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Project Completion Report

Full Project Period (March 09, 2021 to March 31, 2024)

Project Title

**Promoting Accountability and
Transparency in Public Institutions**



Organization Name

Badhon Manob Unnayan Sangstha (BMUS)

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List of Abbreviations

PATPI- Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Public Institutions
BMUS- Badhon Manob Unnayan Sangstha
SAGP- South Asia Governance Program
TAF- The Asia Foundation
SASGP- South Asian Small Grant Project
SIDR- cyclone name
COVID19- one kind of disease (Corona disease)
UP- Union Parishad
Upz. Upazila
SA- Social Accountability
M&E-Monitoring and Evaluation
e.g- *exempli gratis* (Latin word)- "for example."
i.e- *id est* (Latin word)- "that is."
CG -Citizen Groups
CF -Citizen Forum
CSC- Community Score Card
USAID- United States Agency for International Development
PROGATI- Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity
SA- Social Audit
RTI- Right to Information
CSO- Civil Society Organization
NGO- Non-Government Organization
GoB- Government of Bangladesh
SMC- School Management Committee
CCC - Community Clinic Committee
CC- Citizen Charter
CBO- Community Based Organization
FGD- Focus Group Discussion
PO-Project Officer
PC- Project Coordinator
PD-Project Director

Executive Summary

The Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Public Institutions project funded by The Asia Foundation (TAF) under South Asian Small Grant Project (SASGP). This project implemented by local organization BMUS at Bagerhat district in Bangladesh. This report investigates the essential role of accountability and transparency in public institutions. These principles are foundational to good governance, essential for public trust, institutional efficiency, and promoting equitable and sustainable development. There is a little or no scope in Bangladeshi people for contributing to meaningful development of services as planning and resource allocation decisions are extremely centralized. The practice has made the service providers unaccountable to the people they serve. The Government, in recent times, has sought to adopt a bottom-up approach in planning and involving local constituencies, an increased role in governance. However, without a systematic intervention to bring people's participation into the delivery and governance of services, the people also have failed to realize their right to participation given to them by the constitution and subsequent recent reforms. The proposed project area is Bagerhat Sadar, Morelgonj, Rampal and Mongla Upazila Rampal Upazila of Bagerhat district which is poverty concentrated coastal area adjacent to the Sundhaourbans. It is also SIDR affected area along with regular floods and cyclone.

The goal of the project is: Established responsive public institutions that contribute to improving lives of people especially poor and marginalized in Rampal Upazila of Bagerhat District. The Purpose is: Increased accountability (30% from base) of selected public institutions through engaging citizens in monitoring using social accountability tools in a sustainable process in order to improve access to the quality of public services (50% from base) within 3 years project period at Sadar, Morelgonj, Rampal and Mongla Upazila of Bagerhat district.

Enhancing Public Engagement: Mechanisms for public participation and feedback should be established and strengthened. Regular public consultations and transparent communication channels can foster a more inclusive governance environment. **Building Institutional Capacity:** Ongoing training programs for public servants on accountability practices are essential. Institutions should promote a culture of ethical behavior and integrity. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular audits and evaluations of public institutions should be conducted to ensure compliance and identify areas for improvement. Independent oversight bodies can provide objective assessments and recommendations.

Promoting accountability and transparency in public institutions is not merely an ethical imperative but a practical necessity for effective governance. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report, public institutions can improve their performance, gain public trust, and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable society. The path to achieving these goals lies in a committed, multifaceted approach involving legal reforms, technological innovation, public engagement, and continuous capacity building.

Background

In recent years, the demand for accountability and transparency in public institutions has grown significantly worldwide. These principles are recognized as cornerstones of good governance, essential for fostering trust between citizens and their governments, enhancing the effectiveness of public services, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. This report was commissioned to address these critical issues and provide actionable recommendations for improving governance practices. The public delivery system in Bangladesh is built on the colonial administrative structure and is characterized by top-down approach of management. People have little or no scope for contributing to meaningful development of services. Planning and resource allocation decisions are extremely centralized. The practice has made the service providers unaccountable to the people they serve and created the opportunity for them to be influenced by those who are in the power structure or have familial or social connections with those in the influential positions power structure. In recent times this has generated huge scope corruption; – with the country being ranked among the most corrupt in the world in the assessment of organizations like the Transparency International. Despite the above attempts, without a systematic intervention to bring people’s participation into the delivery and governance of services, the people also have failed to realize the rights of participation given to them by the constitutions and subsequent recent reforms. Absence of civil society groups for movements representing the general population, have only made the people unable to organize themselves to pressurize the service providers and policy makers.

This project seeks to address the root causes of the lack of responsiveness of public service providers by strengthening civic organization at the grassroots level, creating critical mass of awareness and skills to engage service providers to make them accountable to the citizens they serve. The project will create platforms of such engagement by establishing forums which bring together stakeholders from both the service delivery and coordination, and service recipient sides through a comprehensive approach. It will emphasize on participation of the grassroots and service delivery stakeholders, creating foundations for democratic principles and practices to take root in public service systems. The project area is Sadar, Morelgonj, Rampal and Mongla Upazila of Bagerhat district is poverty concentrated coastal area adjacent to the Sundarbans, largest mangrove forest in the world. It is also SIDR affected area along with regular floods and cyclone. The main professions of the population are poor farmers, fishermen, day-laborers and unemployed youths. There are many minority communities living there, most them are hardcore poor.

in our practical field experience are a heightened unawareness among citizens about their rights and the expectations from public institutions. Corruption and Mismanagement: Many public institutions have been afflicting by corruption, inefficiency, and mismanagement, undermining public trust and compromising service delivery. By providing a comprehensive analysis and actionable recommendations, this report aims to assist policymakers, public officials, and other stakeholders in enhancing the accountability and transparency of public institutions. Improved governance practices will not only restore public trust but also contribute to more effective and equitable public service delivery, ultimately fostering sustainable development and social well-being.

Progress overview and results:

The overall progress aimed at improving accountability and transparency of public institutions is sufficiently identified through successful implementation of legal structures, e-governance tools and strong power-building initiatives. These achievements have been promoted to the public's confidence, corruption, improved institutional skills and well assets allocation, which has made significant contributions to the oppressive goals of equality and sustainable development. A significant adjustment has been made in response to changing context include extended dependence on the digital platform to ensure the continuity and transparency of disrupted time like the COVID-19 epidemic. This change has highlighted the important role of technology to maintain transparency and has created more investment in the digital administration infrastructure. Evolution has continued to form social-political landscape program activities, adaptive techniques to maintain speed and address emerging challenges in pursuing good governance.

Objective:

The objectives of the project are Increased accountability (30% from base) of selected public institutions through engaging citizens in monitoring using social accountability tools in a sustainable process in order to improve access to the quality public services (50% from base) within 1.5 years project period at Sadar, Rampal, Mongla and Morelgonj Upazila of Bagerhat district.

The general results show significant progress in increasing accountability and transparency in public institutions. Key achievements include the establishment of a comprehensive legal framework (inclusion of citizens in legal committees), the widespread adoption of e-governance tools (e.g., online birth registration, online application of different services, zoom platforms) and effective public relations methods (e.g., ward shava, open budget at the Union Parishad (UP), social safety net distribution, open dialogue, public hearing etc.).

These achievements have increased public confidence, curbed corruption, increased institutional efficiency, and increased resource allocation. Through a more transparent and accountable governance framework, these advances directly support the goal of fair and sustainable development. Progress emphasizes the need for a multi-pronged strategy that includes legislative reforms, technological advances, and ongoing capacity building to ensure lasting improvements in public sector governance. Going forward, the focus will be on sustaining these achievements through continuous monitoring, evaluation and adaptation. It will be vital to strengthen the implementation of existing mechanisms, expand the scope of e-governance tools and further engage citizens in the decision-making process.

In addition, emphasis will be placed on prioritizing transparency in public spending, improving access to information, and fostering a culture of accountability at all levels of government at the targeted Union Parishad/Upazila. Building on these foundations, the path to a more accountable, efficient and responsive public sector governance system will be cemented, paving the way for inclusive and sustainable development in the years to come.

Results section

Result 1.1	
Status of the result	<p>1. Achieving the goal of accountability: Beyond the initial target set at the beginning of the project, the accountability of selected public institutions has been increased by 30% through citizen engagement and monitoring tools.</p> <p>2. Improved service quality: increased access to quality public services by 50%, which leads to measurable improvements in service delivery metrics such as reduced wait times and increased user satisfaction.</p> <p>3. Sustainability of Profits: Efforts are on to ensure sustainability beyond the tenure of the project, focusing on institutionalizing the accountability mechanism and maintaining the process of community engagement to uphold the results achieved.</p>
Result description (What progress were achieved contributing to this result)?	<p>1.Increased Citizen Involvement: Significant progress has been made in involving citizens through SA tools such as citizen report cards and social audits, resulting in higher awareness and engagement in the governance process.</p> <p>2.Policy reform and institutional transformation: Policies reformed in response to citizen feedback have increased the openness and acceptability of government agencies, encouraging greater accountability.</p> <p>3.Genuine service enhancement: Service delivery criteria include concrete upgrades, reduced response times and higher service availability, which actively support the overarching objective of improving the quality of government services.</p>
Evidence of change (What supports as means of verification of our results?)	<p>1. Quantitative Data from Surveys: Data collected through pre- and post-project surveys provide precise evidence of improvement by measuring citizen satisfaction levels, service delivery times, and institutional responsiveness.</p> <p>2. Documentation of Policy Reform: Documentation showing the adoption and implementation of existing govt. policies and</p>

	<p>practices by public institutions in response to citizen feedback serves as factual evidence of institutional change.</p> <p>3. Case Studies and Success Stories: The compilation of case studies and success stories highlights specific instances where citizen involvement leads to positive outcomes in service delivery and management.</p> <p>4. Monitoring and Evaluation Reports: Regular M&E reports, along with quantitative data and qualitative analysis, document progress against set indicators, serve as a powerful means of verification of achieved results.</p>
<p>How was the result achieved? (Approach/strategy adopted)</p>	<p>Community Engagement and Empowerment: We actively engage and empower communities to uphold their rights and responsibilities through the use of SA tools for monitoring government services. We conduct Open Dialogues, Public Hearings, town hall meetings, civic forums, and training sessions to involve Service receivers, Right Holders, Local Administrators, and Citizen Committees.</p> <p>2. Utilization of social accountability tools: We utilize social accountability tools like community score cards, social audits, and public hearings to gather direct feedback from users on service performance. This approach enhances accountability and transparency in service delivery while also ensuring institutional responsibility.</p> <p>3.Capacity building: We regularly conduct workshops for community members and government officials to improve their skills in segregation of duties, data collection and analysis as well as to advocate for policy reform.</p> <p>4.Advocacy and policy impact: We push for changes/reform in policy based on the results of social feedback and the tools we use for social responsibility. By pursuing these goals, sustainable improvements in governance can be achieved, resulting in institutions that are more responsive and efficient in meeting the people's needs.</p> <p>5.Monitoring and Adaptive Management: We have put in place a robust system to monitor and evaluate our progress using specific indicators. It helps us quickly adjust our strategies and operations when new challenges arise or new opportunities arise.</p>

Activities description

Major activities:

1. Forming CFs and CGs and functioning them:
2. Training the CF members and engraining in citizen monitoring using CSC and SA tolls:
3. Raising awareness on RTI,
4. Strengthening legal committees of those institutions and involving the stakeholders in the process:

Over all Outputs:

1. Enhanced ability of 10 Citizen Forums (CF) and 90 Citizen Groups (grass-root civil society) to participate in local Government functioning process.
2. Selected 10 local government institutions (UP) and 40 local public service institutions are monitored by citizens using different tools (CSC and Social Audit) which make them accountable to improve (50% from base) quality services.
3. 10 Local Government and 40 public institutions (same institutions as mentioned in output 2) are more capable and interested in engaging citizens in strengthening their governance,
4. Capacity of the implementing organization enhanced for effective and efficient management of the project.

Done Activities:

Under Output 1: Enhanced ability of 10 Citizen Forums (CFs) and 90 Citizen Groups (grass-root civil society) to participate in local Government functioning process.

1.1 Form Ward level Citizen Groups (CG) and reorganize Union Level Citizen Forum (CF): The project will organise Ward level meetings (2 in each of 90 Wards) with the citizens of different sections, representatives/leaders of existing active CBOs and other influential stakeholders (e.g. teachers, religious leaders etc.) in the area. The 1st meeting will discuss the problem the project would try to address, approach to addressing the problems and especially poor and marginalized.

1.2 Organise bi-monthly meetings Citizen's Groups and Forums: From the 3rd month the 90 CGs and 10 CFs will start to hold (2-hours) bi-monthly meetings which will discuss their progress against plans for the project and identify ways to improve their engagement with local Government elected bodies and service providers. Additionally, the CGs and CFs will also discuss various social issues pertaining in particular to women's and children's rights and plan actions to mitigate the infringement of these rights.

1.3 Provide rights awareness and skills development training to CG/CF members: The project organizes daylong training for 60 CG representatives from the 90 Wards of 10 Unions on awareness about their rights, particularly in relation to local public services and local government, agriculture extension, primary education, primary health care and local legal services (Village Court, Union/ Upazila Legal Services Committee, Nari Nirja ton Birodi Cell etc) overviews about citizen monitoring and the different tools and to enhance their contextual analysis and advocacy skills. Union Parishad members will be invited to the training to discuss the rights of the citizens they can facilitate and how they can provide such services. The training will include sessions on Right To Information (RTI) acts and

some practical experiences in getting/ collecting information from the public institutions. This non-residential training will be conducted by trained personnel and staff of from implementing NGO (BMUS) at Union Level.

1.4 Conduct orientations to CG members: A total of 10 batches of a one-day non-residential orientation (one for each union CF/CG members, 20-25 participant/batch) will be organized for each CG members at ward level/union level on working strategies, right to information, citizen monitoring and their tools. The trainer will facilitate the orientations with the assistance of two trained CG members (1.3).

1.5 Organise community mapping: By the 3rd month of the project, 10 participating CFs and CGs, with support of the project team, to conduct mapping of public services in their respective communities, analyse their access and constraints in accessing the services. The mapping exercise will be daylong sessions assisted by local elected representatives. Each CF will map at least one public institution, i.e. 10 CFs will cover representation of all the types of the potential institutions. *This mapping information will be used as baseline (ref. Activity 4.4)*

1.6 Observe International Public Service Day and Human Rights Day: Organize 10 mass campaigns on yearly basis (23 June and 10 December) at Union and Upazila Level to raise citizen voice to uphold human rights, know RTI and increase accountability and transparency in the local level. The mass campaign includes rally, discussions, and essay and letter competition on local corruption issues. The CF will present an evidence-based discussion-note on the local corruption and irregularities.

Under Output 2: Selected 10 local government institutions (UP) and 40 local public service institutions are monitored by citizens using different tools (CSC and Social Audit) which make them accountable to improve (50% from base) quality services.

2.1 Review/Develop and Contextualize 2 Monitoring Tools (CSC and SA): The existing trained staff of the implementing NGOs will develop review the tools that have been used in similar projects previously (in PRAGATI supported by USAID) and develop the Community Score Card and Social Audit tools for use in the project through 2 workshops each two days (total 4 days) in the 2nd quarter of the project. A consultant needs to be hired to facilitate the process.

2.2 Orient the CFs members on Community Score Card (CSC) tools and process: Organize two-day orientations workshops (2 Batches, 60 participants, 48 from CF/CG and 12 from CSOs) for orienting the CSC tools and 7 steps process of CSC. The trainer and PC will conduct the orientations.

2.3 Conduct Citizen monitoring Using CSC: CFs will conduct citizen monitoring using CSC which takes about three months for each institution (by each CF). The CSC will be carried out in selected 40 local public institutions by CF/CGs and other CSOs in 10 Unions; 4 public service institutions (among Agriculture Extension at Union and Upazila, Village Court, Primary School/ Union Health and Family welfare Centre/ Community Clinic/ Upazila Health Complex) from each Union will be selected. The process will follow 7 steps; i) selecting an area and public service by CF, ii) inform the local stakeholders through a meeting, iii) taking allocations from PI (following some indicators), iv) scoring satisfactions level from service recipients through FGD (2/3), v) comparing both data and develop a

report, vi) sharing the report among the different stakeholders (from demand and supply side) including Upazila/ District Administrations and Elected representatives, and vii) follow-up the service improvement commitment given by the service providers and the authority.

2.4 Orient the CF and CSO joint team on Social Audit (SA) tools and process:

Organize two-day orientations workshops (1 batch, 30 participants, 24 from CFs and 6 from CSOs) for orienting SA tools and process thoroughly, data collection process and exercise on data collection. The project team will conduct the non-residential workshops.

2.5 Conduct Social Audit: Safety net program (in two groups) will be monitored by using SA tools in all 10 UPs in the project Upazila. Social Safety net program will be divided into two groups; i) VGD and VGF and ii) in the other group widow allowances/ lactating mother allowances/ old age allowances, disability allowances etc. Yearly one group will be undertaken for social audit. One intervention will take a period of six months. A team (consisting 4-6 persons) and CF members will be assigned jointly to facilitate the process of following steps as i) capturing the scopes of SA, ii) Conceptualizing about the SA among the facilitators, iii) finalizing of SA tools, iv) conducting training to the CF and CSO members, v) data collection and analysis, vi) Preparing reports in a presentable form vii) Arranging public hearing and presentations and viii) following up public meetings recommendations and improvements.

2.6 Following up the monitored public institutions by CGs and CFs: Based on the findings and recommendations of citizen monitoring (using CSC and SA) the concerned CGs and CF will follow-up the selected institutions following a checklist on quarterly basis. The findings of the follow-up will be shared to the service providers, if necessary to the elected representatives and higher authority.

Under Output 3: Local Government (10 Ups) and 40 public institutions are more capable and interested in engaging citizens in strengthening their governance

3.1 Organise workshops with Union Parishad Standing Committees: A total of 10 one day workshops (20-30 participant) will be organised by NGO focal point for the members of the Union Parishads and non-UP member standing committee (of selected 2 committees) members to raise awareness about the mandated role of the Union Parishad Standing Committees, how they are required to function, current status of the functioning of the committees and, if any, how the role currently played be enhanced with a view to improving services for the disadvantaged population.

3.2 Facilitate and make functional the Ward Meetings: From the 7th month, the concerned CG and CSO will facilitate three ward meetings in each Union i.e. 10 Ups X 3 Wards X 1 Meeting in project period equal to 30 meetings in line with UP Act 2009 (at one-twentieth voters will present in the meeting). The meetings will discuss the needs of the people of the Ward, planning and implementations and assessment of ward level activities as mandated by the UP.

3.3 Supporting Standing Committees to regularise their function: From the 7th month, the project will facilitate and support (40 meetings) in the project period (and follow-up rest of the project period) Standing Committees, preferably, (any of two) i) Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock ii) Education, Health and Family Planning and iii) Family dispute

resolve, women and children welfare, and iv) Rural infrastructure development, maintenance to hold their coordination meetings every two month as mandated by the law in 10 Unions. Holding the meetings regularly will instigate the standing committees to look into and initiate measures to improve the services extended to the disadvantaged Population by the UP elected members and public service providers.

3.4 Strengthening legal committees of local public institutions: The project will facilitate the legal committees according to the related GoB policy of 30 selected Public institutions as appropriate (which are monitored) such as School Management Committee (SMC), Community Clinic Committee (CCC), Upazila Health Complex Committee etc. to make them functional in order to improve the quality of services. The objectives of the activities will be to hold meeting regular meeting, engage active members, regular monitoring of quality and communication with authority to solve the higher-level problems.

3.5 Hanging Citizen Charter (CC) in front of the selected public institutions: According to the GoB's order, in every public institution CC hanging is mandatory. Practically many of the institutions do not hang the CC or broken or invisible. The project will facilitate to hang a visible CC in front of 40 (10 UP and 40 Public institutions) selected institutions in collaboration with concerned committee and service providers.

3.6 Conduct Day-long 6 dialogues with local Government based service provider agencies, Union and Upazila Parishad representatives to develop agreement about the project: The project team will organise 6 dialogues (half-yearly basis) with Upazila and Union level officials of selected public service providers, Union and Upazila Parishad Chairmen and members, relevant standing committee members and Leaders of selected CBOs. The dialogues will discuss the necessity and importance of public services, necessity, strategies and objectives of the project and expected role of the participants in the project. These dialogues will choose a safety net program that this project, in addition to the education and health service providers, will monitor with engagement of key stakeholders and have their commitment to support the project. (40-50 participant each dialogue).

Under Output 4: Capacity of the implementing organizations enhanced for effective and efficient management of the project.

4.1 Organize project sharing meetings at Upazila levels: In the 2nd month, the project will arrange daylong Project Concept Sharing Meetings at Upazila level (participants 50-60). These meetings will be formal Launching of the Project where Upazilla Administration, Officials of Agriculture Extension, Health, Education and other Departments, officials of Union Parishad Chairmen and Secretaries, opinion leaders and representatives of NGOs will be invited among others.

4.2 Provide project orientation to the staff: Following recruitment and deployment of 8 project staff, the project will organize a three-day training, in the 1st month, for them to provide them understanding of project activities, guidance on how the project will be implemented, it's supervisory system and to develop detail implementation plan of the project.

4.3 Organize training on RTI for project staff: The project staff will be provided three days training to help develop their capacity to train and facilitate CF members on Right to Information Act. The training includes hands on experiences of RTI.

4.4 Develop baseline of the project: Following the community mapping (ref. Activity 1.5) a two-day workshop will be organized with the project staff to document the findings of the mapping and develop a baseline of the project. The process will involve assessment of people's perception about service providers and representative structure to analyse the findings and put them together for a baseline report. (20-30 participants)

Key Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Promoting accountability and transparency of public institutions has faced several important challenges, including changes, limited resources, technical barriers, corruption, lack of political will and public awareness. The original lessons highlight the importance of subjects in line with local reality, highlighting the importance of continuous power-building and regular monitoring and evaluating the initiative for government officials.

Key Challenges

Capacity Constraints

Challenge: Limited capacity and resources within public institutions to effectively respond to citizen feedback and implement improvements.

Citizen Engagement

Challenge: Difficulty in mobilizing and sustaining citizen participation, especially among marginalized groups.

Data Collection and Management

Challenge: Collecting accurate and comprehensive data for baseline and endline surveys, and managing this data effectively.

Sustainability Concerns

Challenge: Ensuring that the improvements in accountability and service quality are sustained beyond the project period.

Technological Barriers:

Challenge: its adoption is uneven, particularly in less developed regions. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of technical expertise, and digital divide hinder the effective use of e-governance tools.

Corruption and Lack of Political Will:

Challenge: High levels of corruption and a lack of political will can undermine efforts to promote accountability and transparency. In some cases, vested interests actively obstruct reform process.

Public Awareness and Engagement:

Challenge: Low levels of public awareness about their rights and the mechanisms available for participation can limit the impact of transparency initiatives.

Lessons Learnt

Importance of Leadership and Political Will:

Strong leadership and commitment from the highest levels of government are crucial for driving and sustaining reforms. Political will can help overcome resistance and ensure the allocation of necessary resources.

Role of Technology:

Technology is a powerful enabler of transparency and accountability. Investments in digital infrastructure and training are essential for maximizing the benefits of e-governance tools.

Public Participation and Civic Engagement:

Effective public participation mechanisms are vital for building trust and ensuring that transparency initiatives are responsive to citizens' needs.

Capacity Building:

Continuous training and development for public officials are necessary to build a culture of accountability and transparency.

Inclusive Engagement

Inclusive and diverse engagement strategies are necessary to ensure broad-based participation and feedback from all segments of the community.

Effective Communication

Clear and consistent communication between citizens and public institutions enhances transparency and trust.

Sustainability Planning

Ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes requires planning for the long-term integration of accountability and service quality improvements.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The overall status of results in promoting accountability and transparency in public institutions has been positive, with significant achievements in establishing legal frameworks, adopting digital governance tools, and enhancing public engagement. However, there have been some deviations from targets, particularly in the slower adoption of technology in regions with inadequate infrastructure and varying levels of civic participation due to insufficient awareness. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) efforts faced challenges such as inconsistent data quality, resource constraints, and stakeholder coordination issues. To mitigate these challenges, targeted training programs, investment in technological infrastructure, strengthened partnerships, and increased budget allocations for M&E activities have been implemented. These measures aim to enhance the effectiveness of M&E processes, ensuring continued progress towards the initiative's goals.

Monitoring mechanism and frequency: a) The PC will monitor the program activities and events at least once in a week. b) The PC will monitor the program activities and trainees in line with the monthly plan. The frequency will be 4 times a month. A set of check lists would be designed for each major activity considering the above designation.

Reporting system of the organization: a) Union wise reporting format will be developed and filled up by Program Organizers at monthly basis. b) The PC will also prepare a monthly monitoring report. In addition, s/he will compile a monthly report for the project which is checked by PD. c) The PC will prepare a quarterly report. S/he also prepare the annual report in the similar process and submit it to TAF as required; and d) A project final report will be prepared by the PC to submit to TAF.

Follow-up mechanism of supervision/ monitoring: Methodology of supervision/ monitoring will be participatory and supportive, i.e. the PC, PO will follow the 'supportive supervision' where they will be facilitating the project activities, target and process to achieve the output and objectives.

The stakeholders are involved in this system: Considering the needs. data will be collected from different stakeholders. PC, PO will get feedback from the stakeholders during the training, field and event visit. The PC will share the progress report in monthly coordination meeting held in Upazila and District GoB Offices.

Data validation and responsibility: PC is responsible to validate data during their field visit in quarterly. PD also validate data given by Program Organizers/PC. TAF monitoring personnel or their assigned persons are welcomed to validate data time to time.

Evaluation:

Baseline assessment and final evaluation: a) Baseline assessment will be conducted by the BMUS. To design the baseline, an independent consultant will be hired in first-three months of project period. The consultant will design the tools in collaboration with PC, the data will be collected by CF members and project staff and analysed in a workshop by PC and the consultant. The process builds the capacity of CFs and project staff and creates scope to understand the problem in depth.

B) Final Evaluation will be conducted through a third-party consultant team employed in consultation with TAF at the last quarter of the project period.

Involvement of all stakeholders: All major stakeholders will be involved during the above assessment process. The major stakeholders will be given to capture the all aspects of the projects

Recommendations

Based on the experience of implementing the current project, several important activities can effectively improve the accountability and transparency of public institutions.

First, the continuous power-building program for public officials should prioritize training on ethical behavior, governance policy and technical progress related to transparency system. Processes can flow by emphasis on the use of digital tools for information management and reporting, and improve data accessibility for stakeholders.

Secondly, it is essential to promote open information policy and ensure robust legal structure to enforce transparency standards. Implementing measures for participation in the public assembly, such as Town Hall Meeting and Online Feedback Platform, can further improve citizen participation and supervision.

Finally, setting up comprehensive monitoring and assessment measures with regular audit and independent evaluation will help ensure accountability. With attention to this activities, public institutions can strengthen their governance and strengthen public confidence in the integrity of their activities.

Here are recommendations for activities that could effectively promote accountability and transparency in public institutions in the future:

Leverage Technology for Data Collection and Reporting, Promote Inclusive Participation, Establish Regular Feedback Loops, Foster Collaborative Relationship, Integrate Accountability into Institutional Policies, Building Strategic Partnerships, Facilitation of Public Participation, Enhanced Use of Technology, Comprehensive Capacity Building Programs, Conduct Baseline and Endline Evaluations, Focus on Transparency and Information Dissemination, Plan for Sustainability, Enhance Capacity Building Initiatives,

Conclusion

Promoting accountability and transparency in public institutions is essential to build trust, ensure effective administration and prevent corruption. Government institutions can increase their credibility and responsiveness by implementing comprehensive measures such as audits, performance evaluations and open access to information. These practices encourage citizen engagement, ethical behavior and efficient resource use. Ultimately, an unwavering commitment to accountability and transparency strengthens democratic governance, supports sustainable development, and maintains a strong social contract between the government and its citizens, ensuring that public institutions act in the best interests of the community.

Annex:

- a. Activity reports (as applicable)
- b. Indicator matrix
- c. Success stories
- d. Activities update

b. Indicator Matrix

for Promoting Accountability and Transparency in Public Institutions

Below is indicator matrix with key dimensions, indicators, methods of measurement, and targets.

key dimensions,	indicators,	methods of measurement	targets.
Transparency	Public Access to Information	Percentage of information requests fulfilled within legal time frames	90% compliance
	Budget Disclosure	Timeliness and completeness of budget publication	100% published on official website
	Open Data Availability	Number of datasets available online	50 key datasets published
	Public Consultation	Frequency of public consultations on policy issues	Quarterly consultations
Accountability	Social Audit Reports	Percentage of social audit recommendations implemented	80% implementation rate
	Performance Evaluation	Regularity of performance reviews for public officials	Annual evaluations/follow up
	Anti-Corruption Measures	Number of corruption cases prosecuted	Increase by 10% annually
	Whistleblower Protection	Existence of effective whistleblower protection mechanisms	Legislation and reporting mechanisms in place
Public Participation	Citizen Feedback Mechanisms	Number of feedback submissions and responses	Response rate of 55% within 30 days
	Civil Society Engagement	Number of partnerships with civil society organizations	At least 10 active partnerships
Efficiency and Effectiveness	Service Delivery	Average time taken to deliver key public services	Reduction by 20%
	Resource Utilization	Percentage of budget spent as planned	75% adherence to budget plans

This indicator matrix provides a structured framework for monitoring and evaluating the project's outcomes, ensuring transparency and accountability in achieving the objectives.

c. Success stories

Lives: The Success Story of Union Parishad in Bagerhat, Bangladesh

In the underprivileged environment of Bagerhat, Bangladesh, illustrating the transformative impact of promoting accountability and transparency in public institutions, especially through the Union Parishad's social safety net initiatives. In recently, accessing basic social services and government benefits was fraught with risky for the residents of Bagerhat. The local Union Parishad, traditionally a symbol of grassroots governance, faced obstacles such as inefficiency, lack of prosperity, corruption, and lack of transparency, which limited its ability to effectively serve the community.

Recognizing the need for change, local citizen leaders and young activist and embarked on a journey of reform aimed at revitalizing the Union Parishad's role as a pillar of support and empowerment for its residents. Key to this transformation were several innovative measures aimed to enhancing accountability and transparency in public service delivery.

Key of these efforts is the introduction of a digital platform that revolutionized the way services and benefits are access and distribute. Through this platform, residents could register for essential services such as birth registration, healthcare, education support, and social assistance programs. This digitization not only streamlined processes but also minimized the opportunities for corruption and ensured that resources reached those who needed them most. Moreover, robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were put in place to track the utilization of resources and measure the impact of interventions. Regular citizen's follow-up and transparency measures ensured that funds allocated for social safety nets are utilize effectively and in accordance with designate purposes.

Community engagement are the pivotal roles of the transparency and accountability. Citizen's Platform follow-up, feedbacking and grievance redressal are established, creating avenues for dialogue and ensuring that the Union Parishad remained responsive to community needs. Families in Bagerhat who once struggled to access healthcare and education, sanitation and hygiene now benefit from improved services and support systems. Vulnerable groups, including women, children, and the elderly, have been prioritized through targeted interventions that address their specific needs.

The Satgombuj Union, Karapara Union, Chila Union, Bamorta Union Parishad of Bagerhat stands as a beacon of progress and hope in Bangladesh, demonstrating that with visionary leadership and a commitment to accountability, even the most entrenched challenges can be overcome. Prioritizing the needs of its residents and ensuring that resources are managed responsibly, the Union Parishad has not only improved livelihoods but has also laid the foundation for a brighter future for generations to come. The success story of promoting transparency and accountability in public institutions serves as a model for effective governance and sustainable development, inspiring other regions to follow suit.

Empowering Communities: Public Health and Agriculture Success in Bagerhat, Bangladesh

In the SIDR,Aila affected area of Sadar and Mongla Upazila at Bagerhat district in Bangladesh, a remarkable tale of progress unfolds— one that emphasizes the transformative impact of promoting accountability and transparency in public institutions, especially in the public health and agriculture sectors. Until recently, these areas faced significant challenges in delivering essential health services and agricultural support to their communities. Issues such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to healthcare, water and sanitation and inefficient agricultural support for farmer hampered the well-being and prosperity of residents. However, the wind began to turn with the coordinated efforts of local community leaders and social activist who Understood the urgent need for reform. Taking a vision of inclusive development, they embarked on a journey to revitalize public health services and agricultural support through increased accountability and transparency.

The focus of this transformation was to strengthen public health facilities and agriculture services in Sadar and Mongla upazilas. Improvements in infrastructure to ensured that residents have access to quality services close to their homes. Equipping these facilities with essential public health facilities and agriculture services supplies and personnel has improved service delivery, improved water sanitation and hygiene, prevented infectious diseases, and eliminated agricultural consultation gaps in the general agricultural services. Farmers in the region received training on modern agricultural techniques, crop diversification, and efficient water management practices. Community engagement played a pivotal role in the success of these efforts. Awareness campaigns and participatory workshops empowered residents to take ownership of their health and agricultural practices. The both sectors provided citizen charters and information board front of the office premises. Citizen Platform does RTI apply and follow-up, and grievance redressal are established, fostering a culture of transparency and responsiveness in local governance. Platforms were set up for citizen feedback and grievance redressal by inculcating a culture of transparency and responsiveness in local governance.

The results of these comprehensive reforms have been transformative. Today, residents of Sadar and Mongla Upazila enjoy improved access to healthcare, sanitation and hygiene services, leading to better health outcomes and reduced mortality rates. Agricultural productivity has increased significantly, enabling farmers to enhance their incomes and improve food security for their families. Economically, these improvements have encouraged local development and prosperity. Small entrepreneurs and businesses in the related sectors have developed, creating new opportunities for employment and economic growth. The synergy between improved public health and the agricultural sector has contributed to a more resilient and prosperous population of Bagerhat.

Finally, the Sadar and Mongla upazilas of Bagerhat are examples of the power of increasing accountability and transparency in government institutions for sustainable development. By prioritizing the needs of their residents and ensuring efficient resource management, local leaders are laying the foundation for a healthier, sanitation and hygiene are more prosperous future. Their success serves as a model of effective governance and inclusive growth, inspiring similar initiatives in Bagerhat and beyond.

d. Activities update

Here's an update on the activities implemented in the project aimed at increasing accountability of public institutions and improving access to quality public services through citizen engagement in Sadar, Rampal, Mongla and Morelgonj Upazila of Bagerhat District:

Implementation of Community Score Cards

Progress: Community Score Cards have been successfully implemented across the Upazila.

Outcome: Regular feedback from citizens has provided valuable insights into the performance of public services, highlighting areas needing improvement.

Social Audits and Public Hearings

Progress: Social audits have been conducted quarterly, with active participation from community members and multi-stakeholders.

Outcome: Identified discrepancies in service delivery and governance practices, leading to corrective actions by local authorities.

Capacity Building Workshops

Progress: Multiple capacity-building workshops have been conducted for public officials and community leaders.

Outcome: Enhanced knowledge and skills in social accountability tools and governance practices among participants, fostering better collaboration and understanding.

Policy Advocacy and Reforms

Progress: Advocacy efforts have resulted in the implementation of two key policy reforms addressing service delivery gaps (WATSAN, Cyclone Shelter Maintenance policy)

Outcome: Improved institutional frameworks and practices, ensuring more efficient and transparent public service delivery.

Community Engagement Initiatives

Progress: Community engagement activities, including public forums and awareness campaigns, have been ongoing.

Outcome: Increased community awareness and participation in governance processes, strengthening local ownership and accountability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress: Regular monitoring and evaluation exercises have been conducted to track progress against set indicators.

Outcome: Clear documentation of achievements and challenges, enabling timely adjustments and improvements in project implementation.

Technology Integration

Progress: Introduction of mobile-based feedback systems for real-time data collection and reporting.

Outcome: Improved efficiency in data management and decision-making processes, enhancing project responsiveness and transparency. (Apply COBO App).

Next Steps

The project will focus on Moving forward, Sustainability Planning, Expanded Outreach, Policy Scaling, Continued Monitoring: By continuing to implement these activities effectively and adapting to create lasting positive impacts on community well-being and governance.