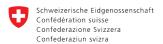


## A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE

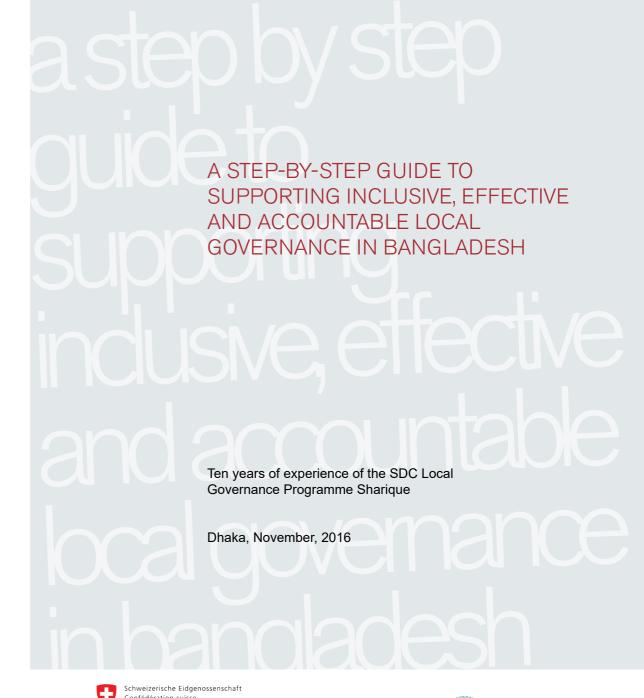
## AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN BANGLADESH

Ten years of experience of the SDC Local Governance Programme Sharique

Dhaka, November 2016









Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC



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## **Abbreviations**

CSO Civil society organisation

LGI Local government institution

LGSP Local Governance Support Project

NGO Non-governmental organisation

PCM Project cycle management

PFM Public finance management

PGA Participatory Gender Analysis

RTI Right to information

SDC Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

UDCC Union Development Coordination Committee

UP Union Parishad

UPGP Union Parishad Governance Project

UZGP Upazila Governance Project

VGF Vulnerable Group Feeding

VGD Vulnerable Group Development

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We are happy to release the second edition of the Sharique Handbook, which offers a step-by-step guide to capacity building for good local governance at Union level. Sharique has completed ten years of experience in supporting rural communities and local governance institutions to establish good and effective local governance. By working with local government elected representatives and public servants, as well as with citizens, a model of a step by step process was developed, tested and rolled out in 207 Union Parishads in four districts of Bangladesh. We are delighted to share this model with the government agencies concerned with local government capacity building. We also hope to transfer the knowledge and tools to a number of Development Partners in Bangladesh for further use and replication.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all Sharique staff and Partner NGOs who have developed this capacity building approach together with our partner Unions in the project areas. The Sharique approach to local governance looks specifically at building a sustainable enabling environment, through capable local government actors, informed national decision makers and a voice for citizens as an actor in local governance. These ten years of experience showed that local governments in Bangladesh have matured and become a strong local governance driving force. Union Parishads have taken a stronger stand in ensuring better and more just services to all women and men, including poor and vulnerable groups. Citizens have also matured to engage meaningfully with local governments for better planning and effective plan implementation.

Sharique would like to thank all 207 Union Parishads and 29 Upazila Parishads who engaged in this partnership and contributed to developing an approach to capacity building that is effective, needs-driven and produces results. This partnership and knowledge management would have not been possible without Sharique's

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managers who never got tired to try new things and learn from those. A note of gratitude goes to Tirtha Sarathi Sikder, Amir Uddin and Salma Khatun for sharing their experiences and providing information and support in the compilation of this handbook.

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The Sharique Team



## PART ONE

## INTRODUCTION



## **OBJECTIVE OF THIS GUIDE**

The Step-by-Step Guide to Supporting Inclusive and Accountable Local Governance in Bangladesh provides practical guidance on systematically and comprehensively supporting local governance actors through the Union Parishad planning and budgeting cycle. The aim is to offer detailed and accessible guidance and options for improving inclusion, accountability, effectiveness and citizen participation in preparation for and throughout the annual planning and public management cycle at Union Parishad level. The guidance is designed for implementation "on-system", in sync with the annual planning and fiscal calendar of Union Parishads in Bangladesh and specifically to support the implementation of the legal provisions, in particular of the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, which was adopted in 2009 and amended in 2010. It is complementary to the Union Parishad (UP) Operational Manual, providing suggestions on how several of the key elements could be implemented in practice.

The Guide is based on ten years' experience in supporting local governance in Bangladesh through the SDC Local Governance Programme Sharique. Its objective is to make the practical lessons learned from this experience available to other stakeholders, including Union Parishads themselves, as well as a range of public and non-governmental supporters and service providers. Sharique shares its lessons learned with a three-fold purpose:

- 1. Learning and inspiration: to serve as a tool for local governance actors (UPs, civil society organisations, citizens), as well as national and international stakeholders, to learn more about "tried and tested" models and practices of Union Parishad public resource management and inclusive and accountable governance.
- Empowerment and action: to support local governance actors (UPs, civil society organisations, citizens) in their efforts to implement more effective, inclusive and accountable local governance practice in Bangladesh, in line with the UP Act 2009.
- Resources and reference: to provide local governance practitioners a compendium not so much on the "what", but as the "how" of methods for supporting improved local governance, and as a resource for learning and empowerment.

The Guide does not seek to prescribe what should be done in each and every setting otherwise known as "best practices". The recommendations and suggestions given herein will need to be considered in light of the contextual factors present in each

setting where it is implemented, and may need to be adapted by users.

#### The Guide

- Acknowledges that local governments and citizens are the key actors of local governance and describes steps and expected resultant outcomes, or changes they can expect to foresee, based on the
- experience of Sharique partner UPs and citizens.
- Recognizes that national-level stakeholders and development practitioners at different levels are interested in supporting local improved governance and aims to provide guidance and a means for how this can be done more effectively, based on Sharique's experience.



## **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

This Guide is conceptualized and structured to accompany the reader stepby-step through a streamlined process of strengthening local governance, linked to the Union Parishad (UP) management cycle. However, some readers may wish to jump straight to a particular step of relevance to their situation. The steps are handily defined to facilitate both those with more general and more targeted interests in both local governance process and particular tools.

Likewise, the Guide is also intended to be used by a range of different actors. Although local governments and citizens lead the process of local governance, external actors can also play a role in triggering and facilitating change processes through their technical and financial interventions. The Guide may be used by direct actors in the local governance system, whether local government representatives or citizens. Alternatively, a range of external facilitators may use it. These can include facilitators within the state system, for example institutions responsible for the capacity development of local government. Facilitators also include a range of development partners and practitioners: donors, INGOs and NGOs.

More specifically, we hope that local government institutions (LGIs) will use it as a resource to learn how they can improve their performance, in line with the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009, the UP Operational Manual and available capacity development opportunities. Some of the tools are specifically intended for use by the UPs themselves for internal UP processes, and some should be used by the UPs to engage citizens.

We hope that local civil society organisations and service providers will use the Guide to develop their own capacities and understanding of local governance processes and the role they can play therein, as well as a resource in their own capacity strengthening work with citizens and local governments. Similarly, we hope that individual citizens can use the Guide to learn more about ways to voice their opinions more effectively and how to hold their Union Parishads to account throughout the local public management cycle.

We also expect that the Guide will be used by national level government and nongovernmental organisations in their local governance capacity strengthening programmes, and its training modules will be provided to LGI staff as well as be used in university courses related to public administration.

We expect the Guide to be particularly relevant for the many development partners and projects working in this field, particularly within Bangladesh but also wider afield. A comprehensive support package for local governance following this guide is recommended to be planned and implemented with a three-year time frame in view (the third year being dedicated to quality enhancement – see details on page 29). The experience of Sharique proved that UPs and citizens can learn to build and practice effective local governance within two years if they have adequate training and coaching support. Having three years adds value to strengthening the skills.

This Step-by-Step Guide contains the following resources:

A description of five steps, and two transversal topics, that we consider the core "package" to be addressed in efforts to sustainably improve local governance in Bangladesh. These steps are aligned to the local (UP) management cycle and are designed to be implemented "on system". We have defined the steps in terms of the outcomes or changes that they contribute to.

- A streamlined selection of "tried and tested" tools from the portfolio of tools Sharique has developed over the past ten years. Some of these tools date from the early days of the project and have been implemented consistently for a decade. Others are more recent products, based on the changing context of local governance in Bangladesh. A summary of each of these tools, as well as an estimate of the required human and financial resources for implementing them, is provided in this Guide. The tools themselves are available in the accompanying digital files.
- Highlights of lessons learned, including tips and advice. We share some of what we have learned from the challenges and successes of implementing these tools, aiming also to provide advice for readers beyond the practical steps of the tools themselves.

The Guide is structured around the following five steps and two transversal topics:

## 1. Raising awareness and assessing governance

In this step the UP and the citizens are informed about what the existing laws and policies for local government say, assess the existing situation in their UP - including where the gaps are, understand what their respective roles and responsibilities are as per legislation and learn how to minimize the gaps to achieve effective and inclusive local governance in their communities.

## 2. Strengthening coordination structures

This step aims to strengthen two local governance coordination structures, which we recommend as vitally important for ensuring accountability and transparency within the local governance system: Standing Committees (SC) and Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC).

## 3. Opening up participatory spaces

While Step 2 focuses on coordination structures within the local government, Step 3 aims at opening up participatory spaces for citizen engagement with local government. In this step, the UP receives an orientation on how to conduct ward shavas and open budget meetings and why it is important to organise these spaces and to listen to the opinions and feedbacks of the citizens. At this stage citizens, as well, learn to be pro-active and participate.

### 4. Integrated planning

Local governments in Bangladesh are required to prepare annual plans as well as a strategic (5 year) local development plan. In Step 4, the UP goes through each stage of the strategic planning process and links it to the annual plans. In the end. it produces a strategic (five year) plan comprising priority issues reflecting the citizens' needs in the Union and a detailed annual plan of action. The planning process has an integrated character, as on the one hand it reflects a participatory approach to planning, in which the whole diversity of Union's stakeholders' proposals are integrated into one document. On the other hand, it integrates the five annual plans into one development plan for five years. It is also linked to the budget, which makes it comprehensive and integrated.

## 5. Budgeting and finance management

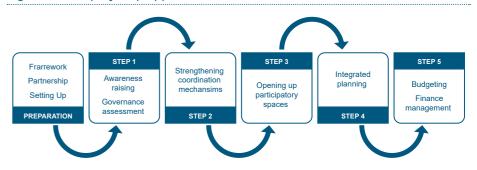
Putting the strategic development plan into action requires detailed and effective management of public resources, including financial resources. In Step 5, the UP increases its knowledge on budgeting (revenue management, budget formulation, budget implementation, budget analysis etc.) and on how to manage a project in an efficient manner. Citizens, as well must be budget literate. In Step 5. both local councils and secretaries and citizens are trained on budgets.

## Gender Equality and Pro-Poor Governance

Gender equality and pro-poor governance are considered as "transversal" elements in the Guide. The aim is that UP members and citizens identify differences and inequalities between women and men at family and community level and plan measures to reduce discriminatory practices, if such are found to exist. Additionally, women's voice and leadership skills are enhanced. The package also includes a tool through which poor and disadvantaged people increase their knowledge on the availability of and entitlements to social safety net provisions. Furthermore, poverty considerations are addressed through a) the social mapping and poverty analysis exercise embedded in the five year strategic planning process and b) through the enhanced participation of poor and disadvantaged groups in UP decision-making processes. These are exercised through the involvement of the citizens in different committees and the opening up of the participatory spaces, such as ward shava meetings, open budget meetings, budget review meetings, participation in selection of safety net beneficiaries and a variety of other spaces.

As the local context in Bangladesh is changing rapidly (i.e. evolving legal framework, changing political, economic and social conditions), a project or programme also has to adapt its working modalities. Since the beginning of Sharique's intervention in 2006, a number of important changes within the local governance context have occurred. Among these, the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009, and amended 2010 has brought significant changes in the functioning of the UPs. The tools shared in this Guide have been updated over the years to adapt to the changing context (and to build on lessons learned) and represent the current "state of the art". However, readers of this guide are encouraged to update or adapt the tools as appropriate, based on their own experience and on any future changes in the legal and policy framework for local governance.

Figure 1: A step-by-step approach



Gender equality and pro-poor governance

Updates to this handbook and the tools can be found on www.helvetas.bangladesh.org



## THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME SHARIQUE

The longstanding and flagship SDC Local Governance Programme Sharique has been in operation since 2006. The project aims to build the capacities and competencies of Union Parishads to operate in an accountable, socially inclusive and effective manner. According to external reviewers, the project's biggest achievement is that it generated evidence to show that local governments can work for the poor and marginalised. Sharique has been able to demonstrate through its support to UPs and civil society groups that it is fully possible to build effective partnerships between UPs and citizens for the purpose of joint and participatory decision-making and effective local governance.

The word Sharique means "partner" in Bangla. Sharique has embraced this concept of "partnership" as the core principle in Sharique's implementation approach. The approach seeks to strengthen the capacities of, and interface between, partners in local governance: LGIs, citizens and civil society. Sharique is active both in building the capacities of local governments, particularly Union Parishads, and in supporting citizens to know their rights and have the confidence to demand them. In cooperation with local civil society organisations, Sharique provides several trainings, such as on the Right to Information Act, budgeting and planning, selection of beneficiaries for social safety net programmes, and the roles and responsibilities of representatives and Standing Committees. It also trains UP members on gender equality issues and promotes social equity through pro-poor budgeting, participatory gender analysis, women leadership training and local governance self-assessments. Furthermore. Sharique facilitates formation of citizen groups (ward platforms) and supports already existing groups to emerge as local development actors, which sometimes play oversight and advocacy functions

towards the UP. Sharique has also been on the cutting edge of implementing Public Finance Management (PFM) at the local government's level (UP and UZP) in Bangladesh. In all of these activities, Sharique's particular focus is on women and men citizens in rural areas who are poor and disadvantaged.

However, geographically and populationwise, Sharique covers only a small portion of the country. It thus seeks to be complementary to larger scale interventions operated by major development partners and to pro-actively share its learning with national-level stakeholders. The added-value of Sharique within these multiple initiatives is its integrated bottomup approach to strengthening local governance. The approach is designed to bring the various local governance actors together in strengthening the existing systems and processes and to develop new methodologies and mechanisms, where such are missing. While the national government, with assistance from internationally supported programmes such as Local Governance Support Project (LGSP), Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP)/Upazila Governance Project (UZGP) and others, brings in laws, frameworks, manuals and grants. Sharique has become known for its experience in developing and testing methods, tools and mechanisms within the legal framework for the practice, application and troubleshooting by LGIs.

## INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNANCE

LGIs in Bangladesh face a challenging task in developing more transparent and inclusive local governance systems and processes, improving services, and steering decisions in the face of changing and complex scenarios - be they political, institutional or environmental. The challenges include a population of over 157 million people (resulting in populous local government units), high levels of illiteracy and a general scepticism and lack of trust towards those in authority. This is all the more so given the complex power relations present in society - between influential landlords and labourers: between the Muslim majority and the Adivasi, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian minority communities; between men and women. In many parts of Bangladesh, the topography and geographical remoteness means that many people are cut off from local public services either seasonally or more chronically.

As the smallest administrative and political unit in the country, the UPs are the building blocks of the governance system; democracy at the national level can truly flourish only through their sound functioning. Sharique focuses on building the capacities and competencies of selected UPs, supporting them to become role models of inclusive, effective and accountable governance for other UPs. Sharique's decade-long experience shows that targeted interventions at improving the functioning of local governance systems at UP-level, in accordance with the law and principles of good governance, can have a significant and lasting impact. This Guide is intended to share insights and advice into how that may be achieved in other contexts.

The theory of change underlying these interventions is that the more accountable UPs become, the more they start enjoying pro-active disclosure of information and consultations with citizens. The more accountable UPs become, the more citizens open up and bring in valuable contributions to the overall development. Sharique has witnessed a number of changes among UPs and within Unions. These changes strengthen the system, they bring in invaluable examples, which are worth following and using as role models.

## WHAT IS INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE **LOCAL GOVERNANCE?**

This Guide is designed to support different stakeholders interested in improving the inclusiveness, effectiveness and accountability of local governance in Bangladesh. Sharique considers these to be a) the core "good governance" principles and b) topics where capacity building interventions can have a significant and lasting effect on local governance performance. These terms can be defined as follows 1:

Inclusion. equality and nondiscrimination: This means that no group may be excluded from power and resources and implies that proactive public integration policies for excluded or marginalised groups should be implemented. Non-discrimination policies should be applied for the express purpose of reducing inequalities between men and women, urban and rural populations, and between different ethnic or religious groups.

In the context of Bangladesh, inclusive local governance means ensuring that all voices, including those of women, Adivasis, religious minorities (i.e. Hindus, Christian), disadvantaged groups (i.e. differently-abled people) are heard and that these people can participate in local decision making processes. In order to address social inclusion in an effective manner, a deep understanding of local

power dynamics and patterns of social exclusion is required.2

Effectiveness and efficiency: This implies a results-oriented performance of state institutions in assuming their public duties, which should serve the well-being of people. It further implies that financial and human resources are used in an optimal fashion, without waste, corruption, or delays.

In the context of local governance in Bangladesh, this would imply ensuring an appropriate match between plans and the resources to implement them. proper distribution of entitlements under the mandate of local governments, and rigorous public procurement practices.

Accountability: Accountability refers to the control of the power exercised within state and society at the national as well as subnational level. It is about the right of people to access information, to check and pass judgement on the performance of those assigned with public duties, and it is about the obligation for the people holding power to explain their decisions. In addition, it concerns the duty of the controlling agencies to reward good performance and to sanction abuses of power. Accountability presupposes clear definitions of the functions, duties, and

rules for the scope of action of public and private institutions.

A number of formal and informal mechanisms for ensuring accountability are defined in legislation and observed in practice in Bangladesh. Formal mechanisms provided by law include: ward shavas, open budget meetings, budget review meetings (sharing progress) and Right To Information (RTI) compliance. Informal practices include daily interactions around meeting points, patronage or charity relationships, etc. Informal dispute resolution takes a large portion of UP leaders' effective time. UPs are at the interface between traditional communitylevel problem solving mechanisms and mechanisms built into the operation of public institutions (particularly as defined in the UP Act 2009).3

The following are also important basic

3 For more information on Sharique's experience with inclusive local governance, please refer to Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation (2011).

conditions:

Participation: Implies that all population segments need to be connected to the social and political processes that affect them. This means that public spaces exist where different groups can express dissenting opinions and personal interests, and where these view-points are treated as serious inputs in the decision-making process.

Transparency: Implies that the public in general, or at least those directly affected, should obtain information from the state about the rationale underlying decisions. decision-making criteria, the intended manner of implementing a decision, and any insight into its effects.

The rule of law: Key elements of the rule of law generally include: non-discrimination and equality before the law, the hierarchy of norms, and substantive coherence of the legal framework, the separation of powers, the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, and respect for human rights.



## WHAT DOES INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNANCE LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

When Sharique started, Union Parishads were widely conceived to be operating in an ineffective and unaccountable manner. Representatives were not present in the office on a regular and reliable basis, few funds were disbursed for development activities, and the general public perception of corruption and inefficiency. Changing such patterns takes time, and the difference ten vears on is noteworthy. Here are some of the characteristics of inclusive, effective and accountable local governance performance on the part of both citizens and LGIs (the list is not exhaustive) that Sharique is promoting:

<sup>2</sup> For more information on Sharique's 1 The following definitions are drawn from: experience with inclusive local governance, please refer to Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation (2011).

Table 1: Characteristics of inclusive, effective and accountable governance in practice4

#### A Union Parishad... A citizen... involves citizens in decision making pays taxes and is proactive votes facilitates formation of the Standing volunteers to be active at ward/ Committees as per law community level Standing Committees conduct biparticipates in meetings organised monthly meetings by the UP forms project implementation provides suggestions and inputs at committees the meetings organised by the UP organises at least two meetings per contributes to the strategic planning year (ward shavas) to discuss with through one or more of the citizens annual plans and review available spaces for this: resources progress and poverty mapping exercise; develops a strategic plan every five stakeholder consultation: ward years and updates it annually shava and public hearings to review strategic plan and others conducts meetings on a regular basis and takes minutes and acts volunteers to be active in UP on the basis of decisions taken at Standing Committees, project implementation and supervision such meetings committees organises UDCC meetings on a bimonthly basis monitors projects implemented in the area discloses information on the consciously expresses projects it implements, e.g. through notice-boards in the yard of the UP understanding about the UP's office limitations in fulfilling all citizens' requests ■ is open 5 days a week and receives citizens during the office hours seeks information from the UP. line agencies, etc. and contributes with selects safety-net beneficiaries information as requested by UPs, in a transparent and consultative e.g. information about safety net manner beneficiaries assesses taxes every five years in a cross checks lists of beneficiaries transparent manner

selected for safety nets distribution

and takes steps to correct them if

- maintains a register of tax payees and provides receipts for tax payments
- manages information effectively, e.g. filing system, registers, etc.
- ensures that the voices of women. poor and marginalised people are heard and their needs are met through targeted projects
- ensures proper justice through running the village court
- conducts a financial audit every
- participates in social audit meeting

- necessary
- requests and participates in trainings if s/he identifies issues where s/he needs to know more
- challenges practices such as child marriage, women trafficking, etc.
- takes own initiatives to improve her/ his life and raises awareness
- respects others and inspires others to be involved with UP

From a rights based approach, the above lists evidence that citizens are duty bearers and rights holders while local governments (UPs) being a duty bearer. Sharique's experience has been that it is important to work with both of these stakeholder groups and to strengthen the institutional settings

where they come together around key local public resource decisions (i.e. ward shava, open budget meetings). Sharique has also worked on strengthening the key coordination mechanisms within local government, which is covered in Step 2 of this Guide.



## THE UP ANNUAL PLANNING AND BUDGET CYCLE

This Step-by-Step Guide is aligned to the management cycle of UPs in Bangladesh, so that they receive the trainings at the right time in order to be able to implement their learning directly into their work. While the full roster of tools that Sharique has developed over the past 10 years includes some 30 tools, this Guide provides a selection of the most essential elements for supporting the key steps in the UP management cycle. The reasons for this focus on the UP annual cycle are as follows:

■ UP as an institution must organize its activities around an annual cycle of operations, as well as alongside midterm horizons, i.e. a five year plan. This is an ordinary practice for any institution, public or private organisation. Operations are followed by fiscal year cycles.

collects taxes every year

<sup>4.</sup> This updated table is from Sharique (2013).

- As a rule, the UP annual cycle starts with planning and budgeting for the upcoming new fiscal year/s (01 July - 30 June), followed by the plan and budget implementation and ending with a plan and budget review. For the UPs, the annual cycle of operations is embedded in the UP Operational Manual, the UP Act and several rules and circulars, which have been issued by the national government to support the operations of the UPs. Although a number of UPs diligently attempt to perform their functions, in the past the UP annual planning and budget cycle was not emphasized enough. Sharique recommends that capacity building be provided around the annual management cycle. This will enhance the UPs' skills to be more organized, follow the right steps and review progress around these steps. The Guide provides suggestions on how to implement the 'cycle' by following the legal provisions for the UPs to fulfill their mandates.
- The UP annual planning and budget cycle is not just about plans and budgets. It also incorporates a comprehensive approach to good local governance principles. Therefore, it is important to promote these principles not in isolation, at random times. During a fiscal year, the UP as well as citizens have certain roles to play at certain times in the year. The Guide recommends strengthening good governance elements along the steps within the UP cycle. This not only strengthens specific skills of both UPs and citizens, it also aims at improving the quality of system

performance. Thus. governance is improved through practical (and legally mandated) mechanisms, such as more effective and inclusive ward shavas, open budget meetings, budget review meetings, citizens' engagement activities in project monitoring, etc. These good governance mechanisms have to be performed in certain moments during the cycle and repracticed every year until they become common practice, and until the UP annual budget and planning cycle is becoming a transparent, inclusive and accountable local government practice.

The UP management cycle for Bangladesh is organized around the fiscal year, which starts on July 1 and lasts till June 30. It is imperative that both UPs and citizens know how and when to plan, how and when to meet for dialogue and consultations, how and when to review progress of work done and when to report and revert to new planning or update previous planning. These steps are pretty much explained by the UP Operational Manual and the UP Act. However, this Guide brings in the value of a more organized and wellstructured process, which is described step by step within the time framework of a given fiscal year. The Guide also incorporates the social elements into the technical spheres, i.e. when the UP according to the Operational Manual must develop and submit a budget, this Guide also alerts on the need to organize open budget meetings, to consult the citizens, to pro-actively disclose the budget information and to ensure that poor and disadvantaged are considered in the new cycle of budgeting. Although all the functions of UP are clearly described in the UP Operational Manual, here we propose the sequence of a well-organized public management annual cycle, which we experienced in working with the 207 UPs. Please be advised that these are the essential steps. One could add more to those. It also depends on the level of the UP and how advanced its citizens are in terms of pro-active initiatives.

We recommend that the UPs and citizens are capacitated on the following steps, which are the core elements of the UP management cycle:

## Planning and Budgeting

• Planning. This stage includes the planning of the activities for midterm (5 years) and an annual planning.

- Budgeting. This stage includes budget forecasting and development of annual budgets.
- Implementation of the Plan and Budget. This stage is the core of the UP's operations. It incorporates all the steps that UPs and citizens must take in order to implement the elaborated plan and the budget, such as budget implementation, revenue collection, monitoring, analysis and reporting, project implementation and others accompanied by activities supporting transparency, inclusion and accountability.
- Progress review, analysis and reporting



## CHANGES AND INDICATORS OF CHANGE

implementing Guide. this Sharique recommends that users reflect on the specific changes they would like to contribute to, in order to develop a rigorous monitoring strategy. Development practitioners are asked to explain and quantify their results as well as to explain clearly what works or what does not work in different contexts. Indeed, this Guide is an endeavour by Sharique to explain and share with others what worked in our case for local governance capacity development.

The expected changes should be measured under different, but clearly focused perspectives, in particular:

- Changes according to the good governance principles listed above (accountability, effectiveness. inclusion);
- Changes in the performance of the LGIs:
- Changes at institutional and procedural level:
- Changes in behaviors and attitudes of local governance actors (including local governments and citizens);

What changes can be expected through implementing this Guide?

This depends from context to context and on a number of factors including the existing baseline situation, political willingness, etc. Sharique recommends that Guide users analyse the context first (see also the section Preparation) and assess the key changes they would like to contribute to. These changes can/ should also be defined in cooperation with the envisaged local government and civil society partners. The specific emphasis may imply a more intense focus on one or the other of the steps defined in this Guide.

The envisaged changes are also designed as a contribution to the following SDG Goal 16 targets (in particular):

- Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

How will you know if changes have been achieved? Guide users are encouraged to define a short list of indicators to monitor

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progress towards achieving their defined outcomes or changes. There are a number of different sources of indicators that Guide users can build on. Where possible, it is advisable - in the interests of efficiency - to use indicators already monitored by local governments or that will be assessed in the implementation of this Guide. Sources include:

- Local governance performance indicators listed in the "Local Government Performance Appraisal" "Local Governance Self-Assessment" (see Step 1)
- Indicators used by the Government of Bangladesh Local Governance Division and World Bank supported Local Governance Support Project to assess local government performance for the performance-based grant
- Good governance indicators listed in the Sharique publication Strengthening Local Governance in Bangladesh: Lessons of Practical Experience



## STEP BY STEP TOWARDS INCLUSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE LOCAL GOVERNANCE



## FIVE STEPS AND TWO TRANSVERSAL ELEMENTS

This Step-by-Step Guide has been divided into five steps and two transversal issues. As mentioned earlier, the Guide users should feel free to go step by step or to jump to whatever section is most relevant. At the beginning of each step, a brief description is given about what the UP and citizens do. what the tools are intended for and what the expected changes are.

The diagram on the following page provides suggestions on what to start with and how to gradually build the capacities of both the local government and citizens, step by step. This depends, however, on when a project/programme starts. Certain trainings are time-bound because of their alignment with the planning and budgeting cycle. Sharique recommends that a project/programme would use all the tools presented here in a time frame of two years (the third year - recommended being dedicated to quality enhancement). However, these two years do not take into consideration the preparation phase (see page 35 for further information).

The Guide users should nevertheless feel comfortable adjusting the tools, according to their own mandate and the resources and time available. The selection and implementation of tools should be based on an initial analysis of the capacities and knowledge of the UP and the citizens within a specific area. They should be applied according to a reflection on which changes are expected and which trainings are needed to achieve the goals set.

The aim is that, at the end of each step, the UP and citizens should observe certain changes. The sequence of steps is aligned in a broader picture to the UP annual planning and budget cycle, as discussed in Part I of this Guide. However. the value of the Guide is in the fact that it adds a few steps, which do not come naturally from the legal framework. While the laws and the UP annual management cycle are rigid and technical and focus around planning and budgeting, the Guide focuses on meaningful learning and skills building in order to be able to implement the UP annual planning and budget cycle. The steps below reflect the results of the capacity building interventions. It should be considered that while a variety of changes might occur as a result of capacity building, and more so - certain changes might trigger side change effects, we recommend that the following core changes are monitored and data registered:

## Awareness Raising and Assessing Governance

UPs and citizens are aware of the legal framework for local governance, their roles and responsibilities in local government and commit to improve the current local governance situation in their Union.

## Strengthening Coordination Structures

The Standing Committees and the UDCC are in place. Their members understand their duties as committee members and work to coordinate service delivery to citizens in an efficient manner, and in cooperation with the UP.

## Opening Up Participatory Spaces

The UP organises and effectively facilitates ward shavas and open budget meetings, inviting citizens for dialogue and joint decision making. Information on budget, taxes and other important matters are disclosed during these events.

### Integrated Planning

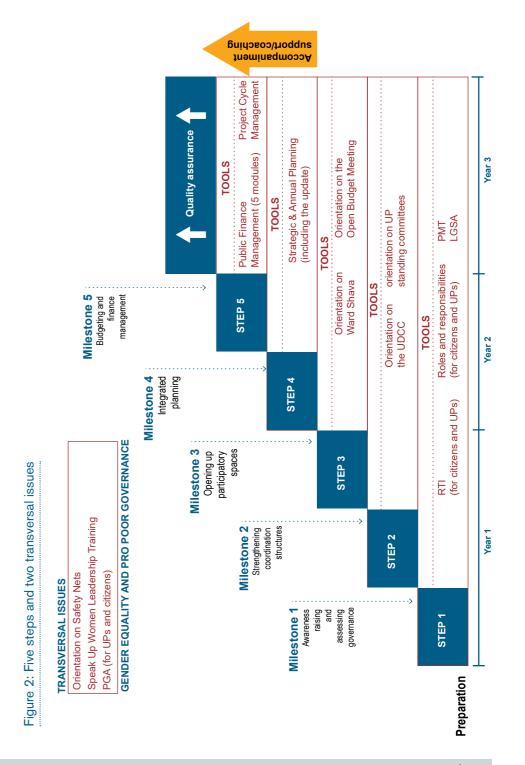
The UP goes through the whole process of elaborating a strategic plan based on the citizen's needs and resource availability in the Union. The result of this endeavour is an inclusive and feasible five-year plan, updated each year. The strategic plan is complemented by the annual plan, which results from the regular ward shava meetings focused on planning (around February).

## Budgeting and Finance Management

The UP has enhanced its knowledge on how to manage its funds and how to raise its revenues. It knows how to go throughout all the stages of the budgeting cycle and is taking into consideration the citizen's queries and feedbacks. Moreover, it is clear about the different stages of project management (scheme implementation) and knows how to ensure quality throughout the whole process.

## Gender Equality and Pro-Poor Governance

UPs and citizens have identified gender issues at household and community level and have taken action to address discriminatory practices. In addition, women have gained confidence by acquiring leadership skills and are now raising their concerns at UP level. Poor and disadvantaged people from the communities are now claiming their rights for safety net provisions. The UP acts in a pro-poor and inclusive manner and the women, poor and disadvantaged people are participating more actively in public affairs.



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## **ABOUT THE TOOLS**

In order to support the implementation of this Guide, Sharique is making available 19 "tried and tested" tools developed over its decade-long experience in local governance capacity development. These 19 tools represent a shortlist of those tools the project considers most essential, drawn from the wider portfolio of tools. The tools are grouped into a series of packages and steps in the capacity development process. They can also be used in a standalone manner.

**Objectives.** The tools range in their objectives: some focus on analysing a particular situation, some focus on empowering disadvantaged groups, some are relatively "technical" and focus on the steps that local governments need to take to carry out their mandated planning and budgeting tasks and responsibilities.

Formats. The tools also range in their formats. The tools have been developed in a functional and organic way and are presented "as is"; they are not standardised. Some tools are training modules, some are guidelines, and some are reference materials. Users are invited to modify and adapt the formats to meet their needs. All tools are available in both English and Bangla.

**Methods.** We suggest different methods for using the tools. Some can be used directly by local governments. Others may require outside support and facilitation in the form of: training of trainers, guidance

through hands-on-learning and coaching or backstopping from a distance.

Time and resources. We have provided an indication of the time and resources required for each of the Modules. Time and resources are only indicative; they can change upon common sense, common decisions and needs. In selected cases, there are two time frames indicated for one and the same module. This means that throughout our experience, the time for this particular exercise/workshop was much specific to the locality and its people and differed from workshop to workshop. Feel free to experiment with time. However, the content and quality must not be changed for achieving best results.

## Inclusion of all segments of the society.

Special attention should be paid to women, poor and marginalized people. In order to promote inclusive participation, the facilitators should encourage these groups to attend the trainings, to raise their voice and should make sure that the other participants listen to what they have to say. Several facilitation methods can be used in this regard.

More information on each of these elements is provided in the tools themselves. In the following sections we introduce the tools to be implemented in each of the steps we propose for improving inclusive, effective and accountable governance. The tools themselves are available in a digital format that accompanies this publication.



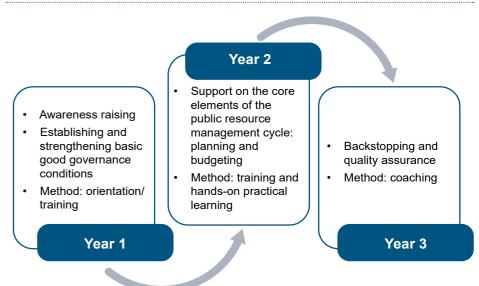
## **SEQUENCING AND RESOURCE PLANNING**

For those wishing to replicate the comprehensive Sharique capacity development approach by following this Guide step-by-step, the envisaged process will take three years. In the first year of support, training will focus on the first three steps, which are intended to establish the basic conditions. The second year will focus on the more "advanced" fourth and fifth steps, whereas the transversal elements can be implemented at any time. The first two years will require a relatively intensive

investment to provide the trainings and to accompany implementation. The third year (optional but recommended) is limited to backstopping and quality assurance. Some time for the preparation needs also to be considered before the first year, so that implementation can start in time.

The trainings provided to both UPs and citizens should be planned considering the annual planning and budgeting cycle. When developing an action plan for a project/

Figure 3: A three year capacity development plan



programme, it is necessary to have in mind the key moments of the annual operational cycle and to build the interventions around them. UPs and citizens need to increase their capacities before some activities take place (see capacity-building calendar). This is particularly relevant for steps 3, 4 and 5.

These considerations raise questions like: When is the best time to start building capacity of the UPs (considering this 3

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year programme); What methods shall we use to have a wider outreach and more focused and targeted skill building?

the capacity Technically, building programme can start anytime in the vear, as long as it follows the UP annual planning and budget cycle's steps. However, it obviously makes sense to start with the planning and budgeting, and then the plan and budget implementation and the reports. As noted in earlier chapters, in order to start with a good plan, the plan must be developed well in advance before the fiscal year starts. You also must consider that capacity building around planning and budgeting are among the first steps in the UP annual cycle, but not the first steps in the capacity building calendar. This is because a UP and its citizens need to first be aware of what good local governance is, need to first understand what their roles and responsibilities are, and only then to develop planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting skills as well as competencies in inclusiveness, gender sensitivity and good communication. A few tips on when to start the capacity building programme and how to schedule the capacity building interventions are presented below:

■ In order to be able to start a full annual cycle of capacity building, one could start a capacity building programme between June-September. This is a relatively quiet time for a UP, when the major reporting and preparation of the year is finalized. It is technically the start of a fiscal year. But you need to start preparing for the next fiscal year and that is why one year of preparation and practice will help UPs and citizens come prepared with a plan and a budget

towards the 2nd year of programme implementation.

- It is important to provide training with a little time gap before the actual activity shall happen. For example, once you start the programme and build awareness, you could already train the UPs and citizens on how to conduct ward shava meetings correctly. So, if the first ward shava you want to support will happen around November, then in September-October, the UPs shall receive training on the event. Do not train UPs far in advance, as that minimizes the chances of their application in practice of the learned tools.
- The strategic planning process is lengthy. It takes 4-5 months, if organized in a participatory way, with definition of the mission, vision and values. UPs that develop a strategic plan for the first time, need this time indeed. This shall not be underestimated, as the strategic planning process is a process of learning and context analysis, conducted by the UPs themselves. But one needs to study the steps very well and to schedule them so that the strategic plan is developed just before it needs to be approved (March or latest April). This gives you the only option to start preparing the strategic plan in November-December already. This is recommended to be done in the first year of intervention, but the time frame must be observed (December-April). In April, at the latest, UPs have to compile the citizens' demands as identified during the ward shavas, prioritise them based on UP resources and prepare

the draft final plan for citizens' feedback in a public hearing. The UP needs to submit the final budget to government by 31st May. Annually, the UP needs to only update the strategic plan (until the 5th year, when a new plan needs to be developed again). A workshop to update the plan should be organised around March, and a draft plan will then be presented to the ward shava.

- The first and second PFM modules (Budget Formulation and Budget Analysis) should be conducted before the elaboration of the budget (around March). Ideally, if you have a three year capacity building programme, this can be done alongside the first strategic plan. Some may find this a big burden for UPs and can do the whole PFM training cycle in the 2nd year.
- The third (Budget Implementation), fourth (Public Procurement) and fifth PFM modules (Accounting, Reporting and Audit), as well as the Project Cycle Management (PCM) should take

place at the beginning of the budget implementation which starts in July.

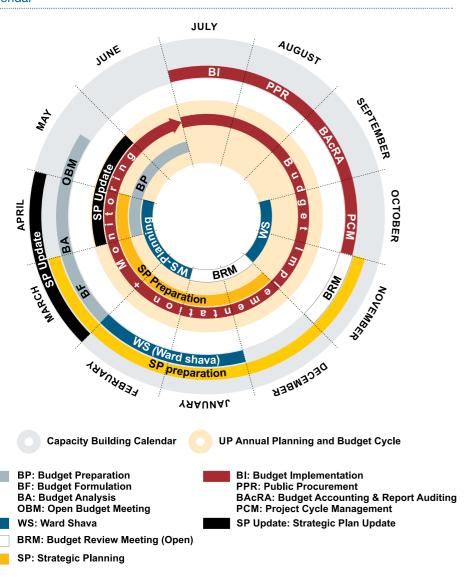
Once UPs have a good understanding of the budget process (i.e. in the second year), UP should be trained on Budget Analysis (fifth module of PFM) before the budget review and the budget formulation.

Further information and a more precise calendar are provided under each description of the steps. However, Sharique strongly recommends to first go through steps 1 and 2 before looking more closely at the annual planning and budgeting cycle.

The following diagram maps some of the tools described in this Guide aligning them to the UP annual planning and budget cycle.

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Figure 4: The UP Annual Planning & Budget Cycle and the Capacity Building Calendar



In order to support implementing organisations in planning the capacity development calendar and the human resources required to support UPs and

citizens through it, Sharique provides an estimation of the time required in the descriptions of the tools. More detailed information is included in Annexes 1-3.

# PREPARATION

Sharique's experience is that it is important to reflect on some questions before starting to implement this Guide in a new geographic area. For external organisations, such as development NGOs, this can be considered a preparatory step.

- 1. What **context** are we working in? It is important to be fully informed about the legal framework for local governance and the local context and structure (notably power relations, both past and present). This analysis should be updated regularly during implementation.
- Who do we work with? Who are the key stakeholders within the local governance system (local government, line agency officials, citizens, local civil society organisations, religious and traditional authorities, etc)? Sharique recommends conducting a thorough

stakeholder analysis before starting to work in a new locality and updating it regularly. We recommend that each organisation can use any approach they consider appropriate. In the case of Sharique, at the start of each phase (four in total) an actor mapping was conducted and the context analysed. Reports are available upon request. Tools can be various, even a simple actors chart and their roles would work.

- . What types of **support** can we offer, i.e. financial and technical?
- 4. Are the identified local governments interested **in a partnership**?
- 5. Can the partnership be formalised and is there sufficient support from the overall environment? It is important to be aware that an NGO's legitimacy may be questioned when working with actors in local governance space.

## Recommendations on building partnership relations with the local governments

We recommend the following steps in order to enter in to a formal partnership with local governments and citizens:

1) Hold a series of first bilateral exchange meetings with identified stakeholders, e.g. participate in the special UP meetings and in meetings of interest groups of citizens to present the objectives of the project/programme. It is important to be clear about the role of the project/programme and the role of the different stakeholders as well as what LGIs can expect to gain. Be aware, unlike other programmes, Sharique never emphasized the financial support, this way the focus is on capacity building,

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not on gaining funds. Even if you plan to provide additional funds as grants, do not emphasize the financial gains as it may take attention from the most important: building the skills.

- 2) Organise a meeting gathering all interested UPs in order to explain in detail what the project / programme is willing to offer in terms of support.
- 3) Request a meeting with other local authorities (with important power holders), e.g. the Upazila Parishad (UZP), the District Administration and the concerned Division (depending on the local context) in order to get the good-will of the local authorities at an early stage even though they are not the target group of the project.
- 4) Hold an inception meeting with the UP and formalise the working relationship. The UP Chairperson should organise this special UP meeting with UP members, the UP Secretary, citizens, representatives from the private sector, local NGOs and Line Agencies working in the UP. It is important to involve representatives of the communities in this meeting, as this moment can be considered a first step towards creating an enabling environment and building trust between citizens and their local government.



## **STEP 1:** RAISING AWARENESS AND ASSESSING **GOVERNANCE**

### SUGGESTED TOOLS

## **On Local Governance Situation Analysis**

- Local Government Performance Appraisal with UPs
- Local Governance Self-Assessment at Community level

## On Roles and Responsibilities

- UP Roles and Responsibilities training for Union Parishads
- UP Roles and Responsibilities training of UPs for Citizens

## On Right to Information

- Right to Information training for Union Parishads and Government Line Agency Representatives
- Right to Information training for Citizens

## Description

In this step, local government and citizens each separately:

- Discuss and assess the local governance situation, identify the strengths and issues of concern
- Learn about their roles responsibilities
- Understand the importance of disclosing and requesting for specific information and how to do it
- Furthermore, the UP
- Elaborates a governance improvement plan

Union Parishads and citizens should be aware of the current situation and find out what are the strengths and challenges in terms of local governance in their Union and what could be improved. Two tools are specifically designed for this purpose, focusing on two stakeholder groups: the Local Governance Self-Assessment (LGSA) for Citizens and the Local Government Performance Appraisal, also known as Performance Management Tool (PMT) for Union Parishads.

Based on a series of pre-set questions, the participants of both assessments are invited to analyse the local governance situation in their Union. The issues of concern identified at community level are intended to provide inputs for the citizens when developing their annual plans. The UP should be informed about these priority matters and take them into consideration when preparing its Governance Improvement Plan (GIP) which is the result of the PMT. The analysis should therefore be conducted first at community level and then at Union level, however, it is important that the UP is informed in advance about the community conducting the performance assessment.

In line with the indicators set at government level, the UP should be evaluated on a vearly basis through the PMT and the results serve as an indicator on how well it performs. The PMT is a management tool and should not be confused with the government accepted UP audit performed by the LGSP programme. The PMT can be undertaken preparation for the formal annual audits; it provides the UP with the management skills to assess its own competencies and monitor them throughout the year. Based on the issues where a need for improvement is identified through the PMT, the UP develops a plan for improvement (GIP) which defines what activities need to be done, who should be responsible, what the resources needed are and by when it should be accomplished. The GIP is therefore the main element of the PMT as it provides guidance to the UP on how to improve its performance in terms of local governance.

With regard to the frequency, it is recommended to conduct the LGSA twice. once at the beginning of the project/ programme and a second time half-way through (considering a three year duration) to set a baseline and subsequently be able to assess the progresses made.

Both evaluations are important as they help identifying which aspects need to be strengthened. According to the results of both the LGSA and the PMT, the citizens and the UP can reach a common understanding of priorities for improving governance. This in turn helps those facilitating the process by using this Guide to priorities the proposed tools to gradually fill in the existing gaps.

The training sessions on the roles and responsibilities coach both UPs and citizens on the correct interpretation of the legal requirements and their respective roles regarding local governance in the Union. In accordance with the Union Parishad Act 2009, the UP representatives and citizens learn, among others, about the participatory spaces for interaction, and their respective contributions and involvement in the annual planning and budgeting cycle. After the training, the UP should realise how important it is to consider the citizens' needs in the whole process. In turn, the citizens should understand they have certain rights and obligations.

Another key element of good local governance is the sharing of information, which contributes to more transparency and accountability from the UP side. For this reason, both UP and citizens are trained on the RTI, according to the Act passed in 2009. Through this training, the UP realises its mandatory responsibility of sharing information about a wide range of public matters. It learns how to disclose information by making use of information centres, project implementation information boards, open budget meetings, information fairs etc. On the other hand, the citizens become aware that they have a right to request information.

Due to the importance of being knowledgeable about the basic legal requirements, it is recommended to conduct these trainings during the first 2-3 months of a project/programme. Whereas the UP governance analyses and the roles and responsibilities' trainings should be done as soon as possible, there is more flexibility with the RTI sessions. These trainings can also be done at a later stage, but ideally during the first year of the intervention. Sharique also suggests to conduct the training on roles and responsibilities to the UPs first, and only then organise a Performance Appraisal. This would leave time to conduct LGSA at community level while UP would enhance their understanding on what their roles and responsibilities are.

## Changes expected after the trainings:

■ Based on the Governance Improvement Plan, some activities are undertaken to improve the local governance situation in the Union

- Citizen's participation in local governance increases
- Citizens and UP bodies are aware of their respective roles responsibilities
- UP is sharing information with the citizens, and is responding to their demands
- Citizens are becoming proactive in requesting information from their Union Parishad

#### Results and lessons learned

## Inclusive, effective and accountable governance: Results

"I received training on roles and responsibilities from Sharique. I have become more aware of what local governance is and who the actors are. Now being more aware on the issues I am inspired to proactively participate and encourage others to participate in different meetings at the ward level, where problems are discussed and solutions sought for. Recently I represented my community in the ward shava meeting and raised a few critical issues on behalf of our ward. I was happy to learn that the UP considered our issues and included them in the strategic plan and also allocated a budget for their implementation." - Rupali, ward platform member in Auchpara Union, Rajshahi District

Sharique facilitates citizens' access to UP/UZP information broadly in two ways: ensuring proactive disclosure of information by UP and UZP and sensitizing citizens to seek from UP that information that directly affects them and use it for solving their problems related to public services. Md. Alhajuddin and Ms. Firoja Khatun, members of Charbasudevpur ward development platform in Charanupnagar Union recounted how powerful information can be:

"Soon after our training on RTI, an individual citizen, on behalf of a group of villagers submitted one application to the Union Parishad requesting disclosure of the whole

list of VGD beneficiaries, the list of goat distribution beneficiaries and the selection criteria used for both. Another application was submitted to the Upazila Health Center requesting the timetable of availabilities of doctors, the list of monthly services and availability of medicines at their Union Health center. After initial hesitation, both offices provided this information to us. As a result of these moves, two of our extremely poor ward platform members, initially not included in the list, received VGD cards and one received a goat. Moreover, after this inquiry, the union health center has become more accessible and many people from our ward now resumed their health check visits and benefit from services from the health center. RTI not only gives us transparency but we can truly benefit from it."

#### Lessons learned

Whilst the process of assessing governance appears straight-forward, its implementation is not, especially where it is being introduced for the first time, and all those participating are unfamiliar with the idea of citizens having a voice in local governance. Particularly of importance is to have the right people participate in the event. Since such meetings can only ever accommodate a limited proportion of the total number of citizens in the area, it is recommended that a good representation of women and men, young and senior, representatives of all ethnic groups residing in the community attend the events. Meetings with citizens must not be secretive. Although, for certain meetings it is recommended that the UP members do not attend the meeting, it is still good to inform the UP about the meeting. The community level LGSA, for example, was initially met with considerable suspicion on the part of Union Parishad members, who feared that criticism would damage their reputation overall, as well as being personally harmful. The presence of Union Parishad members in community level assessments thus restricted open discussion.

A key lesson was that accountability can be better promoted through collective feedback synthesised by facilitators in a constructive manner, rather than through direct and personalised comment. It may be anticipated, however, that as the process becomes more routine and broadly accepted, such personalised sensitivities will decrease.

Another lesson learned was that no matter what activities and tools we use, both citizens and UP members must be aware of what is happening, even if they are run in separate groups. One of the elements in the success of Sharique was trust. We built trust and presented ourselves as supporters of both: citizens and LGIs. Thus, it is critical to take 'no sides'.

And last but not least, it is important to overcome the stereotype that UPs are reluctant to cooperate and do not want to present information. It is important to avoid the 'demand' phrase and rather to use the term 'claiming your rights' instead of 'demanding your wishes'. Sharique's learning is that often citizens do not get information because they do not know how to ask for it. They have limited communication skills and often they have limited ways to reach the UPs. Our learning was that activating citizens groups of activists in the wards works well for the benefit of communication and information dissemination. Sharique has facilitated the creation of ward platforms (i.e. active citizens groups). Any group of this type could work, as long as they take a role of agents of change among citizens.

## Tools for Step 1: Package on local governance situation analysis

## LOCAL GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT AT COMMUNITY I EVEL

Format: Guidelines for facilitators Training of Trainers: 01 day training for facilitators and ½-day orientation for 10 local volunteers per union (approximately).

Duration of the local governance selfassessment: ½-day per session **Human Resources:** 01 facilitator and 4-5 volunteers per session

### 1. DESCRIPTION

This tool is designed to raise citizen's awareness and to facilitate a shared understanding of their local governance situation. Furthermore, it allows the participants to debate about the current situation of governance in their UP and encourages both the citizens and the UP to take action for improvement.

Before the exercise takes place, around 10 volunteers should be identified and trained. The facilitator plays the main role during the self-assessment but 4-5 volunteers each time support the facilitator during group work sessions. Each volunteer accompanies a small group of citizens for the assessment, clarifying questions and encouraging participation.

The content of the workshop is structured in the following way

1) identification and discussion on the roles of different actors in local governance;

- 2) identification and evaluation of key local governance issues (in small groups);
- 3) prioritisation of five or six issues that need improvement and assignment of responsibilities for forwarding the assessment results. The set of questions raised refer on the one hand to citizen's participation and on the other hand on how well local governance functions. While visual material (flashcards) are made available for those who cannot read. emphasis should be laid on the questions.

The outcome of this internal review serves as an input for further actions for improvement at community level whereas the UP should take the priority issues into consideration when developing its Governance Improvement Plan.

### 2. PURPOSE

- Raise citizens' awareness of local governance issues
- Create opportunities for citizens to raise their voices and express their opinions
- Mobilize citizens to get active in initiating and supporting activities to
- improve local governance and to get involved in the existing committees at UP level
- Contribute to citizen engagement and empowerment, as well as strengthening accountability relations in local governance

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

Sharique suggests to conduct the LGSA twice, once at the beginning of a project/ initiative and a second time half-way through the process. It should ideally be done before the Performance Appraisal Tool. This would allow the communities (who participate in the LGSA at ward level) to bring the issues discussed to the UP level assessment. Further, based on what comes out of the LGSA, further trainings can be provided according to the needs identified.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The assessment should ideally conducted ward-wise (as many times as possible depending on the resources available) but can also be conducted at village or greater ward level. Interested

Illustration 1: Citizens assessing the state of local governance, Horogram Union, Rajshahi District

people (maximum 35) representing key actors of the community should take part in this exercise.

The participants should include:

- Community representatives of various citizens' social backgrounds such as:
- · Women, poor people and members of disadvantaged groups
- Ordinary citizens
- Youth
- Traditional leaders
- Local businessmen

## Tools for Step 1: Package on local governance situation analysis

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Format: Guidelines for facilitators Training of Trainers: 03 days for facilitators **Duration of the assessment:** Approximately 03 days (½-day for a presentation/orientation at UP level, time needed for the UP to prepare the documents, 1 ½ days for the performance

appraisal by an assessor/facilitator and the UP Secretary, ½-day for the validation workshop and ½-day for the formulation of the governance improvement plan) **Human Resources:** 02 facilitators

### 1. DESCRIPTION

The Local Government Performance Appraisal Tool, also known as Performance Management Tool (PMT) has two objectives. Firstly, it has an educational objective, making participants familiar with issues related to good local governance and identifying potential areas of improvement in Union Parishad functioning. Secondly, it serves as a tool to assess the performance of the UP. compare it with peers and evaluate progress in performance over time.

The tool has two main components:

- 1. An objective assessment of the UP's performance
- 2. A participatory workshop to discuss the UP's performance assessment results, to validate the results and to outline areas in which the UP should improve its performance, as well as possible actions for improvement

It follows three steps which can be summarized as follows:

- Preparation for the Appraisal
- The Appraisal is conducted by the UP Secretary and an assessor (a field facilitator or another trained person)
- Validation workshop: governance improvement plan discussion and validation of results

UP representatives should meet again after the PMT to do the follow-up (either the same day or the day after). The exercise should lead to a Governance Improvement Plan (GIP) where the UP prioritises the issues of concern and initiatives to be undertaken, nominates responsible persons/groups, and identifies needs for external support, as well as the required resources and timeframe. When developing its plan, the UP should not forget to take into consideration the issues identified at community level (see LGSA).

### **PURPOSE**

The tool aims at:

 Initiating a process of learning about own performance and developing critical skills of self-assessment of the current situation of the Union and the work of the UP

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The tool is used at different moments and for different reasons:

- Before an intervention, to establish a baseline
- At the initial stage of implementation, to engage the different stakeholders at UP level in a dialogue on the current state of local governance and on how to improve the UP's performance.
- Later on, to reflect on progress made. set new goals and define further activities to improve local governance function. The assessment should therefore be conducted on a vearly

It is strongly recommended to conduct the PMT after the training on roles and responsibilities as UPs need first to understand what their duties are before assessing their performance.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The main stakeholders are at UP level (The Union Parishad Chairperson, Secretary and members. one of the selected members of Standing Committees and Union based line department officials).

In steps one and two a limited number of stakeholders (UP Chairperson, Secretary and the Presidents of the Standing Committees for Step 1 and only the UP Secretary and the assessor for Step 2) should be involved whereas all of the above-mentioned actors are supposed to take part in the 3rd step (the validation workshop) in which the results of the appraisal are discussed and validated. Representatives of CBOs and community leaders can be invited to this workshop as

### 5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The UPs should independently monitor the progresses of the GIP throughout the year (without the support of facilitators). It is recommended that the UPs report on

the GIP during the plan and budget review meeting, which normally happen around December of the annual operational cycle.

## Tools for Step 1: Package on roles and responsibilities

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UPS

Format: Training on the roles and responsibilities of the Union Parishad Chairperson, Secretary and members Training of trainers: 03 days for facilitators

**Duration:** 02 days

Human resources: 02 facilitators

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

This training was developed based on the information provided by the National Institute of Local Government (NILG), and it reflects the roles and responsibilities for the UP, in accordance with the law. It covers a wide range of topics such as the legal framework, ward shavas, the role of the UDCC, office management, tax assessment and collection, budgeting etc. and includes some exercises to help the participants understand the issues and make the training more participatory. Elected leadership requires skills and competences in putting skills to use in highly complex, politicized environments. It is no longer sufficient merely to adhere

to the laws that circumscribe the official position of the UP chair/member. The UP Chair and members must be able to achieve results and be able to "get things done." For this the UP members must be able to communicate, make decisions. enable citizens to take responsibilities, use their power in a responsive way and other important competencies. For this purpose, we designed this Guide around the required skills and competencies that UPs need to have in a number of roles. The guide addresses the roles and responsibilities from the functional point of you: what to do, how to do it, and why.

#### 2. PURPOSE

At the end of the training the participants:

- Are clear about their roles and responsibilities
- Are able to act more effectively and provide adequate services to the citizens

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

This training should be conducted at the very beginning as it gives the basic understanding on the legal requirements. It should therefore take place before the Local Government Performance Appraisal. In terms of frequency it can be done once or twice in a timeframe of three years, in case new representatives take office.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: the UP Chairperson, UP Secretary and UP Members.

## Tools for Step 1: Package on roles and responsibilities

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UP REPRESENTATIVES- FOR CITIZENS

Format: Training Module Training of trainers: 02 days training for facilitators

**Duration:** two ½-day sessions at ward/ community level (Three hours per day) Human resources: 01 facilitator per session

### 1. DESCRIPTION

This training aims at raising citizens' awareness on the roles and responsibilities of Union Parishads and at presenting the composition and duties of some essential UP committees in which citizens play an important role. The tool has two parts: the first one focuses on the UP's functions and duties and the second one gives information on ward shavas (description, importance, legal framework objectives).

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the training is to:

- Raise awareness among citizens on the roles and responsibilities of UP representatives, as well as on ward shavas
- Encourage the community members to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as citizens
- Promote citizen participation in governance processes

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

This training provides some basic and essential information to the citizens. It is recommended to conduct it during the first months of the project/programme and in as many wards/communities as possible (according to the resources available). Because the ward shavas take place at two specific moments of the year (around March and November), it is important to

plan the training early enough to prepare the citizens in time for the event. Whereas the training only needs to be done once in a timeframe of three years, it is important that the facilitators keep on providing accompaniment support/coaching to the citizens during ward shavas in order to ensure their participation and inclusion (see also description of Step 3).

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: around 30-35 citizens per ward, including women, poor

people and member of marginalized groups.

## Tools for Step 1: Package on information disclosure

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION - FOR UPS AND GOVERNMENT LINE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Format: Training Module

Training of trainers: 02 days for facilitators

**Duration: 02 days** 

Human resources: 02 facilitators per session

### 1. DESCRIPTION

According to the Right to Information Act 2009, the government has the duty both to provide the requested information, unless defined exemptions apply; and to proactively disclose information listed in the law (that is of general public interest).

Based on this law, this two days training provides information on:

- a) the importance of access to information as such and in relation to good governance:
- the RTI Act;
- the legal framework at Union level:
- how to deal with information applications and
- how to improve access to information

In short it explains what UPs must disclose and when and where to share this information. It also underlines the obligations of the designated staff at UP level and what type of information the citizen can request. At the end of the training, the UP should come up with an action plan for improvement. The follow-up is supposed to be done internally but facilitators can remind the UP representatives if needed. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, it is recommended to coordinate this plan with the GIP and other plans. If a GIP is not supported through the programme, then it is important that the UP has a plan for improvement on communication and information disclosure.

#### 2. PURPOSE

To make Union Parishad representatives and Union based government line agency staff aware about their legal obligation to disclose information.

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The training on RTI for UPs should ideally be conducted at an early stage (during the first year of the project/programme) as it increases transparency and accountability

and ensures better governance. It is sufficient to provide it once in a timeframe of three years.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

Union Parishad representatives and Union based staff of government line agencies

## Tools for Step 1: Package on information disclosure

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION FOR CITIZENS

Format: Training Module

Training of trainers: 1day for facilitators

Duration: 08 hours (1 day or

spread over 2 days)

Human resources: 01 facilitator per session

### 1. DESCRIPTION

The Right to Information Act 2009 states that the citizens have the right to formal application for information and obliges the authorities to disclose and share information in both a pro-active and responsive manner.

This training based on the law provides detailed information on the importance of the RTI, the benefits of access to information for citizens, the legal basis of the right to information and procedures on how to access information. A short video complements the training (available in the accompanying digital files).

### 2. PURPOSE

The objective of this tool is:

- To raise awareness among communities about their RTI
- To develop the citizens' capacities for accessing information from different government and non-government bodies, specifically
- How to file an RTI application

- · How to file an appeal
- · How to file a complaint
- What can be accessed in proactive disclosure by UPs and line agencies

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The training should ideally be conducted during the first year of the project/ programme as it empowers the citizens by encouraging them to claim their rights in terms of information disclosure. It can be done once only and in as many wards/ communities as possible (depending on the resources available).

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: citizens, women and men, including the poorest and marginalized (around 25-30 persons per session).



## **STEP 2:** STRENGTHENING COORDINATION **STRUCTURES**

### **TOOLS SUGGESTED:**

- Orientation Manual for Union Parishad Standing Committees
- Orientation on the Union Development Coordination Committee for UPs

### **Description**

In this step:

- Standing Committee and UDCC members enhance their knowledge on their roles and responsibilities
- UP representatives realize importance in considering recommendations from committees

The UP Act requires UPs to establish Standing Committees; Union Development Coordination Committees (UDCC) are established through a circular. UDCC are composed of line agency staff, elected UP members and a few civil society representatives and Standing Committees of UP members and citizens. Because of the involvement and participation of civil society representatives in the decisionmaking process, there are important elements of the overall accountability mechanism at Union level.

The Union Parishad Act 2009 states that each UP should form at least 13 Standing Committees and additional Standing Committees can be formed after approval of the Deputy Commissioner. However, these Standing Committees are often not effective because UPs lack the capacities to establish, and train them. The orientation manual for UP standing committee members contributes to their capacity building. The terms of reference of each of the required committees are analysed and discussed during the exercise, to help the members understand what their duties are and how these can be operationalized.

The second tool developed by Sharique and presented in this Guide is an orientation module on the UDCC for UPs. This committee, which meets every two months, acts as a platform for coordinating resources and thus is intended to ensure a fair and inclusive delivery of services. In this regard, it also helps strengthening the coordination and horizontal accountability between line department officials and the UP.

## Changes expected after the training:

- UDCC and Standing Committees are in place and their members work in an efficient and transparent manner
- UDCCs improve coordination for service delivery between different service providers

- Standing Committees formulate specific recommendations for decisionmaking by the UP
- Through these committees citizens are able to voice their concerns
- UPs take into consideration the recommendations of both committees

#### Results and lessons learned

## Results in terms of inclusive, effective and accountable governance

Citizens in Dhanpur Union have started to believe that they can expect much more from their UP apart from road maintenance, emergency aid and Shalish. Dhanpur UP now regularly holds UDCC meetings where representatives from government departments, NGO, Kazi ( registrar of marriage under Muslim law), private traders, CSOs and local elites in addition to the UP bodies and its Standing Committee members participate.

During a UDCC meeting held in November of 2011 the forum has decided to place a formal complaint to the Upazila administration about the bad performance of local fertilizer dealers. It was an issue everyone agreed on, and on behalf of the forum this request for taking measures was forwarded to UZP, which in turn took measures and helped institute a more thorough control over the use of fertilizers in the Union.

Also, in the same UP at another UDCC meeting the local health inspector and the UP Standing Committee for health and family planning agreed to work together on issues related to early marriage. All participating members also agreed to prevent any illegal marriage arrangements and for that the UDCC enforced the rule that no marriage shall be allowed without the consent of UP body and Kazi.

The UDCC also helped organizing a better and timely issuance of birth certificates in order to prevent incidences of early marriage and polygamy in the Union.

Another collaboration between the UP Standing Committee for law and order and the representative of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) came out of the meeting on preventing drug trafficking and spread of drug addiction in the Union. Hence, different meetings now deal with different issues. (As told by Mr. Shah Md Foyshal Alam, Union Facilitator - Dhanpur Union).

UDCC has truly become a forum for a) raising issues; b) brainstorming solutions, 3) raising awareness of those responsible to solve the raised issues.

### **Lessons learned**

Through the enhanced coordination of stakeholders during the UDCC meetings, citizens get improved services from different agencies whether government, non-government or private agencies. Government department workers are now more available and services of NGOs more harmonised with UP and line department's activities. UP now can easier tap into the services of private traders (especially agritraders) for enhancing their development plan. It is therefore a good way to prevent manipulation of prices and adulteration of goods.

Today it is almost impossible to believe that a few years ago such a forum as UDCC did not exist. Sharique learned that for successful cooperation and harmony of the Union development, the Union needs first of all legal spaces where coordination can help and second, skills to be able to use the spaces up to their potential. Thanks to the great efforts of Sharique/HELVETAS and JICA, the UDCC was officially accepted by the national government and is a required meeting to be held bi-monthly by the UP. However, there is still a long way to go to make these meetings truly constructive. One thing that we observe is the lack of follow-up on the discussions, which happen at UDCC meetings. At first, it is exciting to see the UP members and other stakeholders interact and think alike, raise concern over same issues and agree on measures. This is not to be underestimated. At the same time, UDCC is not a decision making forum. It only instigates the sparkle, and the follow-up action is equally important as the meeting itself. We learned that these can be gradually achieved, if UP members are committed to make it work.

Short checklists, which were developed by Sharique for conducting UDCC meetings are helpful as they help UDCC members be more structured and result oriented. For example, one of the elements of each UDCC meeting shall be to review what has happened between the previous UDCC meeting and the following one. It has been learned that if UDCC participants know that a review of the tasks will be conducted, then they put an effort to act not only during the UDCC meeting but also during the time in between meetings.

UDCC has proved so far to be the best platform where any issues can be discussed, whether those are of direct UP's responsibility or beyond.

## **Tools for Step 2: Package on committees**

## ORIENTATION MANUAL ON UNION PARISHAD STANDING COMMITTEES

Format: Orientation manual Training of Trainers: 01 day for facilitator **Duration: 02 days** 

Human resources: 02 facilitators

### 1. DESCRIPTION

The objective of this training is to build awareness among the elected representatives of the Union Parishad and citizen members of the Standing Committees (SC) about the legal basis of Standing Committees, their importance, area of work (Terms of Reference, ToR) and how they are formed and operate. This training will build the capacity of UP Standing Committees (SC) to support the UP in ensuring effective oversight in sectorial matters.

### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the tool are:

- To provide information to the Standing Committee members on their roles and responsibilities
- To sensitize UPs on how important it is to consider the recommendations of the Standing Committees

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

Before providing the training, it is essential to make sure that all the Standing Committees are (re) activated. If this is not the case, the first step is to remind/ encourage the UP to do it. Because there is often a lack of awareness on their roles and responsibilities, it is then recommended to

train the participants early on (during the first year), as well as every time a new council is formed and every time there is a legal update on the Standing Committees.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience are: UP elected representatives and Standing Committee members.

## **Tools for Step 2: Package on committees**

## ORIENTATION ON UNION DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION COMMITTEE - FOR UPS

Format: Orientation Module

Training of trainers: 01 day for facilitators

Duration: ½-day

Human Resources: 02 facilitators per training

### 1. DESCRIPTION

was developed to raise This tool the awareness on legal basis (Government Circular on March 14, 2013) and importance of the UDCC and to help its members be as organised and efficient as possible. It aims at ensuring that the meetings of this coordination platform are held in an appropriate manner and that every stakeholder feels responsible for the implementation of local development activities at Union level. This way duplication of services offered by government and non-government organisations are avoided, and the quality of services is enhanced.

Among other tasks, the UDCC is in charge of planning and coordinating all sorts of socio-economic activities in the Union, as well as reviewing the latest progresses made and providing recommendations. The module explains how to conduct these meetings every two months, how to follow the agenda in a structured way and how to present the achievements and future plans of different stakeholders.

#### 2. PURPOSE

- To build awareness among the UDCC members on their roles
- To provide details on how to conduct the bi-monthly meetings and ensure efficient coordination
- To create and/or strengthen a space for citizens to raise their concerns about the performance of different service providers

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The UDCC brings together representatives from the local government, the local line department officers and civil society and is helpful in ensuring coordination and improved service delivery. It is therefore recommended to activate this body at an early stage and conduct this training during the first six months of the project/ programme.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

■ UDCC members (39).



hoto: HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation

## **STEP 3:** OPENING UP PARTICIPATORY SPACES

### **TOOLS SUGGESTED:**

- Orientation on Ward Shava for UP bodies
- Orientation on the Open Budget Meeting

### **Description**

## In this step local government and citizens:

Are oriented on the objectives, content and structure of ward shava and open budget meetings and on how to make best use of these spaces

Prior to train UPs on the technical aspects of the planning and budget processes, UPs have to learn about the participatory spaces that are required by law, where citizens and other stakeholders can attend and provide feedback, ask questions and engage with UPs in a dialogue. We have already discussed earlier the necessity to train UPs and citizens on context analysis (LGSA), on roles and responsibilities and pro-active disclosure of information. In many UPs citizens still do not have access to their UP members and most often planning and budgeting is solely the prerogative of the UPs. The tools offered in this package are here to change this attitude. UPs and citizens must know which spaces exist for interaction and dialogue between civil society and citizens and UPs, and learn to use them effectively.

As advised earlier, it is recommended that strategic planning, budget formulation and budget analysis trainings are offered to UPs and citizens after they have learned about the R&R, have conducted a

performance assessment and developed a GIP, and have completed other activities as discussed in previous chapters. As both the planning and budgeting processes are highly participatory, it is important that in parallel with capacity building on planning and budgeting, UPs learn about the spaces of interactions as well.

Practice shows that ward shava meetings, for example, are more common and happen more often than open budget meetings. While UPs cannot learn all the techniques overnight it is recommended that spaces are introduced before the technicalities on planning and budgeting are discussed. This means that training on ward shava will happen before training on strategic planning. This does not mean that these two are mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they complement each other.

Thus, it is important that in due time UPs and citizens initiate and strengthen two key participatory spaces that are an integral part of the operational cycle, namely the ward shavas and the open budget meeting. According to the UP Act 2009 the UP has the obligation to organise at least two meetings per year at the ward level (ward shavas) and to share the draft budget with the citizens (open budget meeting). In addition to that,

this Act states that UPs have to develop their annual budget based on the citizens' priorities shared during ward shava. Once the UPs develop stronger skills in planning and budgeting, they can apply those in the following ward shava and open budget meetings, thus strengthening both: the spaces themselves and the skills to use those spaces.

The two tools proposed in Step 3 provide a brief orientation on how to create an enabling environment for participation and how to use these spaces for the benefits of both parties. Because citizens and UPs need to practice in order to internalize the learning, the tools provided here are simple guidelines of what should be done before, during and after the events. Sharique recommends to additionally provide accompaniment support during the following ward shavas and open budget meetings. UPs will gradually become skilled enough to offer and organize by themselves these spaces in an inclusive,

non-discriminatory transparent manner.

For citizens, these spaces are important venues where they can express their concerns. Their role is to participate, ask questions and ensure that their inputs and needs are heard and properly reflected. During the ward shavas, citizens can recommend project proposals and give feedbacks on progresses made as well as on income-expenditures of the UP, comment on the safety net beneficiaries' lists, challenge the tax collection approaches, if they don't seem correct etc. A similar contribution is given during the open budget meeting where the draft budget is discussed. The more active citizens are, the greater the demand for more inclusive and transparent services. These spaces are therefore critical for accountability, citizen participation and inclusive decision-making.

With regard to the schedule, it is important



Illustration 2: Open Budget Meeting, Deluabari UP, Rajshahi District

to conduct both trainings before the actual events take place.

Moreover, as their titles suggest, these trainings provide only a broad overview of both events. Module 1 and 2 (Budget Formulation and Budget Analysis) of PFM are the foundation modules to prepare a comprehensive budget which UPs will share with citizens at the open budget meeting (see Step 5).

- UPs organise ward shavas and open budget meetings in a transparent and inclusive manner
- Citizens attend and actively participate in the events/meetings
- UPs take into account the comments and recommendations made by the citizens
- Citizens are aware of UP achievements. of the previous year

### Changes expected after this step:

### Results and lessons learned

## Results in terms of inclusive, effective and accountable governance

"The UP budget meeting is a wonderful exchange between citizens and the local government. Generally, I used to speak up at meetings as an opening speaker or at ceremonies as a main speaker to close the ceremonies. So, traditionally I would come at the start or end of the meeting and never had a chance to enjoy the whole event before. The UNO Durgapur has been asking me for a long time to observe at least one UP open budget meeting and I have fulfilled my promise. I am grateful for the invitation to such an excellent meeting. I was pleasantly surprised to see a draft budget of the UP elaborated by the UP itself. Not only has the UP elaborated the budget, but could present it to its citizens. I looked at this draft budget and noticed that the UP revenues in the past year have increased compared to the previous year and also noted that 10% of the total income came from the UP's own revenue income. This UP budgeting exercise is a tremendous step forward in the strengthening of the local government. I firmly believe that this change is not a result of single days rather of a long time practice. I hope the success of this UP is maintained in future. I am totally impressed with the open budget meeting in the Deluabari Union Parishad." (Deputy Commissioner of Rajshahi district, Mr. Md. Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury)



Illustration 3: Ward Shava at Matikata Union, Rajshahi District

### **Lessons learned**

Communication between UPs and citizens is important to keep the dialogue and enhance participatory governance. Sharique started with the approach of mobilizing citizens to attend such spaces as ward shava and open budget meetings. At first, this was just an exciting opportunity for citizens to be able to meet the UP members face to face, to listen and even to share among themselves information that otherwise was not shared. Interest in governance matters and a high turnout of citizens was a first success in proving that such spaces for interaction work.

However, the project did not stop here. We learned that although many citizens showed interest in attending the events, just a few were ready to raise concerns, comment and provide feedback. Therefore, in the beginning the meetings were predominantly dominated by the UPs. In order for citizens to engage in meaningful participation, they need more preparation. A few things helped ameliorate this situation. First, Sharique trained UPs to provide information about the events in advance. For example, to ensure that citizens provide feedback on the draft strategic plan, a 'strategic plan-in brief' brochure was issued and circulated among wards. This helped citizens understand the subject matter before the event, thus prepare questions in advance.

Another element that helped achieve a more meaningful participation was training women in 'speak up' skills (see the transversal tools section of this Guide). The number of women in ward shava and budget meetings often outnumber men. Women are often well aware of community issues and they need the skills to be able to formulate their questions in public.

We also learned that often UPs do not keep records of the conducted meetings. This is a violation of law in the first place, as the legal framework requires minute's record keeping for most of the meetings, and second – by avoiding keeping records on meetings, promises and proposals get easily lost. In order to encourage UPs to keep records, indicators on record keeping were included in the performance management appraisal. During the appraisal, the UP would need to produce minutes of meeting to prove their completion.

The most important lesson learned is that the spaces for interaction are to be used at the right time and for the right purpose. The final result of the meeting shall not be participation in it, but rather the accomplishments of that participation. We learned that citizens are more engaged when they know what they can accomplish through participating and speaking up in such meetings, and what they can take back home from those meetings (such as ideas, new information, new friends, strengthened communities and the real concept of citizenry).

66 Step 3: Opening up participatory spaces Step 3: Opening up participatory spaces

## Tools for Step 3: Package on participatory spaces

## ORIENTATION ON WARD SHAVA - FOR UP BODIES

Format: Orientation module for UP representatives. UP Secretary and one non-elected members from each Standing Committees

Training of trainers: 01 day for facilitators Duration: ½-day meeting with the

Chairperson, Secretary and other members to share the guidelines. Human resources: 01 facilitator for the meeting and 02 facilitators during the ward shavas (if accompaniment is envisioned).

### 1. DESCRIPTION

According to the law, the UP should organise two meetings per year at ward level. This tool was designed to build awareness about the legal structure and roles and responsibilities before and during ward shavas. The module includes important provisions of the UP Act on how to organise and conduct a ward shava and specifies how to identify and prioritize social and economic issues discussed at ward level in the UP planning process.

This training can be conducted at Union level, or outside of Union. The training shall be followed by accompaniment and coaching

### 2. PURPOSE

The tool intends to

 Enhance knowledge on ward shava, according to the law

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

As ward shavas are kev mechanisms for accountability and participation, it is important to train the participants as soon as possible. They should gain this knowledge before they conduct a ward shava. The training may be provided only once in every UP but it should be followed by accompaniment support and coaching support afterwards when needed. This means 9 wards per UP might require support in organizing the 1st ward shava meeting. An organisation can always find a way how to utilize the concept of peer learning for the purpose of ward shava capacity building. If 9 visits per UP is beyond available resources, model UP/wards can be identified, which can serve as peer learning spots, where other UP members visit for the purpose of learning.

For the first meeting, the UP will need a facilitator for demonstration purposes; from then on, the UP members do not need further facilitation.

Raise awareness on the roles and responsibilities of the UP representatives and Standing Committee members regarding ward shava

during the subsequent ward shavas. Sharique recommends that two trained persons attend the event and give advice/ support to the UP if necessary. This is a time consuming and resource intense activity. Sharique therefore recommends also trying conducting such training for groups of UPs simultaneously.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: UP bodies and selected Standing Committee members

## **Tools for Step 3: Package on participatory spaces**

## ORIENTATION ON OPEN PUBLIC MEETING (EMPHASIS ON THE OPEN BUDGET MEETING)

Format: Guidelines for facilitators (example of an open public meeting) Training of trainers: 01 day training for facilitators and 1-2 days (around 3 hours each day) to inform the citizens (prior to the event)

Duration: ½-day Human resources: 01 facilitator for the orientation meeting and 02 facilitators during the open public meetings

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

Open public meetings are an excellent tool of accountability and are used by UPs generally for sharing the UP plans and budgets. UPs are required to present their draft plans and budgets to citizens before these are approved. According to the legal requirements, an open budget meeting should be conducted once a vear (according to section 57 (2) of UP Act 2009). During these meetings the budget linked to an annual plan (and the five year plan, if such exists) is discussed. In addition, by law, the UP is required to share the five year plans with citizens. This is usually also presented in an open public meeting, but only once in five years, when such a plan is developed. It is advisable that UP keep separate the two meetings: one on the budget and annual plan and a second on the strategic plan. During these open public meetings, the following elements should be presented:

- a) the overall UP budget with income and expenditures.
- b) the UP five-year development plan (if available);
- the UP overall development plan for the coming fiscal year (including how it is financed);

- d) Ward-wise break-down of the UP development plan for the coming fiscal year (including details);
- e) Ward-wise break-down of implemented projects in last year/ current fiscal year to date.

These meetings are essential they contribute to transparency and accountability and give citizens the opportunity to voice their opinions on budget related matters and the UP annual development plan.

The tool serves as an orientation to the UP representatives on what they have to do before and during the meetings. On the day of the event, the facilitators observe and give advice if needed.

Before one of these events, the open **budget meeting,** some preparatory work should be undertaken:

Mobilising and informing citizens through organised groups: 2-3 days before the event, the facilitator contacts the leaders of the citizen groups, helps them get prepared and guides them on how to analyse the budget and on which type of questions they could ask. This takes around 30 minutes per community.

 Preparation by the UP Secretary on the information to be displayed and assignment of roles and responsibilities for the event (moderator, persons who will pass the microphones etc.)

In the Annexes of the tool, the formats for presenting the overall UP development plan and non-ward specific UP development projects, UP budget and UP development plan segregated by wards are provided.

### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the tool are as follows:

- UPs inform the citizens about the updated UP five-year development plan (if available and once in 5 years) or about the final draft UP annual development plan as well as the UP budget for the coming fiscal year (every year)
- Citizens perform their monitoring role and verify whether their priorities set in the ward planning meetings are reflected in the UP annual development plan
- Citizens give their feedback and views on the five-year (strategic) plan and the UP annual development plan and budget for the coming fiscal year
- UP informs citizens on issues that are of relevance to them

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

Open budget meetings should take place around April to mid-May. According to the feedback and views of the citizens, the UP members should update the budget and submit it until May 31, as per the UP operational manual. The orientation

training therefore should be done during the first quarter of the year, before the event. It is also strongly recommended to conduct this training during the first year, as it is a key participatory space.

### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE OPEN BUDGET MEETING

The target audience is:

- All citizens in the Union
- UP representatives
- Line agency officials
- Members of neighbouring UPs as guests to learn and get inspired by the event



Illustration 4: Open Budget Meeting, Beheli Union, Sunamganj District



# **STEP 4:** INTEGRATED PLANNING

#### **TOOLS SUGGESTED**

 Guides on how to develop a Strategic Plan (5 years) and how to update it on a yearly basis

#### **Description**

#### In this step:

- UP representatives and Strategic Plan Committee members go through the different steps of the strategic planning process and develop a five-year strategic plan
- Citizens' needs and interests are taken into consideration in the strategic plan

According to the UP Act 2009 and the UP (Development Plan) Rule 2013, UPs are obliged to develop a Five Year Plan. It is important because it encourages UPs to identify the priority issues in the Union on a midterm basis and to develop a vision on how to address them. The strategic plan itself covers a period of five years, but it is reviewed on a yearly basis, thus the annual plan is integrated in the strategic plan. Because the update exercise of a strategic plan is nothing else but the elaboration of the annual plan itself, viewed through the prism of a strategic plan, we call it the integrated planning, which includes a midterm plan - for five years, with detailed annual action plans.

The first time a UP undertakes the development of a strategic plan it takes around 4-5 months to complete the process. It is recommended to start the process early enough, around November or December. Each UP can undertake the

strategic planning process without much preparation and does not have to be at an advanced level to initiate it. Depending when the capacity building programme starts, it should be considered to train the UPs in strategic planning in the first 12 months of capacity building or in the 2nd year. If a programme starts in June-July, then it might be late to initiate strategic planning by November. However, if a programme starts in January, then there is plenty of time to train the UPs to undertake strategic planning by the end of November. It is imperative to know that the learning process should occur in November-March and culminate with a draft strategic plan, which should be validated in a public meeting (ward shava or public hearing) with citizens.

A separate guideline focusing on the Strategic Planning Update provides information on how to conduct a one day workshop where the strategic issues are revised and an action plan for the next year is designed. As the update should be conducted annually before the ward shava (in order to share the draft plan with citizens for their feedbacks), Sharique recommends to organise the workshop around February. This leaves time for the UP to finalise the plan, considering the citizens' comments.

### Changes expected after this step:

- A relevant and inclusive five year plan is produced and openly displayed
- UPs prioritise the implementation of projects that address issues outlined in the strategic plan
- The strategic plan is revised and updated each year

#### Results and lessons learned

# Example of results in terms of inclusive, effective and accountable governance

After the Strategic Plan Committee was formed on September 23, 2014 in Noarai UP, Sunamganj, the Chairman Mr. Afjal Abedin said to the members: "I am raising the idea of a Five Year planning not for my personal purposes. It is now a government's requirement for all of us. This is why we now try to engage as many people as possible in developing our SP. I would also seek the cooperation of all for the implementation of the plan. This long term plan will help us realise the dream of this locality. It will secure our local development even when I no longer will be in this UP. The thing that we now started with Sharique assistance will hopefully be completed with the cooperation of all of you. If we can work in accordance with our plan, we will not lag behind in achieving our goals and objectives. Recounted by Md. Mijanur Rashid Chowdhury, field facilitator, Sunamganj

#### **Lessons learned**

UP bodies now feel more confident on how to fulfil the government requirements regarding the elaboration of a Five-Year Plan. They had no material available on how to develop it until Sharique trained them on what should be done, step by step and according to the law. Once aware of the process, each UP has been able to, on the one hand, develop a Five-Year Plan as required by the government and on the other hand to enhance its knowledge. The UPs now have a vision for the Union while developing projects responding to the needs of the population and fitting into the UP annual budget. They realize the potential of local resources and their importance for sustainable local development. Citizens' engagement in the whole process has also been essential as they have supported the UP representatives in selecting and mobilizing local resources for implementing the strategic plan.

However, the tool developed by Sharique is quite new and despite the general satisfaction at the end of the process, it has proved to be complex and time consuming. It is expected that the government will emit a simple guideline in the future. In the meantime it is important to be aware of the significant amount of time, commitment and energy required when starting the process of developing a Strategic Plan.

It is a common practice in any organisation to have a strategic plan. It is always time consuming, but practice shows that it pays off. A good plan is already 50% of an organisation's success. This tool is not to be used without expert facilitation. Sharique developed a comprehensive lengthy facilitator's guide that is rather for practitioners, not for the UPs themselves. A good digest of the guide could result in a Planning Instructions note for UPs. The process of developing a plan can be different, but the component parts shall be same. That was a useful learning for 207 UPs, and their experience shall be capitalized and used for advocating for a simple, step by step guide, which can be accepted by the government.

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# Tools for Step 4: Package on integrated planning

# STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR UPS - AND ANNUAL UPDATE OF THE PLAN

Format: Facilitator's Guides on the UP Strategic Planning Workshop and on the Review and Update Workshop Training of trainers: 05 days training for facilitators (Strategic Planning) and 01 day for the update: A guide on how to train the trainers (ToT) is also included in the digital files **Duration:** Approximately 4-5 months on and off for the strategic planning committee

to complete the whole process (support provided by the facilitators is needed only for several key moments) and one day workshop regarding the update of the strategic plan Resources needed: 02 facilitators for the strategic planning workshop and then coaching support from one facilitator during the whole process. For the update workshop one facilitator is sufficient.

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

According to the UP Act 2009 and the UP (Development Plan) Rule 2013, the UP shall formulate a Five-Year Plan. It is specifically important because it encourages UPs to conduct visioning exercises. The strategic plan itself covers a period of five years, but it is reviewed on a yearly basis.

The strategic planning tool trains facilitators in how to support UP representatives and the Strategic Plan Committee members throughout the whole process, which requires about 4-5 months to be completed. It can be divided into 3 stages:

- Preparation for developing a strategic plan (14 weeks) - includes a social mapping and poverty analysis exercise and a stakeholder consultation round table
- 2. Development of the strategic plan document (2 weeks)
- 3. Approval of the participatory strategic plan and follow-up (4 weeks)

The tool provides information and exercises to understand the importance of strategic planning and how to develop a relevant and feasible plan. The tool also aims to develop capacities on the part of the facilitators, including facilitation skills for strategic analysis exercises (stakeholder analysis, SWOT, etc.). The objective is for the facilitators to be able to train and support the future participants in understanding what a strategic issue means, identifying the problems in the Union, prioritizing the most important issues and developing an adequate plan. At the end of the process, every UP comes up with its own strategic development plan.

Additionally, a separate guide for facilitators on how to organise a strategic plan review workshop is also available. This is part of stage 3 of the process. The citizens' inputs should be considered twice in this process: during the data collection and situation analysis (Stage 1) and during the Stage 2, after the draft plan is ready and presented for discussion in a public hearing.

#### 2. PURPOSE

- The objective of the strategic planning tool is:
- To develop a UP vision and mission
- To identify the values of the Union
- To analyse the stakeholders, and the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities
- To identify and formulate strategic issues

- To develop a relevant, feasible and inclusive action plan
- The objective of the plan update workshop is:
- To reconfirm the vision, mission and values of the Union
- To review the stakeholders list. opportunities, and the strategic issues
- To develop an action plan for the following year

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

Raising awareness on the legal requirements and opening participatory spaces are essential before starting the process (i.e. Steps 1 and 3 of this Guide). Due to the lengthy process and the engagement it requires, it is recommended to start accompanying UPs in this process at the end of the first year/ beginning of the second, given that this falls between November-February

However, as UPs are at different levels. some of them might have already practiced certain elements of a strategic plan. It is important that a rapid assessment of the situation is conducted to see at what level the UP is in its strategic planning accomplishments. The assessment is nothing too elaborate.

The strategic plan methodology developed by Sharique includes a list of steps required for a comprehensive and participatory planning. Some steps can stand by themselves, and some are interconnected.

For example, analysis of stakeholders can be a standalone step, while developing strategic issues is a step strongly connected to the preparatory process of data collection from wards and the stakeholder consultation. We recommend that during the orientation meeting, which is the first step in the process, a cross check is conducted as to which steps have already been accomplished by the Union in the past (if any). This will give a good indication on the capacity building efforts still needed. More so, if a Union has already developed a strategic plan in a participatory manner, and can demonstrate it, then it is recommended that the capacity building is only conduced for the update of the plan. By no means is the strategic planning tool included in this Guide the only relevant method for supporting strategic planning. Other plans supported by other advisers are welcome and their presence shall serve as an indication of good governance at that UP level.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: UP Chairperson and UP members, as well as the Strategic Plan Committee members, formally approved by the UP and convened at the beginning of the process.



# **STEP 5:** BUDGETING AND FINANCE MANAGEMENT

#### **TOOLS SUGGESTED:**

- Public Finance Management
  - Module 1: Budget Formulation
  - Module 2: Budget Implementation
  - Module 3: Public Procurement
- Module 4: Accounting, Audit and Control
- Module 5: Budget Analysis
- Project Cycle Management

# **Description**

In this step the UP

- Enhances its skills on how to prepare, manage and analyse a budget
- Increases its knowledge on PCM to ensure quality management and participatory monitoring of all the projects it funds
- Understands the importance of assessing and collecting taxes
- Develops strategies to increase its revenues
- Maintains record keeping of accounts and for audits

Both the local authorities and the citizens play a role in the budgeting process. For this reason, they need to understand good PFM practice and how to steer, use and control the use of public resources. Better budgeting leads indeed to enhanced accountability and more efficient local governance. However, financial management and resource mobilisation are complex issues that require skills and knowledge.

To help the UPs in their endeavour and in being inclusive, Sharique has prepared, in collaboration with the Institute of Public Finance, Ministry of Finance, a set of five modules on PFM. This training course was specifically designed to support the local authorities in dealing with public money and other public resources throughout the entire budget cycle. It follows a chronological order and is divided into the following five modules: Budget Formulation, Budget Implementation, Public Procurement, Accounting, Audit and Control and Budget Analysis.

Modules 1 (Budget Formulation) and 5 (Budget Analysis), include revenue estimation and cost calculation, gender budgeting, budget presentation. participation, trends of income and expenditure of the previous 3 years and budget approval. Because the UPs need time to prepare the draft budget which has to be ready for the open budget meeting, it is important to conduct the training as early as possible, ideally March - April. The next step, budget implementation, refers to revenue collection, spending, bank

reconciliation and asset management, and gives particular attention to procurement. Budget implementation starts in July, once the budget is approved and the new fiscal year starts.

Module 4 focuses on accounting, reporting and audit as well as on the recording of non-monetary transactions, mid-year and end of year reports, external audit and public scrutiny. UPs are required by law to submit the reports to government within 60 days of the of fiscal year end. So the module should be provided in early August.

Module 3 (Public Procurement) covers procurement of goods and services, e.g. procurement methods, procurement planning and work orders to vendors in accordance with the Public Procurement Act 2006 and rule 2008 with its amendments. The module describes effective, efficient and transparent fund management by UP officials as well as citizens' participation in LGI's procurement. It should be provided prior to the Project Cycle Management (PCM) training in August/September.

Finally, the training covers pre- and postbudget analysis. The module should ideally be conducted in November or December, as UPs should know how to revise and analyse a budget before the budget review and the formulation phase.

The intention through these modules is to increase the skills of the UP representatives in order to be capable of delivering public services of the highest possible quality, with the highest benefit for the people. Participation and inclusion

of the citizens is also essential, which is why emphasis is laid on the transparency (budget disclosure) and accountability (public meetings) mechanisms.

In order to ensure that the funds spent on specific projects are managed in an efficient way, UP representatives should understand how to develop, steer, monitor and assess a project. To help them with that, the scheme implementation or PCM tool provides some guidelines on the steps UPs should follow and what they should take into consideration when designing a new project. This tool is thus complementary to Module 2 (Budget Implementation) of the PCM tool and should also be conducted around the month of July.

These tools aim at building practical skills of UPs in participatory budgeting. Because of the complexity of the subject, we recommend to go through Step 1, 2 and 3 of this Guide during the first year and to wait for the second year to go deeper into the planning and budgeting cycle (Steps 4 and 5). This way it leaves time for the government and citizens to become accustomed to working together and to have sufficient trust and capacities to embark on the challenges of improving the mobilisation and management of public resources.

#### Changes expected after this step:

The UP is capable of formulating, implementing, monitoring and analysing its budget in a transparent and pro-poor manner

- The UP assesses taxes as required by law
- The UP collects taxes and mobilises resources
- The UP is able to procure goods and services in a transparent and accountable way
- The UP has prioritised projects focusing on strategic issues and manages them in an efficient and propoor manner (in accordance with PCM recommendations)

#### Results and lessons learned

# Example of results on inclusive, effective and accountable local governance

Household tax assessments, according to the law, must be conducted every five years. Due to lack of resources and their sensitivity, these assessments are however often not conducted as expected. The Baroghoria UP in Chapainwabagnj District, for instance, collected in 2013 a meagre 93'000 Tk. in tax. In general, until that year, the local government forecasted every year very modest tax income and rarely managed to collect even these little amounts. In the fiscal year 2014/2015 it collected however 335'750 taka (4200 USD), which was three times more than previously. In 2014 was the first time that it organized a tax assessment and subsequently a tax assessment sharing meeting. For the purpose of the assessment the local government hired an independent consultant who visited each household, and, based on the established formula, fixed the amount of tax to be paid by each of them. To avoid errors and eliminate any chances for tax abuse, the local government announced the tax assessment results openly for check and approval by citizens. With the effect that citizens became aware of their duties, but also were given the opportunity to understand how taxes are calculated.

With the tax income the local government managed to remunerate the council members, who had not been paid for months, and were at the brink of leaving office. The larger part of the revenues was however used to fund several community development projects, responding to the demands of the population for a road upgrading and the installation of electric lighting in one of these roads. These projects would have not been realized without the tax funds and, knowing that the money came out of their pocket, citizens took an active role in supervising their allocation and use. On the other side council members understood the benefits of improved tax collection.

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#### Lessons learned

The main conclusion is that social accountability works when it happens in a constructive and mutually accepted way, as opposed to forwarding demands. The most important results in the practice of participatory tax assessment is the strong awareness on roles and stronger citizenry feeling. In addition to that, experience has shown that in meetings where citizens voice major concerns, local government officials do consider those and come up with revised tax plans and development plans.

However, major challenges remain as the motivation to engage in long-term processes of social accountability over tax is difficult to achieve. The amount of household tax per household is rather minimal and does not allow for strongly visible results. Popularity among local government officials is another reason, for which these officials resist tax collection. It is easier for them to be popular by not enforcing tax collection rather than to force that.

We have learned from a group of secretaries who were trained in budget preparation that all this time they have been planning wrongly. They had never applied a budget calendar before, for example, and had never made budget forecasts. Simple things that could be taken for granted at a point in future were totally missing from the process. The PFM training was thus a true breakthrough for a number of stakeholders involved.



Illustration 5: Tax sharing meeting, Nejambur Union, Chapai Nawabganj District

# Tools for Step 5: Package on public finance management

# PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT

Format: Training Course for UPs in 05 modules Training of trainers: 05 days training for the facilitators for Module 1 (Budget Formulation), 04 days for Module 2 (Budget Implementation), 03 days for Module 3 (Public Procurement), 04 days for Module

4 (Accounting, Audit and Control) and 03 days for Module 5 (Budget Analysis) **Duration:** Each module (except Module 5) comprises an orientation part (01 day) and a hands-on for a smaller audience (02 days) Human Resources: 02 facilitators per module

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

This training course, prepared by the Institute of Public Finance of the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with Sharique, aims to support the UPs to go throughout the entire budget cycle. It comprises five modules, which cover the budgeting cycle: Budget Formulation, Budget Implementation. Public Procurement. Accounting, Audit and Control and Budget Analysis. The modules (except Budget Analysis, which only has a hands-on component) are in turn subdivided into two

sections with the following objectives:

- Orientation training gives the essential information of the different stages of the PFM cycle and explains to the participants how to exert influence in the process
- Hands-on training provides participants with practical skills needed to manage successfully public finances in Union Parishads.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objective of this tool is:

For citizens and local authorities to understand how good PFM should work and how to steer and control the use of public resources through the system.

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The PFM training modules are designed for UPs who understand sufficiently the planning and budget cycle. Therefore, it is important that the PFM training course starts after the initial introduction into the PMT, UP structures, participatory spaces, and strategic planning. UPs first need to understand their roles and responsibilities and participatory spaces need to be working well (i.e. Steps 1-3) before introducing a course on PFM. However, practice also shows that in UPs with strong secretaries, the process of PFM training goes quite smoothly. This is also a training course that requires highly qualified trainers and facilitators. You would need to

ensure that the professional level of your facilitators is well above the knowledge of the secretaries. Sharique was amazed at the capacities of some of the secretaries who with very little preparation have grasped the essence of the PFM courses.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

- orientation trainings: Chairperson, UP Secretary, UP members, one citizen per Standing Committee, potential electoral leaders and ward representatives (max. 45 people)
- For hands-on training: UP Chairperson, UP Secretary, presidents of the three Standing Committees dedicated to finances (Finance and Establishment. Tax Assessment and Collection, as well as Audit and Accounts) (5 participants from 5 UP meet together).



Illustration 6: The importance of being transparent at any time; information boards at UP Bahara, Sunamgani, showing UP plan and budget, expenditures, contact persons of NGOs, standing committee members etc...

# **Tools for Step 5**

# **FFFECTIVE SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION**

Format: Guidelines for facilitators Training of trainers: 02 days for facilitators **Duration:** 02 days

**Human Resources: 02 facilitators** 

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

Effective scheme implementation, or project cycle management (PCM), is a mechanism to ensure quality assurance and participatory monitoring during all stages of a project cycle. It refers to the way projects are managed by the Union Parishad.

This tool has been developed in order to enhance the knowledge and capacities of the UP representatives with regard to PCM. It provides information on the different steps a UP should go through

when conducting a project, from the planning phase to the evaluation phase.

The tool also provides a template of a Project Summary Form based on the existing grant application form of the government. This document provides information on what should be taken into consideration when designing a project (scheme). A series of questions and answers gives additional details about what to pay attention to when filling in a project proposal.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the tools are as follows:

- To enhance the knowledge and capacities of the UP representatives with regard to effectively managing a project from the beginning to the end
- To ensure the effective inclusion and participation of citizens throughout the cycle.

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The tool is specifically related to the implementation of projects funded by the UP. In this regard it is linked to the budget implementation and should be used hand in hand with the second and third modules on PFM (on budget implementation and public procurement).

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: the UP Chairperson, Secretary, members and a small group of citizens



# TRANSVERSAL ELEMENTS: GENDER EQUALITY AND PRO-POOR GOVERNANCE

#### **TOOLS SUGGESTED:**

#### Package on Gender Analysis

- Participatory Gender Analysis at Union level
- Participatory Gender Analysis at Community Level

## Package on Women's Leadership Skills

- Women Leadership Training
- Speak Up Workshop

# **Package on Pro-Poor Governance**

Orientation on Safety Nets for Citizens

## **Description**

# In this step:

- UP and citizens identify gender inequalities at community level and commit to taking collective action to reducing discrimination
- Women UP members and potential women leaders develop leadership skills
- Citizens enhance their knowledge on different types of safety nets and on the selection criteria for beneficiaries

In Bangladesh, women, poor people and members of marginalised groups face numerous challenges and are often excluded from decision-making processes. Sharique has developed a selection of tools to support these excluded groups in raising their voices and claiming their rights. In Sharique's experience, the promotion of gender equality and a more equitable targeting and distribution of safety net benefits has proven to generate a more enabling environment for social justice.

Women in Bangladesh face various discriminations: they have limited and unequal rights as well as access to and control over resources because of the existing laws of inheritance, patriarchal values, and customary practices. Raising awareness on the differences and inequalities between men and women and promoting gender equality is therefore very important. Two specific tools have been developed in this regard: the Participatory Gender Analysis (PGA) at Community Level and at Union Level. These trainings have a similar content. They consist of discussions and analysis around the roles and responsibilities of men and women in their community. Issues of concern are identified and participants finally commit through a simple action plan (for UP level) to undertake specific actions for reducing gender discrimination. This action plan shall not be viewed as a plan in itself, rather it later shall be coordinated with the GIP to avoid duplication of efforts. However, it is important that a separate exercise is conducted to develop the gender issues and solutions for solving those issues.

In addition to the PGA, Sharique has also developed two training modules, the Women Leadership Training module and its follow-up, the Speak Up Workshop, aiming at building women's confidence and increasing their active and meaningful participation in public affairs, as well as their bargaining power. Both women UP members and influential women from the community are invited to attend these events, which encourage the emergence of female leaders.

With regard to pro-poor governance, an orientation module on social safety nets distribution has been designed in order to increase the level of awareness of citizens on several types of safety nets. The tool encourages citizens to be proactive and to support the UP in identifying beneficiaries, as well as cross checking how the implementation is done at ward level.

All of the tools related to gender equality and pro-poor governance can be conducted at any time of the year. However, because better inclusion in decision-making and in accessing services is essential, it is recommended to conduct these trainings at an early stage, ideally during the first year of the project/programme. Besides, experience has shown that the committees (such as the Standing Committees or the UDCC) work better if they have a mixed representation of men and women with various social backgrounds.

#### Changes expected after this step:

- Women and members of disadvantaged groups participate in decision-making processes at Union level and are able to express their opinions
- UPs promote the participation of all segments of society
- UPs act in a more gender-sensitive and pro-poor way and deliver quality services to women, poor and marginalised people
- Citizens contribute to an open and transparent selection of safety net beneficiaries

#### Results and lessons learned

# Examples of results on inclusive, effective and accountable governance

"I was a housewife until 1998. Then, the local people asked me to become a Union Parishad (UP) member. My position in the family has changed since I am a member.

Many people come to my house now and ask me for advice. Consequently, I have become more important in my household.

As a member and chair of the mass education Standing Committee of the UP, I make lists of the poor and very poor in my community, I am responsible to distribute safetynet allowances to the very poor, I implement projects and I mediate in conflicts. The Local Governance Programme Sharique, helps us [the UP] with trainings and how to conduct open budget meetings etc. As a female UP member a challenge I face is the distribution of the projects. Usually, women receive no projects. The male UP members are preferred and women can only monitor the projects. But now, through the Women Leadership Training, we have learnt how to bargain and now we also get some projects. We, the three women members in the UP, stand together. We argue that since most of the poor people come to us, we should assign all the social safety-net allowances. The UP has not yet accepted our demands for the social safety-net responsibility, but in the distribution of widow allowances our word is now given priority.

I like my work as UP female member because it is very satisfying to fulfil the demands of others in the community. People come to me in my household to ask for advice which I, as well as my husband, enjoy. I am also in contact with other female members when we meet at the Upazila level where we can share and exchange experiences. I hope I will be able to stand for election again. I have heard there is a possibility as a woman to stand for vice-chairman at the Upazila level. This I would like".

Recounted by Annapurna Das, Derai Union, Sunamgani

#### **Lessons learned**

Addressing social inclusion in an effective manner requires a deep understanding of local power dynamics and patterns of social exclusion. In some areas where Sharique works, there are very strong religious leaders whose dictates make it difficult for women to travel freely or even participate in public meetings. In other localities some of the most isolated communities - both physically and politically - are Hindu fisherpeople. As fisher-people by caste, they are relatively low in the Hindu caste system (although not classified as Dalits), and have traditionally operated at the margins of society - fishing informally, without explicit rights to the main water bodies in the area. Each of these different situations requires tailored actions to encourage

socially inclusive Union Parishad operations. Amongst Adivasis and fishing people, particular effort has also been focused on role models - encouraging individuals who can speak on behalf of their community.

There is much that men representatives in Union Parishads can do to support women in taking a more active role; indeed a positive attitude on their part to women's participation is crucial. This has been a regular feature of capacity building for Union Parishads. The most common responses have been to make special infrastructure provision for women, and specific women's projects. A separate room and toilet can make a big difference to the comfort that women feel in visiting or working in Union Parishad offices. Similarly, budgetary allocation for matters such as transport to hospital for pregnant mothers or home-based income generation (for example, the provision of sewing machines) are readily accepted and appreciated by both men and women. These are, of course, projects conforming to gender-stereotypical roles. As women become more experienced and confident in Union Parishad matters, it may be anticipated that their demands for projects - and roles - will evolve accordingly.



Illustration 7: An Adivasi (indigenous) woman speaking at a budget review meeting, Gogram Union, Raishahi District

# Tools for transversal elements: Package on gender analysis

# PARTICIPATORY GENDER ANALYSIS - AT UNION I EVEL

Format: Guidelines for facilitators Training of trainers: 01 day training for facilitators

**Duration:** 01 day

**Human Resources: 02 facilitators** 

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

The participatory gender analysis (PGA) is a tool to promote gender equality through local governance. It is divided into two parts; the PGA is presented first and the refresher second. It has been designed as a means for the UP, the Standing Committees and civil society representatives to analyse and discuss gender inequalities at the family, community and UP level.

At the family level, the tool examines different roles and responsibilities of women and men in the domestic setting. It explores power relations in terms of decision-making processes, control over assets and self-determination. At the community level, it focuses on the mobility of women and men and their status in the community. At the UP level, it looks at what

women and men do in the UP and Standing Committees, at their level of participation in UP decision-making processes, at the access to UP services and at who benefits from projects in which the UP is involved.

According to a set of questions and the use of flashcards, the participants identify the existing inequalities and differences between men and women, present, prioritise and analyse these gender issues and finally develop an action plan to address them and improve gender equality in the Union.

The second part (the PGA Refresher) is a follow up workshop to continue the gender awareness process within the UP.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the PGA are:

- To build awareness among UP and Standing Committee members regarding prevailing gender inequalities at family, community and UP level
- To encourage the UP to commit itself to creating an enabling environment within the UP to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men
- To develop an action plan for reducing gender discrimination within the Union

The PGA Refresher aims at incorporating the newly discussed gender issues in the plan and updates it. It is suggested that after conducting the PGA Refresher twice, the original PGA should be facilitated again to have a more updated analysis of the gender situation in the Union.

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

Although the PGA is not bound to any specific moment of the annual operational cycle and could be conducted at any time, it is wise to do it during the first year of the intervention in order to be able to plan more targeted activities on gender equality. The PGA Refresher can be conducted either on a six monthly or an annual basis, depending on the time and resources available.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The exercise (both the PGA and the PGA refresher) is first of all intended for the UP. Apart from the UP Chairperson, Secretary and members, members of the Standing Committees are also meant to participate. A number of spouses of the intended participants should be encouraged to

take part, as well as some community organisation leaders and other key people of the community. The total number of participants should not exceed 35 and an equal number of women and men should be invited.

# Tools for transversal elements: Package on gender analysis

# PARTICIPATORY GENDER ANALYSIS - AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

Format: Guidelines for facilitators Training of Trainers: 1day for facilitators Duration: ½ day

**Human Resources: 02 facilitators** 

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

The participatory gender analysis (PGA) is a tool to promote gender equality. It has been prepared for conducting participatory discussion and analysis at the community level on the social position and condition of men and women.

It is based on a questionnaire focusing on the roles and responsibilities of men and women in the family and social contexts. Among others, the tool looks at the power relations in terms of decision-making

processes, control over assets, selfdetermination and mobility aspects.

The participants first identify the prevailing inequalities and differences, and debate and analyse the root causes of these gender issues. They finally commit to taking collective actions towards reducing gender discrimination and elaborate a plan for changes, which should be revised every year.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the PGA are:

- To create awareness about gender inequalities
- To ensure that the community makes commitments to change principles which prevent gender equity
- To help build a coordinated strategy for reducing gender discrimination within a community

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

It is recommended to conduct the PGA during the first year of the intervention. As it may address sensitive issues, it is however important to previously build a relationship of trust with the communities where it is done.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The total number of participants should not exceed 30. An equal number of women and men should be invited and priority should be given to the poorest and marginalized people.

# Tools for transversal elements: Package on women's leadership skills

# WOMEN I FADERSHIP TRAINING

Format: Training Module

Training of trainers: 02 days for facilitators

**Duration:** 02 days

Human resources: 02 facilitators per training

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

This training aims at helping women to develop their leadership capacities and thus increase their participation in public affairs. It is followed by another tool called "Speak Up!" which encourages women to practice their public speaking skills.

The training comprises the following sessions:

- Orientation on leadership and its types
- Qualities of leadership
- Local Government and Governance
- Role of women's leadership at different level

■ Five important functional leadership skills at a glance

In the last session, emphasis is laid on the development of practical skills in five domains: Access to information and techniques for implementing information effectively, techniques for acceptable debate, people mobilization skills, networking and communication skills and conflict resolution skills.

The training includes various exercises (role plays, group discussions, debate competition etc.) to encourage the women to participate actively.

#### 2. PURPOSE

To train women to develop their capacities as efficient leaders who will contribute to good governance at the local level

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

The training could be conducted at any time, but it should ideally be proposed during the first year of the project/initiative as it strengthens the capacities of women from both the sides of local government representatives and citizens.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is: women UP members, women Standing Committee members and potential community-level

leaders. The group should have maximum 15-20 persons.

# Tools for transversal elements: Package on women's leadership skills

# SPFAK UP

Format: Workshop Material

Training of trainers: 01 day for facilitators

Duration: ½-day

Human resources: 01 facilitator

#### 1. DESCRIPTION

The SPEAK UP! Workshop is a follow up course of the Women's Leadership Training (WLT) that aims at increasing women's capacity to speak in public. While the acquisition of public speaking skills is the main priority, other significant issues are also addressed in the course of the workshop, such as gender, roles and responsibilities of different community actors and the effective use of feedback.

It is divided into four steps:

- Identification of different applications. objectives and the gender dimension of public speeches
- Awareness on speech developing procedures
- Group exercise to practice the preparation of speaking in public
- Presentation of public speeches in the plenary with group feedback

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the training are:

■ To make women aware about different applications, objectives and the gender dimension of public speaking

■ To increase women's skills developing and giving public speeches

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

This workshop can be given at any time during the process but ideally during the first year. There is no rule on how long after the WLT it should take place. However, it is recommended to wait a few weeks or months between the two trainings in order to perceive some changes.

#### 4. TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience are: the former participants of the Women Leadership Training, which includes women UP members, women Standing Committee members as well as potential leaders from community groups (should not exceed 15-20 persons)

# Tools for transversal elements: Package on pro-poor governance

# ORIENTATION TRAINING ON SAFFTY NFTS FOR CITIZENS

Format: Training Module

Training of trainers: 01 day for facilitators

Duration: ½-day

Human resources: 01 facilitator

#### 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

This module aims at addressing safety net distribution concerns. In some areas, the UP is in charge of the whole process whereas in others citizen's groups are supporting the UP in cross-checking the lists of priority beneficiaries (according to the RTI Act). This tool provides information to the citizens on several types of safety nets (such as VGD, VGF, old age allowance and widow/divorced women allowance) and on the selection criteria for beneficiaries.

#### 2. PURPOSE

The objectives of the training are:

- To build citizens' knowledge on the social safety net programs, and the selection criteria of beneficiaries
- To promote transparency, accountability and people's participation to implement the UP social safety net programs

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCING

This orientation session can be provided at any time during the project/programme.

#### **4. TARGET AUDIENCE**

The target audience is: 20 to 25 citizens per session, including women, poor and marginalized people.

# REFERENCES

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# CONTENTS OF THE DIGITAL FILES

#### Tools:

- Local Governance Self-Assessment at Community Level
- Local Government Performance Appraisal
- Roles and Responsibilities of UPs
- Roles and Responsibilities of UP representatives - for citizens
- RTI for UPs and Government Line Agency Representatives
- RTI for Citizens
- Orientation on Union Parishad Standing Committees
- Orientation on Union Development Coordination Committee for UPs
- Orientation on ward shava for UP **Bodies**
- Orientation on open budget meeting
- Strategic Planning for UPs (ToT and Facilitator's guide)

- Strategic Planning Update
- Public Finance Management
- Module 1: Budget Formulation
- Module 2: Budget Implementation
- Module 3: Public Procurement
- Module 4: Accounting, Audit and Control
- Module 5: Budget Analysis
- Effective Scheme Implementation
- Participatory Gender Analysis at Union Level
- Participatory Gender Analysis at Community Level
- Women Leadership Training
- Speak Up
- Orientation on Safety Nets for Citizens

# ANNEXE

The table below provides

and trainers fees might different as resources tine frames for might year capacity building process. The table

**ANNEX 1: HUMAN RESOURCES REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE TOOLS** 

the workshops

given is estimation, intended to assist users of this Guide in planning resource

T00L	Training of Trainers	Training of Duration of the Trainers training	Frequency (over 3 years)	Appropriate time in the cycle	Human Resources	Budget Estimate
Local Governance Self-Assessment at Community Level	1 day training, ½-day for orientation of local volunteers	1 day training, ½ day per session ½-day for orientation of local olunteers	Twice (at the beginning of and any tin half-way through cycle the project/	Twice (at the At start of intervention/ beginning of and half-way through the project/ programme)	1 facilitator and 4-5 volunteers	Tk. 2500.00 (for 35 people)
Local Government Performance Appraisal	3 days	3 days	Annually	At start of intervention, annually and at end of intervention, i.e. at start of FY to evaluate performance of previous year immediately after the R&R training of UP	2 facilitators	Tk. 8000.00 (for 25 people)
Roles and Responsibilities of UPs	3 days	2 days	Once	At start of intervention/ any time in the annual	2 facilitators	Tk. 10500.00 (for 16

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T00L	Training of Trainers	Duration of the training	Frequency (over 3 years)	Appropriate time in the cycle	Human Resources	Budget Estimate
Roles and Responsibilities of UP Representatives for Citizens	2 days	Two ½ day session	Once	At start of intervention/ any time in the annual cycle	1 facilitator	Tk. 3000.00 (for 30 people)
Right to Information for UPs and Government Line Agency Representatives	2 days	2 days	Once	At start of intervention/ any time in the annual cycle	2 facilitators	Tk. 16000.00 (for 25 people)
Right to Information for Citizens	1 day	1 day or spread over two ½ days	Once	At start of intervention/ any time in the annual cycle	1 facilitator	Tk. 3000.00 (for 30 people)
Orientation manual on Union Parishad Standing Committees	1 day	2 days	Once	Any time	2 facilitators	Tk. 21500.00 (for 35 people)
Orientation on Union Development Coordination Committee for UPs	1 day	½ day	Once	Any time	<b>,</b>	Tk. 12000.00 (for 39 people)
Orientation on Ward Shava for UP Bodies	1 day	% day meeting and then accompaniment/ coaching support	Orientation once and then accompaniment twice a year (if needed)	Before the event takes place: October- November and February-March	1 facilitator for the orientation and 2 the day of the ward shava	Tk. 5000.00 (for 16 people)

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Budget Estimate	Tk. 5000.00 (for 16 people)	Tk. 65000.00 (for 30 people)	Tk. 9500.00 (for 30 people)
Human Resources	1 facilitator for the orientation and 2 the day of the open budget meeting	2 facilitators for the orientation and then 1 facilitator during the process	One facilitator
Appropriate time in the cycle	Before the event takes place: mid-April to mid-May	Process should start at the end of the year (around November- December)	During the last quarter of the fiscal year
Frequency (over 3 years)	Orientation once and then accompaniment once a year (if needed)	Once in every UP	Annually (once the strategic plan is finalised)
Duration of the training	% day meeting and then accompaniment/ coaching support	The process takes approximately 4-5 months. Facilitators spend at least 7 days supporting the UP.	1 day workshop
Training of Trainers	1 day, as well as 1-2 days (around 3 hours each day) to briefly inform and prepare the citizens from several communities	5 days	1 day
T00L	Orientation on open public meeting	Strategic Planning for UPs	Strategic Planning Update

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Budget Estimate	Tr. 44000.00 (for 35 people for the four Tr. 80000.00 (for 25 people for the five hands- on trainings) orientation trainings)	Tk. 18500.00 (for 30 people)	Tk. 10000.00 (for 30 people)	Tk. 3500.00 (for 30 people)	Tk. 14000.00 (for 22 people)	Tk. 9000.00 (for 22 people)	Tk. 3000.00 (for 30 people)
Human Resources	2 facilitators	2 facilitators	2 facilitators	2 facilitators	2 facilitators	1 facilitator	1 facilitator
Appropriate time in the cycle	1. March-April 2. Around July - August 3. Around August - September 4. July – mid August 5. March - April	Before Budget Implementation	At any time	At any time	At any time	At any time	At any time
Frequency (over 3 years)	Once	Once	Once with facilitators and then revision of the action plan every year (facilitators don't need to attend it)	Once	Once	Once	Once
Duration of the training	1 day for orientation and 2 days for hands-on training for each module. Except for Budget Analysis which only has hands-on training.	2 days	1 day	½ day	2 days	½ day	½ day
Training of Trainers	5/4/3/4/3 days (19 days in total)	2 days	1 day	1 day	2 days	1 day	1 day
T00L	Public Finance Management (5 modules) 1. Budget Formulation 2. Budget Implementation 3. Public Procurement 4. Accounting, Audit and Control 5. Budget Analysis	Effective Scheme Implementation	Participatory Gender Analysis at Union Level	Participatory Gender Analysis at Community Level	Women Leadership Training	Speak UP	Orientation Training on Safety Nets for Citizens

# **ANNEX 2: TIME REQUIRED FROM KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

The following time commitment would be required from key resource persons if the whole Step-by-Step Guide is implemented in a typical UP over two years. Times given are an approximation, based on Sharique experience. The number of days for each

UP would differ depending on the approach to training. Training can be individual for each UP or can be provided to a cluster of UPs. The list below is mainly based on UP based training.

Number of days allocated to these trainings (estimate)
Approx. 50 days of preparation (ToT) Approx. 40 days for the trainings conducted at UP level Approx. 55 days per UP for the citizens' trainings
Approx. 40 days
Approx. 40 days
30-40 days
0-10 days

# **ANNEX 3: NOTES ON RESOURCE AND TIME PLANNING**

#### Financial costs

The given budget estimate does not include the transport, venue and accommodation costs of the trainings. It gives an idea on how much the material and the food would cost

# Time investment required for particular tools/steps

Participatory planning and budgeting require intense resources and generous time frames. Step 5 – budgeting and finance management – takes more than half of the total time requirement to implement the whole Step-by-step guide. It is important for the implementers and

local government partners to have a clear understanding and commitment on the time required before starting this process. Exchange visits and peer-to-peer learning may be useful to ensure that UPs are well informed of both the costs and benefits of engaging rigorously in these processes. PFM five module set can be easily delivered in two years. However, it is very important that each training is delivered before the actual task is to be implemented.

# Time investment required for facilitators

The calculation does not include how many days the facilitators would spend on providing accompaniment support, but

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only the time spent for hands-on training. Additional time should be considered for accompaniment, as recommended in several tools (i.e. on ward shavas).

The preparation time required by the facilitators for the trainings (information/communication to the communities, preparation of the material etc.) and the transport are not taken into consideration in the calculations. However, Sharique is considering combining a UP based approach to district/UZP based approach. That means that certain tools can be also trained on in groups of several UPs. This will also be greatly helpful for economizing on time and financial resources

The estimated number of days per facilitator is based on the assumption that one facilitator would be in charge of all the trainings at Union level. In practice it can be different as some facilitators may focus on specific trainings while others would be in charge of other themes.

The number of days at community level required by the facilitators to train the participants is calculated based on the estimate that 9 sessions (one per ward) are organised in each UP (valid for the LGSA, R&R, RTI, PGA and orientation on safety nets). Additionally, even though some sessions require only a half-day, it is unlikely that the facilitators will be

able to conduct two sessions in one day. Therefore, every time a half-day is needed, the calculation is instead done on a one day basis. We also recommend that a 'multiple ward' approach is explored. In the long run it is our intention to make these tools functional. If there is no possibility to address the issues at each ward level, the Union or even the UZP wise/district wise approach is to be tested.

Five members of five UPs (25 people) are invited to each of the hands-on trainings on PFM. This means that a facilitator responsible for a specific UP does not necessarily have to facilitate the training each time (two facilitators are enough per training).

Only the Standing Committee members related to finances need to attend certain trainings (e.g. the hands-on trainings of the 5 modules on PFM). This explains the significant difference in the number of training days for UP members.

# Time investment required from citizens

The number of days the citizens would spend in trainings depends on their involvement (if they are part of a committee for instance) and on their sex (some trainings are specifically designed for women).