

# TECHNICAL BRIEF

## participatory planning for inclusive urban governance



## DELIVERING DECENTRALISATION

slum dwellers access to  
decision-making for pro-poor  
infrastructure services

**PRACTICAL ACTION**  
Technology challenging poverty



## BANGLADESHI PEOPLE LIVING IN URBAN AREAS

55%

have no  
access to  
supply water

25%

slum dwellers  
use sanitary  
latrine

60M

by 2031

Bangladesh is one of the fastest urbanizing countries compared to other middle income countries, with 6% growth rate/year since its independence (UPPR, UNDP, 2011). In 2001, Bangladesh had 532 urban centers with a population around 30%, which is likely to be 50 million by 2021 and may exceed 60 million by 2031 (CUS 2008, Bangladesh Urban Forum, 2011). Urbanisation is a process of development. But, unplanned urbanisation creates a lot of problems to the city dwellers including rapid growth of slums with increased pressure on infrastructural services like water, sanitation, electricity, drainage facilities, etc.(UPPR, UNDP 2011) as they are often excluded from urban planning and development interventions. The urban poverty rate is 21.3 %, of them 7.7% are extremely poor (HEIS, 2010).

Practical Action Bangladesh have implemented a four-year long (2012 - 2016) multi-country (Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka) project named Integrated Urban Development (IUD)-II project, focusing participatory planning for inclusive urban governance. It came as a follow-up of IUD-I project had been implemented from 2006 to 2009. We have worked in Faridpur and Jessore Municipalities with the aim of promoting decentralised urban governance to empower the slum dwellers through effective engagement with the Municipality Governance.

### Situation of the Slum Dwellers

The project covered 30 slums (24 in Faridpur and 06 in Jessore) with 10,962 people (5511 female and 5451 male). Most of them are day laborers, van/rickshaw puller, cleaner, sweeper, pit-emptier. Many of them are engaged in cleaning work in municipality, hospital/clinic and other Government offices. Open defecation rate is 6% and 8% in Faridpur and Jessore municipality areas, respectively. They didn't have any scope to participate in the Municipality governance process earlier. Thus, their needs remain always unaddressed with little exception.

In  
Bangladesh  
IUD-II project  
covered

30  
slums

10962  
people

### Why Participatory Planning?

Participatory planning is an effective tool in engaging and integrating a wide range of stakeholders, including community, private sector, government, NGO and municipality. This helped the low income Settlement Improvement Committee (SIC) in streamlining and empowering them in the governance, planning and delivery process of infrastructural services. The SIC representatives formulate the Community Action Plan (CAP) based on the yearly assessment and priority ranking with their existing resources, in presence of the municipality councilors, officials, partners and elites. In the process, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools were used. The participatory planning process, with engagement of the stakeholders and the actors, helps to mobilise the community towards organising them for a certain purpose and act.

### Objectives

- ▶ Identifying the problems, needs and priorities of the communities to take strategic action for implementation;
- ▶ Strengthening community to plan, formulate and implement development plans;
- ▶ Empowering women and other marginalised groups, particularly the socially excluded Harijan and Dalits (the untouchable communities);
- ▶ Integrating the CAP in different projects for avoiding duplication of interventions;
- ▶ Facilitate municipalities to address CAP in their development budget;
- ▶ Strengthening the communities for better access into the governance and decision-making process of the municipalities.



## Steps of Community Participatory Planning

### A. Community Mobilisation

Community mobilisation has been carrying out through formation and activation of SICs (1 in each slum) and CIFs (federation of SICs). However, primary mobilisation was run with the community people through the participatory exercises of PRA tools (Transect Walks, Social Mapping, Wealth-ranking and wellbeing analysis and Institutional Analysis through Venn diagram) in the planning process.

#### Settlement Improvement Committee (SIC)

Slums in Faridpur have been organized into SICs, each with 21 members General Committee (11 female) and 7 members Executive Committee with 4 female representatives. In Jessore, the Executive Committee for SIC is comprised of 9 members with 5 female representatives. All the SICs are registered with the Department of Social Welfare. They exercise a democratic practice in SICs and CIFs for selection or election of representatives for two years as per their constitution. The SICs play the key roles in identifying needs, strategies, action planning and their implementation with community peoples' participation.

We have learned and experienced the better impact of participatory planning, decision making and exercising democratic process. We can arrange election in our SIC reformation, exercise and enjoy democracy!

Rumpa Begum

newly elected Secretary of Lalonnagar SIC, Faridpur in 2015, where 85% members cast votes.

#### Community Improvement Federation (CIF)

This is the apex body of SICs, consists of 51 General Committee representatives and 17 members in Executive Committee in Faridpur, where, female representation is 53%. In Jessore, six communities of the Harijan have formed a general committee of 30 members and an executive committee of 11 members, where 55% are female. The CIF has become a strong “platform” of raising voice and taking organised efforts by these poor people, and act as a bridge between the communities and the municipalities. It has strengthened the capacity of the communities in participating in the municipality governance, planning and decision-making process, and influencing the infrastructure service-delivery process along with implementation of project interventions.

### B. Participatory Planning: Preparation of Community action plan (CAP)

Based on priority ranking of needs with proper estimation of budget with 5% community contribution, they implement activities upon review of plans through planning sharing workshop jointly Municipality Councilors, Slum Development Officer (SDO). Finally, the plan is approved by the Municipality Mayor in presence of government officials, social elites, and local NGO representatives in a separate planning and budget allocation workshop.



### C. Community capacity building

All 312 community leaders (196 female) of Faridpur and Jessore have been trained and oriented on the participatory planning process, formulation, review and implementation of policy and action plans through coordination and cooperation with the Municipality, Local Government Departments and local NGOs. The major areas of capacity-building training include the structure of Local Government, Right to Information, women's participation in development process, Citizen Charter, Concept and tools of Social Audit, Municipality Budgeting process, Roles & Responsibilities of Municipality and Citizen. The project used “peer to peer” exchange of skills and skills from the first phase to the second. There is evidence of community capacity building and empowerment, participation and influencing the municipality governance process. An example is shared on the next page.

Two slums- Rabidsah Polly and Bishorjanghat were under threat of eviction in Faridpur. SICs brought up the issue to the Municipality and the local representative to the Minister through CIF. CIF took lead to negotiate with the authority and succeeded in protecting the slums. They staged procession and protested against the eviction by the government officials that saved them from eviction.

#### D. Implementation process of Community Action Plan (CAP)



The SIC leaders were provided with capacity-building training on CAP preparation, and exposure visits to the Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) project field in Jessore. Based on the priority list of services and facilities, the community consider for implementation of the CAP. Prior to that, Engineering section of Municipality estimates cost against the action plan, shared with the Municipality representatives. All plans are accumulated and again shared with municipality representatives (officials, ward councilors), the CIF leaders, partners, journalists, CEO and Mayor for final approval. Then, a 5-membered procurement committee for each SIC approves for necessary procurement & smooth implementation

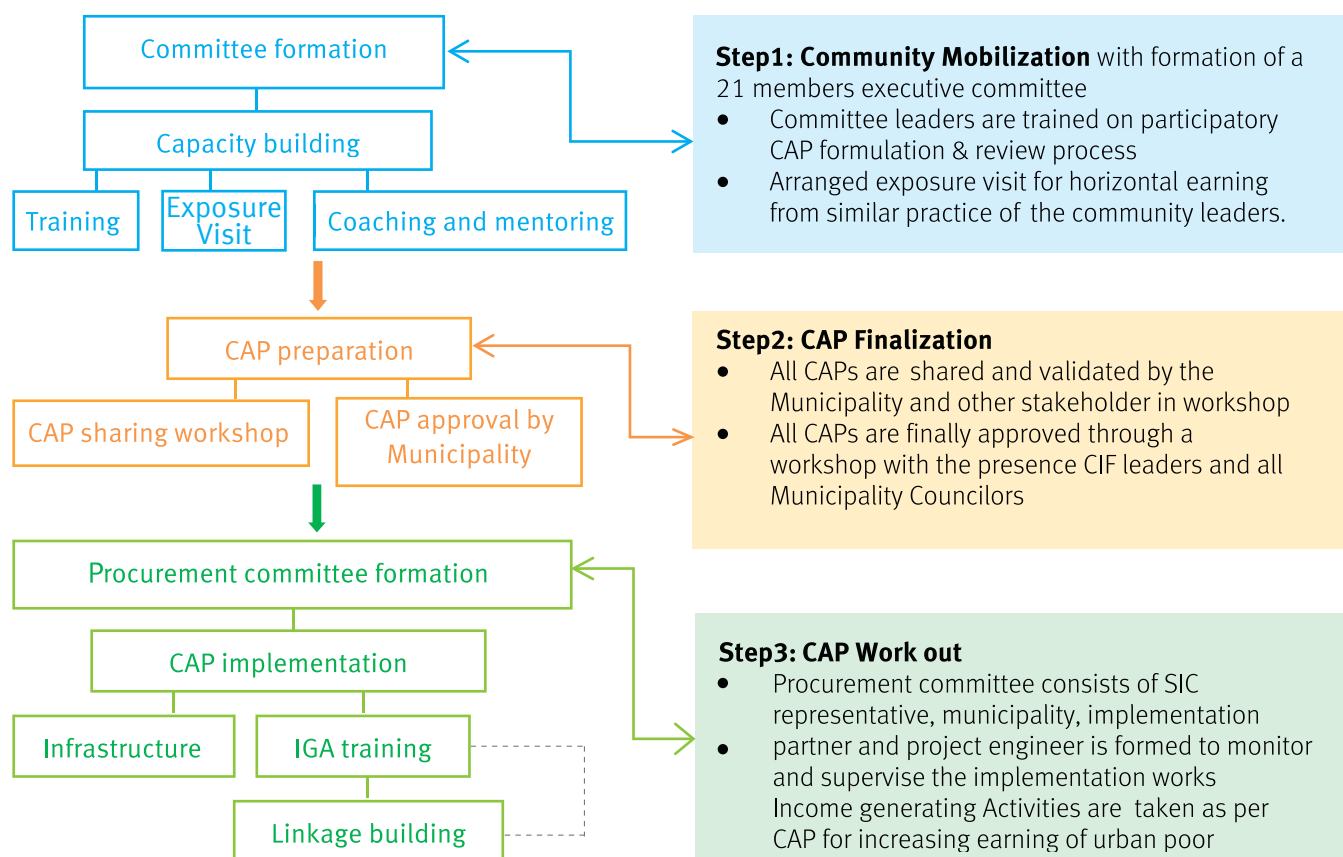


Diagram: CAP Implementation Process

Participatory monitoring has been established for sustainable operations of physical facilities and services throughout implementation process by the community leaders in support with the representatives of Society for the Urban Poor (SUP) like DHARA, WORD, etc.

## E. Reaching Inclusive Urban Governance

### Wider Representation and Influencing

In Faridpur, CIF is now much empowered and advanced in representing and influencing the municipality, district and upazila level government departments and administration for infrastructural, IGA, education and other support services. Leaders from slum dwellers association regularly attend Municipality level meetings of TLCC, PRAP, GAP and WMSC, where they actively participate and contribute to decision making process. Besides, CIF participates in government relief and safety net operation during floods and winter clothes distribution with responsibility and authority, which, reveals its empowerment in the Municipality governance process as well as LGIs. They are receiving concessional health, education and legal support from government departments through signing formal MoU. Their children are participating in district level cultural events, which they were deprived of earlier as they were untouchables. For the very first in the history of Jessore Municipality, the Harijan community people were participating in budget sharing meeting. SIC leader, Mr. Babul Harijan has been nominated committee member in Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PRAP).

The Mayor of Faridpur Municipality has provided with a room for CIF Secretariat at the Municipal Building about 9 years back that has been facilitating its activities and maintaining continuous contact and relation building with the Municipality.

in the past, we couldn't even dream of entering into the gate of Municipality as we were untouchables. But, now we are invited with honor and respect. Our Mayor and Councilors shake hands with us!

- Asha, *harijan* leader from Talikhola

## F. Leverage of resources by the Municipalities

beginning of the IUD II phase, the project constructed roads and a community house in the Kaharpara slum, which the Mayor declared as a Model Slum. He also provided supports for construction and supply of water hydrant, electricity poles and tube-wells for Kaharpara and SICs as per community demand and influencing in governance process.

The slum people are not excluded now. Inclusive budget allocation has been gradually increasing for the slum people. Under PRAP and Gender Action Plan (GAP), the Faridpur Municipality has approved BDT 17,200,000 (£145,763) for urban poor people for infrastructure services in the fiscal year 2014-15, which, is higher than the previous allocation of BDT 14,570,000 (£123,475) of 2013-14 and BDT 12,200,000 (£103,390) of 2012-13, which reveals the increased investment by the Municipality for the urban slum people.



1.46M  approved in Faridpur by PRAP & GAP ▲ 18% more than previous year ▲ 40% more than two years back

## G. Reaching Inclusive Urban Governance

has been taking place by the municipalities and in Government planning process. Consolidated CAP of different SICs is validated jointly by the community and Municipality, integrated in PRAP and GAP for annual budget allocation. CAP has been integrated in SICs under UGIIP2 project in Faridpur and UPPR in Jessore, introduced joint planning, resourcing and monitoring with those projects. The project has introduced joint planning, resourcing and monitoring with the existing projects like the second phase of Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP-II) and UPPR in Faridpur and Jessore. About 90 delegates, mostly from abroad, have visited the project to replicate the learning and experience. In the long run, the process is expected to be widely replicated and mainstreamed in the government development planning process, nationally and regionally.

## Conclusion

The process has been revealed as an effective approach that facilitates dialogue among all stakeholders and actors. It mobilizes and involves them in the community development process, from identifying problems to taking decisions for implementation. It also develops integrity and ownership over the process, which encourages the community and empowers them towards their development. The SICs and CIFs have become the strong platform for them to raise their voices and strengthening linkages, with the municipalities and other local government institutions at district and upazila levels. The process has enabled the poor people to come close to the mayors, councilors, officials and relevant actors for having approval and increased annual supports from the municipalities. It has changed the mindset of both the community and the municipality towards the inclusive urban development for better living environment for the city dwellers in the future. The CAP has integrated the municipality and other development donors, government and INGOs to contribute to the urban development, which is in line with the SDG-11 that specifically focus on inclusive and sustainable urbanisation. The participatory planning process, especially the CAP, has been already replicated in the government development process that would positively contribute to face the challenges of rapid urbanisation in the future.

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**DELIVERING DECENTRALISATION**  
**slum dwellers access to decision making**  
**for pro-poor infrastructure services**

**A process that facilitates dialogue among all actors, mobilizes and validates popular knowledge and skills, involves the community with process of identifying problems and needs; develops integrity and ownership in the process which support the community.**



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