main drivers of community and municipality-level implementation of the programme interventions. While municipal officials are mainly men, CBO leaders and the CBO Network are women-led and women-centred. Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) and Safe Community Committees (SCCs) are also women-led and women-centred (24,662 SCGs with 370,313 members). Through their inclusion and participation in these community structures, women defined community priorities and supported the targeting of socioeconomic programmes, as well as played a role in procuring and implementing infrastructures in the community. In group discussions, women expressed the view that their

decision-making ability within the household had been enhanced, as evidenced by the decline in the incidence of violence, higher participation in decision-making, and increased mobility.

The programme promoted the participation of PWD in ULG's multisectoral platforms, ensuring their voices were incorporated into ULG planning and governance. NUPRP also prioritised eligible households with PWDs for grant support to improve their livelihood and well-being. The programme explicitly considered PWD accessibility when constructing WASH and communication infrastructures. The programme adopted the PWD accessibility requirement in low-cost housing design and committed to unit allocation priorities. A portion of all low-cost housing units are developed targeting PWDs (out of 646 units, around 40 are for PWDs). Through these measures, NUPRP has contributed to the LNOB agenda of SDG.

Overall, marginalised communities in urban areas often remain invisible and lack support due to a lack of official recognition by government authorities, which leads to their exclusion from policy and planning discussions. The data and evidence-driven implementation strategy of NUPRP reflects the possibility of implementing pro-poor urban projects with targeting accuracy and community engagement. Capacity development and advocacy activities enabled the visibility of the urban poor/marginalised communities in NUPRP-targeted cities/towns. Such an approach may be replicated in other towns and cities.

Lessons learned and good practices: Underlying the findings discussed above, this section lays out key lessons and good practices (practices worth replicating) which may be drawn from NUPRP's experience. The discussion is organised along NUPRP's five broad Outputs:

Improving urban governance and planning (Output 1): NUPRP's multi-level policy advocacy approach has been effective in sensitising, mobilising and engaging government agencies at the local, municipal and national levels. This approach has led to a shared understanding and appreciation of pro-poor climate-resilient urban planning. The programme's efforts have increased pro-poor budget allocation and spending in all NUPRP towns and translated into tangible benefits at the individual and community level (see findings - effectiveness and impact criteria). The programme's experience suggests that engaging with stakeholders at different levels, although time-consuming, onerous and requiring substantial resources, appears to pay off in delivering benefits to the targeted individuals and areas (see findings - efficiency).

A strong element of improved urban governance and planning was the use of tools such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Method, Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA), Mahallah and Resource Mapping. These tools proved effective in identifying poverty and climate-vulnerable groups and areas. Such tools enabled a targeting accuracy of 87% (see findings – efficiency).

Enhancing citizen participation and community mobilisation (Output 2): The programme-supported municipal-wide CBO Network of CDCs—CDC Clusters—TF. The findings suggest that the revived, women-led, women-centred community-based organisations have played an instrumental role in promoting the interests of poor urban communities at the policy and governance level of ULG. The programme's institutional and leadership capacity development support to CBOs and members enabled them to bargain for community interests, including influencing ULG's planning, budgeting and development works. NUPRP promoted CBO members' engagement in multisectoral municipal committees of ULG and ensured that their voices were heard and acknowledged in urban planning and governance. The programme has reconfirmed that the Community Action Plan (CAP) is a vibrant tool to mobilise and prioritise community demands (see findings – effectiveness and cross-cutting agenda).

Enhancing economic development and livelihoods (Output 3): The NUPRP approach of policy advocacy at multiple levels of government, the use of CBO networks to enhance participation and voice and finally, the use of various individual and community grant instruments have played an important role in influencing a wide -range of socioeconomic outcomes. Chief amongst these has been the prominent role played by the business development and skills apprenticeship grant in enhancing household income and food security (see findings – impact and cross-cutting agenda). While other grants (education grants, nutrition grants) have also played a role in influencing specific outcomes, the most apparent effects seem to emanate from the business development and skills grants. Other initiatives such as the Safe Community Committees (SCCs) have contributed to the prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and EFM, and the nutrition-related grants have had a positive effect on the health of pregnant and lactating women with children aged 7 to 24 months. Notwithstanding the effect of individual grants, the main lesson here is that the collective effect of NUPRP as a whole is responsible for the observed socioeconomic effects (see findings – impact).

Enhancing housing and land tenure (Output 4): While the NUPRP has met or, in some cases, more than met its objectives, it has been somewhat less successful in enhancing housing and land tenure security. As discussed above, budgets allocated for this Output have not been fully utilised (see findings – efficiency and impact), and targets have not been met mainly due to a lack of funds and commitment from concerned government agencies (see findings – effectiveness). To elaborate, there was limited engagement with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW) and the National Housing Authority (NHA). These two agencies are essential for mainstreaming housing and tenure security for urban poor communities into national decision-making processes (see findings – sustainability). A clear lesson here is the importance of engaging with these specific agencies to achieve results in the case of this Output. Nevertheless, it has piloted environment-friendly and low-cost housing (e.g., use of ferrocement, hollow bricks) in four towns, and housing finance has been made available from three Community Housing Development Funds (CHDF). These provide examples for GoB and development partners if they are keen to address the housing issues affecting marginalised groups in urban areas.

Improving access to climate-resilient infrastructure and basic services (Output 5): This Output accounted for the largest share (27.6%) of NUPRP’s budget and included two funds, the SIF and CRIM. Infrastructure projects identified, prioritised by CDC members and constructed through community participation on the basis of Community Action Plans (CAPs) were implemented through the support of NUPRP’s SIF and CRIM instruments, with the latter supporting larger-scale infrastructure projects in qualifying cities and towns through co-funding mechanisms. This so-called community procurement/contracting approach helped reduce costs (see findings – efficiency) and led to the construction of a large number of relevant infrastructure projects, which generated substantial benefits such as enhanced access to water, reduction in waterlogging, and improved drainage among others (see findings – impact). Similar to the comments made under Output 3, it is NUPRP’s multi-layered and comprehensive approach, which combines access to funds, capacity building and training, involvement of local communities in identifying and prioritising needs and policy advocacy with government agencies, which underlies the positive infrastructure effects.

Recommendations and concluding remarks:

Bangladesh has a development vision - it aspires to reach the status of a high-income country by 2041. By 2030, the country intends to achieve all the SDG goals and attain the status of a middle-income country by 2031. Attaining this vision necessitates many changes, including a structural transformation in economic sectors (broadly industry, agriculture and services) and sub-sectors accompanied by attainment of high human development (increase in longevity, knowledge, and real income). The task is daunting for many reasons. A critical area of concern is addressing the challenges associated with urbanisation without industrialisation, unlike the classical case of urbanisation with industrialisation in the West. Specifically, among others, the country needs to address rising urban poverty in absolute and relative terms, climate-induced urban poverty and resilience, and multifaceted gender issues.

While there is a growing body of knowledge on urbanisation and urban poverty, NUPRP’s insights, particularly the findings, lessons learned and good practices, offer valuable Bangladesh context-specific strategies to address these complex issues. Based on the NUPRP experience, the following recommendations may be made:

Recommendation 1: The NUPRP model, which is based on multi-layered engagement and policy advocacy with government bodies, community mobilisation through CBOs, leveraging existing government and community structures, the use of relevant technical tools for targeting beneficiaries at both the individual and the collective level has translated into substantial, verifiable benefits with a high benefit-cost ratio. **Based on the findings and lessons learned, the GoB and development partners should consider scaling up NUPRP.**

Recommendation 2: NUPRP engaged in building partnerships at multiple levels of government and between government organisations and community organisations. This engagement led to a shared understanding of pro-poor urban development and undergirded the substantial socioeconomic benefits observed at the individual and community levels, including allocating additional municipal resources for pro-poor urban development and the effective use of various grants. The upshot of this is that, although admittedly complex, the results of this evaluation support multi-pronged integrated interventions as opposed to single interventions. Specifically, to sustain the effects of the intervention, continued policy advocacy at multiple levels, strengthening community involvement through training and capacity-building, empowering local organisations in decision-making, and direct support through various grants to support socioeconomic outcomes (income, food security, safety of women, prevent early marriage) is needed. **The NUPRP model offers a successful inclusive pro-poor urban development model, deploying multiple types of interventions.**

Recommendation 3: A perennial concern of development interventions is appropriately identifying beneficiaries and vulnerable areas. One of the technical strengths of the NUPRP has been the successful deployment of tools such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA), and Mahallah and Resource Mapping. **These tools have been effective in identifying poverty and climate-vulnerable groups and areas, and their continued use in projects such as NUPRP and, more generally, while rolling out development interventions is recommended.**

Recommendation 4: Targeting efficiency in terms of individuals and areas and identifying relevant infrastructure projects is not just an outcome of applying technical tools. It results from productive interactions between the use of technical tools and engaging with the community. **This engagement should be supported and relying only on technical tools or only on participatory approaches to identify intervention beneficiaries, and areas should be eschewed.**

Recommendation 5: A bane of infrastructure-related development projects is their lack of maintenance and sustainability. Through its women-led, women-centred efforts at strengthening CBO and the participation of women leaders and persons with disabilities in the development of CAP, the NUPRP has successfully identified and built relevant climate-resilient inclusive infrastructure. Through its community procurement approach, which directly engages the community in building infrastructure, NUPRP projects have been constructed in a cost-efficient manner. **The involvement of inclusive community organisations in selecting and prioritising infrastructure projects and development projects and their participation in construction bodes well for the sustainability of such projects. These relatively innovative elements of NUPRP underlie the recommendation that such design features need to be preserved in current or future editions of similar development projects.**

Recommendation 6: NUPRP has been relatively less successful in meeting its objectives regarding access to housing and tenure security. Budgets allocated for this Output were not fully utilised when information was gathered for this evaluation. Furthermore, support from concerned government agencies was limited as there had been limited engagement with the MoH&PW and the NHA. **If NUPRP and similar programmes are to reach their goals of enabling access to low-cost housing and supporting tenure security, then such engagement is necessary and recommended.** Nevertheless, NUPRP successfully piloted environment-friendly, low-cost housing (e.g., ferrocement and hollow bricks) in four towns, and housing finance was made available from three CHDFs. **The pilot is a good model for GoB and development partners actively providing low-cost housing for poor urban communities.**

To scale up the NUPRP model, the overall responsibility of policy decisions should lie with the Cabinet Division. If scaling up is envisaged, it will require all-round effort from several entities. Policy advocacy efforts may be coordinated by UNDP (given its experience with UPPR and NUPRP) and include relevant civil society organisations. One of the relevant implementing entities is the Ministry of Planning (MoP)-Planning Commission and External Resources Division (ERD), which in its upcoming 9th Five-Year Plan (July 2025-June 2030) assigns high priority to addressing urban poverty reduction aimed at reaching the status of an upper-middle-income country by 2031. Other implementing/engaged entities could be the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) - specifically the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW), Ministry of Land (MoL), Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), international development partners (e.g., UNDP, FCDO), national development actors (Civil Society including NGOs and CBOs), and Urban Local Government (ULG)-City Corporation and Municipality (CC&M) entities.

Based on this endline evaluation, it may be concluded that the NUPRP experience represents a well-knitted and integrated programme founded on five broad Outputs (urban governance and planning, citizens' participation and community mobilisation, economic development and livelihoods, housing and land tenure, and infrastructure and basic services including climate-resilient infrastructure) backed by many project interventions (a total of 13 projects including various grants, nutrition, training, housing and land tenure, savings and credit groups, community engagement, infrastructure, local government capacity building, poverty mapping, policy influencing) has the potential to address most dimensions of urban poverty and marginalisation in a potentially sustainable manner.

1.1. Programme Background

The urban economy comprising industrial sectors- formal and informal- is an integral part of any growing economy. Bangladesh is no exception and its economy is undergoing a structural transformation, accompanied by a relatively steady growth rate. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB), in its Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2021-2041 (PPB 2041), identifies the management of an organised urban transition as one of the key challenges towards becoming a high-income economy by 2041.⁹ PPB estimates that by 2041, 80% of Bangladesh's total population will reside in urban centres, underlining the need for managing urbanisation and development in the country. Rapid urbanisation, poverty, climate-change-induced hazards, non-climate hazards due to unplanned urban development, inadequate urban amenities, limited capacity of urban local government and insufficient livelihood access for urban residents are core barriers to achieving PPB's 2041 goal.

In this context, the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP), also known as the Livelihood Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP), was launched to address organised urban planning, urban poverty reduction, mobilising urban marginalised groups to access livelihood opportunities and urban amenities offered by urban local governance (ULG) agencies, and participatory, inclusive urban governance. It is among Bangladesh's largest urban development programmes, providing direct livelihood support to poor urban communities. FCDO has provided about USD 75 million to the programme from 2018 to 2024 to support about 4 million urban poor through balanced, sustainable and pro-poor development.

The programme was delayed by about two years (originally planned to start in 2016) and kicked off in the last quarter of 2018. NUPRP is designed to respond to rapid unplanned urbanisation, urban poverty, unsustainable development and non-inclusive governance. The programme was implemented nationally and at the municipal and community levels in 11 City Corporations and 8 Municipalities.¹⁰

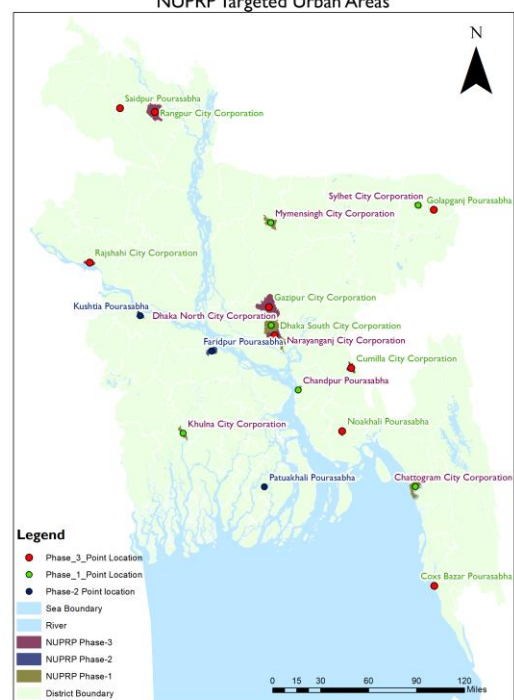
The programme aimed to contribute to balanced, sustainable growth by reducing urban poverty in Bangladesh and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, which call for "Leaving No One Behind."¹¹ The core programme objectives are:

- i. To facilitate climate-resilient housing and essential services for low-income households;
- ii. To build community organisation, skills and enterprise development for women and girls;
- iii. To enhance the climate adaptive capacity of low-income communities through resilient infrastructure;
- iv. To strengthen municipal capacity for improved urban management, policy and planning.

Five broad Outputs of the programme are:

- Output 1: Improving urban governance and planning
- Output 2: Enhancing citizen participation and community mobilisation
- Output 3: Enhancing economic development and livelihoods
- Output 4: Enhancing housing and land tenure
- Output 5: Improving access to climate-resilient infrastructure and basic services.

MAP 1. 19 NUPRP Towns
NUPRP Targeted Urban Areas



In addition, the programme also addressed three broad cross-cutting issues: Human Rights, Gender Equality and Leaving No One Behind (LNOB). The five interconnected broad Outputs addressed 50 SDG indicators under 7 SDGs¹², including Gender equality (SDG 5).¹³ Gender concerns were central to NUPRP's implementation at all stages, focusing on women's views through gender audits, vulnerability assessments, and collaborative mapping with local women's groups. Women's and girls' perspectives are prioritised during the design and implementation phase (i.e., targeting beneficiaries, community contract management, and support in social and safety audits of programme components), guaranteeing their robust representation in public interactions. Additionally, grants, training, legal support, and awareness-raising initiatives provided targeted support to women and girls.

NUPRP's design prioritised PWDs, especially those who were poor, and supported them through advocacy, planning, and ensuring they benefitted from projects, loans, and grants. Infrastructure at the community level was designed to ensure inclusiveness.

The six-year-long programme (2018-2024) was rolled out in **three phases** starting from September 2018 and will be completed by December 2024 (Revised Programme as of July 2021).¹⁴

The evaluation team was guided by UNDP's Terms of Reference (ToR) in performing the endline evaluation (Annexe 1: Terms of Reference).

Figure 1. NUPRP targeted 7 SDGs



CHAPTER II: DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTIONS

The Local Government Division (LGD) under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), Government of Bangladesh (GoB), implemented the programme with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom (UK), formerly known as the Department for International Development (DFID), along with GoB and UNDP, provided financial support for the programme.

Stakeholder Categories

1. The NUPRP Project team
2. Government officials of relevant ministries/divisions/department
3. LGI Officials
4. NUPRP partner organisations/institutions
5. Community Organisations
6. Beneficiaries

In addition to these key partners, the project included a wide range of stakeholders. NUPRP partnered with the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB) and the Bangladesh Urban Forum (BUF) to strengthen the GoB and other relevant actors to encourage pro-poor urban management, policy and planning that is coordinated, strategic, and climate-smart. The project made an agreement with UNICEF for nutrition services and related referral linkages. Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) contributed towards nutrition governance, while Alive and Thrive provided inputs on nutrition-specific behavioural change. The Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) engaged with the project to document best practices. Community organisations (CDCs, CDC clusters, and TFs) ensured participatory and evidence-based planning and advocated for pro-poor planning at the city/town level. The CDCs also administered all the grants and loans for beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were short-listed through a rigorous targeting process, and the final selection was completed through a participatory meeting engaging CDC members.

Motivated by rapid urbanisation and high levels of urban poverty, the NUPRP is intended to bring about sustained improvements in inclusive, climate-resilient and effective urban development and significantly reduce climate, social, physical and economic vulnerabilities for poor urban residents. NUPRP continued and built upon the strengths and gains of the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) programme; it evolved from the UPPR approach, addressing its weaknesses and adapting to continually changing urban trends and institutional contexts. A key element in the NUPRP approach is that it is intended to be participatory and inclusive, particularly empowering the voices of the urban poor, women, and people with disabilities. The focus at the city and town levels is to facilitate the linkage of poor urban communities with city/municipal government, basic service delivery, planning processes, and spaces for inclusive deliberation and engagement. As a mentor-cum-facilitator-cum advisor, NUPRP worked in 19 City Corporations/Paurashavas, covering around 4 million urban poor individuals residing in around 1.2 million households.

In each city/town, the NUPRP's implementation followed three steps:

- i. Understanding the context: community mobilisation and understanding the local context,
- ii. Inclusive planning: participatory planning processes at various levels, ensuring the voices of marginalised groups are included. Capacity-building efforts support community organisations and municipal governments, promoting coordination among stakeholders and government agencies and
- iii. Implementing pro-poor, gender-sensitive and resilient programmes and projects: connects urban poor communities with the broader city, providing financial and social support to reduce vulnerabilities and improve well-being.

The NUPRP has five broad Outputs.

Output 1 focused on improving urban governance and planning by enhancing coordination, planning, and management of Local Government Institutions (LGIs) in cities and towns. The programme promoted a pro-poor approach, providing technical support to municipal governments to enhance their capacity for inclusive and climate-resilient urban planning. Key strategies included fostering dialogue between municipal authorities and communities, supporting governance mechanisms, and using mapping and data analysis to understand urban poverty better.

Output 2 emphasised citizen participation and community mobilisation, particularly empowering urban poor communities led by women and marginalised groups. The programme facilitated the formation of community organisations, savings and credit groups, and Community Housing Development Funds (CHDFs) while also building partnerships between community organisations, municipal governments, and service providers to improve access to basic services.

Output 3 targeted economic development and livelihoods by providing grants (SEF, Apprenticeship, Business, and Education) to support socio-economic, health, and social well-being, particularly for vulnerable groups such as adolescent girls, extremely poor women, and persons with disabilities. The programme also addressed nutrition and gender-based violence through education, counselling, and legal aid services.

Output 4 focused on housing and land tenure and aimed to reduce eviction risks in low-income settlements. NUPRP conducted land mapping and established CHDFs to finance low-cost, climate-resilient housing while also piloting environment-friendly housing projects with government support.

Output 5 dealt with the construction of climate-resilient infrastructure and enhanced access to basic services, implementing projects identified through Community Action Plans (CAPs) and supporting large-scale infrastructure projects in qualifying cities and towns through co-funding mechanisms.

NUPRP Theory of Change (ToC)

The NUPRP expects to contribute to five broad Outputs (outlined above) through thirteen interconnected projects. While schematic representations of the ToC for each Output are provided in Annexe 4, the overall ToC envisages improving the livelihoods and living conditions of the urban poor by addressing various critical areas. This ToC, as outlined in the NUPRP inception report and business case, is complex and indirect and emphasises the importance of intervening at multiple levels to drive change. The overall theory of change argues that if the national policy framework and cooperation between government agencies are strengthened, if the autonomy and capacity of urban local government (ULG) is enhanced, if the urban poor are better organised, represented and recognised, and develop a greater sense of safety, security and well-being, then urban development would be more inclusive and responsive to the needs to the urban poor.

To be explicit, this theory of change implies that NUPRP is primarily an urban pro-poor governance programme that seeks to address urban poverty issues through simultaneously supporting city and municipal governments, as well as poor urban communities, to reduce vulnerability, promote evidence-based decision-making, improve accountability, promote inclusive planning practices, and support and influence demands for a pro-poor policy environment at the national level. Therefore, the NUPRP vision encompasses the development interests of the urban poor, including specific interventions aiming at poverty reduction *per se* and influencing pro-poor policies at the national level.

It is important to realise that the NUPRP does not assume the role of direct implementer. Instead, it acted as a facilitator, trainer, mentor, technical adviser, and disseminator of tools, information and methods. Therefore, the very design of NUPRP implies the presence of strong elements of organisational and management sustainability. It was expected that as a consequence of the NUPRP implementation, the urban poor would be able to raise their voices, their voices be listened to, respected and acted upon, and that too in a manner generating climate-resilient Outcomes.

NUPRP Result Pathway

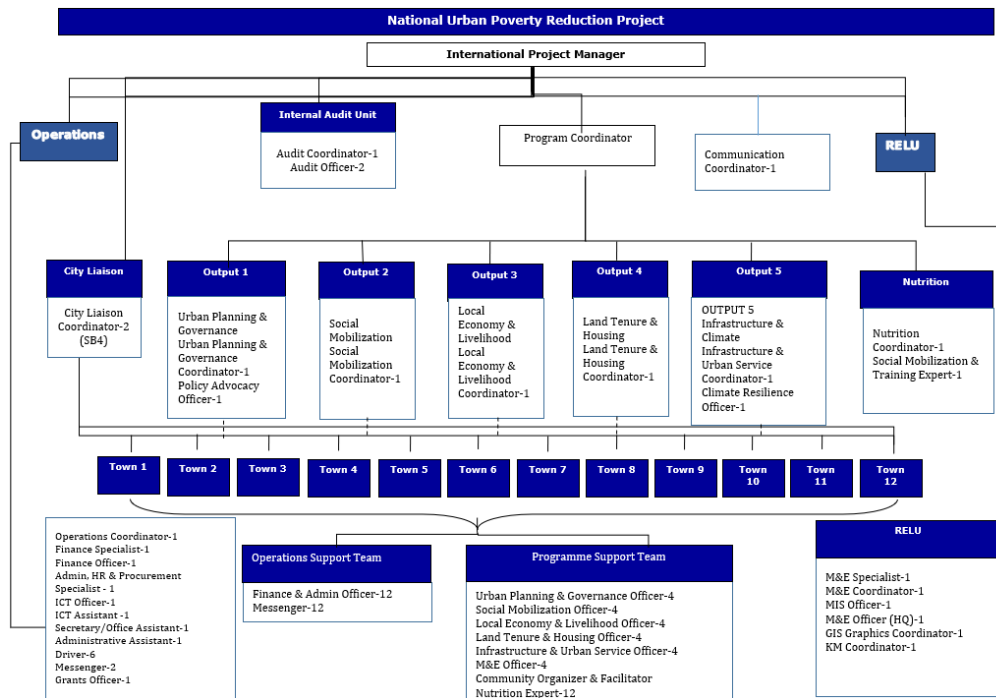
To elaborate on the ToC, the NUPRP approach outlines a pathway from specific activities to long-term Outcomes across several dimensions. The intermediate results of the programme include enhanced skills, increased community representation, higher awareness of urban poverty, more employment prospects, and better housing and infrastructure. Assuming LGs are responsive, opportunities are present, and urban poverty continues to be a top priority for the government, the ultimate objective is to create long-lasting changes in the living circumstances and means of subsistence for the urban poor.

The governance initiative (Output 1) envisages improving Local Government (LG) skills through capacity building, leading to improved planning and more informed choices. Community mobilisation (Output 2) is promoted by developing and supporting Community Organisations (COs), which create inclusive Community Action Plans (CAPs) incorporated into LG plans.

Economic development efforts, such as the SEF and social awareness campaigns, are expected to benefit the urban poor by improving their skills and prospects (Output 3). Land mapping, capacity training, and the development of Land Tenure Action Plans are all part of initiatives to strengthen tenure agreements and access to housing financing (Output 4). Climate-resilient infrastructures by SIF are expected to strengthen community resilience in case of climate-related shocks (Output 5). Cumulatively, these efforts/Outputs are expected to result in evidence-based decision-making by LG, which prioritises pro-poor urban development.

Under the guiding concepts of collaboration, capacity building, evidence-based decision-making, engagement, and advocacy, NUPRP sought to reduce urban poverty in a way that is both scalable and long-lasting.

Programme Management: NUPRP was executed at the national level by the LGD and managed by UNDP, which administers the programme on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh and donors. The LGD, through an NPD appointed by the government, leads the Programme Implementation Team, which consists of members from the GoB, UNDP, and other partners, including city staff. At the city and municipality level, the programme was administered through formal agreements between the NPD and the respective mayors, with UNDP providing technical assistance, capacity development, employment training, secure tenure and housing finance, infrastructure improvement, monitoring and evaluation, and support for human resource management to ensure high accountability standards. At the local level, City/Town Steering Committees, chaired by the mayors and including various representatives, guided programme activities and were supported by City/Town Project Boards comprising senior officials and NUPRP managers.



The National Project Steering Committee, chaired by the Secretary of LGD, provided policy guidelines and reviewed progress, and a National Project Board, chaired by the NPD, oversaw annual plans and budgets.

3.1. Evaluation Scope

The endline evaluation reviews the programme's overall performance, assesses the extent to which the different interventions have delivered the expected Outcome results, evaluates the programme's effectiveness and sustainability after programme closure, and identifies lessons from the programme's work on reducing poverty. The programme performance was assessed against logframe indicators where the evidence was generated from programme document review, structured panel survey, discussions in the community, and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The revised Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact) and cross-cutting criteria play a crucial role in assessing NUPRP's impacts on institutions and communities within the project's geographical scope (19 cities and towns). An evaluation matrix which complies with the set of evaluation questions covering each OECD-DAC criterion has been developed. The endline evaluation tracked the programme's overall progress (success and achievements), challenges, mitigation strategies adopted, lessons learned from the implementation process, and sustainability and risk factors, which, among others, are expected to help design the exit strategy.

3.2. Evaluation Objectives

The overall objective of the endline evaluation is to undertake a performance evaluation and impact assessment of the NUPRP before the implementation cycle ends on 30 June 2024. This independent evaluation measures programme progress and success according to the Result and Resource Framework/RRF (Annexe 5), Updated Logical Framework/Logframe (Annexe 6) and Theory of Change/ToC (Annexe 4). Specific objectives of the endline evaluation are:

- i) To examine progress towards achieving the expected results since August 2018 against the approved Results and Resource Framework, Logical Framework and its contribution to the UNCSD/CPD Outcomes.
- ii) What changes NUPRP interventions have brought, and what changes can be attributed to NUPRP?
- iii) To what extent has the intervention generated significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, high-level effects?
- iv) What major factors influence the achievement or non-achievement of results in NUPRP interventions?
- v) To what extent did the NUPRP seek to mainstream gender in development efforts, consider disability issues and apply a rights-based approach?
- vi) Assess the value for money of the project to understand the cost-efficiency of the project.
- vii) Has the theory of change been fully implemented, and have any of the key assumptions underlying the theory of change changed? Were the strategies employed by the programme successful? How effectively did the programme adapt over the implementation period?
- viii) What lessons can be drawn from the programme to inform UNDP, Government, and FCDO in future urban development programming?

3.3. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation reviewed the programme activities and achievements according to the six abovementioned OECD-DAC criteria. Within these six criteria, the evaluation emphasised several issues which seemed particularly linked to the performance indicators as stated in the NUPRP's Resource-Results Framework (RRF), and which were also identified in the TORs, including the cross-cutting issues such as human rights, gender equality, disability, social inclusion, climate resilience. There were 35 evaluation questions (EQs) relevant to these six criteria. The EQs and their accompanying sub-questions, data sources, data collection, and analysis methods have been presented in the final evaluation matrix in Annexe 4 and validated during the inception phase of the evaluation. The performance standards were set by reviewing different programme documents (i.e., Theory of Change, Logical Framework/Logframe, RRF, VfM strategy). The evaluation questions are designed to be interlinked among the desired OECD-DAC evaluation criteria for this evaluation.

3.4. Evaluation Questions

The following table presents the relevant sub-section(s) in the report addressing each evaluation against OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Relevant sub-section in the report
Relevance/Coherence (The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change)	1. To what extent was the NUPRP design relevant in supporting balanced, sustainable and pro-poor development in the low-income settlements in urban areas through more effective and inclusive municipal/local governance?	6.1.1
	2. To what extent was the design and strategy of the NUPRP relevant to national priorities outlined in the 8 th Five Year Plan and UN priorities in Bangladesh?	6.1.2
	3. To what extent was the design and strategy of the NUPRP aligned with CPD, Strategic Plan Outputs and UNSDCF (2022-2026)?	6.1.2
	4. To what extent was the theory of change relevant to serve the needs of the urban poor?	6.1.3
	5. Were the strategies employed by the programme successful?	6.1.3
	6. How effectively did the programme adapt over the implementation period?	6.1.3
	7. Did the interventions promote synergies and interlinkages with other interventions carried out by the same institution and/or government?	6.1.4
	8. Did the intervention show consistency and complementarity with other actors' interventions in the same context?	6.1.4
Efficiency (The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way)	9. To what extent were the NUPRP Outputs delivered in time to ensure high-quality programming?	6.2.1
	10. To what extent has NUPRP ensured value for money?	6.2.3
	11. Has the programme been successful in terms of targeting (and influencing municipalities to target) intended social groups?	6.2.4
	12. Has NUPRP been successful in reducing the level of inclusion and exclusion errors to a minimum?	6.2.4
	13. To what extent has funding impacted programme implementation? Was funding sufficient for the achievement of results? (Funding analysis)	6.2.2
	14. To what extent were synergies developed between UNDP initiatives/programmes that contributed to reducing costs while supporting results?	6.2.3.8
	15. How well did programme management work to achieve targeted results?	6.2.5
	16. To what extent were the mitigation measures efficient in addressing the fiduciary risks, including safeguarding at each level?	6.7
Effectiveness (The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups)	17. To what extent has the programme achieved the overall objectives?	6.3.2
	18. The progress towards achieving the expected results since August 2018 against the approved Results and Resource Framework, Logical Framework and its contribution to the UNCSD/CPD Outcomes.	Table 3
	19. What change has been achieved against project targets for Outputs, Outcomes, and impact?	6.3.3
	20. What changes have NUPRP interventions brought, and what changes can be attributed to NUPRP?	6.3.3
	21. What factors contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of the NUPRP Outcomes and Outputs?	6.3.3

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions	Relevant sub-section in the report
Impact (Extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects)	22. What changes have occurred as a result of the NUPRP interventions, what is the scale of the interventions, and what can be attributed to the interventions?	6.4
	23. Has the new infrastructure contributed to climate resilience?	6.4.1.5, 6.4.1.4
	24. To what extent were the milestones of programme Outputs achieved and contributed to achieving the relevant Outcome-level results? How many people have been reached through the programme?	Table 3, Table 7, Table 8, 6.4.1.20
	25. To what extent has the intervention generated significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, high-level effects?	6.4.1.1 – 6.4.1.4, 6.4.1.7 – 6.4.1.18
Sustainability (The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue)	26. Which results are likely to be sustained (from an environmental, social and financial perspective) beyond the end of support? Which are not? What are the challenges and opportunities?	6.5.1.1 – 6.5.1.6
	27. What are the major factors influencing the achievement/non-achievement of sustainability of NUPRP interventions?	6.5.1.7 – 6.5.1.13
	28. To what extent are the institutional mechanisms and policies in place to sustain the impact of NUPRP's interventions?	6.5.1.14 – 6.5.1.16
	29. Review the level and range of partnerships established at all levels that contributed to scaling up and sustaining the programme interventions.	6.5.1.17
	30. To what extent have capacities been strengthened at the local and municipal governance levels?	6.5.1.18 – 6.5.1.20
Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Leaving No One Behind	31. To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and women's empowerment? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?	6.6.1.1 – 6.6.1.6
	32. To what extent have gender equality and women's empowerment been addressed in the project's design, implementation and monitoring?	6.6.1.7
	33. To what extent have poor, indigenous, and PWDs, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalised groups benefited from the work of NUPRP?	6.6.2.1
	34. To what extent were the programme's various components able to address the urban poor's human rights and exclusion concerns?	6.6.2.2, 6.6.2.4, 6.6.2.5
	35. Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation?	6.6.2.3

4.1. Evaluation Approaches

This endline evaluation report is based on a mixed-method approach and relies on data obtained from a variety of sources. These include administrative data and review of programme documents, a two-round household-level panel data, which was the main source of quantitative data and a variety of methods to gather qualitative information (see details below). With a view to enable triangulation of findings, the evaluation ensured the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of UNDP and other partners.

Stakeholders from UNDP participated and supported the evaluation (from planning to reporting) by enabling access to various project documents. Document review covered the programme inception report, business case, VfM strategy, progress reports, research and diagnostic reports, annual reviews, strategy and operational documentation, reports from partners, and other relevant correspondence. While reviewing the documents, the research team met with relevant NUPRP personnel (e.g., the programme team and M&E team) to discuss pertinent programme issues. Other stakeholders (details are provided below) were reached during the data-gathering process. The two-round (baseline and endline) household-level panel data gathered information on three different sets of households. These were NUPRP beneficiaries (treatment group, that is, households that received direct grants and benefits from NUPRP), a group labelled semi-control (households that benefited from NUPRP's community infrastructure and community-level knowledge and information dissemination projects) and a pure control group (households residing in areas that are similar to the focus of NUPRP activities but did not have access to NUPRP resources). The difference-in-difference approach was applied to identify impact.

The evaluation team operated independently of the NUPRP in designing the evaluation and selecting suitable methods and tools for data collection within the available resources and field-level reality. The evaluation adopted the principles outlined in UNEG's Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation¹.

4.2. Sample and Sampling Frame

The NUPRP is a combination of thirteen individual projects. Several projects (i.e., community mobilisation and capacity development) benefited the target CDCs (semi-control) as a whole, and others are grants (cash and kind) and support directly benefiting the recipients (treatment), and there are areas where NUPRP is not active (control area/group). Sample size determination considered individual indicators for each of the individual projects. The sample size for the three groups (treatment, semi-control, control) was determined considering a 95% confidence interval, 80% power, and design effect (1.2) for multi-stage sample, but was adjusted to allow for potentially different rates of attrition between baseline and endline (detailed in Annexe 2).

The sampling frame for the treatment and semi-control group HHs were the beneficiary short and long lists prepared (based on MPI score) by the programme, respectively. The sampling frame for the pure-control group was prepared by applying the MPI index in locations similar to NUPRP intervention areas regarding population coverage, infrastructure, and basic service availability, but the group did not have access to NUPRP resources. The endline survey was able to track 84% (4,520 households) of the respondents included in the sample at baseline. Specifically, the endline survey was able to track 89% (3,098) of treatment households, 80% (522) of semi-control households, and 70% (900) of control households. Given the context and the targeted programme areas, this is perhaps a relatively low attrition rate and inspires confidence in the findings reported in the subsequent chapters.

4.3. Data Sources

Primary Source of Data/Information:

Household Survey: Household surveys were used to assess programme impact and achieve targets. They were used to identify changes in selected output and outcome indicators included in NUPRP's logframe. The sampling strategy for this evaluation was developed before programme implementation (described in Annexe 2). The evaluation relies on a two-period matched panel data set (household-level) with surveys conducted at baseline and endline.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Community Beneficiaries: FGDs documented the experiences of direct

and indirect beneficiaries and their thoughts on programme interventions (benefits and non-benefits, positive and negative changes). The evaluation covered 30 FGDs (each covered 9-11 discussants) with different beneficiary groups across all NUPRP towns.

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with CBO Leaders: The IDIs gathered in-depth information and insights on project performance at the community level and were used to validate the desk review and survey data. In addition, the IDIs also explored good practices produced by the programme. IDIs were performed with CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation Representatives (CBO Leaders) to understand community mobilisation, the extent to which the community engaged with programme implementation, and to identify changes that may have occurred in urban poor communities and urban governance. Across NUPRP cities and towns, the evaluation team completed 35 IDIs.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Representatives of Stakeholder Agencies:

Key Informant Interviews were intended to understand diverse perspectives, identify challenges and successes, and explore unanticipated outcomes and good practices produced by the programme. The key informants shared insightful information and provided details on the background, execution, and effects of the programme. Key informants included relevant national, municipal, and community stakeholder agencies that understand their level of engagement and the extent to which the programme succeeded in achieving its intended results. The evaluation interviewed 25 key informants at the town and national levels.

Consultations with national and town officials of NUPRP: Consultations were organised to capture the programme management's perspective on overall programme progress, achievement of objectives, and results. Furthermore, the consultation gathered information on implementation challenges, mitigation measures, and alternatives to improve programme implementation, which were discussed during these consultations. The consultations took place in each of the 19 NUPRP cities and towns. There were multiple (5) consultations with NUPRP officials in Dhaka at different stages of the evaluation process.

Observation Checklists: Observation Checklists documented the existing state of the community—and municipal-level infrastructures developed under the Settlement Improvement Fund (SIF) and Climate Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund (CRMIF). The evaluation observed 190 randomly selected infrastructures using a semi-structured checklist.

Secondary Source of Data:

Desk Research: The evaluation team reviewed all relevant programme documents (Business Case, the logical framework, RRF, the annual and quarterly Progress Reports of the programme, lessons learned reports, the training materials, research and diagnostic reports, videos and policy briefs produced by the programme, among others) shared by the programme team. The team also reviewed third-party monitoring outputs (mid-term evaluation) and earlier reports prepared for programme status and performance assessment.

4.4. Data Collection Procedures and Tools

The evaluation opted for face-to-face interviews and discussions at the community level (structured interviews, FGDs, and IDIs). The key informant interviews with stakeholders adopted a mix of face-to-face and online platform-based interviews. The FGD and IDI guidelines included modules for beneficiary groups and community-level stakeholders. The data collection tools were tailored to each stakeholder's context, considering their various categories.

The data and information collection strategy included multiple consistency checks. The structured HH survey adopted the CAPI method for data collection. The CAPI application included logical checks and skip patterns to reduce data inconsistencies. An experienced panel of field personnel was selected to undertake the fieldwork. Around two-thirds of the field personnel had previous experience and had worked on NUPRP assessments at baseline. To ensure accuracy and to minimise errors, field personnel were trained for a week on data entry and interview and group discussion scripting. There were separate teams for the quantitative HH surveys, qualitative interviews, and group discussions. NUPRP officials and experts participated in the training sessions.

The field personnel selected for the HH survey were divided into nine teams. During the survey, a team of data validators undertook daily data quality checks. In case of inconsistencies, re-interviews took place. The personnel (moderators and note-takers) for qualitative interviews and group discussions were divided into three

teams. The note-takers prepared scripts every day and shared the scanned scripts online. The core team members read the scripts and provided feedback for necessary improvements. There were random quality assurance visits by the core team in the field. The field movement plan was shared with NUPRP to undertake any necessary visits for quality assurance during the field survey.

4.5. Evaluation Ethics and Safeguarding

This evaluation followed the principles outlined in UNEG's Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.¹⁵ The health and safety of respondents is considered the first and foremost priority. Safeguarding personal data and maintaining the confidentiality of the respondents/participants is of utmost importance. The most relevant ethical issue concerns the respondents' personal data privacy. Since this assignment aimed to collect primary data, the evaluation team maintained the confidentiality of the respondents and participants. The identity of the respondents/participants and all the data and information provided by the respondents/participants are kept confidential. Proper coding rules ensured the confidentiality of the data/information and respondents. Field personnel sought permission and explained objectives before collecting data and/or interviewing any respondents and/or before group discussions. The 'Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations System' is attached (Annexe 12: Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations System).

4.6. Gender Considerations

Women and girls are at the core of NUPRP's design and are integrated into all programme interventions. The NUPRP engaged women in designing and implementing the programme; most grant beneficiaries are women (around 87%). The earlier technical reports reflected on women's participation in NUPRP. The participatory gender audit reports provided evidence of gender-responsive practices and cultures in programme implementation. Consistent with NUPRP's focus on women, 91% of the sample respondents were women. The structured household surveys inquired about women's decision-making ability, mobility, violence against women, community leadership, access to finance, health, and nutrition. The group discussions and interviews covered women's changed perceptions (participating in productive work, community work and control over resources) in HH and the community due to their engagement in NUPRP. The evaluation adopted Sida's Guiding elements and principles during tool designing and analysis¹⁶.

4.7. Evaluation Limitations

Given the size and complexity of the programme, the time allocated for the endline evaluation (three months) was too short. This was partially achieved by reducing the duration of fieldwork and deploying additional field personnel.

In several towns (Faridpur, Cox's Bazar, Cumilla, Gazipur, Kushtia, Mymensingh, Patuakhali, Rajshahi, and Saidpur), NUPRP town officials had left as the programme was about to close. Although some town officials and records were accessible, the departure of NUPRP officials made it difficult to access town-level programme memories (experiences, witnesses). To deal with this issue, the evaluation team contacted town officials who had left NUPRP for verbal communication through mobile phones to validate findings. The endline evaluation encountered challenges conducting comprehensive VfM due to limitations and constraints in accessing annualised programme finance information (cost data by Outputs and activities) from NUPRP. To deal with this, the evaluation team adopted the cost distribution specified in the NUPRP VfM strategy. However, without the actual cost data, the margin of error and the VfM analysis for selected indicators are not measurable (especially when measuring benefit-cost ratios).

Data and information were analysed after synthesizing the information from the interviews and observations and reviewing various documents. The evaluation matrix (Annexe 3) provides detailed information on the data used to analyse and respond to each evaluation question listed in section 3.4.

Programme performance assessment: Programme performance status was assessed based on the Output and Outcome indicators in the logframe and compared against the programme’s target. The evaluation questions were answered through extensive programme document review, structured interviews, visits, discussions, and observations. The secondary data and findings were validated through discussions with relevant UNDP/NUPRP personnel.

Quantitative data analysis: Data was analysed using SPSS 24, relying on distributions (numbers, proportions, and percentages) and graphical presentations. The logical checks in the CAPI application ensured data consistency. The baseline and endline survey data were matched based on a survey ID number to prepare a panel data set to undertake DiD analysis.

Difference-in-Difference analysis: This study applies difference-in-difference (DiD) to estimate the impact of NUPRP. The DiD analysis assesses the average change in Outcomes of interest for both the treatment (NUPRP beneficiaries) and the control group separately over time (to measure the differences within the groups over time) and then assesses differences between these differences.

Statistical Expression of Difference-in-Difference (DiD)
<p>Simple DiD: $\text{Impact} = [(Y_{t1} - Y_{t0}) - (Y_{c1} - Y_{c0})]$</p> <p>Regression-based DiD: $Y_{it} = \beta_0 + NUPRP_{it}\beta + X_{it}\varphi + T_t\delta + \theta_i + \varepsilon_{it}$</p> <p>$Y_{it}$ indicates the Outcome of interest for household i at time t $NUPRP_{it}$ indicates whether household (area) i is enrolled (included) in the scheme in year t X_{it} indicates time-varying observables T indicates the time period of the observation (baseline or endline) β is the average treatment effect on the treated; θ_i is a household fixed effect; ε_{it} is a time-variant error term</p>

Qualitative Information Analysis: Qualitative information was subjected to content analysis based on thematic areas of inquiry. Evaluators familiarised themselves with the transcripts and developed a coding framework using both deductive and inductive approaches, incorporating literature-informed a priori and emergent codes. Summaries of the main themes for each participant were created through charting, critical reflection and memo writing. Memos were drafted for each code and sub-code, allowing researchers to identify similarities and divergences across participants' stories through constant comparison.

The gender analysis considered women's roles and responsibilities across various domains, such as the household, school, community, and political organisations. It assessed women's participation in productive work and contributions to household livelihood improvement. The analysis also explored women's involvement in community work and assessed women's access to and control over resources, including their ability to make decisions about using those resources.

The risk analysis covered strategic, political, financial, organisational, social, and environmental risks identified through programme implementation and mitigation strategies. The value for money analysis adopted indicators in the NUPRP’s value for money strategy.

The analysis of the data, both quantitative and qualitative and both primary and secondary, from the basis for the findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations are contained in the following chapters.

6.1. Programme's Relevance and Coherence

6.1.1. Programme Design Significance

The NUPRP design is relevant as it supports balanced, sustainable, and pro-poor development in low-income settlements in urban areas through more effective and inclusive municipal/local governance.

6.1.1.1. Programme Design and Relevance: The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) has been instrumental in advancing effective and inclusive urban governance across 19 cities and towns in Bangladesh¹⁷. The programme's design emphasises a participatory approach, ensuring that urban poor [53.2% of the urban population lives in low-income settlements (World Bank data 2016)] communities are not just passive beneficiaries but active participants in urban development and governance. Through robust community mobilisation and the promotion of a town-centred Community-Based Organisation (CBO) Network, including Community Development Committees (CDCs), CDC Clusters, and Town Federations (TFs), NUPRP has established platforms that enable urban poor communities to voice their needs and concerns¹⁸.

6.1.1.2. A key element of the NUPRP's design is its focus on capacity enhancement for Local Government Institutions (LGIs) and CBOs to foster balanced and sustainable urban development and governance. The programme's five interrelated Output structures align with the "Leaving No One Behind" (LNOB) agenda, ensuring that community mobilisation is central to stimulating pro-poor policies and decisions across all tiers—community, municipal, and national¹⁹.

6.1.1.3. NUPRP's design demonstrates adaptability and foresight, particularly in integrating a climate resilience approach to address the challenges posed by climate change-triggered population inflows (around 26% of rural people displaced due to climate events move to cities/towns²⁰) into urban centres and the associated health risks in settlements²¹ (according to 2014 Slum Census only 26.5% of slum HHs had access to water sealed latrines). The programme's responsiveness to rapid urbanisation (the urban population growth rate between 2000 and 2016 remained steady between 3.4% and 3.5%, reaching a peak in 2002 at 4.6%²²), poverty, and climate change challenges is evident in its strategies to support balanced, coordinated, and sustainable urban development and governance planning. These strategies are particularly effective in addressing the root causes of urban poverty, exacerbated by climate-change-induced urban growth.

6.1.1.4. Urban Development and Governance: NUPRP implemented 13 projects²³ which targeted the critical urban development and governance challenges in selected towns. The programme notably addressed the scarcity of housing for poor urban communities and the inadequacy of livelihood opportunities, especially for women and persons with disabilities. By explicitly targeting livelihood improvements through business and skill-development grants, NUPRP played a substantial role in reducing gender inequality in these communities.

6.1.1.5. In line with its commitment to climate-smart urbanisation (urban areas in Bangladesh are also highly vulnerable to increased natural disasters such as cyclones, storm surges, and floods, which are projected to increase with climate change²⁴), NUPRP developed climate-resilient infrastructures and revitalised multi-sectoral platforms, such as disaster management committees, in the targeted municipal offices. The programme also advocated improved access to amenities such as electricity, gas, safe drinking water, sanitation, and waste management for poor urban communities.

6.1.1.6. Moreover, the programme worked intensively to improve food and nutrition access for women, girls, and children by reviving multi-sectoral nutrition committees, domicile counselling support, and providing food baskets containing nutritional supplements to households with pregnant and lactating mothers. The formation of Safe Community Committees (SCCs) under NUPRP was crucial in preventing early marriage and gender-based violence (GBV). The CBO network of CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs actively advocated for the rights and demands of the urban poor with Urban Local Government (ULG) agencies.

Box 6.1: Town official views on the NUPRP design

"Well-planned interventions of NUPRP are beneficial for my Paurashava to address poverty, gender-based violence and malnutrition." --A Municipal Official, Cox's Bazar

"The programme is a blessing for the Paurashava. The programme interventions help us to make this town clean and healthy" -- A Municipal Official, Faridpur

"Our officials and community leaders benefitted from transparency, good governance, training and workshops organised and supported by NUPRP." --A Municipal Official, Chandpur

"The programme revived the multi-sectoral disaster and nutrition committees. These platforms are important for addressing my towns' nutrition-sensitive and climate-change-responsive urban governance." --A Municipal Official, Patuakhali

*"NUPRP extensively supported us in strengthening city coordination of social welfare, nutrition and health interventions. The programme also supported strengthening the urban governance."
--A City Corporation Official, Narayanganj CC*

6.1.1.7. Comprehensive Approach to Poverty Reduction: NUPRP adopted a comprehensive approach that combined livelihood development (Dhaka, the largest city in Bangladesh, was ranked 214 out of 231 in the city livability index by Mercer City Livability Index in 2017²⁵), community mobilisation, and empowerment strategies to tackle multi-dimensional poverty across 19 towns. The programme was flexible in adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated poverty by creating new poor—transforming previously non-poor individuals into poor and the poor into poorer conditions.

6.1.1.8. The programme's interventions were strategically aligned to address unplanned rapid urbanisation, urban population growth, and multi-dimensional poverty, enhancing urban governance in the targeted towns. NUPRP's activities were geared toward strengthening participatory (inclusive) policy and decision-making at the municipal level, ensuring that ULGs adopted resilient, sustainable, and pro-poor approaches.

Box 6.2: Community leaders and community people's views on the NUPRP design/implementation

"We had no access to City Corporation before NUPRP. Now mayor and councillors take our opinion about beneficiary selection and grant distribution" -- A CDC Leader, Khulna CC

"We learned how to assess and rank our priorities through CAP. We also could raise our voices in front of the mayor and councillors. Our representatives in the different committees of Paurashava ensure our rights and demands are acknowledged and addressed by municipal officials." --A CDC Leader, Gopalganj

*"As a woman, I had no voice in my home and community in the past. Since I started the business with grant support from NUPRP, I have had a say and importance to my family and community. Even my neighbours seek my advice."
--A Business Grant Beneficiary, Chattogram CC*

"We thank NUPRP for their nutrition counselling and food basket support. This support helped us to ensure our nutrition during our pregnancy." --Nutrition Grant Beneficiaries, Rangpur CC

"We could raise our concerns with the mayor through our CDC leaders." -- Non-Grant Beneficiaries, Khulna CC

"We now have access to safe drinking water with support from NUPRP. Earlier, we depended on Padma River water, which caused diarrhoea and skin diseases." --Non-Grant Beneficiaries, Rajshahi CC

6.1.1.11. Efficiency and Resource Allocation: NUPRP's design ensured efficient resource allocation to achieve its intended Outputs and Outcomes²⁶. The programme followed a balanced approach to reducing multi-dimensional poverty and establishing inclusive urban governance. It promoted a multi-party, multi-sectoral approach involving communities, local government officials, and national policymakers in response to urbanisation, population growth, and poverty. The programme's design was cost-effective (please see 6.2.3.8 for details), incorporating grant allocation, co-sharing in infrastructure development, CBO-managed Operations and Maintenance (O&M) of infrastructures, piloting low-cost housing, housing financing, and the promotion of Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) to enhance the financial self-sustainability of urban poor communities (described further in section 6.3).

6.1.1.12. Throughout its implementation, NUPRP demonstrated flexibility by adjusting planned actions to accommodate changes in budgetary needs. Outputs such as improved coordination, planning, and management in programme towns (Output 1) and enhanced organisation capability and advocacy for poor urban communities (Output 2) directly contributed to planned urbanisation, better urban governance, and reduced urban inequalities. Outputs focusing on the well-being of urban slum residents, particularly women and girls (Output 3), secure land tenure and housing (Output 4), and improved resilient infrastructure (Output 5),

addressed key areas such as water supply, sanitation, pollution management, urban transport, and risk reduction²⁷.

6.1.1.13. Sustainability and Long-Term Impact: Sustainability is a core element of NUPRP's design, which aims to create cumulative and lasting impacts through its interventions. The programme's 13 independent projects collectively delivered five broad Outputs, promoting sustainable urban development across 19 targeted towns. NUPRP also played a significant role in encouraging the development of a national urban policy framework.

6.1.1.14. The programme's bottom-up community engagement strategy in urban planning and development was central to its sustainability. By advocating for city-specific, inclusive local solutions to urban governance, NUPRP contributed to Bangladesh's national Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, including No Poverty (SDG-1), Gender Equality (SDG-5), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG-6), and Reduced Inequality (SDG-10) (please see 6.1.2.7 for details).

6.1.1.15. NUPRP's pro-poor approach was evident in activities such as participatory poverty mapping, multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI)-based grants for livelihood development, and community mobilisation to ensure participation of the urban poor in local and national urban development planning and governance. The programme's climate resilience approach, a key component of its design, was reflected in sensitising community and municipal officials, mainstreaming these principles in urban development policies, and developing climate-resilient infrastructure and essential WASH services.

6.1.1.16. NUPRP's multi-sectoral, collective approach and efficient municipal governance aimed to create an inclusive, resilient, and pro-poor urban landscape. The programme's design highlights the importance of uniform multi-sectoral planning, stakeholder collaboration across community, municipal, and national levels, and reviving multi-sectoral committees at the town level. These collective measures, combined with the engagement of multi-stakeholders in Community Action Plans (CAPs) and CBO network involvement in municipal management, are crucial for sustaining the programme's impact.

6.1.2. Harmonisation with National and Global Policy Frameworks

The NUPRP's design and strategy are relevant to the national priorities outlined in the 8th Five-Year Plan and align with the Country Programme Document (CPD), Strategic Plan Outputs, and UNSDCF (2022-2026)

6.1.2.1. Alignment with National Priorities: The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) was designed to align with the national priorities outlined in Bangladesh's Five-Year Plans, particularly the Eighth Five-Year Plan (8FYP)²⁸. The programme's key focus areas—poverty reduction, sustainable development, and promoting climate resilience and inclusive governance in urban areas—directly support the primary national goals of poverty eradication, inclusive growth, and sustainable urbanisation. Furthermore, the programme design aligns with the urban agenda outlined in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)²⁹ 2010-2021, the Bangladesh Perspective Plan (BPP)³⁰, and the urban agenda outlined in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) 2010-2021. The programme emphasised community empowerment through mobilisation and active participation in governance, climate-resilient infrastructure development, and tenure and housing security improvements.

6.1.2.2. NUPRP supported Urban Local Government (ULG) agencies in building climate-resilient infrastructure and enhancing community capacities through targeted livelihood development initiatives. These actions played a vital role in advancing sustainable urban development and improving the overall quality of life for urban poor communities. NUPRP's strategic alignment with national priorities and its targeted interventions have significantly contributed to achieving Bangladesh's development goals, particularly in fostering inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban environments.

6.1.2.3. Alignment with UN and UNDP Frameworks: NUPRP's design was well-aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2020³¹ and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2026³². The programme addressed 50 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets related to urban issues, including poverty reduction and sustainable development, as outlined in the UNDAF. Furthermore, the programme's design corresponded to the risks associated with urban growth and sustainability, such as unplanned urbanisation, rising urban poverty, and governance challenges identified in the Country Programme Documents (CPD) 2017-2020 and 2022-2026. NUPRP ensured programmatic planning synergies with CPD goals, emphasising the "Leaving No One Behind" (LNOB) principle.

6.1.2.4. NUPRP, also aligned with UNDP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025³³, emphasises priorities such as poverty reduction, inequality, governance, resilience, environment, energy, and gender equality. The programme incorporated digital tools like the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for precise beneficiary targeting and real-time Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to document progress. NUPRP's strategies promoted adaptation and resilience by endorsing localised approaches in implementing interventions, such as pro-poor budgeting by Local Government Institutes (LGIs) and community co-sharing in urban development.

6.1.2.5. **Contribution to UNSDCF Priorities:** NUPRP's design, approaches, and strategies were directly articulated to respond to planned urbanisation, urban well-being, poverty reduction, environmental resilience, and inclusive urban governance, aligning with the intended Outcomes of the UNSDCF 2022-2026. The programme contributed to all five UNSDCF priorities³⁴. NUPRP's planned Outputs addressed multi-dimensional poverty, promoted gender equality, and enhanced access to WASH services, ensuring coherence with the UNSDCF 2022-2026.

6.1.2.6. **Integration with UNDP Strategic Documents:** The programme successfully integrated targets from the CPD 2017-2020³⁵, CPD 2022-2026³⁶, UNDP's Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and UNSDCF 2022-2026. These strategic documents emphasised sustainable development, poverty reduction, gender equality, and climate resilience. NUPRP recognised the importance of improving institutional and policy frameworks and enhancing inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance to achieve its five broad Outputs.

6.1.2.7. NUPRP's design directly supported several SDGs

SDGs Goals	NUPRP alignment SDG goals
SDG 1: No Poverty	The programme aimed to eradicate urban poverty through targeted SIF interventions.
SDG 2: Zero Hunger	Nutrition-responsive activities were integral to the programme's approach to reducing hunger.
SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being	NUPRP contributed to better health outcomes for urban dwellers by improving access to livelihood, WASH, nutrition, secure housing, and safe mobility.
SDG 5: Gender Equality	Women-specific grant support and leadership development within CBO networks promoted gender equality.
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Business and skill-development grants supported economic growth for the urban poor.
SDG 10: Reduced Inequality	The LNOB strategy and pro-poor approach helped reduce inequalities in urban centres.
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	A combination of urban governance and planning, citizen participation and community mobilisation, livelihood opportunities, and climate-resilient infrastructure development contributes to sustainable cities and communities.
SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals	The programme fostered multi-sectoral partnerships for collaborative actions to achieve its outputs.

6.1.2.8. In conclusion, NUPRP's design and strategies align well with national and international frameworks, ensuring that the programme's interventions are comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable.

6.1.3. Efficacy of NUPRP's Intervention Strategies

The theory of change is relevant to serving the needs of the urban poor. The strategies employed by the programme are successful. The programme effectively reflects adaptive capacity over the implementation period.

6.1.3.1. **Relevance of the Theory of Change:** The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) was underpinned by a robust theory of change (See Chapter II and Annexe 4) designed to address poor urban communities' multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional needs. The programme's theory of change focused on preventing exclusion from governance, improving livelihoods, securing tenure and housing, enhancing climate resilience, and addressing gender disparities. It outlined key strategies for tackling the challenges of urbanisation, population growth, and multi-dimensional poverty through inclusive governance and participatory planning.

6.1.3.2. NUPRP's theory of change emphasised comprehensive solutions for poverty reduction, enhanced livelihoods, improved housing and tenure security, community participation in urban development, women's empowerment, gender equality, and the "Leaving No One Behind" (LNOB) principle across the 19 programme

towns. This inclusive development framework was central to NUPRP's approach to achieving sustainable urbanisation.

6.1.3.3. Strategic Implementation by NUPRP: NUPRP successfully executed all planned activities per the Project Document (Prodoc) and Development Project Proposal (DPP), contributing to balanced and sustainable urban growth and poverty reduction in Bangladesh³⁷. Drawing on lessons learned from the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project (UPPR-P) 2008-2015, NUPRP implemented 13 projects to sustainably improve the livelihoods and living conditions of poor urban communities in low-income settlements.

6.1.3.4. NUPRP followed a phased implementation approach (the first phase in 7 Cities and Towns started in August 2018, the second phase in 3 Towns started in October 2018, and the third phase in 9 Cities and Towns began in April 2019), ensuring effective sequencing of interventions and allowing for adjustments and resource remobilisation as needed. Responsibilities and authorities were delegated to municipal offices to ensure local buy-in and engagement, fostering empowered local governance to address urban development challenges. Recognising climate change as a critical challenge, NUPRP deployed a climate-resilient urban strategy that included sensitising local government officials, promoting climate-smart policies and planning, and developing resilient infrastructure to reduce disaster risks. The programme also adopted a pro-poor economic development strategy, providing business, skill development, and education grants to improve livelihoods. A food assistance strategy, including nutrition grants and counselling, was implemented to enhance the health of mothers and children under five.

6.1.3.5. NUPRP maintained a zero-tolerance policy concerning fraud and discrepancies and ensured transparency, accountability, and ethical compliance. The programme's commitment to LNOB was reflected in its disability inclusion and marginalised social groups inclusion strategy, ensuring fair and inclusive beneficiary selection for grants and infrastructure projects.

6.1.3.6. Adaptability and Response to Challenges: NUPRP demonstrated commendable adaptability, effectively managing delays in programme inception and responding to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic³⁸. The programme's COVID-19 response strategy was informed by a socio-economic assessment conducted by the Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)³⁹. This strategy ensured that delayed activities did not compromise the expected results and allowed for the smooth continuation of interventions in the post-pandemic period⁴⁰. Despite the initial two-year delay in starting the programme (shifted from 2016 to 2018) and the disruptions caused by the pandemic, NUPRP successfully adjusted the duration of activities and resource mobilisation. The programme also streamlined its post-COVID-19 exit plan, implementing a no-cost extension to complete remaining activities without altering pre-planned interventions⁴¹.

6.1.3.7. Operational Efficiency and Governance: NUPRP operated within the scope outlined in the Prodoc/DPP⁴², forming steering platforms from the national to the ward level to coordinate programmatic efforts. These committees, operating under delegated authority, ensured effective planning, operations, and management of the programme components. The programme's adaptive measures were focused on achieving the targets outlined in the Results Framework (RRF). NUPRP's strategic adjustments and responses to unforeseen challenges underscore its flexibility and commitment to achieving its objectives in line with the original theory of change.

6.1.3.8. NUPRP's strategic design, phased implementation, and adaptive measures were instrumental in achieving the programme's objectives, ensuring it effectively addressed the multi-dimensional challenges of urban poverty while remaining resilient to external disruptions.

6.1.4. Programme's Synergies and Interlinkages

The interventions promote synergies and interlinkages with other interventions carried out by the same institution and government. The intervention shows consistency and complementarity with other actors' interventions in the same context.

6.1.4.1 Promotion of Synergies and Interlinkages: NUPRP was designed to foster synergies and interlinkages with other activities of the UNDP and LGD, both collectively and independently. At the municipal level, NUPRP facilitated the development of coordination platforms, such as the NGO Coordination Committee, to promote collaboration, avoid duplication, and optimise resource use for greater impact. At the national level, programme

activities were jointly planned, reviewed, tracked, and managed by LGD and UNDP through the National NUPRP Office, ensuring effective institutional collaboration.

6.1.4.2 NUPRP prioritised institutional collaboration across government, non-government, private sector, and community organisations to enhance synergies and interlinkages. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit, comprising national and town teams, played a crucial role in tracking programme progress and following up with town teams to avoid duplication of efforts. Interagency coordination, knowledge sharing, and strategic partnerships were key mechanisms used by NUPRP to enhance synergies with government agencies and development partners, ensuring the efficient use of resources to address urban poverty and climate vulnerabilities.

6.1.4.3 NUPRP's design and operations were carefully aligned with national and UN priorities for urbanisation, population growth, poverty reduction, and climate resilience, as outlined in key planning documents (details in sub-section 6.1.2). The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) adopted NUPRP as a national project to improve the livelihoods of poor urban communities, further reinforcing the programme's synergies with national strategies.

6.1.4.4 External Coherence and Collaboration: NUPRP ensured external coherence by developing strong liaisons with counterpart development partners to complement each other's interventions (evidenced by donor effort mapping, Figure 5). At the municipal level, the NGO Coordination Committee, facilitated by NUPRP town offices and the multi-sectoral committees revived by the programme (the city/town level coordination committees are functional as an effort by NUPRP, Table 3), played a critical role in harmonising efforts with other development partners operating in similar domains. The programme, jointly implemented by LGD and UNDP, ensured that activities under other partnerships, whether involving LGD, UNDP, or other government and UN agencies, did not conflict with NUPRP's initiatives. This robust coordination mechanism across community, municipal, and national tiers ensured regular exchange and harmonisation of activities.

6.1.4.5 Contribution to SDGs and Good Practices: NUPRP's interventions contributed to specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets and complemented the efforts of other agencies working towards achieving these global objectives. Other development partners have utilised the programme's innovative practices, such as CCVA, Poverty Mapping, and the MPI-based database of urban poor and CBO Networks⁴³. In conclusion, NUPRP's strategic design and operational frameworks effectively promoted synergies and interlinkages with other development initiatives, ensuring coherence, efficiency, and alignment with national and international priorities. The programme's coordination mechanisms and collaborative efforts significantly contributed to its success in addressing urban poverty and enhancing climate resilience.

6.2. Programme's Efficiency

6.2.1. Timely Delivery of Programme Outputs

The majority of NUPRP Outputs are delivered on time and ensure high-quality programming.

6.2.1.1. Initially, the NUPRP initially faced challenges in resource allocation. However, the programme effectively ensured timely and high-quality Output delivery across its interventions through flexible operational planning. The programme was scheduled to conclude by June 2023. The programme received a no-cost extension to support implementing climate-resilient infrastructure projects (CRMIF and low-cost housing). Furthermore, the programme's activities for a sustainable exit strategy had to be completed. By June 2024, all planned interventions were completed except for the low-cost housing pilot, where superstructure construction was finalised, but allotment remained pending. This component is projected for completion by December 2024, with a no-cost extension. The programme experienced delays, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the postponement of skill development training due to the closure of facilitator training institutes. Nevertheless, NUPRP aligned with the original delivery timeline through strategic planning and adaptability.

6.2.1.2. Amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders, the programme is recognised for its high-quality deliverables, notably in infrastructure development and low-cost housing. The capacity development training was well-received by beneficiaries from the community, municipalities, and programme staff, reflecting the quality of the training provided. The successful on-time delivery of Outputs was attributed to strategic planning, the adaptability of the programme's management (including the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit), optimal resource utilisation, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and transparent operations. This timely delivery minimised

resource wastage, maximised outreach, and fostered confidence and strong ownership among stakeholders, creating momentum in the programme's implementation.

6.2.1.3. The programme management employed an adaptive strategy to mitigate unforeseen delays, utilising a Risk Register to map potential risks and develop mitigation strategies. To ensure effective programme management, the NUPRP established a Programme Implementation Committee (PIC) at the national and municipal levels, as well as City/Town Steering Committees (TSC) and City/Town Project Boards (TPB). The programme's monitoring and evaluation approach included online and offline monitoring, enabling careful progress tracking. The execution followed bottom-up and top-down processes, with PPM assessments identifying poverty pockets, CCVA assessing climate vulnerabilities, and MPI methods ensuring accurate beneficiary targeting in 19 programme towns. These measures contributed to the high-quality delivery of outputs, providing the NUPRP with timely delivery and recovery from unintended or forced delays.

6.2.2. Programme's Financial Resource Utilisation

6.2.2.1 The bulk of the programme budget comes from the FCDO with co-funding from GoB and UNDP. The programme's financial management from 2016 to 2023 reflects a dynamic budget allocation, revision, and expenditure management approach. Initially, the project's budget was set according to the Prodoc, with subsequent revisions reflecting the need to adjust to unforeseen circumstances, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which notably impacted financial planning and execution. The project demonstrates strong financial discipline when analysing the overall expenditure trends, with actual expenditures consistently meeting the revised budget figures. The most significant adjustment occurred in 2020 due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, where an additional USD 3,589,658.67 was allocated to manage the harsh socio-economic effects on the urban poor. Despite these challenges, the project fully utilised the revised budget. In subsequent years, the pattern of budget revision and full utilisation continues, with both 2021 and 2022 seeing adjustments that allowed for effective financial management and full budget utilisation.

Figure 2: NUPRP funding sources

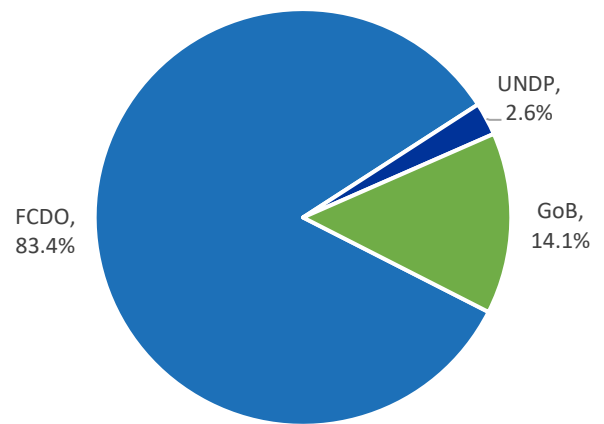


Table 1: NUPRP budget and expenditure by year

Year	Budget per Prodoc (USD)	Revised budget (USD)	Funding for COVID-19 (USD)	Total revised budget (USD)	Expenditure till March 2024 (USD)	Budget Utilisation (%)
2016	479,410	1,337,830		1,337,830	1,337,830	100%
2017	15,476,022	2,076,746		2,076,746	2,076,746	100%
2018	25,338,594	5,130,373		5,130,373	5,130,373	100%
2019	24,087,433	15,060,736		15,060,736	15,060,736	100%
2020	25,541,668	13,146,608	3,589,659	16,736,266	16,736,266	100%
2021	17,559,061	15,219,476		15,219,476	15,219,476	100%
2022	3,517,812	12,697,405		12,697,405	12,697,405	100%
2023	-	7,594,840		7,428,130	7,428,130	100%
2024	-	11,304,916		11,471,627	1,484,794	13%
Total	112,000,000	83,568,930	3,589,659	87,158,589	77,171,756	89%

6.2.2.2. The progress in the housing and land tenure component has been notably slow (42%), primarily due to significant challenges related to securing land tenure and gaining access to government land for low-cost housing schemes. It is projected that by December 2024, this component will be complete.

Table 2: NUPRP budget and expenditure by Component/Outputs

Component/Outputs	Budget per Prodoc (USD)	Revised budget (USD)	Expenditure till March 2024 (USD)	Budget Utilisation (%)
Output 1: Urban governance and planning	8,644,444	3,646,075	3,516,085	96%
Output 2: Citizen participation and community mobilisation	8,362,900	8,008,902	7,971,802	100%
Output 3: Economic development and livelihoods	30,531,000	18,898,779	18,773,079	99%
Output 4: Housing and land tenure	13,042,500	15,204,515	6,457,761	42%
Output 5: Infrastructure and the basic services/climate-resilient infrastructure	32,359,074	21,541,861	21,325,815	99%
COVID-19 Response		3,332,359	3,332,359	100%
Monitoring and Evaluation	2,911,000	3,412,146	3,006,546	88%
Management	10,000,934	7,764,427	7,533,027	97%
General Management Support	6,148,148	5,349,526	5,255,283	98%
Total	112,000,000	87,158,589	77,171,756	89%

6.2.2.3. The project's strategic financial planning and execution ensured that funds were effectively utilised to meet project goals despite significant external challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.2.2.4. **Programme's Funding Adequacy:** At the outset, the available funding was deemed sufficient to achieve the programme's intended Outcomes. Annual reviews by FCDO consistently indicated that the programme was economical and effective in utilising its allocated budgets to implement interventions in a timely manner. However, as the programme progressed, it faced significant challenges that impacted its financial stability. Budget cuts and rising inflation increased procurement costs, thereby straining the programme's financial resources. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these challenges, leading to additional unforeseen expenses. In response to these financial pressures, the programme was forced to scale back certain activities under Outcome indicators 1.1 and 1.2 and Output indicators 4.4 and 4.5 (Table 3), following agreements with FCDO. Adjustments were also made to procurement processes, including modifications to the nutrition package and a reduction in the duration of nutrition support. Community infrastructure development projects funded through the SIF and CRMIF were similarly adjusted. The programme also reduced management support costs across various components, including SEF, SIF, CRMIF, CHDF management, and the operations of CBO Networks to manage these financial constraints.

6.2.3. Programme's Value for Money (VfM) and Cost Effectiveness

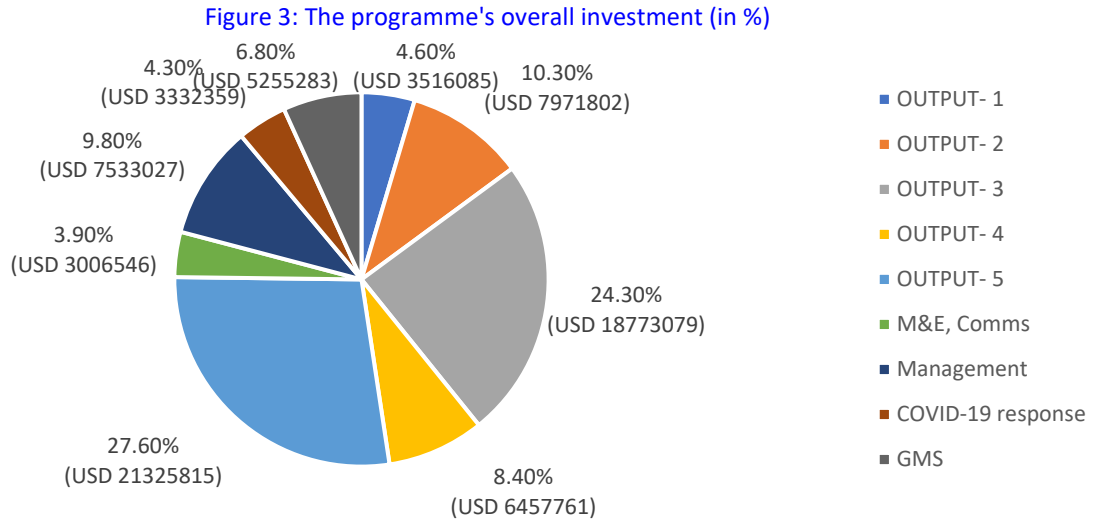
NUPRP ensured value for money.

6.2.3.1. The NUPRP has emphasised and operationalised transparency and accountability, recognising these as essential preconditions for the optimal and effective use of financial resources. The programme management routinely generated financial progress reports to enhance transparency and accountability throughout the project lifecycle⁴⁴. Strategic financial planning was executed cautiously and flexibly, enabling the programme to adapt to unforeseen funding changes and budgetary adjustments without compromising its targets. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit tracked resource mobilisation, utilisation, reallocation, and adjustments. The programme effectively reduced administrative costs by involving the Community-Based Organisation (CBO) Network of Urban Poor and Urban Local Government (ULG) offices as local planners and implementers. The maintenance of the programme's risk register further enabled NUPRP to adopt prompt and effective mitigation strategies and take pragmatic actions to prevent system losses and avoid unforeseen costs. This approach also guided the programme management in addressing fiduciary risks.

6.2.3.2. NUPRP maintained a high level of transparency in financial management, carefully tracking expenditures to ensure the efficient use of financial resources. From the programme's design phase, budgetary allocations were estimated through detailed mapping of funding sources. This meticulous financial and resource mapping facilitated pragmatic programmatic implementation planning. The M&E approach allowed the programme's management to balance financial resources with Output activities effectively. The M&E Unit deployed real-time monitoring and data-driven assessments to measure the programme's immediate and long-term impacts. Despite budgetary revisions and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme successfully

implemented all activities following the Results Framework (RRF) and logframe. Furthermore, and as will be discussed in more detail later, the programme's targeting efficiency was notable, with an 87% accuracy rate in selecting beneficiaries according to the established criteria.

6.2.3.3. NUPRP invested 75.2% (USD 58,044,542) of its available resources in interventions across the five broad Outputs. The remaining 24.8% (USD 19,127,215) was allocated to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), programme management, the COVID-19 response, and General Management Services (GMS). The programme's direct investment constituted 56.8% of the total budget, while the remainder was allocated to operational costs, including management costs.



The value-for-money analysis adopts the indicators listed in the NUPRP's value-for-money strategy to the greatest extent possible based on data from the programme⁴⁵.

6.2.3.4. The NUPRP allocated USD 58 million (75.2%) of its total budget of USD 77.2 million to its five primary Outputs. Monitoring, evaluation and communication expenses amounted to 3.9% of the total budget. Management costs accounted for 16.6%, exceeding the 9.8% anticipated in the business case, primarily due to unforeseen circumstances. Additionally, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an expenditure of 4.3% of the total budget. Among the five Outputs, infrastructure development represented the highest line item cost at 27.6%, lower than the initially assumed 36.4% in the business case. A redistribution of costs occurred within the Outputs.

The following part of the VfM analysis is based on the VfM matrix described in the VfM Strategy, where the VfM indicators are categorised into Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness.

6.2.3.5. **Economy:** NUPRP's procurement processes adhered to UNDP (for assets, consultancy services, office rent, training/workshops, printing materials, travel cost, internet, fuel and vehicle maintenance) and GoB (construction materials and labour/wages, training/workshops) standards. Independent audit reports confirm that resources were procured at competitive prices and within regulatory frameworks. Additionally, the cost-effectiveness of various activities was maintained, with the average daily cost for community facilitators at USD 3.4 and the training cost per day per trainee at USD 7.3⁴⁶, highlighting the programme's commitment to economic efficiency.

6.2.3.6. **Efficiency:** Operational costs constituted 43.2% of the overall project expenses, aligning within the expected range (40% to 60%) found in other multi-year and multi-activity projects in Bangladesh⁴⁷. The programme's efficiency varied across components. For instance, Urban governance and planning (Output 1) had a close split between operational costs (52.9%) and direct investments (47.1%), suggesting balanced resource use. In contrast, community participation and mobilisation (Output 2) required a much higher operational cost (86.5%) compared to direct investments (13.5%). The remaining NUPRP Outputs required disproportionately higher direct investment, reaching the highest at more than 81% for infrastructure development activities (Output 5). The programme allocated 56.8% of its total budget to direct investments, with 43.2% covering operational costs. This distribution shows that a substantial portion of the budget was effectively directed

toward achieving tangible outcomes⁴⁸. The programme's targeting efficiency was also notable, with an 87% accuracy rate in selecting beneficiaries according to the established criteria. In specific activities like the creation of CDC Clusters and Federations, the unit cost was USD 1,133 per person, with USD 694.7 as a direct cost.

The programme relied on the CBO's banking system for efficient grant disbursement and invested USD 195.46 per skill-development trainee (USD 141.30 as direct cost). The programme minimised training costs by engaging government-operated institutions, benefiting 15,994 skill-development trainees. Approximately 72% of the skill-building beneficiaries secured employment within six months of training, exceeding the figure of 33% assumed in the business case. The programme invested USD 171.4 per SEF business grant beneficiary (USD 129.56 as direct cost) and had a utilisation rate of 98.2%. SEF educational grants ensured that all recipients continued their education. (more details on income effects are in section 6.4). The programme had a substantial effect on household income, with a 40.6% average increase in income six months after skills training and a 51.6% increase following the receipt of the business grant.

6.2.3.7. Effectiveness: Based on the figures reported in the previous paragraph, the BCR for skills training was calculated at 4.2, and for business grants, it was 4.3, indicating high returns on investment over five years. Regarding housing, the programme improved the quality of living for 2,051 households, benefiting 8,614 individuals at a unit cost of USD 3225.69, significantly enhancing housing standards with a BCR of 4.09 (please see Annexe 9 for details). The risk of eviction was also reduced from 24.3% at baseline to 12%, demonstrating the programme's effectiveness in providing housing security. In infrastructure development, the programme improved access for 1.8 million people, 43% of the target population, and 78% of beneficiaries reported increased security and better access to services, illustrating the programme's broad and positive impact on community welfare. The programme successfully increased the proportion of municipal budgets allocated to the urban poor, rising from 1.6% in 2019 to 2.5% in 2023, showing a growing focus on poverty reduction.

6.2.3.8. Strategies Adopted for Cost Efficiency: The NUPRP employed various strategic measures and activities to reduce costs while maximising the benefits delivered to poor urban communities. Across all Outputs, NUPRP strategically utilised government and local resources, including staff, facilities, and existing community structures, to minimise costs. Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) acted as hubs for information exchange and resource distribution, significantly reducing programme staff's direct engagement and associated costs. Financial literacy training for Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) enabled these groups to manage their accounts independently, reducing the need for continued support from community facilitators. In providing housing support, NUPRP collaborated with towns to secure land for low-cost housing projects, reducing the financial burden on the programme. Using innovative construction materials, such as hollow bricks and ferrocement, further decreased construction costs while improving the durability of the housing units. The programme successfully mobilised contributions from cities and towns, fostering local ownership and reducing overall costs. This co-sharing model lessened the programme's financial load and encouraged sustained community involvement in infrastructure projects. The community procurement strategy to implement SIF infrastructures saved cost (profit, VAT and TAX by implementing agency) compared to traditional procurement strategies. The programme's approach to multi-use of resources, such as reusing meeting spaces and leveraging existing community networks, further contributed to cost efficiency.

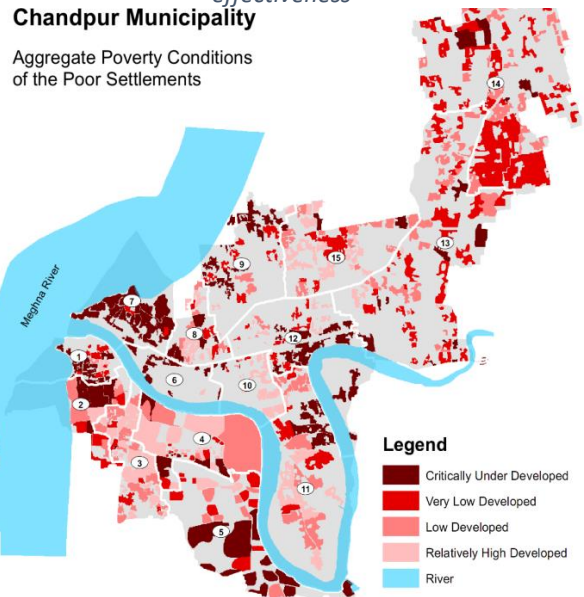
6.2.3.10. The programme's inclusive approach, targeting accuracy, and efficient resource management resulted in a BCR of 3.4, which is not very different from the business case assumption of 3.75⁴⁹. The overall benefit generated through income increases, savings, livelihood opportunities, improved nutrition, and reduced climate-related losses amounted to USD 262 million (Table 9.1 to 9.5 in Annexe 9) compared to the total programme cost of USD 77.2 million, demonstrating the programme's substantial impact and cost-effectiveness in improving the livelihoods of urban poor communities.

6.2.4. Programme's Targeting Success

The programme successfully targeted (and influenced municipalities to target) intended social groups and adopted strategies to minimise inclusion and exclusion errors.

6.2.4.1. The NUPRP implemented a rigorous and inclusive approach to stakeholder engagement and beneficiary identification, essential for effectively reaching the most vulnerable urban populations (87% targeting efficiency). Building on UNDP's previous experiences, NUPRP focused on minimising inclusion and exclusion errors in beneficiary identification and selection. The programme adopted a systematic, data-driven approach, using the MPI-based beneficiary identification process and engaging the community to ensure the accurate selection of the most appropriate beneficiaries for interventions⁵⁰. This process was initiated through ward and town-level inception meetings, which were crucial in mobilising relevant stakeholders, including community members. These meetings were instrumental in educating participants about the community mobilisation process, particularly the methods of mapping and data collection aimed at identifying key social groups such as the urban poor, women, adolescents, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised communities⁵¹.

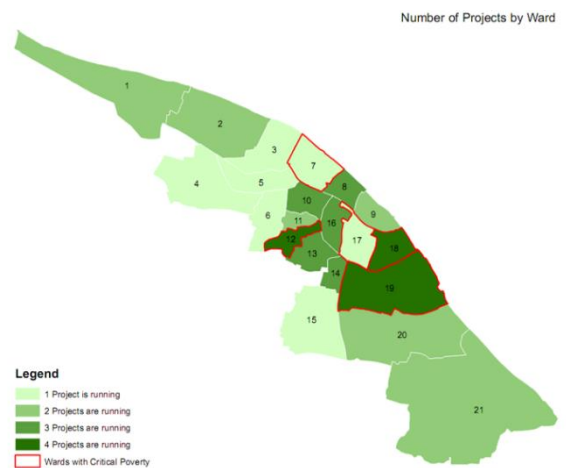
Figure 4: City-wide poverty mapping and ward prioritisation mapping by NUPRP for targeting effectiveness



6.2.4.2. The programme also focused on capacity building by providing targeted training to CBO leaders and municipal officials, enhancing their understanding of pro-poor and inclusive governance. This initiative was supported by developing guidelines, such as those for 'Mahalla and resource mapping' and 'urban poor settlement mapping,' which enabled LGs to systematically and accurately map the needs and rank the priorities of urban poor communities. In collaboration with municipal officials, NUPRP conducted community mapping exercises to identify the most marginalised poverty pockets within towns. Third-party agencies further supported this effort by conducting Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), Donor Effort Mapping and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA) across 19 NUPRP towns⁵², which were also instrumental in identifying the most climate-vulnerable groups. These assessments were critical in accurately identifying and targeting poor and climate-vulnerable social groups, ensuring that the programme's interventions were directed towards those most vulnerable groups⁵³.

6.2.4.3. The programme also engaged community and CBO leaders in identifying beneficiaries using the MPI method. This method provided a systematic approach to listing and ranking beneficiaries, facilitating the selection of grant recipients. While some CBO leaders and municipal officials expressed concerns about the limitations of the MPI method, they acknowledged that it effectively ensured that only the most eligible urban poor were selected as grant recipients based on their MPI scores. Based on MPI scores, CBO leaders and municipal officials further validated the beneficiary list generated from the eligible urban poor database, reinforcing the programme's commitment to transparency and accuracy in beneficiary selection⁵⁴. The programme's reliance on the Multidimensional Poverty Index ensured the selection of the poorest and most marginalised urban households in disadvantaged urban pockets.

Figure 5: Donor Effort mapping in Mymensingh to enhance targeting effectiveness



6.2.4.4. NUPRP faced several challenges in selecting the intended social groups, with ensuring transparency in the selection process being a significant concern. The programme addressed this challenge by systematically involving all relevant parties throughout the selection process. Other challenges included securing the commitment of municipal offices across 19 towns to prioritise urban poor development, developing a comprehensive urban poor community database, and accurately identifying urban poverty pockets. Additionally, building mutual trust within the community and encouraging active participation in local governance were critical barriers that needed to be overcome to achieve the programme's objectives. To address these challenges, NUPRP employed a multifaceted strategy to influence Local Government Institutions (LGIs) to prioritise the inclusive participation of poor communities in local governance mechanisms⁵⁵. A central element of this strategy was developing the CBO Network model, which was based on extensive community mobilisation.

6.2.4.5. NUPRP's approach to stakeholder engagement and beneficiary identification was methodical and inclusive, addressing immediate challenges while accurately targeting vulnerable populations. Despite the complexities involved, the programme's strategies effectively fostered community participation and integrated marginalised groups into local governance, contributing to the initiative's overall success.

6.2.5. Programme's Management Proficiency

The programme management adopted multiple intertwined activities and strategies to achieve targeted results.

6.2.5.1. The achievements of the NUPRP, which, along several dimensions, have exceeded the set targets, underscore the success of the programme's management. A key contributor to this success was the comprehensive training sessions facilitated by the programme, aimed at enhancing the skills of programme staff and stakeholders. These sessions ensured improved and effective programmatic management⁵⁶. Additionally, NUPRP developed a range of guiding documents, including guidelines, M&E tools, transparency and accountability checklists, Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) materials, forms, and contracts to document actions systematically⁵⁷.

6.2.5.2. NUPRP conducted Institutional and Financial Capacity Assessments (IFCAs) to strengthen programme performance further and identify areas requiring additional focus. The programme's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit promoted data-driven operations and management. The multi-tiered framework, which operates at national, municipal, and community levels, was essential in tracking and assessing the programme's progress. This evidence-based approach identified good practices and limitations, allowing for timely corrective actions. The programme's phased approach efficiently tracked resource utilisation and made necessary adjustments. The City Poverty-Ward Poverty Mapping (CP-WPM) and Ward Poverty ATLAS (WPA) methodologies were instrumental in ward prioritisation, contributing to the accurate allocation of resources to improve the livelihoods and well-being of the most poverty- and climate-vulnerable urban pockets.

6.2.5.3. NUPRP allocated resources across five broad Outputs, with a management Output considered the sixth. The programme management regularly conducted value-for-money analyses and financial progress reporting, complemented by the insights from the M&E Unit reports, ensuring the planning and implementation of the programme's activities were well-coordinated at both municipal and national levels. The programme's Real-Time Evaluation and Learning Unit (RELU) established robust M&E mechanisms for real-time monitoring and evidence generation, which were crucial for tracking progress and initiating prompt actions to address risks and challenges in the implementation process. The RELU also utilised a dynamic Management Information System (MIS) for real-time monitoring and automated tracking of programme progress⁵⁸. NUPRP facilitated capacity development training on programme management for national and municipal-level programme staff and relevant stakeholders, including CBO leaders and municipal officials, to further enhance programmatic performance. This comprehensive approach to capacity building ensured that all involved parties were well-equipped to contribute to the successful implementation of the programme, thereby reinforcing the overall effectiveness and impact of NUPRP's interventions⁵⁹.

6.2.6. Programme's Transparency and Accountability

6.2.6.1. The NUPRP demonstrated a solid commitment to transparency, accountability, and zero tolerance for corruption in its management and operations. This commitment was evident in the programme's systematic approach to promoting participatory planning, which involved the intense engagement of all stakeholders at

various levels and with diverse capacities. This inclusive approach ensured that decision-making processes were transparent and that all parties were held accountable for their responsibilities.

6.2.6.2. The programme's management, particularly the finance unit, played a critical role in upholding financial transparency and accountability through rigorous practices in procurement, transparent financial transactions, meticulous record-keeping, internal auditing, and comprehensive accounting⁶⁰. NUPRP also extended its commitment to transparency and accountability to Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and urban Local Government Institutions (LGIs), promoting these principles across all tiers of programme implementation.

6.2.6.3. NUPRP utilised several instruments to identify and assess fiduciary risks at each level of implementation. These included a risk register, value-for-money reports, financial progress reports, Institutional and Financial Capacity Assessments (IFCAs), and Fiduciary Risk Assessments (FRAs)⁶¹. These tools were integral to the programme's strategy for maintaining high financial integrity and accountability standards, reinforcing its commitment to transparent and effective resource management throughout the implementation process. The programme employed systematic approaches such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) method to mitigate fiduciary risks and ensure transparency in beneficiary selection. This method was transparent and effective in deterring potential fiduciary risks. In addition, the programme promoted downward accountability through its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanisms, ensuring that financial resources were utilised transparently and accountably by CBOs, municipal institutions, and within the programme's management. To further support these efforts, the programme provided resource management training to programme staff, CBO leaders, and municipal officials at local, regional, and national levels. Overall, the programme has made significant strides in ensuring financial transparency and accountability and mitigating potential fiduciary risks.

6.3. Programme's Effectiveness

6.3.1 The context and intervention logic of the project: Climate change and rapid urbanisation have created substantial vulnerabilities for urban communities in Bangladesh. As climate-related hazards such as rising sea levels, flooding, droughts, and waterlogging intensify, they intersect with the challenges of urbanisation, exacerbating risks for urban poor populations who often reside in informal settlements. These areas lack basic amenities and are typically located in hazardous zones. The swift growth of cities, with their population projected to double in 40 years (BBS, 2015), strains existing infrastructure and services, further deteriorating the quality of life. Urbanisation drives people from rural areas to cities in search of jobs (according to the Slum Census 2014, 51% of people come to slums seeking a job, and more than 50% of slum people are engaged in non-formal work) and security, yet informal settlements absorb most of these migrants (according to the World Bank, more than 50%), increasing the proportion of the urban poor. Women and people with disabilities in these communities face compounded vulnerabilities, with climate change exacerbating their conditions. The urban poor, already in social, economic, and physical vulnerable positions, are disproportionately affected by climate change due to their reliance on informal sectors and disaster-prone land.

Current poverty reduction efforts are hindered by fragmented and uncoordinated actions among donors and government agencies, resulting in inefficiencies and missed opportunities. The NUPRP addressed these issues by fostering better coordination, integrating multi-disciplinary approaches, and providing evidence-based insights in urban contexts. It sought to elevate urban issues to the national agenda, recognising that poverty is not solely a rural phenomenon and requires urban-centric solutions. Despite these challenges, cities hold the potential to be engines of growth and innovation. With suitable investments in infrastructure, inclusive planning, and strengthened municipal governance, cities can improve living standards and well-being for all residents. NUPRP aspired to harness this potential, promoting progressive policies to reduce urban poverty and provide opportunities for urban communities in Bangladesh.

6.3.2 Achievement of the Programme's Overall Objectives

The programme seems to have achieved its overall objectives.

6.3.2.1. The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) successfully implemented several interventions, and based on an analysis of the data, it seems to have achieved its targets and objectives along most dimensions (see Table 3 below).⁶²

Strengthening municipal capacity for improved urban management, policy and planning (Objective 4, associated with Output 1)

6.3.2.2. NUPRP strengthened the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB), leading to improved urban management, policy, and planning. NUPRP also advocated for the drafting and finalising the National Urban Policy (NUP) and promoted finalising the urban sectoral plan following 8FYP. NUPRP's continuous support for MAB in advocating with the NTC of LGD for the NUP's revision and finalisation underscores its commitment to urban sector policy reform. The programme's policy advocacy with 11 city corporations and eight municipalities ensured pro-poor municipal budgeting (all municipalities increased pro-poor budgeting according to the 2022 Annual Outcome Monitoring report). Further, the programme strengthened municipal-level capacity to support, facilitate, and work with the urban poor through community organisation structures. Activating decentralised committees, such as the Disaster Management Committees, Town Level Coordination Committees, and Ward Committees and engaging CDC members in these committees is commendable (the committees were active in all towns, according to the 2022 Annual Outcome Monitoring report). These committees were effectively facilitated by NUPRP's advocacy and the cooperation of municipalities. The CCVA, vacant land mapping, and ward priority mapping strengthened and capacitated the municipalities to adopt pro-poor climate-resilient urban planning (the mapping and CCVA activities were complete by 2022, according to the Annual Outcome Monitoring report).

Build community organisation, skills and enterprise development for women and girls (Objective 2, associated with Output 2 and Output 3)

6.3.2.3. The NUPRP's support for developing and reviving CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs has been instrumental in mainstreaming the voices of the urban poor in urban development and governance. The programme's success in advocating for the inclusion of poor urban communities in various multisectoral platforms at different levels of local governance has effectively ensured that their needs and perspectives are considered in decision-making processes⁶³ (please see Table 26 in Annexe 8 for details). The increased participation of urban poor leaders, particularly women, in Ward-level Coordination Committees (WLCCs), City Corporation Development Coordination Committees (CDCCs), and other relevant bodies has been a notable achievement, as their voices were actively noticed and considered during evaluations⁶⁴ (women from Town Federations participated in coordination committees. CAPs were integrated into 222 Wards across 19 cities and towns. Among the female FGD participants, 61% participated in CAP preparation, and 48% had raised their concerns). The programme's advocacy efforts have led to a significant increase in budget allocation and spending for urban poor communities (28.6% increase compared to 2019), contributing to poverty reduction (20.4% poverty compared to 41.2% at baseline) and improved access to citizen services (78.6% are satisfied compared to 50.4% at baseline). The strategic involvement of CBO leaders in ward and town-level platforms, coupled with their strong interpersonal relationships with LGI leadership, has further enhanced their influence in urban governance. The political stakes of elected LGI officials (particularly in terms of voting support) have also motivated them to address the demands of CBO leaders.

6.3.2.4. The programme's Socio-Economic Fund (SEF) has successfully supported the livelihoods of poor urban women, fostering economic empowerment. Establishing personal and group businesses with NUPRP's financial assistance has increased household income, contributing to self-dependence, poverty reduction, and food security (details are available in sections 6.4.1.7 to 6.4.1.14). The ability to afford educational expenses (incidence of school dropout in HHs decreased to 3.7% compared to 11.5% at baseline) for children, particularly daughters, signifies a broader positive impact on family well-being and prospects (school attendance among girls increased to 94% from 90% at baseline). Additionally, vocational training and allowances provided by NUPRP have empowered individuals to acquire new skills, enabling them to start businesses and enhance their economic stability. For instance, the incidence of unemployment in beneficiary HHs decreased to 16.4% compared to 31.9% at baseline (see Table 6 in Annexe 8). More than 72% of the skill development grantees were employed within six months of completing training and added to HH income. Almost all (98%) business grant beneficiaries made full use of their utilized business grants (Table 3)⁶⁵. These livelihood improvements (MPI score reduced to 9.31 compared to 24.19 at baseline) empowered women economically and instilled confidence among beneficiaries to advocate for their rights and community interests (please see Table 31 in Annexe 8).

Box 6.3: Changes due to building community organisation, skills and enterprise development

"We can question municipality officials about what they are planning and progress about constructing roads, footpaths, drainages, waste management. Which was unimaginable before forming our community organisations with the support of NUPRP." --CDC Leaders, Narayanganj CC, Noakhali, Patuakhali, Faridpur, Khulna CC

"We are now self-dependent by establishing my business with grant support from NUPRP. Our households' income increased, and the socio-economic condition of households also improved. With our earnings, we could bear the educational expenses of my daughters." -- Business Grant Beneficiaries, Cumilla CC

"Group business grant support helps us to access business capital. Our family income increased and reduced our poverty situation and food insecurity." --Group Business Grant Beneficiaries, Gopalganj

"We received a month-long training from NUPRP affiliated training institute and BDT 3000 as training allowances from NUPRP. We started our tailor shop with tailoring skills." -- Skill Development Grant Beneficiaries, Dhaka North CC

Facilitate climate-resilient housing and essential services for low-income households (Objective 1, associated with Output 4 and SIF of Output 5)

6.3.2.5. In collaboration with the GoB, the programme piloted a climate-resilient and low-cost housing project in five municipalities: Chandpur, Gopalganj, Kushtia, Noakhali, and Rangpur, engaging stakeholders at different levels.⁶⁶ The low-cost housing development is an example to the LGIs that planned and coordinated actions (completing vacant land mapping and creating liaison with LGI to receive approval on the land use in 10 towns/cities⁶⁷) can lead to pro-poor development in cities/towns. Low-cost housing ensured climate-resilient housing with necessary utility services for the beneficiaries, improving their living conditions and tenure security⁶⁸. Furthermore, NUPRP institutionalised CHDF in Narayanganj, Chattogram, and Rajshahi, provided seed capital, capacitated the CHDF management committee, and formulated guidelines and service rules to operate CHDF.⁶⁹ The urban poor, ineligible to receive loans from formal financial institutions, have access to housing loans, leading to resilient housing and tenure security. CHDF has enabled beneficiaries to improve their housing conditions. Still, there is a growing concern about the adequacy of the loan amounts due to the rising cost of construction materials. Furthermore, SIF has successfully addressed the critical issue of essential services (access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation) in poverty pockets mapped by the programme (through ward prioritisation mapping), especially during flooding and waterlogging. The combination of CHDF, SIF, and low-cost housing intervention has significantly improved the community's resilience to climate-related challenges (details are available in paragraph 6.4.1.6).⁷⁰

Box 6.4: Success of climate-resilient housing and infrastructure development by NUPRP

"Socially and economically marginalised households are benefited from CHDF. They now could have improved the house. However, the loan amount required to be increased considering construction materials price hike."--A CDC Leader, Rajshahi

"We received safe drinking water points from NUPRP. Earlier, we could not access safe drinking water during the rainy season due to flooding and long waterlogging."--A CDC Leader, Patuakhali

Enhance the climate adaptive capacity of the low-income community through resilient infrastructure (Objective 3, associated with Output 5)

6.3.2.6. The programme's SIF and Climate-Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund (CRMIF) have effectively boosted low-income communities' climate-adaptive capacity (60.2% of grant beneficiaries benefited from CRMIF, Table 27 in Annexe 8) by developing essential climate-resilient infrastructure⁷¹. The strategic implementation of SIF initiatives (96.3% of grant beneficiaries benefited from SIF initiatives, Table 27 in Annexe 8) has addressed critical vulnerabilities in urban areas, with the construction of roads, drains, footpaths, stairs, fire hydrants, and improved access to drinking water and sanitation facilities proving critical in enhancing community resilience⁷². The programme's focus on WASH infrastructure has been particularly impactful (please see Tables 11 and 12 in Annexe 8), ensuring communities maintain access to the services even in disaster-prone or challenging environments⁷³. Installing drains has alleviated chronic waterlogging issues and contributed to poor urban communities' health benefits (disease episodes decreased by 9 percentage points). Furthermore, the development of roads and footpaths has significantly improved mobility (mobility increased to 95% from 87.5% at baseline), particularly in low-lying areas. Streetlighting has enhanced the safety and mobility of working women and female students. The programme has successfully addressed immediate and long-term

infrastructure needs, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to building climate resilience in vulnerable urban communities (details are available in Tables 8 and 27 in Annexe 8).

Box 6.5: Community perception of benefits due to NUPRP infrastructure

"We constructed flood-resilient RCC roads and drainages to ensure safe community mobility." -- A CDC Cluster Leader, Faridpur and A CDC Cluster Leader, Narayanganj CC

"We constructed a climate-resilient higher water point and sanitation chamber, considering flooding and waterlogging very common in our coastal area. Now women and persons with disabilities could access water and sanitation even in disaster-time." -- A CDC Leader, Patuakhali

6.3.2.7. Programme RRF and logframe: The results framework was comprehensive and strategically aligned with its goal of reducing poverty, improving resilience, and enhancing livelihoods among urban poor populations in Bangladesh. The framework outlined clear Outcomes and Outputs supported by measurable indicators and annual targets. The targets set for each year are incremental and realistic, showing a clear progression over the project timeline. These include critical areas such as climate-resilient urban planning, community empowerment, improved socio-economic services, and access to housing. The logical flow from activities to Outputs and Outcomes is well-structured, ensuring that the activities contribute directly to the programme's intended impact. However, the framework could benefit from simplification, particularly given the programme's complexity. The results framework could have also been strengthened by a more detailed risk management plan and sustainability strategies to ensure long-term post-programme benefits.

6.3.2.8. The programme's logframe contains a detailed structure, listing various indicators (with necessary disaggregation by sex, location, and other target groups except for PWDs), baselines, targets, and achievements, including annual targets and assumptions, suggesting adaptability, which was the case during the COVID-19 lockdowns. However, more explicit contingency planning would enhance the framework's ability to adjust to complex challenges, such as land tenure security.

The following table depicts an overview of the programme's achievement against the targets (set in RRF and logframe 2024).

Table 3. The programme's target achievement (Impact, Outcomes and Outputs) *

Intended Outputs		Targets	Achievements as of May 2024*	Brief Remarks
*High	Medium	Low		
Impact: More effective inclusive urbanisation in Bangladesh.				
1.	The proportion of the slum population below the national poverty line within the slums receiving NUPRP interventions	50%	48.6%	The indicator was specific and measurable through the HH survey and is relevant to the programme's intent to develop a national approach to urban poverty reduction ⁷⁴ . The target was realistic and time-bound and achieved. The emergence of new poor during the COVID-19 pandemic (a UNDP estimated 4 million) limited the indicator from surpassing expectations.
2.	The proportion of Urban Slum Households affected by climate-related disasters within the areas receiving NUPRP interventions	60%	52.9%	The indicator was specific and measurable through the HH survey and is relevant to the programme's objectives. The target was achieved within the programme period despite an increase in the new poor, economic migration and the COVID-19 pandemic-induced challenges.
3.	Percentage of PG member HHs who received benefits and have witnessed an improvement in their MPI score	90%	91.4%	MPI score captures poverty from multiple dimensions and is used globally. HH survey provided the necessary data. Similar to the other two impact indicators, the target set by the programme was achieved.
Outcome 1: GoB and actors working in the urban space are more coordinated and strategic in their approach to inclusive, climate-smart urban development (National Level).				

Intended Outputs				Targets		Achievements as of May 2024*	Brief Remarks
*High		Medium		Low			
1.1 (i) Urban Chapter of the Eighth Five-Year Plan-Influenced; (ii) Urban Sector Policy Influenced				Finalisation of National Urban Policy (NUP) by LGD		NUPRP supported LGD in preparing a revised draft of NUP, which is awaiting further review for finalisation	Progress was measured against 2 Separate policy tools, and achievements were divided into 7 (not quantifiable) stages. The term "influenced" was not explicitly defined. The Urban Chapter of Eight Five Year Plan-related activities dropped due to operational challenges.
1.2 Performance of BUF & MAB is strengthened on an objective and agreed scale to assess institutional effectiveness as a result of capacity building.						Dropped	The indicator progress assessment had seven stages (not quantifiable) measurements ⁷⁵ . The effectiveness assessment was not defined clearly. Due to budgetary adjustments, activities dropped in consultation with FCDO.
Outcome 2: Municipal Authorities more effectively manage and deliver inclusive, climate-smart urban development (Municipal Level).							
2.1. Number of Cities/Towns with increased budget allocation/ expenditure for poverty reduction interventions				19		19 ⁷⁶	The indicator was measurable from city/town budget analysis. The achievement was relevant to programme advocacy efforts. However, the expected share/proportion of budget increase was not set, so this was a binary outcome despite the depth of budget increase (does not account for whether a town increases 10% budget or 50% budget).
2.2. Percentage of people satisfied with Urban Local Government (ULG) services				70%		86.9% ⁷⁷	The indicator was measurable from HH surveys using a 3-point scale and is relevant to community objective 2. The logframe had set a list of services to measure satisfaction with the services ⁷⁸ .
2.3. Number of Cities/Towns in which the local government is implementing costed, climate-resilient infrastructure (as specified in the Infrastructure Development Plan). (ICF KPI 13)				12		19 ⁷⁹	There were 3-stages (not quantifiable) to assess the indicator progress ⁸⁰ . The assessment method included five criteria with certain conditions classified as 'No', 'partial', and 'Yes'. The assessment required discussion with LGD officials with a checklist/discussion points. Note: Allocation for poverty reduction action was increased across project cities and towns from GBP 1.9 million (BDT 226 million) in FY 22-23 to GBP 4.4 million (BDT 607 million) in FY 23-24.
2.4. Number of Cities/Towns implementing Multisectoral Nutrition Plans as part of the Municipal Corporation Annual Workplan				19		19	This indicator also had 3-stages (not quantifiable) to assess the indicator's progress ⁸¹ . The assessment method included 14 criteria with set standards. The assessment required discussion with LGD officials. So far, most towns (14) have implemented a Multisectoral nutrition plan and allocated a budget for nutrition.
Outcome 3: Urban poor communities are more resilient and empowered to articulate and demand their needs (Community level)							
3.1. Percentage of people perceive strong community leadership (CDC/Cluster/ Federations) to influence the formal spaces for pro-poor climate-resilient urban development				75%		83.0%	The indicator was measurable from HH surveys with a set of structured questions. The indicator was relevant to measuring community integration into city/town-level decision-making—the well-planned annual progression. Capacity-building support helped to develop a robust CBO Network.

Intended Outputs				Targets		Achievements as of May 2024*		Brief Remarks	
*High		Medium		Low					
3.2. Percentage of PG members who received benefits feel they have a voice in influencing local government decision-making (planning and management)				75%		79.2%		The indicator was measurable from HH surveys with a set of structured questions. The indicator was relevant to measuring community influence on LGI decision-making. Beneficiaries' engagement with the CBO network improved confidence in raising their voices on ULG platforms.	
3.3. Percentage of: (a) pregnant and lactating women grantees who consumed protein in the last seven days and (b) children (7-24 months) grantees who consumed protein in the last 24 hours (children) ⁸²				95%		(a) 90.8% (b) 91.8%		This structured indicator was measured by interviewing Nutrition grantees. The target set for the indicator was too high (compared to the baseline, 32%-33%), and the programme achieved most of it. Support in both cash and kind and counselling improved consumption behaviour and balanced consumption. The group discussants at the community mentioned that the contents of food packages were consumed at the HH. However, the beneficiaries may not have been the only consumers of the food items at the HH.	
3.4. The average number of days to recover from a) Climate [ICF KPI1] and b) non-climate-related shocks				20 days		(a) 20 days (b) 21 days		HH interviews with structured questionnaires provided the necessary data relevant to the progress of climate resilience. Climate-resilient infrastructures helped improve household and community resilience to confront shocks.	
3.5. Percentage of Households reporting they are at risk of eviction				15%		12%		This indicator was recorded as a perception of the beneficiaries using a binomial response. However, the different HHs may perceive eviction threats differently. The existence of the CBO Network and the programme town office deterred the eviction initiatives.	
3.6. The proportion of targeted (1000 days) households have improved complementary feeding practice				25%		91.6%		This structured indicator was measured by interviewing Nutrition grantees (with children aged 6-23 months) using a set of questions relevant to the frequency of feeding and food items consumed by the child in 24 hours. Support in both cash and kind and counselling improved consumption behaviour and balanced consumption.	
Broad Output 1: Improved coordination, planning and management at the National level and in programme towns and cities.									
1.1. Level of engagement by Municipalities and City Corporations for inclusive climate-resilient urban development (mahallah and poor settlement mapping, community action planning, city-wide plans and budgets)				High		High		The progress was measured against 3 Stages in terms of the level of engagement in consultation with LGI officials: High, Medium, and Low, with a predefined set of 7 indicators (mix of qualitative and quantitative) with qualifying criteria. The indicator is relevant to NURPR objective IV and Output 1. All target towns/cities increased budget allocation for climate/environment development and poverty reduction. CCVA and Poverty Mapping are systematic and participatory. 9 out of 10 PG members think that the CAP represents community needs.	
1.2. Number of Paurashava with functional decentralised committees (DMC/TLCC/WC) with representation from				8		8		The decentralised committee members' responses to a set of semi-structured questionnaires allowed for analysis of this indicator. The indicator is relevant to NURPR objective IV and Output 1.	

Intended Outputs				Targets		Achievements as of May 2024*		Brief Remarks	
*High		Medium		Low					
Town Federation/CDC Clusters/CDCs								Community representation is expected to push the committees to remain functional.	
1.3. Number of Cities/Towns with Pro-Poor and Climate-Resilient Urban Strategy under implementation				19		19 ⁸³		The assessment method included ten criteria with set standards for the Disaster Management Committee/Town Level Coordination Committee/Ward Committee. The members were interviewed using a discussion guideline to record their status against each criterion.	
Broad Output 2: Enhanced organisation, capability and effective voice of poor urban communities.									
2.1 Percentage of Community Organisations (a) CDCs; (b) CDC Clusters (c) Federations whose performance is judged "moderately and fully effective" ⁸⁴ on an objective and agreed scale to assess institutional effectiveness as a result of capacity building				CDCs — 60% fully effective — 40% moderately effective		CDCs — 61% fully effective — 28% moderately effective		NUPRP prepared key criteria, indicators and domains to assess the performance of CDCs, CDC clusters, and TFs using a weighted scorecard for each domain. Based on the list of indicators, a set of structured questionnaires was developed independently for CDC, CDC cluster, and TF. The members usually responded to the questionnaires in a group as they required responses from different activities. The Community Organisations played a pivotal role in advocating for community needs by effectively voicing concerns, opinions, and suggestions to LGIs. These organisations have developed strong capacities to raise concerns and suggest solutions to community and municipal issues ⁸⁵ .	
				CDC Clusters — 50% fully effective — 50% moderately effective		CDC Clusters — 70% fully effective — 27% moderately effective			
				TFs — 50% fully effective — 50% moderately effective		TFs — 84% fully effective — 16% moderately effective			
2.2 Percentage of CDCs implementing Community Action Plans (CAP) based on the Guidelines				90%		100%		The CDC assessment questionnaire (for Output 2.2) included questions relevant to CDC's engagement in implementing CAPs. However, the specific indicator was recorded from secondary data collected from NUPRP. TFs should advocate integrating CAP into the city/town planning strategy to ensure pro-poor planning.	
2.3 Number of Savings & Credit Group (SCG) members and their effectiveness in addressing shocks and stresses				3,26,400 members in 27,300 SCGs		370,313 members in 24,662 SCGs. Effective: 76%		A set of structured questionnaires similar to the CDC assessment was used for SCGs. However, the specific indicator was recorded from secondary data collected from NUPRP. Most of the existing SCGs may not be continued after the programme ends. The community may practice this among themselves in small groups.	
Broad Output 3: Increased access to socio-economic services by poor urban slum dwellers, particularly for vulnerable groups of people.									
3.1 Percentage of education grantees completing the academic year in which they receive the grant (which contributes to Early Marriage Prevention)				90%		95%		This structured indicator was measured by interviewing Education grantees using a structured questionnaire. The grant must be multi-year and require intense monitoring to have sustainable results.	
3.2 Number of (a) pregnant and lactating women up to 6 months (b) Children (7-24 months) accessing				(a) 25,000 pregnant and lactating women		(a) 28,524 pregnant and lactating women		The indicator was recorded using secondary data collected from NUPRP. The support must be continued for multiple years and adhered to by development partners.	

Intended Outputs				Targets	Achievements as of May 2024*	Brief Remarks
*High	Medium	Low				
Nutrition Cash Transfer Grants ⁸⁶				(b) 25,000 children (7-24 months)	(b) 28,524 children (7-24 months)	
3.3 Proportion of targeted pregnant and lactating mothers have improved knowledge and skills related to infant and young child feeding practices				75%	84.1%	This structured indicator was measured by interviewing pregnant and lactating mothers under NUPRP coverage using a set of nutrition knowledge questions disseminated during nutrition counselling by NUPRP. The concerned municipal office should continue this.
3.4 Number of Safe Community Committees (a subset of CDC Cluster) working with social service providers to address VAWG and early marriage issues				206	214	The evaluation undertook group discussions with SCG members. However, the indicator was recorded using secondary data collected from NUPRP. SCC must be promoted by municipal offices and supported by legal aid agencies.
3.5 Number of people who have utilised (a) Business Development Grant; (b) Skill Building Grant				(a) 39,500	(a) 41,054	The evaluation interviewed business development and skill-building grant beneficiaries with structured questions to measure whether the grantees utilised their benefits. 98.2% of beneficiaries utilised business grants, and 70.5% utilised Skill-building grants. The grantees contributed to HH's income and improved livelihood. However, the specific indicator was recorded from secondary data collected from NUPRP.
				(b) 15,500	(b) 15,994	
Broad Output 4: Increased access to climate-resilient housing for the urban poor.						
4.1 Number of Community Housing Development Funds (CHDF) established as legal entities.				3	3	There were no structured measurement criteria. The NUPRP records revealed the indicator status, which was validated during interviews with town officials. Rajshahi, Chattogram and Narayanganj CCs managed to establish CHDF as legal entities. The CHDF guidelines and service rules need to be adhered to strictly.
4.2 Number of Households using their CHDF loan.				1,400	1,445	The achievement is recorded from NUPRP documents ⁸⁷ . Need to increase allocation of CHDF loans and strengthen loan recovery strategy.
4.3 Number of Households with climate resilient housing (a) New Housing; (b) Upgraded Housing.				646	New Housing: 646 Units (in 4 towns)	The achievement is recorded from NUPRP documents and in consultation with relevant town officials ⁸⁸ . Municipal offices with partner agencies promote climate-resilient housing and increase access to reasonable resilient housing materials.
4.4 Number of cities/towns with secured land tenure (based on vacant land mapping, land tenure action plan, and construction of pro-poor new housing).				5	Dropped	No measurable documentation was prepared. Due to limited funds and unavailability of commitment from concerned agencies
4.5 Number of Households with secured Land Tenure (based on Vacant Land Mapping, Land Tenure Action Plan, and				1100	Dropped	No measurable documentation was prepared. Due to limited funds and unavailability of commitment from concerned agencies

Intended Outputs				Targets		Achievements as of May 2024*		Brief Remarks	
*High		Medium		Low					
Construction of pro-poor new housing).									
Broad Output 5: More and better climate-resilient and community-based infrastructure in programme towns and cities.									
5.1 Number of persons with access to climate-resilient (a) safely managed drinking water, and (b) sanitation facilities which are hygienic, gender & disability-friendly				(a) 162,783		(a) 298,413		Using a structured questionnaire, the HH survey provided data on access to safely managed drinking water and improved sanitation. The NUPRP document on WASH infrastructure coverage using SIF funds was used to calculate the population. Innovation in safely managed water access and improved disability-friendly sanitation is required, considering climate-change-induced challenges become more intense.	
				(b) 226,120		(b) 228,215			
5.2 Number of people supported to cope with the effects of climate change through SIF and CRMIF (ICF KPI 1)				1,500,000		1,532,227		The HH survey provided data on the share of HHs who benefited from SIF and CRMIF infrastructures. The NUPRP document on SIF and CRMIF infrastructure coverage was used to calculate the population. The O&M fund management should ensure monitoring, transparency and accountability.	
5.3 Number of Cities/Towns with improved capacity of Municipalities to manage climate-resilient infrastructure projects				19		19		The achievement is recorded from NUPRP documents. Required to engage other development partners to continue support to make climate-resilient capacity improvement sustainable.	
5.4 Number of Climate Resilient Infrastructure Projects in Towns/Cities (Climate Resilient Municipality Infrastructure Fund)				21		20		The NUPRP report provided the indicator's achievement status, which was validated during city/town-level interviews and observations. One project is ongoing in Khulna City Corporation (60% complete).	
<p>As shown in Table 3 but highlighted again below, since August 2018, the programme has progressed towards achieving the expected results against the approved Results and Resource Framework and Logical Framework and contributed to the UNCSD/CPD Outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.6% of the slum population receiving NUPRP interventions are below the national poverty line • 52.9% of urban slum households receiving NUPRP interventions are affected by climate-related disasters • Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) scores improved for 91.4% of participating households. • Targeted cities and towns successfully increased their budget allocations for poverty reduction interventions (28.6% increase in 2023 compared to 2019) • 83% of community members perceive strong leadership • 79.2% of PG members felt they had a voice in ULG decision-making • 28,524 pregnant and lactating women and the same number of children accessed Nutrition Cash Transfer Grants • 214 Safe Community Committees (SCCs) addressed violence against women and girls • 1,445 households received housing loans • 646 new housing units were constructed for the vulnerable in four towns • 298,413 people had access to safely managed drinking water • 228,215 people had access to sanitation facilities • 1,532,227 people were supported to cope with the effects of climate change 									

By June 2024, NUPRP achieved the expected results according to the approved RRF and Logframe 2024 in line with CPD 2022-26 and UNCSD/CPD 2022-2026.⁸⁹ The above table provides an overview of the programme's achievement against intended targets (Table 3). As is evident, the programme has achieved the bulk of the envisaged targets.

Outcome 1 (National Level): GoB and actors working in the urban space are more coordinated and strategic in their approach to inclusive, climate-smart urban development

6.3.2.9. The programme's persistent advocacy for developing a national urban policy until its conclusion demonstrates a commendable commitment to advancing urban planning and development in Bangladesh. The programme leveraged expert knowledge by partnering with key stakeholders such as BIP, HBRI, and BUET. However, the long-term success of these partnerships will depend on their continued collaboration beyond the programme's duration. Organising consultations, workshops, and engagement through NUPRP has raised awareness and fostered stakeholder dialogue. The 2023 Regional Climate Summit, where the importance of locally-led adaptation (LLA) was collectively acknowledged, is a noteworthy achievement⁹⁰. However, the challenge remains in translating this recognition into actionable policies and practices at the local level. The involvement of MAB in advocating for interactive urban planning and enhanced governance tools indicates a proactive approach. However, the true impact of these efforts will be measured by their ability to influence government agencies and bring about tangible improvements in urban governance. As a visible outcome of these efforts, preparing a revised National Urban Policy (NUP) Draft is a promising step forward.

Outcome 2 (Municipality Level): Municipal Authorities more effectively manage and deliver inclusive, climate-smart urban development

6.3.2.10. The budget analysis of targeted municipalities indicates a positive shift in resource allocation for poverty reduction, with incremental increases in budget share (28.6% increase in 2023 compared to 2019) and expenditure benefiting poor urban communities. There is a gradual increase in overall satisfaction with ULG services, which can be attributed to enhanced community participation, improved livelihoods, and stronger CBO Networks, highlighting the programme's success in fostering community engagement⁹¹. The programme's focus on climate-resilient WASH and infrastructure development has effectively enhanced access (5% net accessibility improvement) to climate-vulnerable areas⁹². The community feels empowered as their concerns are acknowledged, resulting in improved services. The programme has also strengthened the committee's capacity to address climate change and promoted ongoing health initiatives, particularly in mother and child health (Outcome 3.3 and 3.6, Table 3). The engagement with ULG agencies in climate resilience planning (prepared and implemented in 19 cities/towns) demonstrates a proactive stance towards sustainable urban development⁹³. A success story in connection with this is that Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) allocated GBP 726,941 (BDT 100 million) FY-23-24 to ensure basic services for urban poor communities

6.3.2.11. However, the programme faces significant challenges in fully integrating climate-resilient urban planning and budgeting across all towns, revealing a gap that requires urgent attention⁹⁴. To elaborate, if new officials are elected, they may not continue with climate-resilient urban planning across all cities and towns. The need for further sensitisation of ULG officials highlights the ongoing barriers to mainstreaming climate-responsive approaches in urban governance.

Box 6.6: Voices of positive changes from the community

"Municipality authority now listen to our voices. They acknowledged our issues. Our community is happy with improved municipal services. We wish the programme continued for many more years." -- A CDC Leader, Gopalganj

"NUPRP has nursed our committee to make it operational. We are now actively coordinating with our city corporation to address climate change-related issues." -- Member of WLDMC, Chattogram CC

"NUPRP helped us to reactivate our committee. We are active and sensitised and will continue promoting mother and child health beyond the programme period." -- Member of MSNCC, Noakhali

Outcome 3 (At Community Level): Urban poor communities are more resilient and empowered to articulate and demand their needs

6.3.2.12. As discussed earlier, the programme grant support and knowledge dissemination have significantly improved the livelihoods of targeted urban poor communities (evidence-based findings are available in Annexe 8), effectively empowering them to have a stronger voice in ULG platforms (community participation ensured in city/town decentralised committees). This empowerment has enabled these communities to influence pro-poor urban planning and governance, highlighting the programme's success in fostering inclusive decision-making processes. Moreover, the reduced recovery period (from 33 days to 21 days, a 36.4% decrease) for

targeted beneficiaries from climate and non-climate shocks underscores the effectiveness of the programme's livelihood support and climate-resilient infrastructure development (5% net improvement in housing superstructures, Table 19 in Annexe 8). This reduction in recovery time demonstrates the programme's success in building resilience and reflects its strategic alignment with broader goals of sustainable urban development. However, to fully assess the long-term impact, ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be necessary to ensure that these gains are sustained and that any emerging challenges are promptly addressed.

Output 1: Improved coordination, planning, and management at the national level and in programme towns and cities

6.3.2.13. The engagement of all 19 cities/towns in inclusive climate-resilient urban development marks a significant achievement, particularly in poverty mapping, the Community Action Plan (CAP), inclusive urban planning, and pro-poor budgeting (Output Indicator 1.1, Table 3)⁹⁵. These efforts demonstrate a comprehensive approach to addressing urban poverty and resilience, clearly focusing on inclusivity and sustainability. The functionality of decentralised committees in the eight targeted Municipalities, including disaster management and coordination committees, is a positive indicator of the programme's effectiveness in fostering local governance structures (Output Indicator 1.2, Table 3)⁹⁶. Including CBO Network members in these committees further highlights the programme's success in ensuring community representation and participation. The functionality⁹⁷ of multisectoral committees is evidenced by their regular operations, active membership, and engagement with poor urban representatives, underscoring the programme's ability to mobilise and sustain multi-stakeholder involvement. The successful conduct of Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM) and CCVA in the targeted towns has laid the groundwork for initiating pro-poor and climate-resilient urban strategies across these areas (Output Indicator 1.3, Table 3). While these outcomes are promising, the continued effectiveness of these initiatives will depend on sustained engagement, adequate resources, and ongoing capacity-building efforts.

Output 2: Enhanced organisation, capability and effective voice of poor urban communities.

6.3.2.14. The community platforms by NUPRP mobilised around 3.1 million urban poor through 3,150 CDCs, 258 CDC Clusters, and 19 Town Federations. The programme's intense mentoring and promotion efforts have yielded significant results, with 61% of CDCs, 70% of CDC Clusters, and 84% of TFs being fully effective (Output Indicator 2.1, Table 3)⁹⁸. However, the fact that the remaining entities are only moderately effective indicates areas where further support and development are needed. The effectiveness of CDCs is reflected in their successful implementation of CAPs according to guidelines (Output Indicator 2.2, Table 3)⁹⁹, which is a testament to the programme's impact. Additionally, the affiliation of CDCs with city corporations or municipalities is a positive step¹⁰⁰. The sustainability of these associations beyond the programme is evidenced by registering most CDC Clusters with government departments and establishing TFs as central to the CBO Network, which is a commendable achievement. The Service Agreements between TFs and City Corporations/Municipalities and the formation of municipal-level O&M central committees reflect a well-structured approach to managing SIF and CRMIF-funded infrastructures¹⁰¹. However, the sustainability of these agreements and the ongoing effectiveness of these structures will be critical to their lasting impact.

6.3.2.15. The programme's support for SCGs, essential to the financial backbone of CDCs, has been practical, with three-fourths of SCGs remaining operational until May 2024 (Output Indicator 2.3, Table 3)¹⁰². The 24,662 SCGs have mobilised USD 7.36 million (GBP 6.41 million) and utilised USD 17.98 million (GBP 14.75 million) in reimbursable loans¹⁰³, crucial for IGAs and emergency expenses. Nevertheless, the long-term sustainability of SCGs is a significant concern, especially given that most are expected to dissolve with the programme's conclusion. Factors such as fund management issues, feelings of deprivation regarding grant allocation, and the perceived unreliability of SCG office bearers contribute to this instability. While the programme's deployment of consultants to mentor CBO Network Leaders is a positive step, the insistence from CBO Network leaders on the need for counselling SCG members and office bearers suggests that more direct and targeted interventions may be necessary to ensure the continued effectiveness and sustainability of SCGs¹⁰⁴.

Output 3: Increased access to socio-economic services by poor urban slum dwellers, particularly for vulnerable groups of people.

6.3.2.16. The programme's nutrition component has been effectively utilised, ensuring that 28,528 pregnant women and lactating mothers with children aged 7 to 24 months received nutrition support for up to six months (Output Indicator 3.2, Table 3). However, the shift from a planned 1000-day approach to a reduced six-month support period due to resource limitations highlights a gap in the continuity of care. The programme's nutrition-sensitive support reached around 270,000 people including 57,000 children and mothers. The improvement in nutrition-specific knowledge and skills among 84.1% of beneficiary pregnant women and lactating mothers strongly indicates the programme's success in enhancing maternal and child health outcomes (Output Indicator 3.3, Table 3).

6.3.2.17. The programme's 214 model Safe Community Committees (SCCs) have been particularly effective in addressing violence against women and girls, with notable success in preventing early marriages within low-income settlements (Output Indicator 3.4, Table 3). This achievement emphasises the SCCs' role as an important mechanism for community-based intervention and protection, reflecting the programme's impact on social well-being¹⁰⁵, further complemented by grants to reduce early marriages (20,774 grantees).

6.3.2.18. Furthermore, the NUPRP's SEF initiatives, including individual (41,054) and group business (1,500) grants, as well as skill development grants (15,994), have substantially improved the livelihoods of 57,048 PG beneficiaries (Output Indicator 3.5, Table 3). These efforts demonstrate a successful approach to economic empowerment and poverty alleviation¹⁰⁶. However, the long-term sustainability of these livelihood improvements, particularly in the absence of continued support, remains an area for further evaluation. Overall, while the programme has achieved significant successes, particularly in nutrition and social protection, the reliance on external partners and the need for sustained support are critical factors that may influence the enduring impact of these initiatives.

Box 6.7: CBO leader opinions on NUPRP grants

"The programme provided business grants to those with some business to ensure they could capitalise their existing experience with the seed fund support. The idea works out considering that most business grant beneficiaries are successful in my cluster." -- A CDC Cluster Leader, Chattogram CC

"NUPRP engaged Mahila Technical Training Centre (MTTC) and Underprivileged Children Education Programme (UCEP) to facilitate skill training to the skill development grant beneficiaries. The training quality of these two institutions is excellent. Those who received training already have jobs or started their businesses." -- Town Federation Leader, Rajshahi CC

Output 4: Increased access of the poor to climate-resilient housing.

6.3.2.19. The programme's initial plan to establish a Community Housing Development Fund (CHDF) across all NUPRP towns was scaled back to only three municipalities, reflecting a necessary but limiting revision due to resource constraints. The successful revival of the CHDF in Chattogram, Narayanganj, and Rajshahi, established initially during the UPPR-P phase, represents a significant achievement (Output Indicator 4.1, Table 3). The CHDF's provision of housing finance support to 1,445 PG beneficiaries, which slightly surpassed the target of 1,400, is notable (Output Indicator 4.2, Table 3)¹⁰⁷. However, not all these loans were disbursed during the NUPRP phase, and some loans have been carried over from the UPPR-P period. A critical concern remains the CHDF's sustainability post-programme, particularly its ability to continue providing loans and managing its staff without external support¹⁰⁸. The ongoing low-cost housing pilot project, which includes 646 units across four towns, is a valuable initiative that addresses urgent housing needs in vulnerable communities (Output Indicator 4.3, Table 3). However, the requirement for a no-cost extension to complete and hand over these units signals potential project management and resource allocation issues.

6.3.2.20. The decision to drop secured land tenure-related interventions due to budget reductions and programme repurposing is a significant drawback, as these interventions could have provided long-term security and stability for marginalised communities (Output Indicators 4.4 and 4.5, Table 3)¹⁰⁹. The dependence of marginalised groups on CHDF loans, given their lack of access to traditional banking services due to stringent documentation requirements, underscores the essential role of such funds in meeting their housing needs. Despite the programme's substantial progress in providing housing finance and initiating low-cost housing projects, the challenges related to the sustainability of the CHDF, the completion of ongoing projects, and the discontinuation of certain land tenure interventions raise concerns about the long-term impact.

Box 6.8: Benefits of CHDF and low-cost housing as expressed by community leaders

"CHDF loan helped marginalised people to improve their housing. These people have no access to banks because they require many documents they do not have." -- CDC Cluster Leaders, Chattogram CC, Rajshahi CC

"The low-cost housing project is a must one for the Kushtia. This project will ensure our pit-emptier/waste management workers can access improved housing for those in horrible conditions." -- A CDC Leader, Kushtia

Output 5: More and better climate-resilient and community-based infrastructure in programme towns/cities.

6.3.2.21. The programme's WASH support to 526,628 PG beneficiaries, ensuring access to safely managed drinking water for 298,413 individuals and sanitation facilities for 228,215, demonstrates a significant achievement in improving essential services for vulnerable communities (Output Indicator 5.1, Table 3)¹¹⁰. Addressing gender and disability considerations in WASH infrastructure development further underscores the programme's commitment to inclusivity and equity. The NUPRP's SIF and CRMIF have been instrumental in developing community-specific climate-resilient infrastructures, which have enhanced the resilience of 1,532,227 people against climate change effects (Output Indicator 5.2, Table 3)¹¹¹. This large-scale impact reflects the programme's effectiveness in addressing critical infrastructure needs in the face of environmental challenges.

6.3.2.22. The successful revival of disaster management committees and integration of climate resilience into municipal planning and budgeting across all NUPRP cities and towns highlight the programme's proactive approach to sustainable urban development (Output Indicator 5.3, Table 3)¹¹². However, completing 20 out of 21 targeted CRMIF-funded climate-resilient infrastructure projects indicates that while the programme has largely met its goals, there is a slight shortfall in effectiveness (Output Indicator 5.4, Table 5.1)¹¹³. The programme has made commendable strides in enhancing WASH access, developing climate-resilient infrastructure, and mainstreaming climate resilience in urban planning.

6.3.3. Programme's Achieved Changes

Multi-dimensional and multisectoral change has been achieved based on comparing project targets for Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact (see Table 3).

6.3.3.1. The NUPRP programme enhanced coordination, planning, and action among urban sector government agencies (Output 1)¹¹⁴. It significantly strengthened the organisational and leadership capacity of CBOs, enabling them to effectively represent urban poor communities in policy and governance platforms (Output 2)¹¹⁵. The programme's SEF grants improved the livelihoods of urban poor communities, particularly women and girls (Output 3). Housing finance from CHDF in three cities and low-cost housing pilots in four cities provided successful models for further interventions by the GoB and development partners (Output 4). The programme also contributed to developing climate-resilient infrastructure in low-income settlements through SIF and CRMIF support (Output 5). Despite dropping Outcome indicators 1.1 and 1.2¹¹⁶, NUPRP advocated for the Urban Chapter's finalisation and supported drafting the National Urban Policy¹¹⁷. However, delayed network-building with urban stakeholders and a lack of early collaboration with key urban planning authorities like MoH&PW and NHA limited the programme's impact. While it made strides in strengthening the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB), the programme's decision to forgo strengthening the Bangladesh Urban Forum (BUF) due to budget constraints was seen as a missed opportunity for national policy advocacy. Furthermore, the programme could have benefited from being more proactive in establishing early collaborations with key urban development stakeholders, such as the BIP, HBRI, NHA, and BUET.

Box 6.9: Stakeholder perception on partnership with NUPRP

"Due to budgetary constraints, we dropped BUF strengthening activities. It is an important platform for national policy advocacy, which will be abolished due to fund crisis, which is unfortunate." -- NUPRP Officials

"NUPRP approached us for partnership at the end of the programme. We could contribute to the programme more effectively if they approached us for formal partnership from inception." -- Key Informant of HBRI

"NUPRP signed an MoU with us towards the end of the programme, which should be much earlier." -- Key Informant of BIP

6.3.3.2. The programme excelled in achieving Outcome 2, influencing 19 municipal offices to allocate budgets for poverty reduction¹¹⁸ and engaging CBO networks in participatory urban governance, leading to increased

satisfaction with ULG services¹¹⁹. It also promoted multisectoral nutrition plans and improved the overall nutrition of targeted urban populations, including pregnant and lactating mothers.

6.3.3.3. Outcome 3 saw significant success in community mobilisation and leadership strengthening, with the CBO Network promoting pro-poor, climate-resilient urban development. Infrastructure development through SIF and CRMIF reduced shock recovery periods to 20 days, and the perceived risk of eviction dropped to 12%. However, the programme's impact was challenged by the rise of a new poor population due to COVID-19, though it is on track to meet its targets within the no-cost extension period.

6.3.3.4. Regarding Outcomes 4 and 5, the programme has achieved noteworthy milestones in supporting vulnerable urban communities through CHDF in several key cities, providing essential housing finance support to marginalised groups and enabling access to improved housing solutions. Additionally, the programme initiated a low-cost housing pilot project across multiple towns, directly addressing the urgent housing needs of vulnerable populations. Furthermore, the programme significantly improved access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation facilities (5% and 13% net improvement in access to improved latrines and safe drinking water; details are available in Table 11 and 12 in Annexe 8), enhancing essential services for a large number of beneficiaries while ensuring the inclusion of gender and disability considerations, highlighting the programme's strong commitment to inclusivity. Moreover, the development of community-specific climate-resilient infrastructures has substantially strengthened the resilience of urban communities against climate change effects. The programme also achieved notable progress in sustainable urban development by integrating climate resilience into municipal planning and budgeting, reviving disaster management committees, and completing the most targeted climate-resilient infrastructure projects. These achievements reflect the programme's effectiveness in addressing housing, WASH, and climate resilience challenges, contributing to the long-term well-being of urban poor communities.

Changes attributed to NUPRP.

6.3.3.5. The NUPRP programme made substantial contributions to national-level policy advocacy, focusing on multisectoral, inclusive, and sustainable urban planning and development. Through local governance advocacy, the programme strengthened pro-poor, climate-resilient, and nutrition-sensitive municipal budgeting. It also revitalised multisectoral committees on disaster, nutrition, and urban planning at the municipal level, promoting a coordinated approach to sustainable development. These efforts ensured the effective representation of urban communities, mainly through the active participation of members from CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs (active participation increased from 35% in 2020 to 56% in 2021 to 78% in 2022)¹²⁰. Additionally, the programme developed climate-resilient infrastructure and influenced urban local governments (ULGs) and development partners to mobilise resources for sustainable infrastructure, thereby benefiting marginalised urban commuters¹²¹. The programme established and enhanced the operations of the Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB), creating a national platform for unified urban policy and decision-making. It also brought together key stakeholders from the government, academia, and development partners to draft the National Urban Policy (NUP), thereby promoting comprehensive urban development and governance.

6.3.3.6. At the community level, NUPRP successfully facilitated community advocacy by forming various groups and clusters, enabling priority-based community planning and advocacy with municipal officials. The programme also played a crucial role in changing community perceptions regarding women's and girls' rights and security through the work of Safe Community Committees (SCCs). Furthermore, revitalising Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) from the UPPR-P phase showed the potential to ensure financial access for marginalised communities. The overall changes led to a fourfold increase in the perception of strong community leadership, improved living conditions, and a net reduction in poverty. The programme also enhanced financial preparedness for climate shocks and contributed to better health, education, and sanitation outcomes, as evidenced by a significant decrease in MPI scores for participating households¹²². The programme contributed significantly to women's leadership development, with some women from the CBO Network participated in the local government elections. Moreover, during the pandemic, NUPRP played a crucial role in mitigating the rise of the new poor, preventing what could have been a much larger increase in poverty levels¹²³.

6.3.3.7. Infrastructure projects funded by the programme reduced environmental risks, created jobs, and boosted household income. NUPRP's successful piloting of low-cost housing and housing finance through CHDF set examples for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and development partners, highlighting the importance

of addressing tenure and housing security for urban poor communities. The programme provided evidence for the necessity of costed climate-resilient infrastructure development, ensuring that no one is left behind in the urban environment.

Factors contributing to the achievement or non-achievement of the NUPRP Outcomes and Outputs.

6.3.3.8. The NUPRP programme was strategically designed to achieve its planned Outcomes and Outputs, with a strong partnership between the Local Government Division (LGD) and UNDP, setting the foundation for addressing the complex needs of urban poverty reduction in Bangladesh. The programme demonstrated commendable adaptability, particularly in responding to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.3.3.9. At the national level (Outcome 1), the programme faced challenges due to budget reductions and delayed engagement with key stakeholders such as BIP, BUET, and HBRI, impacting the performance of some activities. Despite these hurdles, the programme facilitated evidence-based planning through tools like the City Poverty-Ward Poverty Mapping (CP-WPM), Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA), ensuring targeted and data-driven interventions. Institutional and Financial Capacity Assessment (IFCA) training for LGIs and NUPRP staff further enhanced the ability to manage programme interventions effectively.

6.3.3.10. At the municipal level (Outcome 2), the NUPRP town offices were crucial in advocating for pro-poor municipal budget allocations and implementing Multisectoral Nutrition Plans (MSNP). The strong town-wide CBO Network and engagement of poor urban communities in ward-to-town level ULG platforms significantly contributed to sustainable climate-resilient infrastructure development. The programme's CAP-based selection and community participation in construction fostered ownership and innovation in municipal projects.

6.3.3.11. At the community level (Outcome 3), the programme enhanced the poor urban community's trust in CBO Networks and influenced pro-poor climate-resilient urban development. The active participation of CBO leaders in ULG platforms and their relationships with elected officials were pivotal in this success, leading to improved satisfaction of urban poor communities with ULG services. The programme's grant approach was marked by the systematic identification and selection of beneficiaries, leading to successes in education and skill development grants, which helped prevent school dropouts, early marriages, and improved household income. Business grants also enhanced the livelihoods of urban poor households, with the requirement for a business plan being a key factor in their success. The programme also made significant strides in housing, with the CHDF housing finance model proving successful due to structured administration and close monitoring by municipal offices. Regarding WASH infrastructure, the programme successfully developed climate-resilient facilities that improved access to services, where engagement of CBO networks in planning and implementation was the key factor towards the best use of available resources.

6.3.3.12. In terms of Outputs, the programme's data-driven approach to planning and intervention was exemplified by the effective use of mapping tools and the MPI method, which helped reach the right beneficiaries while reducing errors and corruption. The mobilisation of urban communities by forming PGs, CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs strengthened community engagement and CAP development. However, the sustainability of Savings & Credit Groups (SCGs) remains a concern, as not all SCGs performed equally well, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

6.3.3.13. Cross-cutting themes of the programme included promoting the representation of marginalised social groups in ULG platforms, fostering gender equality, and ensuring disability inclusion in urban planning and governance. The women-led approach of the NUPRP was particularly effective in advancing these goals, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable urban development process. Overall, while the programme achieved significant successes, ongoing challenges related to sustainability, budget constraints, and stakeholder engagement suggest areas for continued focus and improvement.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement

6.3.3.14. Despite these achievements, the programme faced several challenges. Delays in programme inception, implementation challenges, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to unintended changes and limitations. The programme could not support the Bangladesh Urban Forum (BUF) as planned, and the delayed development of partnerships with key urban stakeholders limited its early effectiveness. Irregularities within

the CBO Network also created divisions within communities, undermining the integrity and leadership of the network. The dissolution of SCGs during the programme conveyed a misleading message that damaged the network's credibility.

6.3.3.15. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted vulnerabilities, such as the inability of education grants to prevent early marriages during the crisis. Additionally, the programme's piloted low-cost housing and CHDF loan allocations were inadequate in meeting existing demands, with limited coverage across the targeted towns. Furthermore, tenure security remains a major concern, as housing and tenure security interventions were dropped due to financial and political constraints. Advocacy efforts to sensitise municipal officials on climate resilience were also challenging.

6.4. Programme's Impact

The Programme has led to statistically significant and substantial effects on urban poor communities across 19 cities and towns in Bangladesh. Through strategic advocacy, capacity building, and community mobilisation, the programme has achieved notable increases in pro-poor budgeting at the 19-target city/town level, from 1.6% to 2.5%, ensuring more resources are allocated to those in need. The programme's economic interventions have substantially increased household incomes and food security, while infrastructure developments have improved living standards, accessibility, and health conditions. The programme's education, sanitation, and disaster resilience efforts have enhanced the quality of life, ensuring long-term positive impacts.

6.4.1.1. The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) aimed for sustainable improvements in the livelihoods and living conditions of poor urban households across 8 towns and 11 cities in Bangladesh. NUPRP sought to address urban poverty issues by supporting municipal governments and urban poor communities simultaneously to improve resilience and accountability and promote inclusive planning practices. NUPRP's approach worked simultaneously at three levels- the community, city, and national - to bring about positive changes. NUPRP activities included five specific Outputs apart from the COVID-19 response activities undertaken for the urban poor during the nationwide lockdowns in Bangladesh. The adaptive management during and after the unforeseen COVID-19 forced fluctuations in the intended Outputs and Outcomes of NUPRP in its six years of implementation.

6.4.1.2. Governance: Advocacy with elected and appointed municipal/town officials and community capacity strengthening brought about positive changes at the municipality or city level through increased pro-poor budgeting. In all the target towns, the budget share, which may be considered pro-poor,¹²⁴ increased from 1.6% to 2.5%. While this may seem small in absolute terms, this change represents an increase of about 56%. The two-step beneficiary selection mechanism involving ward prioritisation and MPI score mapping ensured targeting effectiveness (more than 87% accuracy). This mapping exercise identified poverty pockets (urban wards) and suggested appropriate solutions for the inclusion of marginalised urban residents in the programme. The resulting maps highlighted the vulnerability and exclusion of the urban poor, enabling better-informed revisions of urban plans like the Master Plan and City Investment Plan. Integrating these findings made the plans more pro-poor and climate-sensitive, reflecting community-identified problems.

6.4.1.3. The formation and activation of town and ward-level coordination committees (TLCC and WLCC) fostered regular discussions on urban poverty. The project successfully advocated for community representation within the coordination committees. These committees ensured that urban poverty issues remained a priority issue. Furthermore, forming Standing Committees with urban poor representatives promoted inclusive decision-making. These efforts enhanced governance within community organisations, ensuring regular leadership elections and active municipal engagement.

6.4.1.4. The interventions to assess, mobilise, establish, support, and strengthen community organisations representing the urban poor, women, disabled, and children have substantially impacted urban poor communities by linking them to city planning and slum development units. Capacity building for these CDCs (for CAP preparation and financial literacy) and the deployment of Community Volunteers increased community mobilisation and supported programme activities. The initiatives have empowered urban poor communities.

For instance, the perception of strong community leadership in treatment areas increased more than fourfold to 83% from 18.5% at baseline, yielding a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) net (DiD) positive impact of 61.3% (see Table 26 in Annexe 8). This enhanced leadership capacity was achieved by promoting inclusive, participatory planning and addressing urban poverty issues independently through the CAP process.¹²⁵ Integrating CAPs into city development plans ensured that the priorities of urban poor communities were reflected in citywide planning documents. The CAP preparation and implementation (through SIF funds) in the treatment areas and the listing of priority community works in the city/town budgeting strengthened the community's perception of their ability to influence local government decision-making. The share of households expressing their ability to influence local decision-making rose to 79.2% among households (HHs) in treatment areas compared to 18% at baseline, yielding a net programme impact of 56.6% ($p < 0.01$). It is most likely that these improvements will continue to influence community-led annual budgeting and activity planning in cities and towns. Furthermore, the linkages and partnerships established between Community Organisations (registered CDCs, CDC clusters, and Town Federations) and municipal government will act as a push factor to continue climate-resilient pro-poor planning (please see Table 26 in Annexe 8 for details).

Box 6.10: Community perception on NUPRP impact

"Our Paurashava increased pro-poor budget specifically targeting social safety net support to marginalised communities."
-- A Municipal Official, Patuakhali

"NUPRP implemented all activities in my ward in consultation with Ward-level PLC." -- A Municipal Official, Noakhali

"We engaged educated youth of the urban poor communities as community volunteers to ensure their employment and community buy-in." -- A City Corporation Official, Rajshahi CC

"Our neighbouring non-poor communities also benefit from the roads and footpaths constructed by our community organisations under the programme." -- A CDC Leader, Gopalganj

"Business grants give us an opportunity to be self-dependent and help our husbands financially to manage household expenditures including healthcare of parents and education of children." -- Business Grant Beneficiaries, Cumilla CC

6.4.1.5. Infrastructure: The project's activities related to awareness and infrastructure development have benefited the target groups within the community and the community at large. Infrastructure, such as cross bridges, RCC roads, footpaths, drains, and culverts, have improved the living conditions of city residents, regardless of targeting. The O&M management fund and management system developed for these infrastructures are expected to ensure their longevity, and benefits may be expected to continue beyond the project's lifetime. These developments, in addition to direct grant distribution, have significantly improved the living standards of the urban poor, with 98% of treatment HHs reporting that their living conditions had improved compared to 40.1% of pure control HHs, a statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) difference (Table 26 in Annexe 8). The main channels were saving time (78%), increasing accessibility (91%), and creating a better living environment. This positive impact is a testament to the potential for further improvement and development in the community.

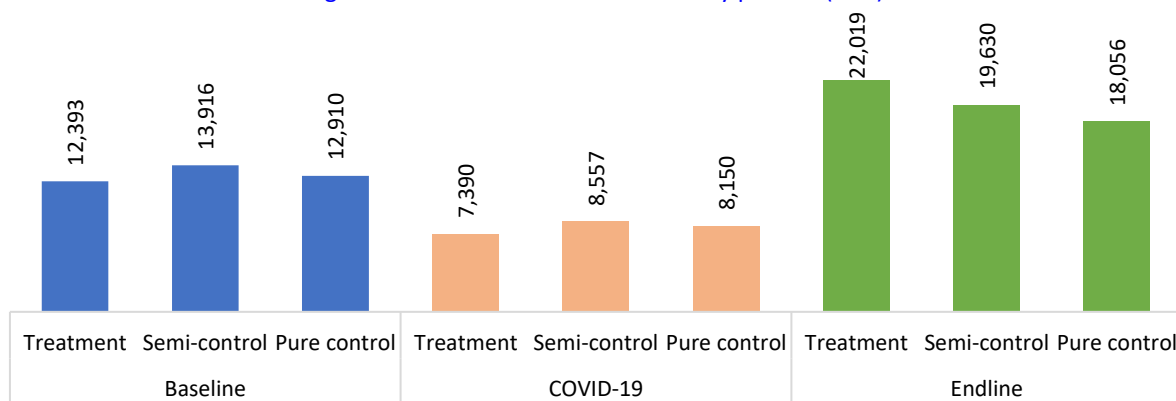
6.4.1.6. Due to the development of project infrastructure, regular hazards such as waterlogging (a net statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) impact of 17.6%) and overflow of open drains have been reduced (more than 61% of treatment HHs benefited). The incidence of diarrhoea decreased - a net impact of 2.9% ($p > 0.05$) among U5 children (please see Table 27 in Annexe 8 for details). The development of waste management systems, installation of water points, and disability-friendly latrines increased access to WASH. Access to drinking water was 95% at the endline as compared to 50% at baseline – the net impact of 13.5% was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), and improved sanitation rose to 98% from 90% at baseline, translating into a net impact of 3.3%, albeit not statistically significant (please see Tables 11 and 12 in Annexe 8 for details). The overall health conditions improved (disease incidence decreased; Table 27 in Annexe 8), and health expenditure declined while at the same time creating opportunities for savings, investment, or improved living conditions through better food consumption, education, and recreation (see Tables 3, 5, 7, 9, 22, and 24 in Annexe 8).

6.4.1.7. Economic Impact (Income Increase): The project also distributed grants to eligible households to improve their living conditions and enhance HH income. Increased income (please see Table 1 in Annexe 8) opens the avenue for greater possibilities, savings and lifting HH out of poverty (please see Table 4 in Annexe 8). Toward the end of the NUPRP, the grantees (treatment HHs) were experiencing better work opportunities (please see Tables 6 and 25 in Annexe 8) and higher incomes. The average monthly income of treatment HHs

rose from BDT 12,393 to BDT 22,019, yielding a 78% gross increase. Over the same period, the average monthly income of pure control HHs rose to BDT 18,056 from BDT 12,910 (a 40% increase). Income increases among HHs within the target area who did not receive grants (semi-control) were similar to the pure-control. In real terms, i.e., income adjusted for inflation increased by 46% for the treatment group and 8% and 10%, respectively, for the pure control and semi-control groups. In net terms, these figures translate into a DiD impact of a 35% statistically significant (p-value < 0.001) increase in income (see Figure 3).

6.4.1.8. The majority of the treatment group includes direct grant recipients, such as business grants. While business grants allow treatment HHs to invest in growth opportunities, there was no statistically significant increase in the "business as primary occupation" metric. However, the proportion of treatment HHs listing business as a primary occupation rose by 3.3%. Nevertheless, the programme enabled wider market access for business grant receivers, allowing them to reach more customers and increase sales and revenue (see discussion on income increases in the preceding paragraph). Furthermore, apprenticeship training and capacity development added an income-earning member to 73% of the apprenticeship grant recipient HHs within six months of training completion. Infrastructure development lowered business costs (18%) and enhanced access to markets and services (65%). Lastly, the decrease in the proportion of homemakers [6.5% gross and 2.3 net impact (not statistically significant; p>0.1); Table 25 in Annexe 8] in the HHs indicates the inclusion of women in income-earning activities, added to the HH income.

Figure 6. HH income at different survey periods (BDT)



6.4.1.9. **Factors Contributing to Income Increase:** To explore the effect of different NUPRP project components in influencing the increase in income, Table 4 provides results based on two regression specifications. The first panel (panel 4a) compares NUPRP treatment beneficiaries to the pure control group. It essentially replicates the results displayed in Figure 6 – that is, over time, the effect of participating in the NUPRP leads to a statistically significant 35% increase in household income (4480/12910). To explore the contribution of each of the specific project components, the results in Table 4 (panel 4b) provide estimates controlling for beneficiary participation in specific interventions. These estimates yield two key findings. First, even after controlling for receiving a specific grant, there is a large effect of NUPRP. This implies that residing in an area where the NUPRP is active, even if a respondent did not receive a direct grant, has a large positive effect on income (26% increase – 3354/12909). This may be interpreted as the joint effort of multiple NUPRP-related livelihood initiatives after controlling for being a recipient of a specific grant. Second, access to business and apprenticeship grants had a large positive effect on HH income, as did access to nutritional benefits. The direct contribution of SIF and CRMIF infrastructures to income is not evident and is perhaps captured in the overall NUPRP effect. Respondent participation in preparing the community action plan is also associated with a higher income due to increased income. (Table 4).

Table 4: Effect of NUPRP and various project components on income

Panel 4a	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf Interval]	Sig
Endline	5146.578	1533.106	3.36	.001	2141.277 8151.879	***
NUPRP	4479.673	1748.955	1.93	.053	-67.31 7706.197	*
Constant	12909.763	1084.07	11.91	.000	10784.695 15034.832	***
R-squared		0.015	Number of obs			7772
F-test		40.200	Prob > F			0.000

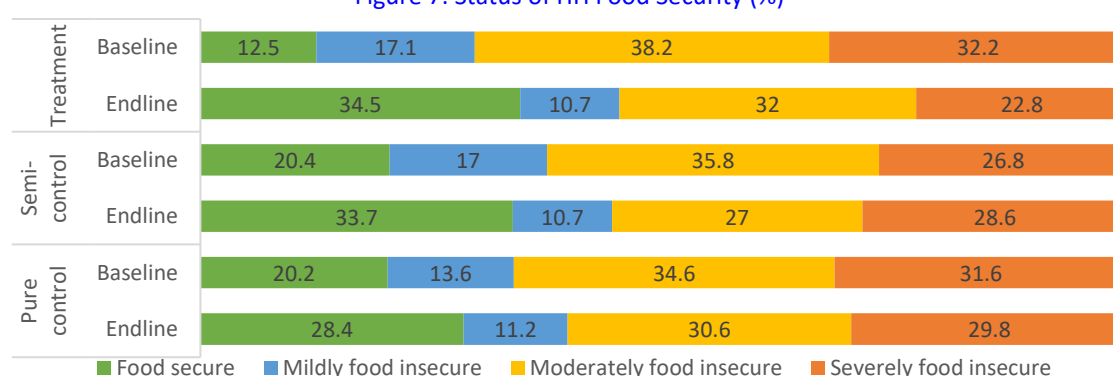
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

Panel 4b	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Endline	5146.578	1530.944	3.36	.001	2145.514	8147.642	***
NUPRP	3354.244	1762.424	1.90	.057	-100.582	6809.071	*
Business grant	6509.812	1393.896	4.67	.000	3777.4	9242.225	***
Apprenticeship grant	4522.907	1573.918	2.87	.004	1437.603	7608.212	***
Education grant	2692.79	1399.399	1.92	.054	-50.41	5435.99	*
Nutrition benefit	4773.424	1607.646	2.97	.003	1622.004	7924.844	***
CAP participation	3865.518	1837.03	2.10	.035	264.444	7466.591	**
CRMIF infrastructure	1683.096	1983.785	0.85	.396	-2205.658	5571.851	
WASH infrastructure	1644.586	1933.467	0.85	.395	-2145.53	5434.703	
Other infrastructure	-93.122	2076.004	-0.04	.964	-4162.65	3976.405	
Constant	12909.763	1082.541	11.93	.000	10787.69	15031.836	***
R-squared		0.019	Number of obs			7772	
F-test		13.717	Prob > F			0.000	

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

6.4.1.10. Food Security: Income increases open the door for food security, which, in turn, supports economic productivity and stability, forming a virtuous cycle. The net impact of the programme on HH food security (that is, the share of households indicating that they were food secure) rose by about 14% ($p < 0.05$) (please see Table 5 in Annexe 8 for details). Nutrition awareness activities, coupled with increased income, brought changes in food consumption patterns, which the treatment HHs could turn into practice with their increased real income. As a result, the household dietary diversity score (HDDS) rose in treatment HHs to 7.2 from 6.1 (Table 5 in Annexe 8) at baseline ($p < 0.05$), with an increase in protein consumption as the key dietary intake change. One-to-one/group counselling with pregnant and lactating women improved critical nutrition-related behaviour and practices, such as higher percentages of 6-23-month-old children receiving adequate dietary diversity and meal frequency [a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) net improvement of 47%]. The counselling increased knowledge and practice among reproductive-aged women about protein consumption. As a result of the knowledge and economic capacity improvement, pregnant and lactating mothers in the treatment area, to a large extent, are still consuming protein regularly (90.8% compared to 34.4% at baseline, yielding a statistically net impact of 10% ($p < 0.05$)) and are also arranging protein-rich food for their 6-23-month-old children [91.8% compared to 31.9% at baseline, yielding a statistically net impact of 25.7% ($p < 0.01$)]. For details, please see Tables 13, 14, 15, and 16 in Annexe 8. Women's increased ability to make HH decisions, food purchases due to their income-earning capacity, increased mobility (please see Table 20 in Annexe 8), and nutrition knowledge contributed to food security.

Figure 7: Status of HH Food Security (%)



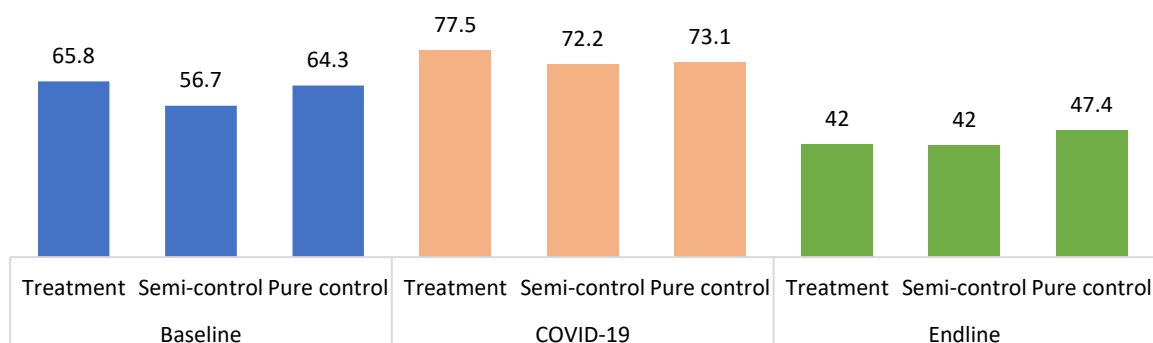
6.4.1.11. Factors Contributing to Increased Food Security: Similar to the analysis of the effect of NUPRP on income discussed above, we provide estimates based on two specifications. The first specification replicates the results in Figure 7 and shows that NUPRP beneficiaries are 14 percentage points more likely to indicate that they are food secure than the control group (panel 5a). The results in panel 5b show that a number of the individual NUPRP interventions have had a positive effect on food security. Most prominently, the effect may be attributed to the business and apprenticeship grants- and the nutrition corners-related grant, with participation in CAP playing a smaller role.

Table 5: Contributing factors to the increase in food security

Panel 5a	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Endline	.081	.02	4.16	.000	.043	.119	***
NUPRP	.14	.022	6.27	.000	.096	.183	***
Constant	.203	.014	14.74	.000	.176	.23	***
R-squared		0.054	Number of obs			7772	
F-test		147.594	Prob > F			0.000	
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$							
Panel 5b	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Endline (Post)	.081	.019	4.17	.000	.043	.119	***
NUPRP	.274	.032	8.63	.000	.212	.336	***
Business grant	.044	.018	2.48	.013	.009	.079	**
Apprenticeship grant	.069	.02	3.45	.001	.03	.108	***
Education grant	.022	.018	1.22	.223	-.013	.057	
Nutrition benefit	.008	.02	0.39	.694	-.032	.048	
CAP participation	.052	.023	2.23	.026	.006	.098	*
CRMIF infrastructure	.063	.025	2.50	.012	.014	.112	**
Nutrition Awareness	.054	.025	2.20	.028	.006	.102	*
Nutrition corners	.104	.026	3.92	.000	.052	.156	***
WASH infrastructure	-.133	.024	-5.48	.000	-.181	-.085	***
Other infrastructure	-.015	.027	-0.56	.577	-.068	.038	
Constant	.203	.014	14.80	.000	.176	.23	***
R-squared		0.062	Number of obs			7772	
F-test		39.603	Prob > F			0.000	
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$							

6.4.1.12. Poverty Reduction: The treatment group's average monthly expenditure increased from BDT 10,123 to BDT 16,252, while the pure control group experienced an increase from BDT 9,338 to BDT 14,757. The semi-control group's expenditure rose from BDT 10,618 to BDT 15,047. The net impact of HH expenditure stands at BDT 710 (please see Table 2 in Annexe 8 for details), which is about a 7% increase compared to the baseline, which is statistically significant at the 10% level ($p=0.08$). Notably, food expenditure constituted a substantial portion of total expenditure, with food expenditure shares remaining high, albeit slightly decreasing, indicating a relative increase in non-food spending. The incidence of poverty, viewed from the national poverty line, decreased across all groups. Households below the national upper poverty line in the treatment group dropped from 65.8% to 42.1% (please see Table 4 in Annexe 8 for details), a 24% statistically significant decrease ($p < 0.01$). Poverty in the semi-control and pure-control groups also fell, albeit to a lesser extent. The net impact of HH poverty decrease is 7.0%, which is statistically significant at the 10% level ($p=0.07$)¹²⁶. The greater decrease in poverty in the treatment group is a combined effect of statistically significant income increase due to livelihood improvement activities and infrastructure development (already specified earlier in this section). Furthermore, the decrease in HH unemployment [5.5% net impact ($p=0.06$), Table 6 in Annexe 8] contributed to the poverty decrease. The poverty decrease among the skill-building and business development grant-receiving HH is more pronounced as these HHs receive 31% of the HH income from the newly employed HH members receiving those benefits.

Figure 8: HH poverty based on national poverty line at different survey periods (%)



6.4.1.13. Factors Contributing to Poverty Reduction: The 7 percentage point reduction in poverty (panel 6a) may be attributed mainly to the apprenticeship and education grants (panel 6b).

Table 6: Contributing factors to poverty reduction

Panel 6a	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Endline	.369	.02	18.20	.000	.329	.409	***
NUPRP	.067	.023	2.90	.004	.022	.112	***
Constant	.157	.014	10.93	.000	.129	.185	***
R-squared	0.194		Number of obs		7772		
F-test	622.975		Prob > F		0.000		

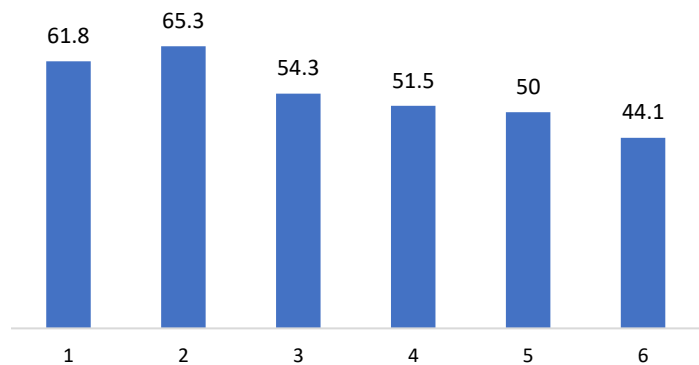
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

Panel 6b	Coefficient	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
Endline	.369	.02	18.23	.000	.329	.409	***
NUPRP	.074	.033	2.25	.024	.01	.139	**
Business grant	.017	.018	0.93	.351	-.019	.053	
Apprenticeship grant	.044	.021	2.10	.036	.003	.085	**
Education grant	.041	.019	2.23	.026	.005	.078	**
Nutrition benefit	-.005	.021	-0.24	.813	-.047	.037	
CAP participation	-.008	.026	-0.31	.759	-.059	.043	**
CRMIF infrastructure	-.029	.024	-1.21	.226	-.077	.018	
WASH infrastructure	.017	.025	0.67	.504	-.033	.066	
Other infrastructure	-.021	.028	-0.76	.445	-.077	.034	
Constant	.157	.014	10.95	.000	.129	.185	***
R-squared	0.198		Number of obs		7772		
F-test	147.440		Prob > F		0.000		

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

6.4.1.14. Resilience: Economic improvements translated into greater access to banking systems. A greater portion of beneficiary HHs, especially women, have an account and larger savings. The savings and credit group formation within the CDC contributed to saving behaviour, leading to improved resilience in case of a disaster. It increased the ability to survive and/or restore regular living standards much quicker than without savings. Programme infrastructure reduced the suffering of climate-induced disasters as the incidence of suffering from natural disasters decreased significantly over the programme period. Towards the programme's end, 51.5% of HHs within the target area faced disaster compared to 63% at baseline. The programme covered HHs that resided in more vulnerable areas according to the mapping exercise, and the developed infrastructure benefited the HHs in the treatment and control areas. Hence, the net impact on HHs affected by climate-related disasters is only 0.2%, which is not statistically significant ($p > 0.1$). However, the average recovery time following a natural disaster also decreased significantly to 20 days [a net impact of 8.6 days, statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)] compared to 27 days at baseline (please see Table 8 in Annexe 8 for details). The income increases and the capacity to make higher savings enabled treatment HHs to be more resilient to disaster (please see Table 1 and 9 in Annexe 8 for details).

Figure 9: Urban slum HHs affected by climate-related disasters (%)



6.4.1.15. Education: The introduction of education grants was a positive intervention for many HHs and school-going girls who were at risk of dropping out of school or facing early marriage due to their inability to keep up with educational expenses. During COVID-19, local and citywide-level urban poor community leaders expressed concerns about the threat of dropping out of school. However, the education grantees completed their school during COVID-19. Though there is no dropout incidence among the education grant beneficiary HHs, there are

incidences of dropout among other households in the treatment area (3.7%); however, it is less pronounced than in the control area (7.4%) [a 3.0% net impact in reducing dropout, not significant ($p>0.1$), (please see Table 22 in Annexe 8 for details). Some initial beneficiaries (2%) have now enrolled in 4-year graduation courses. Establishing the community support group, Safe Community Committee (SCC), for community-level action is reported to have contributed towards reducing early marriage and retaining girls in school.

Group discussant point of view of education grant:

“Our children would have dropped out of school if they had not received support from NUPRP during COVID-19.”

-- Education Grant Beneficiaries, Faridpur

An additional impact of education grant distribution is the increased rate of enrolment in schools. School enrolment has improved for both girls and boys. During the endline survey, 91% of children of school-going age in the target area were enrolled in a school, while it was 85% at baseline. In contrast, in the control area, enrolment decreased slightly [a net impact of 6.8%, statistically significant ($p<0.1$) (please see Table 24 in Annexe 8 for details)]. This change in the treatment area is a notable achievement because, during COVID-19, three out of five students were at risk of dropping out. Apart from the education grants, the savings activity also contributed to continuing education for many girls and boys. The SCG members, in many instances, provided loans to cover expenses for admission and education supplies.

6.4.1.16. MPI Score: During COVID-19, distress selling was identified in around one in every ten treatment HHs, similar to semi-control and pure control HHs. The endline survey identified that the majority of the treatment HHs regained their assets by the end of the programme. The MPI score, a combination of education, health, and living standards (please see Table 7 in Annexe 8 for details), has decreased (i.e., a decrease in the MPI score means a poverty reduction). Improvement in sanitation, increased access to safe water, improved superstructure, higher enrolment of school-going children (mentioned earlier), and improved asset possession (TV, telephone, bike, refrigerator, or motorbike) contributed to the MPI score decrease (please see Tables 11, 12, 19, and 24 in Annexe 8 for details). The average MPI score among treatment HHs was reduced to 9.31 from 24.19 at baseline; among pure control HHs, it was 15.67 from 26.80. The net change in the MPI score is significant ($p<0.01$), displaying a positive impact of the livelihood improvement initiative. Similar changes are also reflected in the net change for HCR (net decrease: 3.4%, $p=0.08$) and the intensity (net decrease: 11.81) and severity.

Figure 10: HHs with decreased MPI score (%)

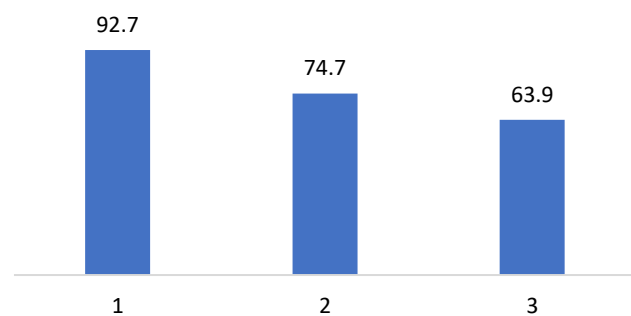
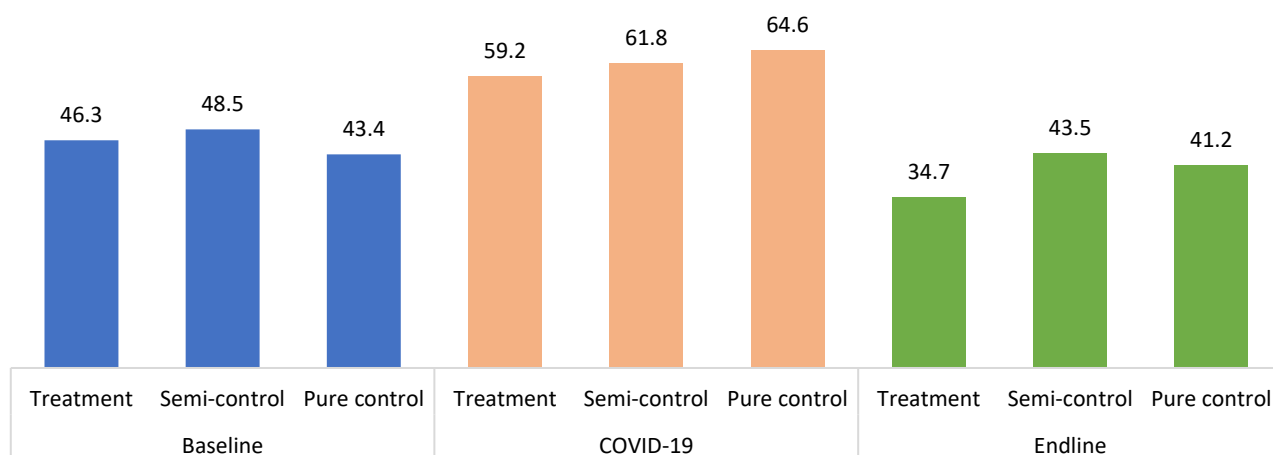


Table 7: Multidimensional Poverty Index Impact

Multidimensional Poverty index	Baseline			Endline		
	Treatment	Semi-control	Pure control	Treatment	Semi-control	Pure control
Average MPI Score	24.19	24.88	26.80	9.31	13.96	15.67
HCR (%)	30.1	29.5	35.2	0.9	5.2	8.6
n	2986	522	900	2986	522	900
Intensity of deprivation	25.66	25.59	30.65	3.37	13.40	20.17
Severity of deprivation	13.15	13.32	17.53	.99	5.14	4.60
n	899	154	317	28	27	77

6.4.1.17. Violence Against Women and Girls: Safe Community Committees (SCCs) across 19 cities and towns focused on preventing Violence Against Women and Girls and Early Marriage. The project records indicate that the SCCs prevented early marriages (resolved 74 out of 101 early marriage cases encountered) through counselling and discussion at the community level when and where they were approached. Supported by local police stations and legal aid service providers, the SCCs organised awareness sessions and public hearings on gender-based violence and legal aid services. The incidence of abuse and violence decreased by 11.6% in treatment HHs; in contrast, it decreased by 2.2% in pure control HHs, yielding a statistically significant net impact of 9.4% ($p<0.05$) (please see Table 18 in Annexe 8 for details).

Figure 11: Incidence of abuse and violence on adolescent girls or women in HH (%)



6.4.1.18. Furthermore, there is a statistically significant increase in women's participation in decision-making regarding financial activities. Participation in decision-making regarding involvement in income-generating activities and household asset possession increased, indicating enhanced empowerment. The net programme impact in this regard was 19.8% ($p < 0.01$). For details, please see Table 20 in Annexe 8.

6.4.1.19. **Low-Cost Housing and CHDF:** The NUPRP piloted low-cost housing options with government support to improve the housing conditions of urban poor communities and increase their resistance against vulnerabilities related to public health and climate change. Four local governments started building affordable housing units in June 2021. Despite progress, beneficiary selection is yet to be completed.

Table 8. Summary of the ongoing low-cost housing

Town Name	Site Size (Acre)	Number of Buildings	Number of Floors	Number of Units	Unit Size (Sft)
Chandpur	1.19	2	5	88	221 (267, For Especially abled)
Gopalganj	3.45	4	5	336	220 (267, For Especially abled)
Kushtia	2.0424	4	4	120	220 (267, For Especially abled)
Noakhali	0.51	6	4	102	234 (335, For Especially abled)

6.4.1.20. Community Housing Development Fund (CHDF), a member-based organisation at the city/town level, is run by local leaders to enhance housing conditions and tenure security for the urban poor. CHDF follows guidelines (prepared by NUPRP) in three city corporations (Chattogram, Narayanganj, and Rajshahi), has accreditation from LGI, and is registered with the government regulatory authority. CHDF uses a revolving fund to distribute financial resources. CHDF supports those deemed unworthy by official financial institutions due to a lack of assets (as collateral). NUPRP supports the CHDF with capacity development and human resources to carry out the services. CHDF is accessible to all HHs in a town/city. CHDF benefited 1,445 eligible beneficiaries with loans totalling BDT 81.5 million (cumulative). Improvement in housing conditions is noted in 12% of city/town households (see Table 19 in Annexe 8).

6.4.1.21. **Settlement Improvement Fund (SIF):** NUPRP created a grant-based SIF to fund priority infrastructure investments in low-income settlements, such as improvements to access roads, reservoirs, latrines, drains, and pathways, which, as mentioned earlier, improved access to essential utilities like clean water, sanitation, and drainage for the urban poor. The SIF infrastructures prioritised climate-resilient infrastructure, adhered to CAPs, improved accessibility for people with disabilities and addressed the needs of women and girls.

Table 9. Summary of SIF Interventions by year

Year	Infrastructure Intervention*		Sanitation Intervention**		Water Intervention***	
	Facilities	Beneficiaries	Facilities	Beneficiaries	Facilities	Beneficiaries
2018	619	27,410	672	11,282	44	2,375
2019	5,117	359,641	3,803	94,633	759	66,505
2020	2,941	299,793	1,996	44,260	699	61,216
2021	1,737	367,668	815	22,034	324	33,124

Year	Infrastructure Intervention*		Sanitation Intervention**		Water Intervention***	
	Facilities	Beneficiaries	Facilities	Beneficiaries	Facilities	Beneficiaries
2022	2,366	372,011	974	45,541	626	109,599
2023	197	46,423	74	10,465	134	25,594
Total	12,977	1,472,946	8,334	228,215	2,586	298,413

* **Infrastructure Facilities** - Building Contracts (Community Resource Center), Crossing Bridge, Culvert Railing, Drain and/or Culvert, Drain Slab and/or Road Slab, Dustbin, Footpath, Garbage Management, Non-solar Street light, Road, Solar Street light, Stair.
** **Sanitation Facilities** - Bathroom, Community Latrine, FSM system, Septic Tank, Single pit latrine, Twin pit latrine.
*** **Water Facilities** - Deep Tubewell, Deep tubewell with submersible pump, Deep-set Tubewell, Piped water supply, Rain Water Harvesting, Shallow Tubewell, Tubewell Platforms, Water Reservoirs.

6.4.1.22. Climate Resilient Municipal Infrastructure Fund (CRMIF): The CRMIF is an attempt to support cities and towns in securing sufficient finance for pro-poor and climate-resilient infrastructure. CRMIF undertook 21 infrastructure projects (completed 20, and one project is still ongoing in Khulna City Corporation) through co-funding mechanisms in selected cities and towns (cities that are more vulnerable to climate shocks). Infrastructures have played a crucial role in enhancing climate resilience by enabling communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from climate-related shocks and stresses, as described earlier. Effective drainage systems and flood barriers decreased flooding and waterlogging (Table 27 in Annexe 8). Infrastructure development supported the livelihood improvements described earlier (income and savings increase, improved food security, and decreased unemployment), enabling the targeted urban poor community to withstand climate shocks to a greater extent.

6.5. Programme's Sustainability

NUPRP has laid the basis for sustainable long-term impact beyond the end of the programme; however, continued investment and commitment are needed.

6.5.1.1. NUPRP has laid a solid foundation for the sustainability of its interventions across environmental, social, and financial dimensions. The programme's strategic design aligns with broader development frameworks and focuses on empowering communities and local governments, setting the stage for long-term impact. However, the sustainability of these gains will depend on addressing the remaining challenges, particularly in securing land tenure, completing housing projects, and ensuring the financial viability of critical components. Continued investment in capacity building, financial support, infrastructure maintenance, and a strong commitment from national and local stakeholders will be essential to ensure that the programme's successes are sustained and expanded in the future.

Box 6.11: LG official and Community perception of NUPRP of sustainability

*"NUPRP Town Office implemented all the interventions in consultation with us. Our mayor guided town offices."
-- A City Corporation Official, Rajshahi CC*

*"We directed the NUPRP town office about implementing because it is a government project."
-- A City Corporation Official, Dhaka South CC*

*"NUPRP taught us a lot in the past few years. We are now starting to practice the learnings in our lives. A longer presence of NUPRP would have made the socio-economic and infrastructure-related changes more sustainable."
-- A Town Federation Member, Gopalganj*

6.5.1.2. Environmental/Contextual Sustainability: The NUPRP has made substantial progress in promoting sustainable urban development and pro-poor governance, which is crucial for the long-term viability of its interventions. The programme has effectively fostered a supportive policy environment at the national level through strategic collaboration with the Local Government Division (LGD) and by systematically developing a network that includes critical policy influencers such as the HBRI, BIP, and BUET¹²⁷. The programme's design, which integrates urban poor communities into decision-making processes, ensures that these groups have a continuous role in shaping their environments. Combined with strong alignment with national and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Bangladesh's Five-Year Plans, this participatory approach positions the programme for sustained impact. Moreover, the programme's ability to adapt to challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights its resilience and the robustness of its strategic planning. However, the sustainability of these efforts will largely depend on the ongoing commitment and

engagement of national and local stakeholders, particularly in ensuring that climate-resilient planning and infrastructure projects, such as low-cost housing, are completed and maintained over time.

6.5.1.3. Social Sustainability: Social sustainability has been a standout success of the NUPRP, mainly through its community mobilisation, leadership development, and the empowerment of marginalised groups, including women and persons with disabilities. The programme has significantly strengthened social cohesion and improved governance at the municipal level by establishing and revitalising Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). These CBOs have become critical platforms for the urban poor to voice their concerns, influence local policies, and ensure their needs are addressed¹²⁸. The programme's success in fostering women's leadership has not only enhanced gender equality but has also ensured that these social structures are likely to endure beyond the programme's lifecycle. Integrating Community Action Plans (CAPs) into city development plans is a powerful indicator of social sustainability, as it institutionalises the voices and priorities of urban poor communities in municipal governance. However, such groups' ongoing capacity building and support will be essential to maintain these social gains, particularly as they transition to operating independently without the programme's direct support.

6.5.1.4. Financial Sustainability: Financial sustainability has been a critical focus of the NUPRP, strategically leveraging resources to promote the financial self-sufficiency of poor urban communities. The programme's financial management has been commendable, effectively navigating challenges such as budget cuts and rising inflation. Key to this success has been the establishment of revolving funds, co-sharing mechanisms, and the CHDF, all designed to provide ongoing financial support for housing and community needs. These financial instruments are intended to continue functioning beyond the programme's end, ensuring that communities can sustain and expand on the improvements made. However, some components, such as housing and tenure security, may require continued investment and support to address emerging challenges, such as rising construction costs and securing long-term land tenure for marginalised groups¹²⁹. The sustainability of these financial mechanisms will depend on the continued capacity of local governments and CBOs to manage and maintain them effectively.

6.5.1.5. Challenges to Sustainability: Despite the programme's successes, several challenges could impact the sustainability of its interventions. The slow progress in securing land tenure and completing low-cost housing projects remains a significant concern. These issues and the need for ongoing capacity building for local governments and CBOs highlight the importance of continued financial and technical support to ensure that the programme's achievements are sustained and expanded. Additionally, the lack of resources and competing priorities in the post-programme period poses a risk to the sustained impact of the NUPRP's interventions, particularly in areas requiring significant investment, such as housing and infrastructure. Furthermore, the programme's success in promoting pro-poor urban policies and climate resilience will depend on the ongoing commitment of both national and local stakeholders, without which the gains made could be jeopardised.

6.5.1.6. Opportunities for Sustainability: The NUPRP has created numerous opportunities to sustain its impact, particularly through its strategic alignment with national development goals and its emphasis on multi-sectoral collaboration. The programme has successfully integrated pro-poor and climate-sensitive planning into municipal processes, which should ensure that these priorities remain embedded in local governance and offer a solid foundation for long-term sustainability. The experience and lessons from the programme's implementation provide valuable knowledge to inform future urban poverty reduction and climate resilience initiatives within Bangladesh and in similar contexts globally. Additionally, establishing financial mechanisms like the CHDF¹³⁰ and SIF offers replicable models that can be expanded to support ongoing urban development efforts. The programme's focus on building robust governance structures at the municipal level, combined with its successful engagement of local stakeholders, positions it well for continued impact. Moving forward, leveraging these strengths and targeted support for areas that have faced challenges will be crucial in ensuring that the programme's achievements are sustained and scaled.

Major factors influencing the sustainability of NUPRP interventions.

- **6.5.1.7. Alignment with National and Global Frameworks:** The programme's design is closely aligned with the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) policies and United Nations (UN) targets, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Bangladesh's Five-Year Plans. This alignment ensures that the programme's

Outcomes are consistent with broader development priorities, contributing to the long-term sustainability of its interventions.

- **6.5.1.8. Multi-layered Stakeholder Engagement:** The strategic engagement of stakeholders at multiple levels—community, municipal, and national—has been crucial in securing ownership and commitment to the programme's Outcomes. It includes the involvement of local government institutions, community-based organisations (CBOs), and national stakeholders, attempting to continue to support and maintain the programme's initiatives beyond its duration.
- **6.5.1.9. Policy Advocacy:** The programme's national-level policy advocacy worked towards GoB ownership of the programme's investments and Outputs, significantly influencing a coordinated and strategic approach to inclusive, climate-smart urban development.
- **6.5.1.10. Institutionalisation and Capacity Building:** The programme has successfully institutionalised CHDF and promoted climate-resilient urban planning. This institutionalisation and capacity-building efforts for local governments and CBOs enhance the likelihood that these structures will continue to function effectively after the programme concludes.
- **6.5.1.11. Financial Mechanisms for Housing and Infrastructure:** Establishing financial mechanisms like the CHDF, SIF, and CRMIF (including the O&M fund management mechanism) has provided a strong financial foundation for sustaining housing and infrastructure developments. However, further capacity-building of CHDF management is necessary to ensure that these financial mechanisms continue functioning effectively in the long term.
- **6.5.1.12. Community Empowerment:** The programme has empowered urban poor communities, particularly through the development of CBO Networks and their integration into urban governance. This empowerment has strengthened social cohesion and improved governance at the municipal level, ensuring that the programme's benefits are likely to persist.
- **6.5.1.13. Data Resources:** The programme's generation of valuable data through City Poverty-Ward Poverty Mapping (CP-WPM), Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA) will continue to serve as critical resources for informed planning and actions to address poverty and climate change.

The institutional mechanisms and policies are in place to sustain the impact of NUPRP's interventions.

6.5.1.14. Management Transition and National-Level Sustainability: UNDP has transitioned its managerial responsibilities to the Local Government Division (LGD), which is now responsible for overseeing the sustainability and long-term impact of the programme's interventions. At the national level, the programme supported preparing the National Urban Policy (NUP) draft, which LGD is expected to finalise by the end of 2024. This finalisation is crucial for sustaining the programme's national-level impact. The programme also organised high-level policy dialogues on climate-induced displacement and climate resilience, though the effectiveness of these dialogues in influencing national policy remains unclear.

6.5.1.15. Municipality-Level Sustainability: The programme's advocacy successfully increased pro-poor budget allocation and spending at the municipality level. Municipal officials have committed to maintaining and potentially increasing these allocations, indicating the sustainability of the programme's advocacy efforts. The participation of urban poor representatives in multi-sectoral committees will continue, which is vital for ensuring their voices are heard in municipal planning and governance.

6.5.1.16. Community-Level Sustainability: The institutionalised CBO Network is expected to continue managing climate-resilient infrastructures and funds established under the programme. The CBO leaders expressed confidence in their ability to influence local government planning and governance. However, concerns remain about the sustainability of Community Development Committees (CDCs), CDC Clusters, and Town Federations (TFs), particularly regarding management costs, fund management risks, mutual trust, and political support. The dissolution of nearly half of the Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) before the programme's end further highlights these challenges.

The capacities of community organisations and local government institutions have been strengthened at the local and municipal governance levels.

6.5.1.17. The programme also focused on capacity building by providing targeted training to CBO leaders and municipal officials. The capacity development training was well-received. The training enabled the CBO leaders to strengthen their skills and relationships with municipal officials, empowering them to influence local governance by participating in ward-to-town-level multi-sectoral committees and integrating their voices into Urban Local Governance (ULG). The programme's efforts to connect town-level CBO Networks with City Corporations and Municipalities facilitated community participation in urban planning and decision-making, promoting inclusive governance. However, the long-term impact of these efforts will rely on the continued engagement of community organisations and municipal officials to sustain these partnerships and maintain the inclusion of urban poor voices in governance.

Partnerships established at all levels may be expected to contribute to scaling up and sustaining the programme interventions.

6.5.1.18. Within the programme, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) were actively engaged in various activities, including mapping, listing, CAP development, participation in multi-sectoral committees, and management of O&M for WASH and mobility infrastructures. These activities facilitated the development of strong organisational and interpersonal relationships between CBOs and municipal offices, fostering collaboration between community organisations and municipal officials. Elected municipal officials were similarly engaged in programme activities. This mutual engagement has led to functional partnerships, contributing to more organised, planned, sustainable, and inclusive urban planning, development, and governance.

6.5.1.19. However, continuing these partnerships relies on mutual willingness, trust, cooperation, and ongoing collaboration. The MAB presents a potential platform for scaling up these municipal-level partnerships to the national level. However, its scope does not yet include connecting all CBO Networks across the 19 programme towns. To enhance sustainability, the existing CBO Networks could be connected with national-level urban poor associations to establish stronger partnerships between CBO Networks and MAB, supporting national-level advocacy for pro-poor urban planning and governance. The programme has established a network with HBRI, BIP, and BUET. Still, these connections have not been extended to the CBO Networks and municipalities in the programme towns. Relying solely on Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreements is an insufficient basis for ensuring sustainability. Strengthening these connections, potentially within the remaining programme period, is crucial for sustaining the programme's Outcomes.

6.5.1.20. Additionally, the lack of engagement with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) is a significant gap, as these agencies are essential for mainstreaming housing and tenure security for urban poor communities into national decision-making processes. Addressing this gap is vital for the long-term sustainability of the programme's impact.

6.6. Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Leaving No One Behind

6.6.1. Programme Promoted Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The programme promoted positive changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.

6.6.1.1. NUPRP is a women-centred programme. Almost all primary group (PG) members are women, as are most grant recipients (women and girls received around 87% of the grant benefits). The programme prioritises women and girls for education (reducing early marriage), nutrition, business and skill-development grants. Male beneficiaries only received skill development grants, and boys received grants to reduce school dropouts. The programme's education grants prevented early and forced marriage of girls (see paragraph 6.4.1.5), which contributed to promoting gender equality. Nutrition grant support has helped improve the health and nutrition (please see Annexe Table 13 to 16 in Annexe 8) of pregnant and lactating mothers and their children up to 24 months old¹³¹. WASH infrastructure supports improved WASH access for women and girls, improving their privacy and access to basic services. Business grants and skill development grants improved the livelihood of women, which, in the process, economically empowered them. Communication infrastructures improved the mobility and movement security of women and girls¹³². NUPRP is also women-led as community organisations (CDCs, CDC Clusters and TFs) of urban women are the main drivers of community and municipality-level implementation of the programme interventions. CBO Network is also women-led and women-centred since all

members are women. Savings and Credit Groups (SCGs) and Safe Community Committees (SCCs) are also women-led and women-centred.

6.6.1.2. The NUPRP community platforms comprise primary group members, primarily females, who have created CDCs, CDC clusters, and a federation at the city level. Through these structures, women defined community priorities, supported the targeting of socioeconomic programmes, and played a role in procuring and implementing infrastructure in the community. Women raised their voices about community development and social cohesion upon receiving capacity development support from NUPRP. The evaluation indicates that 61% of CDCs, 70% of CDC clusters, and 84% of Town federations are fully effective through women's leadership (Table 3). Women managed 24,662 SCGs with 370,313 members (Table 3).

6.6.1.3. Women and girls received the bulk (more than two-thirds) of apprenticeship grants, and to reduce early marriage, school/college-going girls received all the education grants. The project also introduced SCCs to minimise gender-based violence (GBV) and Early Forced Marriages (EFM) that extended access to district legal cells. The SCCs identified 871 cases of GBV and resolved 86% (746) of them at the community level, referring the remaining 14% (125 cases) to legal aid and law enforcement agencies. The SCC encountered 101 cases of early marriage and managed to resolve 74 cases. The communities have extended access to district legal cells. Many SCCs have established linkages with police stations and legal aid organisations apart from conducting awareness sessions and public hearings on gender-based violence and legal aid services.

6.6.1.4. Women and girls received one-to-one counselling on nutrition knowledge, and 28,524 pregnant and lactating women received nutrition benefits. Also, the women business grantees established nutrition corners, increasing accessibility to hygiene and nutrition products.

6.6.1.5. The group discussants (women) expressed that their decision-making ability within the household has been enhanced, as evidenced by the decline in the incidence of violence, higher participation in decision-making, and increased mobility (Please see Tables 28 to 31 in Annexe 8). Capacity development and participation in community development allowed them to learn about the world beyond their domestic tasks, enabling them to have informed discussions at the HH and community and participate in decision-making. The CDC and TF leaders participated at town and national levels, aiding in strategising for a resilient community and social development alongside other stakeholders.

6.6.1.6. Unintended effects of the programme interventions on women, men and vulnerable groups: Institutional capacity and leadership development support by the programme for women of CDCs, CDC Clusters, and TFs empowered them (level of confidence and communication enhanced) to be vocal on other platforms beyond the programme. Community organisation's participation in multisectoral platforms of city corporations and municipalities also helped to mainstream the voices of poverty and climate-vulnerable marginalised social groups.

Gender equality and women's empowerment have been addressed in the programme's design, implementation, and monitoring.

6.6.1.7. The theory of Change depicts how gender equality and women's empowerment are streamlined in the programme design (Chapter II and Annexe 4). The programme's women-focused and women-led initiatives ensure women's prioritisation in all aspects of its implementation. The programme staff and municipal officials are primarily men, but almost all CBO leaders are women who implemented the programme interventions at the community and municipal levels.

6.6.2. Programme's Benefits to Different Urban Social Groups

NUPRP's work benefited the urban poor, PWDs, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

6.6.2.1. The programme design and implementation modality targeted the needs of urban poor women and men, PWDs, and other marginalised groups through national and municipal-level advocacy, grant support for livelihood improvement, climate-resilient WASH and communication infrastructures. Through the programme, urban poor women and men, PWDs, and other marginalised groups are empowered through livelihood improvement and can represent their voices in ULG by participating in multisectoral committees. 371 HHs with PWDs received credit support. 1,011 HHs with PWDs received livelihoods, education, and nutrition grant

support from NUPRP. Overall, 2.44% of combined business and apprenticeship grant beneficiaries were from HHs with PWDs).

The programme is coherent with the issues of urban poor human rights and exclusion.

6.6.2.2. NUPRP addressed issues of urban poor human rights and exclusion by supporting CBO Networks' association with municipalities and sensitising LGI officials. The programme supported the formation of SCCs at the community level (a subset of CDC Clusters) to counter and prevent violence against women and girls. The education grant of the programme is mainly designed to prevent early and forced marriage, which violates the human rights of adolescent girls. The programme introduced MPI-score-based eligible beneficiary identification and selection for grant support and addressed the inclusion of marginalised groups in planning, development and governance.

PWDs consulted and meaningfully involved in the programme planning and implementation.

6.6.2.3. The programme promoted PWDs' participation in ULG's multisectoral platforms, ensuring their voices were incorporated into ULG planning and governance. NUPRP also prioritises eligible households with PWDs for grant support to improve their livelihood and well-being. The programme explicitly considers PWD accessibility when constructing WASH and communication infrastructures. The programme adopted the PWD accessibility requirement in low-cost housing design and committed to unit allocation priorities. A portion of all low-cost housing units are developed targeting PWDs (out of 646 units, around 40 are for PWDs). Households with PWD also prioritised the CHDF loan allocation. Combining CDC, Cluster, and TF, 1.5% of members were PWDs with decision-making positions in community structures.

NUPRP Interventions benefit goes beyond the NUPRP target groups

6.6.2.4. Marginalised communities in urban areas often remain invisible and lack support due to a lack of official recognition by government authorities, which leads to their exclusion from policy and planning discussions. The data and evidence-driven implementation strategy of NUPRP reflects the possibility of implementing pro-poor urban projects with targeting accuracy and community engagement. Capacity development and advocacy activities enabled the visibility of the urban poor/marginalised communities in NUPRP-targeted cities/towns. Such an approach may be replicated in other towns and cities.

6.6.2.5. NUPRP benefits are not limited to those receiving direct grants. The targeting followed specific criteria, not to exclude anyone eligible but preferences for those most vulnerable in the community. The awareness campaigns benefited all the community members. The SIF infrastructures benefited everyone in the community, regardless of age, gender, and ethnicity. The SCGs allowed participation beyond the PG groups, spreading resilience throughout the community. The CRMIF infrastructures benefited everyone within its geographic benefit range. As evidenced by the evaluation surveys, the reduction in climate vulnerability is not limited to any specific target groups.

6.7. Risk Assessment and Management

6.7.1.1. The programme identified strategic, political, financial, organisational, social, and environmental risks. NUPRP developed a risk assessment matrix for the programme (Annexe 10A). In every annual review, FCDO performed risk analysis. The risk assessment was developed based on UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards (Annexe 10B). With a view to sustainability, this Section provides a detailed risk assessment matrix following the programme template (Annexe 10A). The NUPRP closure in June 2024 necessitates a multi-pronged approach to ensure Bangladesh's urban development is sustainable.

Risk (category and type)	Probability/ Impact*	Mitigation
*L= Low, M= Medium, H= High		
Strategic		
An urban sector is crowded with urban sector development partners'	H/M	1. LGD will continue collaborating with development partners (UNDP, ADB, JICA, World Bank, etc.) to improve urban governance and infrastructure.

Risk (category and type)	Probability/ Impact*	Mitigation
*L= Low, M= Medium, H= High		
interventions that undermine planned delivery.		2. Advocate for streamlining urban sector interventions through national urban policy.
The project fails to engage effectively with those responsible for urban policy and has limited policy impact.	M/M	1. UNDP and LGD will jointly ensure that all the pertinent stakeholders are engaged in all stages of national urban planning. 2. Continue policy advocacy through the existing UNDP, BIP, BUET and HBRI networks. 3. Develop and disseminate knowledge products based on the programme experience to influence future policy.
Rapid urban growth in peri-urban areas beyond municipal administrative boundaries.	H/M	1. Municipal offices (city corporations and municipalities) should utilise learned practices in extended areas. 2. CBO network will expand coverage through community mobilisation in peri-urban areas. 3. Engaging other development partners is required to address the need for extended urban areas and existing and new urban centres.
Political		
GoB's commitment to a 'national programme' is tepid after early signs of commitment.	H/M	1. NUPRP, as a successor to UPPR-P, has demonstrated that the GoB ownership can be developed. 2. BIP, BUET, and HBRI will continue advocating for national urban policy in light of the national vision 2041: to become a high-income country, which will not be achievable without inclusive and sustainable climate-smart urbanisation. 3. UNDP and LGD must work on reviving BUF and scaling up its capacity and operations. 4. LGD to ensure finalisation and approval of the revised national urban policy draft.
Lack of coordination and/or significant differences within and between Ministries and ULGs.	H/M	1. LGD at the national level and municipal offices at the town level ensure that the urban development stakeholders' network exists and continues to perform. 2. Municipal Association Bangladesh (MAB) will support LGD in maintaining the network with government and non-government stakeholders related to urban planning, development, and governance. 3. Develop clear communication channels and protocols for collaboration between government, non-government, private sector and community stakeholders.
Political instability and deterioration in the political environment constrain the NUPRP's ability to influence national urban policy and the programme's operational implementation at the city/town level.	H/M	1. CBO Network of community organisations should be responsible for tangible benefits to urban communities to garner continued support. 2. Through representation in municipal offices' multisectoral committees, CBO Network will continue to influence political actors to be responsive and sensitive to the urban poor's agenda. 3. UNDP should foster partnerships with civil society and the private sector to advocate for supporting community organisations and owning good practices learned from the programme.
The ULGs are unable to adopt pro-poor policies because they are constrained by national policies and refuse or lack the capacity to take initiatives forward.	M/M	1. UNDP and LGD must continue advocating with GoB to finalise and adapt the national urban policy, which will remove national policy constraints. 2. UNDP and LGD must continue advocating with municipal offices to sensitise them further and gain buy-in to adopt pro-poor policies and actions.
Financial		
Fraud, corruption and misuse/misdirection of funds.	M/M	1. O&M committees formed at the municipal level will ensure O&M funds for infrastructure management, and CHDF should be used according to the Terms of Reference (ToR). 2. The municipal office should deploy at least one dedicated staff member to oversee the use of O&M funds.

Risk (category and type)	Probability/ Impact*	Mitigation
*L= Low, M= Medium, H= High		
		3. LGD, in collaboration with MAB, should perform routine monitoring of O&M funds and other remaining programme assets.
Slow growth in ULG revenues and/or ULG failure to allocate them to pro-poor/poverty-reducing activities.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate for increased resource allocation to ULGs from GoB. 2. Support ULGs in exploring innovative financing mechanisms (e.g., land value capture, public-private partnerships). 3. Intense and collaborative engagement of development partners for collective action towards eradicating poverty and strengthening climate resilience.
Resource allocation to climate change resilience funding interventions is insufficient against the needs and the incremental costs of adaptations.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate for increased budget allocation for climate change resilience measures. 2. Explore alternative funding sources (e.g., climate financing mechanisms) from development partners. 3. Extract green funding to address climate change-induced challenges of the urban centres of Bangladesh.
Organisational		
Political interference in measures to secure tenure.	H/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNDP continues to advocate with GoB to release government-owned land for low-cost housing. 2. Advocate for developing a Land Tenure Action Plan (LTAP) for urban centres targeting housing for all.
ULG does not have the capacity to manage the NUPRP process or undertake future pro-poor programmes.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNDP and LGD should engage other development partners to support targeted capacity development programmes for ULGs in governance, finance and planning. 2. Facilitate knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning among ULGs.
Social		
Slum populations grow faster than cities can cope.	H/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate slums and low-income settlements' upgradation strategy into broader urban development plans. 2. Accountable engagement of the National Housing Authority (NHA) to develop real housing access for poor urban people. 3. Promote inclusive and participatory planning processes that involve urban poor communities.
Gender inequality and social exclusion prevent girls from accessing the benefits of the programme.	L/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LGD, with development partners and municipal offices, should continue to support the women-led CBO Network of community organisations. 2. LGD, with development partners and municipal offices, should continue to support livelihood grant beneficiary women to protect and promote their income-generating activities (IGAs). 3. LGD, with development partners and municipal offices, should continue to support Safe Community Committees (SCCs) to keep the role of responding to early marriage and gender-based violence (GBV). 4. Disaggregate data to monitor the programme's impact on different social groups.
Powerful city-level stakeholders oppose the programme.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNDP and LGD continue to support the CBO Network of community organisations in countering opposition to anti-poor initiatives. 2. Highlight the programme's benefits for all urban residents. 3. Highlights the importance of urban poor development for inclusive and sustainable urban governance for all urban residents.
Community mobilisation processes are dominated by the elite and exclude key vulnerable groups.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LGD, development partners and municipal offices should continue to support the CBO Network of community organisations in all forms to continue community mobilisation. 2. LGD, development partners and municipal offices should continue strengthening the capacity of marginalised groups to participate in decision-making processes.
Environmental		

Risk (category and type)	Probability/ Impact*	Mitigation
*L= Low, M= Medium, H= High		
Impact of flooding and other natural hazards.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invest in infrastructure that enhances urban resilience (e.g., flood and water-logging protection measures). 2. Develop and implement emergency preparedness and response plans. 3. Develop alternative safe drinking water sources rather than surface-based sources.
Climate change localised data are unavailable or uncertain and make planning climate resilience measures difficult.	M/M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LGD, UNDP and other development partners support continuing Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) every three years to collect and analyse climate data 2. Develop flexible and adaptable climate resilience strategies.

6.7.1.2. There is a high probability that the presence of multiple development partners could undermine the programme's delivery. This can be mitigated by advocating for a streamlined national urban policy and engaging stakeholders effectively. Another significant risk involves rapid urban growth in peri-urban areas, which could exceed the capacity of municipal administrations. The programme can address this by enhancing community mobilisation and collaborating with other development partners.

6.7.1.3. Political risks, particularly concerning the Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) commitment and potential political instability, are high in probability and impact. The programme can mitigate these risks by maintaining strong relationships with local mayors and government officials and advocating for a national urban policy. Financial risks such as fraud, corruption, and misuse of funds are classified as medium, and the programme may counter these through robust financial management systems and innovative financing mechanisms.

6.7.1.4. Organisational risks include high risks of political interference in land tenure measures, which could disrupt efforts to secure affordable housing for the urban poor. The programme may advocate releasing government-owned land and developing a Land Tenure Action Plan. Social risks, particularly the rapid growth of slum populations and potential gender inequality, can be managed by integrating slum upgrading strategies and supporting women-led community organisations. Environmental risks, including those related to natural hazards and uncertain climate data, can be addressed through investments in urban-resilient infrastructure and ongoing climate vulnerability assessments.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSIONS, VISION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) is a complex and sprawling programme launched in 2018 and built on the experience of a previous programme, the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project (UPPR-P). The six-year-long programme (2018-2024) was implemented at the community, municipal (11 city corporations and eight municipalities), and national level and supported about 4 million poor urban residents. The programme targeted one of Bangladesh's most challenging ambitions: to become a high-income economy by 2041. According to Prodoc and DPP (and amendments), the programme has completed almost all envisaged activities.

The programme's journey was not smooth and began with a delay. Subsequently, the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020, at the peak of programme intervention, was a shock for the NUPRP. Despite these broad challenges and budgetary constraints (FCDO reduced the budget, and inflation led to increased programme costs), this endline evaluation supports the view that the programme maintained its momentum.

Based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee's (OECD-DAC) criteria, this evaluation systematically examined the programme's relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. It also examined the mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes: human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, and LNOB.

Methodologically, the report is based on a mixed-method approach and relies on data obtained from various sources. These include administrative data and review of programme documents, a two-round household level panel data- the primary source of quantitative data, and various methods to gather qualitative information. With a view to enable triangulation of findings, the evaluation ensured the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Document review covered the programme inception report, business case, VfM strategy, progress reports, research and diagnostic reports, annual reviews, strategy and operational documentation, reports from partners, and other relevant correspondence. The two-round (baseline and endline) household-level panel data gathered information on more than 4,500 households and used a difference-in-difference approach to identify impact. Qualitative information was gathered through Focus Group Discussions (30 FGD), In-Depth Interviews with CBO Leaders (35 IDIs), Key Informant Interviews (25 KIIs), and consultations with national and town officials of NUPRP in each town. Observation Checklists were used to document the state of community and municipal-level infrastructures developed through the project (190 randomly selected infrastructure projects).

Based on our reading of various documents and scrutiny of data, this concluding chapter offers a set of concluding remarks on each of the five NUPRP outputs and synthetic conclusions on the OECD-DAC criteria. It is followed by a section on lessons learned, good practices, and recommendations.

7.1 Conclusion of the Evaluation

The evaluation findings show that urban local governments' capacity and mindset toward inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient development have undergone a significant paradigm shift in the 19 cities and towns involved in the program, in contrast to other municipalities where the program does not operate.

The analysis of the evaluation findings clearly indicates that the programme has brought about significant positive changes in the lives of low-income communities in its operational areas. The urban poor are now more organised in voicing their concerns to local government officials than before, and their engagement is notably better compared to areas outside the program's reach. The evaluation revealed sharp differences between the control and intervention areas and statistically significant improvements in the endline against the baseline status of urban poor communities in the programme operational area. This implies that the net impact of the program significantly enhanced their resilience and improved their poverty conditions, not only in terms of increased income but also in terms of overall quality of life. This progress is reflected in significant improvements in indicators such as the MPI headcount, intensity, and severity. However, a critical concern persists about the programme's long-term effects, both intended and unintended, and the strategies needed to ensure its sustainability.

7.1.1 Achievement of Outcomes and Outputs Results

The NUPRP has made substantial progress in advancing its core objectives of facilitating climate-resilient housing and essential services, building community organisations and skills, enhancing climate adaptation

capacity, and strengthening municipal governance. Through its comprehensive and interconnected approach, the programme has improved urban management, bolstered community resilience, and empowered socio-economic development, particularly emphasising women and girls.

However, to ensure the sustained impact of these initiatives, ongoing investment, strong political support, and deeper engagement with critical stakeholders, especially in housing and land tenure, are needed. The NUPRP offers a valuable framework for scaling up pro-poor urban development initiatives that are inclusive, sustainable, and resilient. Still, its long-term success will depend on the continued commitment and collaboration among all involved parties.

Outcome 1 (National level): GoB and actors working in the urban space are more coordinated and strategic in their approach to inclusive, climate-smart urban development.

The finalisation of the national urban policy is a critical component of NUPRP's long-term agenda. Through project interventions and advocacy, the Government has become more conscious of the requirement for a comprehensive urban policy, having realised the close nexus between critical emerging issues around climate change, displacements, and sustainable urban development.

NUPRP supported GoB by drafting the first revised version of the NUP, involving collaborative efforts from key entities such as LGED, BUET, and LGD. The revision incorporated feedback from thirty-five diverse ministries and governmental and non-governmental agencies. Throughout the revision process, the NUP was harmonised with national policies and plans, including the National Action Plan (NAP), Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP), Perspective Plan of Bangladesh (PPB), 8th Five-Year Plan (8th FYP), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The revised draft is awaiting a thorough review and finalisation by the NUP Finalization Committee formed by the LGD.

Challenges beyond the project's control emerged during work on national urban policy, including the fact that the Government of Bangladesh shifted its priorities during the COVID-19 pandemic, causing a slowdown in policy finalisation. Additionally, changes in LGD leadership and bureaucratic processes have hindered progress at various stages.

Outcome 2 (Municipal level): Municipal Authorities more effectively manage and deliver inclusive, climate-smart urban development.

NUPRP has consistently advocated for pro-poor approaches in cities and towns, demonstrating models for poverty reduction interventions that now require an independent budget from the local Government. Through broader engagement and advocacy, a budget is being allocated for NUPRP-established models, and more comprehensive pro-poor approaches are now being considered in the city's annual planning and budgeting. The unmet demand identified in CAPs integrated into a total of 222 Wards across 19 cities and towns. The strengthened community governance structures proved effective in this regard as the demands from the target beneficiaries were heard by respective Ward Councilors, who subsequently took forward the CAP demands to the municipal council, which in turn successfully allocated resources to address community challenges. The implementation of development programs by cities and municipalities addresses crucial community demands related to social, economic, and infrastructure challenges in low-income settlements, ultimately leading to inclusive and climate-resilient urban development.

The evaluation observed that allocation for poverty reduction action was increased across project cities and towns from GBP 1.9 million (BDT 226 million) in FY 22-23 to GBP 4.4 million (BDT 607 million) in FY 23-24. NUPRP is encouraging local governments through decentralised municipal committees, i.e. TLCC, WC, and Standing Committees, to allocate and utilise municipalities' own resources for low-income communities to address unmet demands identified in CAPs. A success story in connection with this is that Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) allocated GBP 726,941 (BDT 100 million) for drainage systems, walkways, streetlights, and fire hydrants in FY-23-24 to ensure basic services for urban poor communities. However, the LGIs have resource constraints in addressing all the demands identified in CAPs.

It is evident in the evaluation that around 78.6% of Primary Group (PG) members who sought services from the local Government claimed to have better recognition from the local Government and were satisfied with the services accessed. This included administrative work relating to birth and death certificates, inheritance certificates, citizen/character certificates, trade licenses, taxation, and arbitration. PG members were also

satisfied with the response to their requests for services offered at their settlements, e.g., solid waste disposal and water supply from the urban local Government.

All 19 cities and towns have prepared a costed infrastructure development plan to address climate vulnerability based on the Climate Change and Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA). The program has developed about 13,000 infrastructures utilising SIF and CRMIF funds, benefiting 1.5 million people to better cope with climate vulnerabilities. However, NUPRP advocates for resource mobilisation from the government and development partners to support municipal infrastructure development plans, with project funding meeting only a small portion of the infrastructure demand.

Outcome 3 (Community level): Urban poor communities are more resilient and empowered to articulate and demand their needs.

About 82.8% of people perceived and experienced strong community leadership (CDC/Cluster/Federations), enabling urban poor people to articulate better and demand their needs to bring about sustained changes in their communities. This process of inclusiveness was enabled through NUPRP-established community structures that have supported communities in accessing formal spaces to voice their requirements. This process has been carried out locally, and the communities contributed from design to construction phases. 79.2% of Primary Group members who received benefits from grants, nutrition support and infrastructure facilities feel they have a voice in influencing local government decision-making. All the Town Federations, the apex body of the community organisations, have been registered under relevant government departments, providing the legal basis to continue their work with local government authorities. Following the registration, Town Federations also signed service agreements with respective cities and municipalities to access their resources and support.

Output 1: Improved coordination, planning and management at National level and in programme towns and cities

The programme has substantially enhanced the capacity of participating urban local governments to understand and undertake inclusive and climate-resilient development planning and management. The capacity improvement is evident in the shift in perspective and approach of elected representatives (mayors and ward councillors) and city officials. The programme has enabled development planning that addresses the priority needs of poor urban communities and has created platforms for community members to voice their demands. Discussions with mayors, ward councillors, and community leaders from disadvantaged groups reveal that community members are now more empowered to raise their concerns with city and town authorities. In this connection, the evaluation findings show that 86.9% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the services received from the local Government (an increase from a baseline of 34.4%). At the community level, prioritising needs through community consultation and implementing CAPs via community management has empowered the target community, a concept previously perceived as unattainable. Focus group discussions (FGD) revealed that 61% of participants had actively participated in the CAP process and believed their voices could influence Local Government Division (LGD) decision-making. This belief is supported by a beneficiary survey, where 79.2% of respondents affirmed this influence—an improvement from the baseline and a stark contrast to the control areas, where such influence remains absent. At the city level, advocacy initiatives under the programme have led to a notable increase in the pro-poor allocation of municipal budgets, rising from 1.6% in 2019 to 2.5% in 2023.

At the national level, the programme played a crucial role in reviving the finalisation process of the National Urban Policy (NUP), which had been at a standstill since 2016. By focusing on the policy's relevance to the inclusive and climate-resilient development of urban centres, the programme strategically facilitated the preparation of the first revised draft of the NUP. This draft incorporates national urban priorities and aligns with government plans. Key stakeholders, including the LGD, GED, and others, acknowledge that the programme significantly influenced the Government's decision to finalise the urban policy, paving the way for sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient urban development.

Output 2: Enhanced organisation, capability and effective voice of poor urban communities

The programme has successfully facilitated the development of community organisations, particularly empowering women and girls through skills development and enterprise support. A robust community platform (CBO) has been established, mobilising 3.1 million urban poor through 3,150 CDCs, 258 CDC Clusters, and 19 Town Federations. This network has empowered the urban poor to voice their demands to local governments,

collectively advocating for their interests at the municipal level. CAPs developed under CBO leadership have effectively prioritised and addressed the needs of low-income households, fostering social cohesion and community resilience. As a result, urban poor households have become more resilient and empowered to articulate their demands with local governments and service providers.

The empowerment of women and girls has led to a positive shift in gender dynamics within the communities. Men and boys, traditionally the decision-makers and financial controllers, increasingly acknowledge their contributions to improving livelihoods and well-being. The endline evaluation survey indicates that more than 80% of respondents believe strong community leadership through CDCs, Clusters, and Federations has enabled the urban poor to articulate their needs more effectively, leading to sustained changes in addressing socio-economic and climate vulnerabilities.

NUPRP-established community organisations have mobilised GBP 6.41 million (USD 7.36 million) across 24,330 Savings & Credit Groups. These groups have utilised GBP 14.75 million (USD 17.98 million) in reimbursable loans, crucial for income-generating activities (IGAs) and emergency expenses, especially during the post-COVID-19 economic downturn.

Participants across various cities and towns reported that the programme enabled them to voice their concerns and actively participate in planning and decision-making, resulting in more responsive and effective urban development. The programme's focus on training community members to assess and rank priorities has systematically ensured that local needs are addressed, contributing to improved governance. Moreover, the programme has fostered women's empowerment in urban informal settlements, helping to break gender stereotypes within and beyond communities.

Output 3: Increased access to socio-economic services by poor urban slum dwellers, particularly for vulnerable groups of people

The programme has significantly enhanced women's economic empowerment, with 98% of the 40,549 women who received business grants now successfully managing small enterprises, fostering local economic growth and resilience. However, connecting economic development activities for the urban poor with the market system and creating market opportunities for them remains a crucial missing step for sustainable and long-term economic development. By exceeding its education grant target, the programme enabled 20,774 children, including all supported girls, to complete their academic year, reducing risks of early and forced marriages and promoting long-term educational attainment. Additionally, by reaching approximately 270,000 urban individuals with nutrition-sensitive support, including 57,000 children and mothers, the programme has improved food security and dietary diversity, contributing to better health outcomes. The evaluation found that 91.6% of the households have improved complementary feeding practices, which is 44% higher than the total programme target and nearly 60% higher than the baseline. Further, it was reported that almost 84.1% of lactating mothers have improved knowledge and skills related to infant and young child feeding practices. The establishment and active functioning of multisectoral nutrition action plans in 19 cities have institutionalised nutrition improvement efforts, integrating them into local governance and ensuring sustained impact through dedicated budget allocations and coordinated monitoring.

The programme significantly reduced income poverty and the MPI score among beneficiary households. The programme has led to an increase in household income (35%, $p < 0.001$), enhanced food security (13.9%, $p < 0.05$), and contributed to poverty reduction (7%, $p = 0.08$). The net change in the MPI score is significant ($p < 0.05$), displaying a positive impact of the livelihood improvement initiative. Apprenticeship training and capacity development added income-earning members to 73% of recipient households, contributing to a more diversified and resilient household economy. Additionally, the programme mobilised GBP 6.41 million across 24,330 Savings & Credit Groups, further enhancing financial resilience. Nutrition counselling and increased income enabled better nutritional practices, particularly for pregnant and lactating women and children aged 6-23 months. The programme's SCCs effectively reduced the incidence of violence against women and girls by 9.4% ($p < 0.05$). The SCCs played a role in preventing early marriages, resolving 74 out of 101 cases, and raising awareness about gender-based violence through community engagement and legal support.

Output 4: Increased access to the poor for climate-resilient housing

Securing land tenure is essential for sustainable improvements in urban low-income settlements. The programme initiated efforts to secure land tenure by mapping vacant land in five municipalities. However, due

to various internal and external challenges, these efforts did not culminate in a land tenure action plan. The programme activities to facilitate climate-resilient housing for low-income households have had mixed results. While there was progress in piloting low-cost, environmentally-friendly housing projects and establishing CHDFs, challenges in securing land tenure and engaging key government agencies hindered the full realisation of the objective. Despite budget constraints and political challenges, the housing pilots provide valuable models for future initiatives, demonstrating the potential for sustainable, climate-resilient housing in urban poor communities. The housing pilot's most complex and time-consuming phase, including design approval, land approval, community resettlement, contractor hiring, and land development, took nearly two and a half years. Following this, the construction of 646 housing units in four municipal councils began in June 2021.

According to the discussants and LGI officials, NUPRP has made progress in improving the living conditions of urban low-income communities through initiatives like the Community Housing Development Fund (CHDF). Three CHDFs were established in Rajshahi, Narayanganj, and Chattogram City Corporations to support community housing finance registered under the Department of Cooperatives, accredited by their respective City Corporations, and allocated office space within the city corporation compounds. The CHDF mechanism has provided an opportunity for low-income urban communities, typically excluded from conventional housing finance, to access affordable finance. The easy access, low cost, and flexible payment terms offered by CHDFs has enabled many households to upgrade their homes, improve living conditions, and better cope with climate hazards, reducing unexpected household expenditures and positive socio-economic outcomes.

While the initiative was effective, ongoing support and possibly increasing loan amounts remain necessary to address rising construction costs and ensure the sustainability of these improvements.

Output 5: More and better climate-resilient and community-based infrastructure in programme towns and cities

The NUPRP made substantial investments in climate-resilient infrastructure, greatly improving the adaptive capacity of low-income communities. By focusing on community-driven projects identified and prioritised through CAPs, the programme enhanced access to essential services, such as clean water and sanitation, while addressing critical issues like waterlogging and drainage. Notably, there was a significant reduction in waterlogging incidents, dropping to 6.9% from 26.8% ($p < 0.001$) at baseline, while waste overflow from drains also decreased substantially from 84.5% to 61.3% ($p < 0.001$). Health outcomes improved as well, with the incidence of diarrhoea among under-five children decreasing from 5.2% to 2.1% ($p = 0.007$). The incidence of disease episodes dropped from 34.1% to 21.2%. Programme's community infrastructure initiatives benefited 96.3% of treatment HHs, and municipal infrastructure benefited 60.2% by the endline. These improvements illustrate the programme's positive impact on the targeted communities' environmental conditions and health outcomes.

The infrastructure interventions implemented by NUPRP were designed to work in tandem with socio-economic initiatives, thereby supporting systemic resilience at the community level and improving the living conditions of poor urban communities. These locally-led, climate-resilient infrastructures protected vulnerable communities from harsh weather conditions and climate hazards, thereby reducing the impact of shocks and stress on their lives. The involvement of communities in both the planning and construction phases ensured that the infrastructure developed was not only cost-effective but also closely aligned with the specific needs of these communities, thereby bolstering their resilience to climate-related shocks.

NUPRP has supported approximately 1.9 million urban poor across 19 cities and towns, providing basic services that include both WASH and non-WASH-related interventions to improve living conditions and enhance resilience to climatic hazards. The programme has developed around 13,000 SIF and CRMIF infrastructures, including paved walkways, drainage networks, retaining walls, embankments, staircases, small bridges, and culverts. These drainage networks have significantly impacted public health by reducing the occurrence of waterborne diseases. Additionally, the infrastructure has increased mobility options for elderly residents, persons with disabilities, and children, thereby contributing to a better and healthier quality of life in these communities.

The group discussants consistently reported significant improvements in their communities due to the infrastructure and WASH services provided by NUPRP, reducing the spread of diseases and creating a cleaner living environment. The town-level interviewees (IDIs and KIIs) echoed the positive sentiments expressed in the

FGDs, emphasising the broader impact of NUPRP's infrastructure improvements. Additionally, the long-term sustainability of these benefits was underscored by respondents who noted that the community had been trained to maintain the infrastructure, ensuring its durability and continued positive impact on public health and safety.

7.1.2 Conclusion by OECD-DAC Criteria

Relevance and coherence: The NUPRP design and theory of change are relevant and well-integrated and support pro-poor inclusive development in urban low-income settlements. The programme's approach of multi-layered policy advocacy, support for community-based organisations, and the provision of direct grants and community funds to meet essential community needs clearly speaks to its relevance. The programme has demonstrated adaptive capacity, especially in terms of dealing with the implications of the COVID-19 crisis. The NUPRP's design and strategy are consistent with national priorities, and the programme has promoted synergies and interlinkages with other interventions.

Efficiency: NUPRP has delivered the bulk of its envisaged Outputs promptly and efficiently. Careful financial management with several checks and balances and strategically utilising government and local resources, including staff, facilities, and existing community structures, have helped minimise costs. Furthermore, minimising inclusion and exclusion errors (87% targeting accuracy) and the increased pro-poor allocation of municipal budgets promoted by NUPRP have delivered value for money as captured by a BCR of 3.4.

Effectiveness: Comparisons between the targets listed in the programme's logframe and achievements show that the NUPRP has achieved its targets along most dimensions except for targets related to land tenure security and activities related to strengthening the BUF and MAB. These targets could not be met due to budget cuts and a lack of engagement with and commitment to the concerned government agencies.

Impact: The NUPRP has led to a wide range of statistically significant impacts on urban poor communities across 19 cities and towns in Bangladesh. Through direct grant support as well as through strategic advocacy, capacity building, community mobilisation and infrastructure development, amongst other effects, the programme has led to an increase in household income (35%), enhanced food security (13.9%), and contributed to poverty reduction (7%). While it is hard to disentangle the overall effect of NUPRP from its constituent elements, our exploratory analysis showed that amongst the various NUPRP grants, the business development grant and the skill apprenticeship grants played the most prominent role in influencing household income and food security.

Sustainability: Through its multi-layered stakeholder engagement at the local, municipal and national levels, NUPRP has laid the basis for sustainable long-term impact. The institutional arrangements, capacity strengthening at the local level, mainstreaming of the urban poor in decision-making bodies and the technical tools are in place to support sustained pro-poor urban development. While obvious, it is worth noting that the benefits will likely be short-lived without continued investment, mutual trust, and political support.

Cross-Cutting Agenda: NUPRP is a women-centred programme. Almost all primary group (PG) members are women, and most grant recipients are women. NUPRP is also women-led as community organisations (CDCs, CDC Clusters and TFs) of urban women are the main drivers of community and municipality-level implementation of the programme interventions. Through their inclusion and participation in these community structures, women defined community priorities and supported the targeting of socio-economic programmes, as well as played a role in procuring and implementing infrastructures in the community. The programme has also promoted the participation of PWD in ULG's multisectoral platforms, ensuring their voices were incorporated into ULG planning and governance. NUPRP prioritised eligible households with PWDs for grant support, and the programme explicitly considered PWD accessibility when constructing WASH and communication infrastructures. The programme adopted the PWD accessibility requirement in low-cost housing design and committed to unit allocation priorities. A portion of total low-cost housing units targeted PWDs (out of 646 units, around 40 are for PWDs). In short, NUPRP has contributed to the SDG's LNOB agenda through these measures.

7.2 Lessons Learned and Good Practices

Lessons learned and good practices: Underlying the findings discussed above, several key lessons and good practices (practices worth replicating) may be drawn from NUPRP's experience. The discussion is organised along NUPRP's five broad Outputs.

Improving urban governance and planning: NUPRP's multi-level policy advocacy approach has effectively sensitised, mobilised and engaged government agencies at the local, municipal and national levels. This approach has led to a shared understanding and appreciation of pro-poor climate-resilient urban planning. The programme's efforts have increased pro-poor budget allocation and spending in all NUPRP towns and translated into tangible benefits at the individual and community level (see findings - effectiveness and impact criteria). The programme's experience suggests that engaging with stakeholders at different levels, although time-consuming, onerous and requiring substantial resources, appears to pay off in delivering benefits to the targeted individuals and areas (see findings - efficiency).

A strong element of improved urban governance and planning was the use of tools such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Method, Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA), Mahallah and Resource Mapping. These tools proved effective in identifying poverty and climate-vulnerable groups and areas. Such tools enabled a targeting accuracy of 87% (see findings – efficiency).

Enhancing citizen participation and community mobilisation: The programme-supported municipal-wide CBO Network of CDCs—CDC Clusters—TF. The findings suggest that the revived, women-led, women-centred community-based organisations have played an instrumental role in promoting the interests of poor urban communities at the policy and governance level of ULG. The programme's institutional and leadership capacity development support to CBOs and members enabled them to bargain for community interests, including influencing ULG's planning, budgeting and development works. NUPRP promoted CBO members' engagement in multisectoral municipal committees of ULG and ensured that their voices were heard and acknowledged in urban planning and governance. The programme has reconfirmed that the Community Action Plan (CAP) is a vibrant tool to mobilise and prioritise community demands (see findings – effectiveness and cross-cutting agenda).

Enhancing economic development and livelihoods: The NUPRP approach of policy advocacy at multiple levels of Government, the use of CBO networks to enhance participation and voice and finally, the use of various individual and community grant instruments have played an important role in influencing a wide -range of socio-economic outcomes. Chief amongst these has been the prominent role played by the business development and skills apprenticeship grant in enhancing household income and food security (see findings – impact and cross-cutting agenda). While other grants (education grants, nutrition grants) have also played a role in influencing specific Outcomes, the most evident effects seem to emanate from the business development and skills grants. Other initiatives such as the Safe Community Committees (SCCs) have contributed to the prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and EFM, and the nutrition-related grants have had a positive effect on the health of pregnant and lactating women with children aged 7 to 24 months. Notwithstanding the effect of individual grants, the main lesson here is that the collective effect of NUPRP as a whole is responsible for the observed socio-economic effects (see findings – impact).

Enhancing housing and land tenure: While the NUPRP has met or, in some cases, more than met its objectives, it has been somewhat less successful in enhancing housing and land tenure security. As discussed above, budgets allocated for this Output have not been fully utilised (see findings – efficiency and impact), and targets have not been met mainly due to a lack of funds and commitment from concerned government agencies (see findings – effectiveness). There was limited engagement with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW) and the National Housing Authority (NHA). These two agencies are essential for mainstreaming housing and tenure security for urban poor communities into national decision-making processes (see findings – sustainability). A clear lesson here is the importance of engaging with these specific agencies to achieve results in the case of this Output. Nevertheless, it has piloted environment-friendly and low-cost housing (e.g., use of ferrocement, hollow bricks) in four towns, and housing finance has been made available from three Community Housing Development Funds (CHDF). These provide examples for GoB and development partners if they are keen to address the housing issues affecting marginalised groups in urban areas.

Improving access to climate-resilient infrastructure and basic services: This Output accounted for the largest share (27.6%) of NUPRP's budget and included two funds, the SIF and CRIM. Infrastructure projects identified, prioritised by CDC members and constructed through community participation based on Community Action Plans (CAPs) were implemented through the support of NUPRP's SIF and CRIM instruments, with the latter supporting larger-scale infrastructure projects in qualifying cities and towns through co-funding mechanisms. This so-called community procurement/contracting approach helped reduce costs (see findings – efficiency) and

led to the construction of a large number of relevant infrastructure projects (see Table 8), which generated substantial benefits such as enhanced access to water, reduction in waterlogging, and improved drainage among others (see findings – impact). Like the comments made under Output 3, NUPRP's multi-layered and comprehensive approach combines access to funds, capacity building and training, involvement of local communities in identifying and prioritising needs and policy advocacy with government agencies, which underlies the positive infrastructure effects.

7.3 Vision and Recommendations

Vision: Bangladesh has a development vision that aspires to reach the status of a high-income country by 2041. Before that, the country intends to achieve the SDG goals by 2030 and attain the status of a middle-income country by 2031. Attaining this vision necessitates many changes, including a structural transformation in economic sectors (broadly industry, agriculture and services) and sub-sectors accompanied by attainment of high human development (increase in longevity, knowledge, and real income). The task is daunting. One of the most critical areas of concern is to address urbanisation without industrialisation, unlike the classical case of urbanisation with industrialisation in the West. Challenges include addressing rising urban poverty in absolute and relative terms, climate-induced urban poverty and resilience, and multifaceted gender issues.

While there is a growing body of knowledge on urbanisation and urban poverty, insights garnered from NUPRP's experience support the following context-specific recommendations to address these complex issues:

Recommendation 1: The NUPRP model, which is based on multi-layered engagement and policy advocacy with government bodies, community mobilisation through CBOs, leveraging existing Government and community structures, the use of relevant technical tools for targeting beneficiaries at both the individual and the collective level has translated into substantial, verifiable benefits with a high benefit-cost ratio (please see paragraphs 6.3.2.2, 6.3.2.9, 6.3.3.5, 6.4.1.2, and 6.2.3.7). **Based on the findings and lessons learned, the GoB and development partners should consider scaling up NUPRP.**

To scale up the NUPRP model, the overall responsibility of policy decisions should lie with the Cabinet Division. If scaling up is envisaged, it will require all-round effort from several entities. Policy advocacy efforts may be coordinated by UNDP (given its experience with UPPR and NUPRP) and include relevant civil society organisations. One of the relevant implementing entities is the Ministry of Planning (MoP)-Planning Commission and External Resources Division (ERD), which in its upcoming 9th Five-Year Plan (July 2025-June 2030) assigns high priority to addressing urban poverty reduction aimed at reaching the status of an upper-middle-income country by 2031. Other implementing/engaged entities could be the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) - specifically the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW), Ministry of Land (MoL), Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), international development partners (e.g., UNDP, FCDO), national development actors (Civil Society including NGOs and CBOs), and Urban Local Government (ULG)-City Corporation and Municipality (CC&M) entities.

Recommendation 2: NUPRP engaged in building partnerships at multiple levels of Government and between government organisations and community organisations. This engagement led to a shared understanding of pro-poor urban development and undergirded the substantial socio-economic benefits observed at the individual and community levels, including allocating additional municipal resources for pro-poor urban development and the effective use of various grants (please see paragraphs 6.3.2.3, 6.3.2.4, 6.3.2.6, 6.4.1.4, 6.4.1.7 to 6.4.1.16, and Table 3). The upshot of this is that, although admittedly complex, the results of this evaluation support multi-pronged integrated interventions as opposed to single interventions. Specifically, to sustain the effects of the intervention, continued policy advocacy at multiple levels, strengthening community involvement through training and capacity-building, empowering local organisations in decision-making, and direct support through various grants to support socio-economic outcomes (income, food security, safety of women, prevent early marriage) is needed. **The NUPRP model offers a successful inclusive pro-poor urban development model, deploying multiple types of interventions.**

The most relevant implementing entities (to implement the above recommendation) include the Local Government Division (LGD) under MoLGRD&C, which should continue policy advocacy and integrate pro-poor urban development into local policies, while ULG entities (City Corporations and Municipalities) should allocate resources and involve local organisations in decision-making. The Ministry of Planning's Planning Commission

can ensure these interventions are reflected in national plans, and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) can prioritise gender-specific outcomes like women's safety and preventing early marriage. UNDP and other international development partners (e.g., FCDO) can provide ongoing capacity building and technical assistance, while NGOs and CSOs can facilitate community mobilisation, advocate for pro-poor policies, and support local organisations through training and monitoring. This collaborative approach will ensure sustained socio-economic benefits for urban poor communities.

Recommendation 3: A perennial concern of development interventions is appropriately identifying beneficiaries and vulnerable areas. One of the technical strengths of the NUPRP has been the successful deployment of tools such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), Participatory Poverty Mapping (PPM), Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVA), and Mahallah and Resource Mapping (please see paragraphs 6.1.4.5, 6.2.1.3, 6.2.4.2, 6.3.3.9, 6.3.2.13, 6.1.1.5, 6.2.5.2). **These tools have been effective in identifying poverty and climate-vulnerable groups and areas, and their continued use in projects such as NUPRP and, more generally, while rolling out development interventions is recommended.**

Relevant implementing entities (to implement the above recommendation) include the Ministry of Planning's Planning Commission, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and LGD under MoLGRD&C to integrate these tools into national and local planning frameworks. Urban Local Government entities (City Corporations and Municipalities) should apply these tools at the local level, while the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) can ensure climate resilience is central to urban planning. UNDP and other international partners (i.e., FCDO) can provide technical support. NGOs/CSOs can facilitate community mobilisation and advocacy to empower vulnerable groups and influence policy decisions effectively.

Recommendation 4: Targeting efficiency in terms of individuals and areas and identifying relevant infrastructure projects is not just an outcome of applying technical tools. It results from productive interactions between the use of technical tools and engaging with the community (please see paragraphs 6.1.2.4, 6.2.4.1, 6.2.4.2, 6.2.4.5, 6.6.1.2). **This engagement should be supported and relying only on technical tools or only on participatory approaches to identify intervention beneficiaries, and areas should be eschewed.**

Implementing entities (to implement the above recommendation) should include the Local Government Division (LGD) under MoLGRD&C and Urban Local Government entities (City Corporations and Municipalities), which can lead the integration of data-driven approaches with community insights at the local level. The Ministry of Planning's Planning Commission should establish guidelines ensuring a balanced approach to programme/project design, and the Ministry of Social Welfare can engage through providing vocational training to targeted youth and women. In contrast, the UNDP and other international development partners can provide technical assistance and funding. NGOs and CSOs should facilitate participatory processes, ensuring community knowledge is effectively integrated into planning and decision-making, resulting in more accurate identification of beneficiaries and infrastructure projects.

Recommendation 5: A bane of infrastructure-related development projects is their lack of maintenance and sustainability. Through its women-led, women-centred efforts at strengthening CBO and the participation of women leaders and persons with disabilities in the development of CAP, the NUPRP has successfully identified and built relevant climate-resilient inclusive infrastructure. Through its community procurement approach, which directly engages the community in building infrastructure, NUPRP projects have been constructed in a cost-efficient manner (please see paragraphs 6.2.3.8, 6.3.2.6, 6.3.2.14, 6.3.2.21, 6.3.3.3, 6.4.1.4, 6.4.1.5, 6.4.1.21, 6.4.1.22). **The involvement of inclusive community organisations in selecting and prioritising infrastructure projects and development projects and their participation in construction bodes well for the sustainability of such projects. These relatively innovative elements of NUPRP underlie the recommendation that such design features need to be preserved in current or future editions of similar development projects.**

For this recommendation, the most relevant implementing entity is the Local Government Division (LGD) under MoLGRD&C and ULG entities (City Corporations and Municipalities) to institutionalise community procurement and women-led, inclusive approaches in project planning, execution, and maintenance. The infrastructure development should be integrated into the City/Paurashava Master Plan. The Ministry of Planning's Planning Commission should formalise these practices in national guidelines, while the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) can ensure gender and inclusivity remain central. Engaging MoDM&R can ensure that urban infrastructure development aligns with national disaster management policies and contributes to creating safer,

more resilient urban environments. UNDP and other international development partners can provide technical assistance, capacity building, and funding support, while NGOs and CSOs facilitate community engagement and monitor project sustainability.

Recommendation 6: NUPRP has been relatively less successful in meeting its objectives regarding access to housing and tenure security. Budgets allocated for this Output were not fully utilised when information was gathered for this evaluation. Furthermore, support from concerned government agencies was limited as there had been limited engagement with the MoH&PW, NHA, and Ministry of Land (MoL) (please see paragraphs 6.1.2.1, 6.2.1.1, 6.2.2.2, 6.3.2.5, 6.3.2.19, 6.3.2.20, 6.3.3.7, 6.4.1.19, 6.5.1.1, 6.5.1.5, 6.5.1.20). **If NUPRP and similar programmes are to reach their goals of enabling access to low-cost housing and supporting tenure security, then such engagement is necessary and recommended.** Nevertheless, NUPRP successfully piloted environment-friendly, low-cost housing (e.g., ferrocement and hollow bricks) in four towns, and housing finance was made available from three CHDFs. **The pilot is a good model for GoB and development partners actively providing low-cost housing for poor urban communities.**

The most relevant implementing entities related to the above recommendation are the Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoH&PW) and the National Housing Authority (NHA). These entities should lead and mainstream these initiatives into national policies. Engagement of the Ministry of Land (MoL) is critical for urban land reform, which is critical in ensuring land tenure security through **developing a land tenure action plan**. The LGD under MoLGRD&C with ULG-CCM entities should coordinate locally to meet community needs, including implementing the land tenure action plan. UNDP and other international partners (e.g., FCDO) can provide technical support, funding, and capacity building, while NGOs and CSOs mobilise communities, advocate for tenure security, and support implementation. BIP can contribute through research, policy analysis, and capacity-building programs, while HBRI can develop and promote sustainable building materials and innovative construction techniques.

Overall, the NUPRP experience shows that a well-knitted integrated programme has the potential to address several dimensions of urban poverty and marginalisation sustainably.

ANNEXES

Annexe 1: Terms of Reference

Annexe 2: Evaluation Methodology

Annexe 2.1: List of Documents Reviewed

Annexe 2.2: List of Individuals and Groups Consulted for the Evaluation

Annexe 3: Evaluation Matrix

Annexe 4: Theory of Change (ToC)

Annexe 5: Result and Resource Framework (RRF)

Annexe 6: NUPRP Logical Framework 2024 (Last Updated)

Annexe 7: Data Collection Tools (DCTs)

Annexe 8: Data Tables

Annexe 9: Value for Money (VfM) Indicators

Annexe 10A: Risk Assessment for Phase 1 of NUPRP

Annexe 10B: Social and Environmental Screening

Annexe 11: Qualitative Findings Summary and Case Stories

Annexe 12: Evaluation Team

Annexe 13: Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations System

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

² The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities and continue to do so if circumstances change.

³ Urban Governance and Planning (Output 1): Providing technical support to municipal governments and community organisations to ensure inclusive, evidence-based planning and improved governance. Citizen Participation and Community Mobilisation (Output 2): Mobilising urban poor communities to understand and address urban poverty, voice their demands, and hold local government accountable. Economic Development and Livelihoods (Output 3): Offering grants to improve skills, establish enterprises, and enhance educational opportunities to improve economic and social well-being. Housing and Land Tenure (Output 4): Improving land tenure security and access to housing finance for progressive, climate-resilient home improvements. Infrastructure and Basic Services/Climate Resilient Infrastructure (Output 5): Reducing vulnerabilities of urban poor settlements to climate hazards through targeted infrastructure projects that improve connectivity and access to city networks.

⁴ The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

⁵ The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.

⁶ The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended higher-level effects.

⁷ The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.

⁸ Human Rights, Gender Equality and Leaving No One Behind (LNOB).

⁹ General Economics Division (March 2020). Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021. Dhaka: Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh. Retrieved from https://plancomm.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plancomm.portal.gov.bd/files/10509d1f_aa05_4f93_9215_f81fcd233167/2020-08-31-16-08-8f1650eb12f9c273466583c165a315a4.pdf (accessed on 12 June 2024).

¹⁰ Chandpur Paurashava, Chattogram City Corporation (CCC), Cox's Bazar Paurashava, Cumilla City Corporation (CuCC), Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), Faridpur Paurashava, Gazipur City Corporation (GCC), Gopalganj Paurashava, Khulna City Corporation (KCC), Kushtia Paurashava, Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC), Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC), Noakhali Paurashava, Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC), Rangpur City Corporation (RgCC), Syedpur Paurashava, and Sylhet City Corporation (SCC).

¹¹ LIUPCP (2022). About Us. Retrieved from <https://urbanpovertybd.org/about/> (accessed on 12 June 2024).

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- ¹² NUPRP (2020). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2020. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sep%202020.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ¹³ NUPRP (2020). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2020. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sep%202020.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ¹⁴ Phase 1 (from September 2018): Dhaka North City Corporation, Narayanganj City Corporation, Chattogram City Corporation, Khulna City Corporation, Sylhet City Corporation, Mymensingh City Corporation, Chandpur Paurashava; Phase 2 (from April 2019): Kushtia Paurashava, Faridpur Paurashava, and Patuakhali Paurashava; Phase 3 (from November 2019): Dhaka South City Corporation, Gazipur City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation, Rangpur City Corporation, Cumilla City Corporation, Noakhali Paurashava, Saidpur Paurashava, Cox's Bazar Paurashava and Gopalganj Paurashava.
- ¹⁵ UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', June 2020. Available at <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2866>.
- ¹⁶ Retrieved from: <sida662353en-sidas-work-for-gender-equality.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ KIIs with municipal officials (elected and appointed), planners, architects and academicians under the endline evaluation; review of Results and Resource Framework, Updated Logical Framework (2024), Annual Outcome Monitoring (AOM) Reports (2020, 2021, 2022), In-Depth Monitoring Report (2022), Mid-Term Evaluation Report (2022).
- ¹⁸ Citywide CDCs Training Strategy, IDI with CBO leaders, Consultations with NUPRP officials.
- ¹⁹ NUPRP (2017). Project Document. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Approved%20Project%20Document.pdf> (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ²⁰ Displacement Solutions (2012). Climate Displacement in Bangladesh | The Need for Urgent Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Rights Solutions. https://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/loss_and_damage_executive_committee/application/pdf/ds_bangladesh_report.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ²¹ NUPRP (2017). Project Document. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Approved%20Project%20Document.pdf> (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ²² World Bank data. Retrieved from: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.GROW?locations=BD&most_recent_year_desc=true (accessed on 15 August 2024).
- ²³ The 13 different projects are associated with different NUPRP Outcomes. Outcome 1: Policy influencing, building capacity of Local Government; Outcome 2: Mahalla and urban poor settlement mapping, Training/awareness, Community Mobilisation, Outcome 3: SEF Grants (Education to reduce drop out, Education to prevent early marriage, Business, Skill development), Saving and Credit Group, Nutrition, Violence Against Women and Girls, Outcome 4: Housing loans (CHDF), Land tenure security, and Outcome 5: Community infrastructure (SIF), Larger infrastructure (CRMIF)
- ²⁴ Nationwide Climate Vulnerability Assessment in Bangladesh (2018). Source: https://moef.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/moef.portal.gov.bd/notices/d31d60fd_df55_4d75_bc22_1b0142fd9d3f/Draft%20NCVA.pdf (accessed on 16 August 2024).
- ²⁵ GED Knowledge Portal, MANAGING THE URBAN TRANSITION IN A RAPIDLY GROWING AND TRANSFORMATIONAL ECONOMY. Source: https://gedkp.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/14.-Managing-the-Urban-Transition-in-a-Rapidly-Growing-and-Transformation-Economy-August-2017-v1.docx?post_id=532 (accessed on 15 August 2024).
- ²⁶ UNDP (2017). Project Document. Retrieved from https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/Signed_Prodoc_NUPRP_1.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ²⁷ General Economics Division (March 2020). Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021. Dhaka: Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh. Retrieved from https://plancomm.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plancomm.portal.gov.bd/files/10509d1f_aa05_4f93_9215_f81fcd233167/2020-08-31-16-08-8f1650eb12f9c273466583c165a315a4.pdf (accessed on 12 June 2024).
- ²⁸ General Economic Division (2020). 8th Five Year Plan July 2020- June 2025. Retrieved from https://plancomm.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plancomm.portal.gov.bd/files/68e32f08_13b8_4192_ab9b_abd5a0a62a33/2021-02-03-17-04-ec95e78e452a813808a483b3b22e14a1.pdf (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ²⁹ The programme's interventions significantly contributed to key targets of the NSDS, including improving access to clean water, enhancing sanitation and waste management in slums and low-income settlements, and constructing shelter homes for the poor.
- ³⁰ NUPRP's alignment with the BPP agenda facilitated critical improvements in WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) services, including piped water, modern sanitation facilities, drainage, and sewerage systems.
- ³¹ United Nations Development Group (2017). United Nations Development Assistance Framework Guidance. Retrieved from https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2017-UNDAF_Guidance_01-May-2017.pdf (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ³² UN (2021). Country Programme Document for Bangladesh (2017-2020). Retrieved from <https://www.flipsnack.com/77777E5569B/country-programme-document-for-bangladesh-2022-2026/full-view.html> (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ³³ UNDP (2021). United Nations Development Programme Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Retrieved from https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2021-09/UNDP-Strategic-Plan-2022-2025_1.pdf.

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- ³⁴ Five UNSDCF 2022-2026 priorities 1) Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development, 2) Equitable Human Development and Well-being, 3) Sustainable, Healthy, and Resilient Environment, 4) Transformative, Participatory, and Inclusive Governance, and 5) Gender Equality and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence.
- ³⁵ UN (2016). Country Programme Document for Bangladesh (2022-2026). Retrieved from <https://digitalibrary.un.org/record/836580?v=pdf> (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ³⁶ UN (2021). Country Programme Document for Bangladesh (2017-2020). Retrieved from <https://www.flipsnack.com/77777E5569B/country-programme-document-for-bangladesh-2022-2026/full-view.html> (accessed on 15 June 2024).
- ³⁷ UNDP (2017). Project Document. Retrieved from https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/Signed_Prodoc_NUPRP_1.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ³⁸ The programme's investment areas for emergency responses were - Communication and outreach; establishing hand-washing facilities and hygienic packages; strengthening the coordination function; food assistance; sensitisation and capacity building of health officials; data, research, and third-party monitoring and operations.
- ³⁹ NUPRP's ongoing efforts and programmatic interventions to achieve the Outputs and Outcomes had started to become visible; an unanticipated pandemic changed the scenario drastically. The ongoing means and methods of interventions have been severely disrupted and became dysfunctional. The report is available at: https://urbanpovertybd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final_Socio-Economic-Assessment-of-COVID-19-under-LIUPCP_NUPRP_HDRC_24.12.2020.pdf
- ⁴⁰ Barkat, A. et. al. (2020). Socio-Economic Assessment of COVID-19 under the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme. Retrieved from https://urbanpovertybd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Final_Socio-Economic-Assessment-of-COVID-19-under-LIUPCP_NUPRP_HDRC_24.12.2020.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁴¹ In-depth Monitoring Report (2022), Mid-Term Evaluation Report (2022) and AOM Reports (2020, 2021 and 2022).
- ⁴² UNDP (2017). Project Document. Retrieved from https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/Signed_Prodoc_NUPRP_1.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁴³ Consultations with national and town officials of NUPRP, KIIs with Municipal Officials along with In-Depth Monitoring Report (2022), Mid-Term Evaluation Report (2022), and AOM Reports (2020, 2021 and 2022).
- ⁴⁴ NUPRP (2019). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Six-Month Progress Report (October 2018 – March 2019). Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Six-Month%20Progress%20Report%20%28October%202018%20to%20March%202019%29.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁴⁵ In the absence of annualized cost data by programme Output and their subcomponents, the evaluation does not provide a Benefit-Cost-Ratio (BCR) analysis for each of the interventions.
- ⁴⁶ Data received from NUPRP's financial expert.
- ⁴⁷ The operational cost for the Char Livelihood Programme was 38% while for Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction it was 62%. Source: Value for Money Strategy of NUPRP.
- ⁴⁸ community participation and mobilisation (Output 2) required 86.5% operational costs. In the case of Output 3 (enhancing economic development and livelihood) direct investment accounted for 64.4% of the budget and in the case of housing and land tenure (Output 4) and infrastructure development activities (Output 5) the share of direct investment was 81.1% and 81.3% respectively.
- ⁴⁹ Annexe 3, which provides a detailed economic appraisal of the business case for NUPRP, assumes that £60m investment would accrue £225m in benefits.
- ⁵⁰ NUPRP (2019). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2019. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sept%202019.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁵¹ NUPRP (2020). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2020. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sep%202020.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁵² NUPRP (2019). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Six-Month Progress Report (October 2018 – March 2019). Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Six-Month%20Progress%20Report%20%28October%202018%20to%20March%202019%29.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024)
- ⁵³ Annual Outcome Monitoring of National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme 2022.
- ⁵⁴ NUPRP (2017). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Six-Month Progress Report (April-September 2017). Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Six-Month%20Progress%20Report%20%28April%20to%20Sept%202017%29.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁵⁵ NUPRP (2020). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2020. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sep%202020.pdf>.
- ⁵⁶ NUPRP (2019). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Report 2019. Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20DFID%20Biannual%20Report%20Apr-Sept%202019.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁵⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁵⁸ KII with NUPRP officials (towns level and Dhaka).
- ⁵⁹ NUPRP Bi-Annual Reports. Retrieved from: <https://www.undp.org/bangladesh/projects/livelihoods-improvement-urban-poor-communities-project> (accessed on 20 June 2024).

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- ⁶⁰ KII with NUPRP official in Dhaka.
- ⁶¹ NUPRP (2019). National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Six-Month Progress Report October 2018-March 2019). Retrieved from <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/BGD/NUPRP%20Six-Month%20Progress%20Report%20%28October%202018%20to%20March%202019%29.pdf> (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁶² UNDP (n.d.). Project Brief: National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP). Retrieved from https://urbanpovertybd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/PROJECT-BRIEF-LIUPCP_NUPRP-fnl.pdf (accessed on 20 June 2024).
- ⁶³ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation).
- ⁶⁴ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), KIIs with Municipal Officials, and Consultations with NUPRP town officials.
- ⁶⁵ FGDs with business and skill development grant beneficiaries.
- ⁶⁶ National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Progress Reports (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024).
- ⁶⁷ Patuakhali, Chattogram, Noakhali, Gopalganj, Chandpur, Faridpur, Patuakhali, Kushtia, Rangpur, and Chandpur.
- ⁶⁸ The low-cost housing design includes a clean environment, WASH and utility services for each house, cooking arrangements, a central pond, space for vegetation, space for children, public gathering sheds, and space for a shop and bazaar or hut. Source: Inception report of Proposed low-income settlement site in Chandpur Paurashava and observations during endline survey fieldwork.
- ⁶⁹ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁷⁰ FGDs with non-grant beneficiaries, IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), and Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁷¹ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁷² Infrastructures Observations, IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), KIIs with Municipal Officials, and Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁷³ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁷⁴ "The NUPRP will develop a genuinely national approach to urban poverty reduction.", Project document of NUPRP, pp 6
- ⁷⁵ The seven stages of progress assessment for Outcome 1.2:
Stage 1- Partnership TOR developed and MoU signed with MAB.
Stage 2- Lessons learned on COVID-19 impact by the MAB members documented (through webinar series) for policy advocacy
Stage 3- Capacity Assessment of MAB undertaken and areas identified for institutional strengthening and advocacy.
Stage 4- Consultations (at least 2) with MAB affiliated municipalities organized to advocate on the best practices in Municipal Reform and inclusive urban development.
Stage 5: Regional Urban Forum (at least two) organised and institutional development plan of BUF developed.
Stage 6: NUPRP in partnership with MAB advocates for National Slum Upgrading Policy (at least one high-level policy roundtable organized) and develop an inclusive urban development guideline based on NUPRP good practices.
Stage 7: Policy advocacy initiated for adoption of Inclusive Urban Development Guideline by the GoB/LGD
- ⁷⁶ Municipality-level advocacy is successful since it is associated with the national poverty reduction and malnutrition agenda.
- ⁷⁷ Increased community participation improved satisfaction.
- ⁷⁸ The Scale for measuring the Level of Satisfaction on the services received was: Highly satisfactory=1, Somewhat satisfactory=2 Not Satisfactory=3.
- The range of Urban Local Government Services include - 1) Birth Registration Certificate, 2) Death Registration Certificate, 3) Warishan Certificate (Inheritance), 4) Citizen and Character Certificate, 5) Trade License, 6) Paying House Tax/Rent/Holding Tax
- ⁷⁹ Active engagement of municipal offices and engaged agencies promotes innovative design, costed design, community co-sharing, and labour engagement from the community.
- ⁸⁰ The Progress against the Outcome Indicator 2.3 was measured against 3 Stages:
Stage 1 - Task Force established in each Targeted City/Town and ToR developed
Stage 2 - Matching Funds contributed by the Municipalities under CMRIF as part of the Annual Workplan
Stage 3 - SIF/CMRIF Plan integrated into the Municipal Infrastructure Annual Workplan
- ⁸¹ The Progress against the Outcome Indicator 2.3 was measured against 3 Stages:
Stage 1 - Task Force established in each Targeted City/Town and ToR developed
Stage 2 - Matching Funds contributed by the Municipalities under CMRIF as part of the Annual Workplan
Stage 3 - SIF/CMRIF Plan integrated into the Municipal Infrastructure Annual Workplan
- ⁸² The Progress against the Outcome Indicator 2.4 was measured against 3 Stages:
Stage 1: Multisectoral Nutritional Coordination Committee established and ToRs developed
Stage 2: Multisectoral Nutritional Plans developed and implemented
Stage 3: Multisectoral Nutritional Plans costed and integrated within Municipal Corporation Annual Workplan
- ⁸³ All targeted towns have developed a strategy, but implementation has not started in full force.
- ⁸⁴ The assessment method and tools for DCD, CDC cluster, and Town Federation assessment is available in Annexe 7.
- ⁸⁵ TFs are actively advocating for pro-poor urban planning and budgeting. The community leaders expect TFs to advocate their demands to municipal administrations, while Municipal Offices seek TFs' help in mobilising communities to support city/town governance action plans.

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- ⁸⁶ Support in both cash and kind and counselling improved consumption behaviour and balanced consumption. The group discussants at the community mentioned that the contents of food packages were consumed at the HH. However, the beneficiaries may not have been the only consumers of the food items at the HH.
- ⁸⁷ The Progress against the Output Indicator 4.2 was measured against 3 Stages:
Stage 1 - CHDF Strategy developed
Stage 2 - CHDF Committees formed
Stage 3 - CHDF registered as legal entities
- ⁸⁸ The Progress against the Output Indicator 4.2 was measured against 3 Stages:
Stage 1 - Construction of low-cost housing units started
Stage 2 - Selection of beneficiary completed against ongoing construction housing units
Stage 3 - Construction of housing completed and handed over to beneficiaries
- ⁸⁹ Evidence of results achieved was tracked from a review of the updated logframe 2024, AOM Reports (2020, 2021, 2022), FCDO's (former DFID) Annual Performance Review (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024), In-Depth Monitoring Report (June 2022), Mid-Term Evaluation Report (September 2022) and the Endline Evaluation (2024) findings.
- ⁹⁰ National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) Bi-Annual Progress Report 2023.
- ⁹¹ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁹² IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ⁹³ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation) and The Evaluation Team Observations.
- ⁹⁴ KIIs with LGI officials and town officials.
- ⁹⁵ Annual Outcome Monitoring (AOM) of the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP) 2022.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Functionality Assessment Criteria: Disaster Management Committee/Town Level Coordination Committee/Ward Committee exists; ii) The structure of the committee followed; iii) The committee complied with the Terms of Reference (ToR); iv) Has helped the federation in developing partnerships, e.g., with GO, NGO and private sector; v) Involved/Participates on the Town Level Coordination Committee (if it exists); vi) Has representation from the community; vii) Has regular meetings/workshops and maintains minutes/reports; viii) Contributes to the CC/Paurashava comprehensive policy paper preparation and its Implementation; ix) Reflection of activities/suggestions in the town plan; and x) Maintains communications with key local government officials, e.g., Secretary, Engineer, Slum Development Officer, Town Planner etc., in addition to attending committee meetings.
- ⁹⁸ Fully Effective: Obtained a score of 75 or higher out of 100 in the CBO Assessment (CDC, CDC Cluster and TF). Please see the Annual Outcome Monitoring of the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme Report for details on the assessment criteria. Moderately effective: Obtained a score between 50-74 out of 100 in the CBO Assessment (CDC, CDC Cluster and TF). Please see the Annual Outcome Monitoring of the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme Report for details on the assessment criteria.
- ⁹⁹ Updated NUPRP Logical Framework 2024.
- ¹⁰⁰ KIIs with Municipal Officials, Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰¹ IDIs with CBO Leaders (Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰² IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰³ Summarised from CDC's Reports on Savings & Credit.
- ¹⁰⁴ IDIs with CBO Leaders (Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰⁵ FGDs with grant beneficiaries.
- ¹⁰⁶ FGDs with business and skill-development grant beneficiaries, Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰⁷ IDIs with three CHDF officials (CBO Leaders), KIIs with officials of Chattogram City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation, and Narayanganj City Corporation. In addition, Updated Logical Framework 2024, Bi-Annual Progress Reports of the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (2023,2024).
- ¹⁰⁸ IDIs with three CHDF officials (CBO Leaders), KIIs with officials of Chattogram City Corporation, Rajshahi City Corporation, Narayanganj City Corporation, and Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹⁰⁹ Updated Logical Framework 2024.
- ¹¹⁰ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), Consultations with NUPRP National and Town Officials. In addition, Updated Logical Framework 2024, Bi-Annual Progress Reports of the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (2023, 2024).
- ¹¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹¹² Ibid.
- ¹¹³ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁴ Bi-Annual Progress Reports of National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (NUPRP); KIIs with relevant stakeholders.
- ¹¹⁵ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation); Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials; KIIs with Municipal officials from 19 NUPRP Towns.
- ¹¹⁶ The Eighth Five-Year Plan (8FYP) urban chapter was dropped in agreement with FCDO in 2022 (Outcome Indicator 1.1). Activities related to BUF have been dropped in 2022 in agreement with FCDO (Outcome Indicator 1.2)
- ¹¹⁶ Consultations with NUPRP National and Town Officials.
- ¹¹⁷ Consultations with NUPRP National and Town Officials.
- ¹¹⁸ Municipal Budget Documents of 19 NUPRP Town.

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- ¹¹⁹ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), KIIs with Municipal Officials and Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹²⁰ Annual Outcome Monitoring 2020, 2021, and 2022.
- ¹²¹ Consultations with NUPRP National and Town Officials and KIIs with Municipal Officials.
- ¹²² Detailed tables are available in Annexe 8 and additional description is available in impact on NUPRP (section 6.4 of the report).
- ¹²³ IDIs with CBO Leaders (CDCs, CDC Clusters and Town Federation), KIIs with Municipal Officials and Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹²⁴ There are marginalised people in the cities and towns living in low-income settlements with minimum access to utility and WASH services, and they are typically poor. The towns and cities usually do not have any line item dedicated to improving the livelihood of such poor residents. The NUPRP initiatives led to the addition of a line item in the town budget dedicated to supporting such poor urban residents.
- ¹²⁵ The net impacts or changes over time and their significance (p-values) are derived from difference-in-difference analysis.
- ¹²⁶ However, for HHs living on less than USD 1.9 per capita per day, the poverty decrease reveals a significant ($p < 0.01$) net impact of 30.8% (please see Table 4 in Annexe 8 for details).
- ¹²⁷ KIIs with representatives of HBRI, BIP and BUET. Consultations with National-level NUPRP Officials.
- ¹²⁸ The Evaluation Team Observations. Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials.
- ¹²⁹ The Endline Evaluation Team Observations, KIIs with Municipal Officials.
- ¹³⁰ Consultations with NUPRP Town Officials (Chattogram, Narayanganj and Rajshahi).
- ¹³¹ NUPRP inception report (2016) specifies the nutrition beneficiaries as, pregnant and lactating women and children up to 24 months.
- ¹³² Out of 179 beneficiary women FGD participants, around 87% agreed that their mobility and movement security had improved.