ANNUAL REPORT
2015-2016

VILLAGE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER
B-30, Ekhlas Uddin Khan Road, Anandapur, Savar, Dhaka-1340, Bangladesh

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Message from the Chairperson

I am pleased to see the Annual Report of VERC 2015 - 2016 on the progress, achievements and highlights of the future growth. The year had been a challenging one to the nation as a whole in respect of challenges generated by climate change adaptation needs. Challenges like scarce rainfall and high temperature level and environmental pollution have started posing threats to livelihood and survival. Despite all the odds, VERC efforts succeeded in bringing about new lessons to program sectors envisioning directions for growth and consolidating its role to contribute more to the national development initiatives.

We recall with deep appreciation that built promising partnerships with FAO, Unicef and SCi had been continued in the reporting period. We acknowledge the generous and dedicated support of the development partners for carrying out innovative people empowering process in the country.

The year had been a special one to VERC in terms of making the micro-credit program as a source of support to undertake health service delivery for the disadvantaged women and children, stipend for poor students, support to pre-primary and primary levels which were encouraging to community people to come forward and invest more on education in a collaborative manner. We thankfully acknowledge and highly appreciate the support that we received from PKSF, Save the Children, and water.org in addressing the humanitarian needs of the victims of climate change adaptation efforts across the vulnerable communities.

I, on behalf of the management, appreciate the General Council Members of VERC, the Executive Director and staff members of VERC for their relentless efforts in making VERC efforts more innovative and people-oriented. Special thanks go to the partners supporting us in our mission of being with the people struggling to explore ways towards sustainability of intervention outcomes through concerted efforts. Special thanks should also go to the NGO Affairs Bureau, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, for its effective collaboration and generous support to VERC in all its efforts to do the best possible to the poor community in the country.

It would be highly obliging and trust that you all would continue to support us to go ahead in future.

Nurul Islam Khan
Chairman
Board of Directors
VERC

December 2016

Remarks of the Executive Director

I am happy to present the Annual Report 2015 - 2016 reflecting VERC activities/outcomes in the project areas spreading across the country. Despite limited support from different sources, the spirit of innovations continued during the reporting period in VERC interventions. VERC recalls the valuable contributions made by development partners home and abroad.

Expansion in areas and continuity of VERC interventions during the year in respect of pre-primary and primary education, WASH, livelihood, technology promotion, health, local governance promotion, institution building and income generating activities to benefit more and more people had been encouraging. Strategic emphasis on promoting good governance through capacity building of Local Government bodies, service providers continued as focus issues. Unicef, FAO, WaterAid, water.org USA continued to support CBOs and local government bodies attaining targeted success in line with commitments made by the government.

Rights based activities continued to establishing rights of women and children in VERC interventions in the country. TdH Netherlands project on child rights issues and Save the Children Finland support in this respect was highly effective to influence the CSOs and local government bodies allocating resource; VERC is thankful to them.

Pre-primary and primary education activities in Sonargaon has further been consolidated as a good example of sustaining activities of ECD centers (43) and a primary school with the initiative and resource support of local people's committees and administration. VERC has learnt significant lesson in its project on education for refugee children living in refugee camps in Cox'sbazar district.

Significant progress has been made in respect of micro-finance program in the country with support from PKSF, commercial banks and VERC's own fund with a view to expansion and finding ways for social development interventions in the country in a sustainable manner. Lessons learnt from a number of innovative interventions have been scaled up across IBIG program areas of the country; observations are encouraging to VERC itself and other stakeholders. Line departments of the government have been extending the required technical support to scale up the interventions to bring more people under coverage. IBIG program is now linked with education, climate change adaptation and livelihood development, health and WaSH activities and extending operational support towards sustenance.
A number of networks have been established with national and international organizations at home and abroad to expedite and consolidate activities on environment, WatSan and community health promotion along with capacity building of NGOs and local government bodies. VERC extended support to SACOSAN – VI process from FAN SA BD Secretariat for holding the conference in January 2016 in Dhaka. In addition to regular project activities, VERC has taken part in observation of days/events, campaigns across the country as advocacy initiatives with the national government and other stakeholders.

VERC is indebted to the development partners including the government, the community people in general for their sincere support and participation in implementing the planned activities. Before concluding, I would recall the contributions made by the Board of Directors and the General Council of VERC for their very useful support in contributing to our development efforts. VERC conveys thanks to the interested friends and professionals from across countries during the year for their interest and encouragement to VERC. The dedicated staff members at all levels deserve special thanks for their relentless efforts and contributions in meeting the development needs of the community people for now and for the future.

Shaikh Abdul Halim
Executive Director
VERC

December 2016

About VERC

VERC started its journey as a project of SCF-USA back in 1977 with an aim to provide process consultancy to the internal projects of SCF-USA for ensuring effective participation of community people in implementing the projects effectively and efficiently. The organization has performed the assigned role by maintaining high level quality in delivering its services to achieve the goal of SCF-USA projects. VERC became a separate local organization and continued almost similar role up to 1989 not only for SCF-USA but for the whole NGO sector in Bangladesh.

The historical evolution of VERC shows different shifts in its approaches and role with a range of providing high technical consultancy role but no implementation role to vey high project implementation role but very low technical support role. Currently, VERC is focusing more on implementing different development projects and providing comparatively less technical support to other NGOs. It might be noted that VERC has been acknowledged as a pioneering organization in the field of Non Formal Education (NFE) and Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) programs.

In order to be a learning organization as defined by a respected management author Peter Senge (1990 wrote The Fifth Discipline) "organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together", VERC has always been focusing on strategies its course of action based on Strategic Planning. The Participatory Strategic Plan (July 2015 – June 2020) also shows the commitment of VERC to chart out its development direction based on well thought Strategic Plan.

VERC's Vision, Mission, Goal, Core Values and Core Competencies revised and reformulated as:

Organizational Societal Vision:

A self-reliant and enlightened society based on justice, equity and sustainability where every human being has equal opportunity to maximize their potentials.

Mission Statement:

Establishing and promoting a dynamic and participatory sustainable process towards human development and providing humanitarian assistance towards empowerment of the people especially the disadvantaged by exploring, generating and mobilizing resources for ensuring wellbeing.

Goals:

- Active involvement and empowerment of the disadvantaged; and
- Develop human capacity.

Core Values:

01. Participation & Ownership
02. Respect
03. Environment Friendliness
04. Sustainability
05. Innovation
06. Good Governance
07. Equality

The 7 values can be precisely remembered as PRESIGE or PRE- SIGE

Core competencies:

- Innovativeness
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Participatory Management
- Sharing Resources and Services
- Networking and Partnership
- Learning Organization
- Functional Governing Board
- Reaching and Working with Hard to Reach People

Programmatic Strategic Issues

The programmatic issues were clustered into six thematic areas like: social and legal, economic development, environment, institutional, technological, and youth development. Subsequently, strategic issues, objectives, strategic directions and major activities under each strategic direction were identified. Here it follows:

Thematic Area –

1: Social and Legal
2: Economic Development
3: Environment
4: Institutional
5: Technological
6: Youth Development
7: Cross Cutting Issues

Program Interventions

VERC has been implementing the following six major programs in its working areas across the country during 2013 - 2014:

1. **Women's literacy and Children's Education especially for the poor and disadvantages;**
2. **WatSan and Technology**
3. **Livelihood Development**
4. **Health**
5. **Environmental Protection**
6. **Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation**

In addition, VERC Training and Communication Unit organizes different need-based training program for its beneficiaries, staff members and also for the employees of different government and non-government agencies. Different support units of VERC for instance Research, Evaluation & Documentation (RED) and Finance & Administration unit provide necessary support for proper implementation of the development programs/projects.

Pioneering Contributions

Non Formal Education: VERC is one of the pioneering NGOs in Bangladesh in the field of children's education program which has later been adapted and replicated by many other development organizations both within and outside the country. VERC has also initiated models of community run schools and audit education including innovative and appropriate education materials suitable for the children.

Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS): VERC introduced CLTS approach in February 2000 as the pioneering organization in Bangladesh. In the process of working with the community at the grassroots level on WatSan, VERC has learned that community awareness and participation could prevent most of the water and excreta-borne diseases. Keeping this in mind, it has been executing "People Initiated 100% Sanitation Approach" since early 2000 with financial and technical assistance of WaterAid Bangladesh supported by DFID. The approach is now called as the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach in Bangladesh and abroad. VERC experience is being also reflected in the national sanitation program strategy.

CLTS was innovated by VERC in early 2000. It is a participatory answer developed to traditionally subsidized sanitation programmes that have not succeeded in getting people to want, build, pay for, and use latrines. The approach promotes 100% open defecation free communities to minimize the risk of contamination for all, breaking the cycle of faecal-oral contamination. Contrary to most conventional sanitation approaches which aim simply at providing toilets, CLTS aims to promote collective behaviour change as the key to sustainable, improved sanitation.

Ffacilitators supports communities conduct their own appraisal and analysis of their sanitation situation and take action to become open defecation free. During the process, the facilitators bring attention to sanitation related topics, provides facts (e.g. faecal-oral hazards can only be reduced if open defecation is completely banned from the community as a whole), and provokes a discussion about open defecation and the feelings of disgust and shame associated with it. This triggers change.

Total coverage is not always easy: certain members of the community never reach the target or fall back into practising open defecation. Other issues presenting challenges are scaling up the approach and the issue of exclusion or punishment of community members who do not (or cannot) comply with self imposed restrictions.

Program Locations

VERC Programme area districts across the country:

Programme Sectors	Name of Districts	No. of Upazilas	No. of Unions	No. of Villages
Education	Sirajganj, Bogra, Natore, Pabna Tangail, Gazipur, Manikganj, Dhaka, Narayanganj, Cox,s bazar, Narsingdi (12 Districts)	19	199	1080
Watsan & Technology	Dhaka, Rajshahi,Sirajganj, Gazipur, Comilla, (5 Districts)	06	44 (Savar Municipility)	846
Health and Environment	Dhaka, Manikganj, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Dinajpur, Barisal, Jessore, Narayanganj,Gajipur, Chittagong (10 districts)	13	90 and 1 City coprporation	1824 and 2 wards
Livelihood Development	Chapainwabganj, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gazipur, Dhaka, Manikganj, Narayanganj, Comilla, B,Baria, Chittagong, Munshiganj, Narshindi, Nilphamari, Noakhali, Habiganj (17 districts)	56	297	2073

***There is overlaping of program interventions in Union, Upazila and in the districts.**

Highlights of July 2015 to June 2016

EDUCATION

Village Education Resource Center (VERC) has been emphasizing on education program since its inception to congregate the purpose to promote and fortify human potentials. The main objective of VERC program is to build up children's potentials and to mainstreaming them in education. Education has been identified as a priority sector in Bangladesh by the government and non-government organizations, not only to exterminate illiteracy, but also for human resource development. Accordingly, VERC has been implementing education program in innovative ways with support from development partners in the sector. The ongoing projects are SHIKHON, SISIMPUR, PCHL, Piloting in Kaliakoir, EPRC, HOPE- Savar, HOPE-Belkuchi, DIPECHO-VIII and a regular program operated by making use of VERC own fund. The coverage of education program includes 19 upazilas in 12 districts of the country.

Ongoing projects at a glance:

Sl. No	Name of the Project	Duration	District	Type and no. of School		Student		# of Teachers	Donor
				NFE/	Primary/ Secondary/ Madrasha/ KG	2015	2016		
1	Children's Education Resource Center (CERC) Program	1979 – on going	Dhaka	ECD 4 NFPE 5		196 (B-100 G-96)	198 (B-101 G-97)	9	With minimum community support and support from VERC-Micro-Credit program
2	Sonargaon Sustainable Education Program	2012 on going	Narayan ganj	ECD-15 NFPE-29	Primary-1	1515 (B-751 G-764)	1791 (B-856 G-935)	50	
3	READ	January 2014-December 2018	Dhaka, Manikganj, Tangail		Govt. Primary School -270	39958 (B 19989, G 19969)	35414 (B-17689 G -17725)	653	Save the Children International
4	SHIKHON	January 2012 to December 2016	Sirajganj, Natore, Pabna and Bogra	NFPE-670 EPE-400 SHIKHON Club-229		31077 (B-15544, G-15533)	19734 (B-9989, G-9745)	1299	
5	HOPE, Savar	2016 to 2018	Dhaka Sirajganj	NFE-41	Govt. Primary School -38		24311 (B-11739, G-12353)	263	IKEA Foundation
7	DIPECHO-VIII	2015 to 2017	Dhaka	NFE-7	Primary-7 Secondary-3				Save the Children International
8	Education and Protection for Refugee Children	May 2012 to Dec 2016	Cox's Bazar		Primary-21 Secondary-2 ECCD -52	7619 (B -3759, G -3860)	8880 B-4389 G-4491	263	UNHCR, Save the Children International
9	Sisimpur Enhancing Essential Life Skill	January, 2014-Oct,2016	Narsingdi		Primary-38 Madrasha-1 KGS-13	8869 (B 4489, G -4380)	8512 (B -4317, G -4195)	52	USAID
10	Protection of Children from Hazardous Labour Project	January – December ,2015	Dhaka	ECD-13 NFPE-18		865 (B-393, G-472)	613 (B -248, G -365)	31	TdH Netherlands
11	Piloting of integrated program in Kaliakair	2012 on going	Gazipur	ECD-4		92 B-53 G-39	96 B-53 G-43	04	VERC support
Total -				**E- 436 N-992 T-1428**	**P-440, S-5, M-1**	**B- 45078 G – 45113 T- 90191**	**B- 49328 G- 50125 T - 99453**	**2624**	

WatSan and Technology

VERC has been implementing Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) program since its inception as a component of technology promotion for livelihood status improvement. WatSan activities at the initial stage were mostly carried out in terms of production and distribution of latrine ring-slabs, installation of tube wells for safe water use promotion with limited hygiene education for awareness raising. The widely known Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) was evolved in early 2000. WaterAid Bangladesh (WAB) has been providing technical and financial support to VERC since 1986. The process also influenced in setting national strategies and programs to achieve MDG sectoral goal and has been duly reflected in the Sector Development Plan (2011-2025) of the Government of Bangladesh. VERC efforts in the sector addresses about 3 MDG targets which are more clearly linked with SDG target 6 where Bangladesh government is striving for achieving visible improvements.

Menstrual hygiene facilities in secondary schools were major factors in the rate of absence and dropout of adolescent girls. To address this issue, VERC project intervention could successfully convince the secondary school authorities in Durgapur Upazilla in Rajshahi district providing separate latrines that have adequate water and waste disposal facilities for girls. As a result, more than 10 secondary schools throughout the entire upazila have constructed separate toilet facilities for girls and more than 30 secondary schools received MHM Almira with necessary materials from the MP concerned.

Progress of performance at a glance:

Particulars	Achievement of 2014-2015	Achievement of 2015-2016
No. of Projects under implementation	9	7
No. of Donors	6	5
No. of Districts covered	8	5
No. of Upazilas covered	23	6
No. of Unions covered	179	44
No. of CBOs	1,659	1,092
Installation and renovation of safe water facilities	2,616	1,283
Installation and renovation of sanitation facilities	108,860	9,487
Hygiene Promotion events organized	35,913	7,957
Water beneficiaries covered	89,914	23,756
Sanitation beneficiaries covered	631,879	50,486
Hygiene beneficiaries covered	711,005	157,256
Beneficiaries covered by Capacity Development activities	22,420	985
Community Mobilization activities	8,743	4,200
DAP coverage with hygienic latrine	43	113

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

VERC considers health as a basic human right. But the reality is that most of the people in Bangladesh are deprived of such rights. Quality health services are mostly concentrated in urban areas and are not affordable to the poor. Once known the country as an ecologically in the sound belt has turned to an environmentally endangered region and has started facing climate change and challenges linked with new generation health problems and poverty. In view of the situation VERC has given emphasis in addressing health problems and environmental degradation. VERC initiative is aimed at accessing mother and child health services for poor and marginalized and supporting people to cope-up with the challenges of climate change in program areas.

During the reporting year, VERC had been active with interventions under five projects in addition to two hospitals. The projects include – two right based health project, improved cook-stove promotion focused project and two climate vulnerability focused projects.

Progress of performance at a glance:

Particulars	Achievement of 2014-2015	Achievement of 2015-2016
No. of Projects under implementation	06	07
No. of Donors	05	06
No. of Districts covered	11	12
No. of Upazilas/ City corporations covered	13 +1 city corporetion	12
No. of Unions covered	68	90
No. of beneficiaries covered	40271	52617

LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT

VERC Micro Finance Program has experienced a long journey in addressing a comprehensive development need of the disadvantaged and underprivileged poor people living in both rural and urban areas of the country. It is an important program of VERC in reducing the poverty level by ensuring a sustainable socio-economic status of livelihood security for the people in need of external support. To this effect, efficient management system and tools, linkage with financial institutions, identification of alternative micro-finance schemes, approach to address poorest of the poor section and access to the remotest and hard to reach locations has added an extra dimension to VERC Income Generation Program (IGP) under its Institution Building and Income Generation (IBIG) program.

VERC interventions of the program addresses 1,3 and 7 of MDG targets and covers 1,2,5,12, and 13 of SDG targets and supplements national development initiatives.

Progress of performance at a glance:

Particulars	Status of 2014-15	Status of 2015-16
No. of Branches	60	66
No. of Districts Covered	15	17
No. of Upazilas Covered	51	56
No. of Unions Covered	281	297
No. of Villages	2,014	2,073
Total No. of Group/Samity	6,329	7,299
Total No. of Members	84,035	94,999
Total No. of Borrowers	66,824	76,486
Disbursement Amount	Tk 2,257.77 Million (Tk 225,77,75,000)	Tk 2,878.09 Million (Tk 287,80,91,000)
Loan Outstanding (Portfolio)	Tk 1,217.35 Million (Tk 121,73,52,935)	Tk 1,526.78 Million (Tk 152,67,83,066)
Savings Balance	Tk 373.90 Million (Tk 37,39,06,791)	Tk 462.40 Million (Tk 46,24,04,158)
Insurance Balance	Tk 28.25 Million (Tk 2,82,52,727)	Tk 39.94 Million (Tk 3,99,41,550)
Recovery rate	99.92%	99.92%

As part of corporate social responsibility, VERC supports implementation of services like - health, sanitation, education and agriculture related projects with limited financial resources across different program sectors of the organization in the country considering the priority needs. The contribution amounts to Tk 38,98,650 for the reporting year and the total of till date contribution stands at Tk.1,47,99,023.00.The amount of contribution is increasing every year.

CAPACITY BUILDING

VERC is one of the pioneering institutions in social development in Bangladesh. Strengthening of Local Government is a key strategy for sustainable development involving the local government and community people at large. The section not only develops the capacity of VERC program staff, it also plays a key role in capacitating relevant government staff, LGI representatives and other NGO staff in order to contribute in the development sectors, particularly in the fields of Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion; Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation of programme; Governance; Gender and Equity; Human Rights; Child Protection; Climate Change Adaptations; Disaster Preparedness and Management; Community Management Aspects; Education; Advocacy and Process Promotion; Micro Finance and Small & Medium Scale Entrepreneurship Development.

The Section has imparted training support to different VERC projects as part of regular task. During the period 19392 participants received training on various program capacity needs. A total of 551938 participants received training since inception of the organization.

Progress of performance at a glance:

Particulars	Status of 2014-15	Status of 2015-16
Contract Training	786 participants	765 participants
VERC projects training	18230 participants	18627 participants

Research, Evaluation and Documentation (RED)

Since its emergence VERC undertook different types of research and innovative activities. Later on RED Section has emerged within VERC for conducting action research and piloting different new initiatives which are documented and disseminated among the partners, stakeholders and donors. The studies are usually carried out by VERC itself and by engaging external program experts in consultation with donor agencies. In addition, VERC extends support to interne students of graduation and post-graduation levels to carry out studies on development issues for academic purposes and sharing the findings with respective program sector staff of VERC. Following are some activities of the reporting period:-

1. **Studies done by external consultants - to measure program effectiveness of :**
   - I. Good practices of Downward Accountability Mechanism Practiced by Thirty Secondary School Authorities in Savar Upazila - study done by Mr. Enamul Huda.
   - II. Evaluation of the “ICT and innovative partnerships – responding to well-known challenges for children in new ways” project in Bangladesh - study done by- By Rasmus Jørgensen, Senior MEAL Advisor, SCD September, 2016:
   - III. Project impact evaluation of ‘Community Initiated Sustainable 100% WatSan and Hygiene Behaviour Change, Kaliakoir, Phase-III, : The study has covered 500 households of the intervention area and the external consultant was Dr. Abdus Salam.
   - IV. Study on Faecal Waste Management in Small Towns: A Critical Area for Policy Focus, FANSA
2. **Studies conducted by Intern students:** ***Savar University College*** – A group of 8 interns conducted exloratory studies on VERC program at the field level.
3. **Internal studies done by VERC staff members working under different projects:** Impact Assessment of VERC Stipend for the Meritorious Poor Students. The study shows that 100% of the supported students successfully continued studies.
4. **10 Publications made and 7 IEC materials developed t**o meet up VERC’s internal program communication needs across various project/program implementation process of the reporting period.

EDUCATION

With the purpose of fostering and strengthening individual potentials, VERC has been giving emphasis on education program since its inception. This is the era of social development where education has been recognized as the most precedence sector by all the developed and developing nations as well as the government of Bangladesh. Education is not only to eradicate illiteracy but also to form knowledge based society which will help our country to be a developed one. To this effect, VERC has been piloting and implementing education program in innovative ways with technical and financial support from development partners, GoB and using its own resources. The strategic dimension has been useful to specifically address the growing education needs of children and women in the country. VERC membership with networks growing at stages and in dimensions has been contributing to mainstreaming to primary education efforts of the Government. VERC supplements the government efforts in addressing 2 MDG Goals and four SDG concerns.

TdH Nl supported project came to its closure in December 2011 in Sonargaon and since then a total of 45 schools are running in the area with community support. Community people bear 89% of the program operation cost and VERC supports the ongoing program in the area by extending technical support. In addition, GoB Education department is extending monitoring and administrative support to the initiative.

During the reporting period, VERC has implemented 10 projects across different areas in the country. The projects are SHIKHON, READ, Sisimpur, DIPECHO-VIII, HOPE and EPRC covers the districts of Pabna, Sirajganj, Natore, Bogra, Dhaka, Manikganj, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Cox's Bazar. In the projects, VERC implements non-formal education (NFE) and works with the government primary schools, KG schools, Madrasa for quality education and mainstreaming the dropout students. A total of 99453 students (Boys-49328, Girls-50125) are prosecuting study under the program. VERC works with 330 govt. primary schools (GPS) for quality education through READ, HOPE and Sisimpur projects. In addition to that a total of 436 ECD 992 NFPE centers and 1 model primary school with project and community support where VERC also provides limited resources and these are running well because of quality and mainstreaming of drop out students.

Further to mention here that VERC is implementing 21 primary schools, 52 ECCD and 2 secondary schools in two Ruhingya Refugee camps in Cox'sbazar district where 8880 children are enrolled as students for education as per GoB curriculum with special attention on Burmese language proficiency. In response to the practical need of continuity of education, VERC has been successful to create provision for class VI and Class – VII with the support of Camp Administration and Education department.

Ongoing projects at a glance:

Donor	Name of the Project	Duration	Upazila	District
Community and VERC	Children's Education Resource Center (CERC) Program	1979 – on going	Savar	Dhaka
Community and VERC	Sustainable Education Program	2012 on going	Sonargaon	Narayanganj
Save the Children	READ	January 2014-December 2018	Savar, Shibalaya, Harirampur, Daulatpur, Saturia, Ghior, Mirzapur	Dhaka, Manikganj, Tangail
	SHIKHON	January 2012 to December 2016	Belkuchi,Kamarkhand,Raiganj, Gurudaspur, Baraigram, Chatmohar, Dhunat,	Sirajganj, Natore, Pabna and Bogra
	HOPE	2016 to 2018	Savar, Belkuchi	Dhaka, Sirajganj
	DIPECHO-VIII	2015 TO 2017	SAVAR	DHAKA
	Education for Refugee Children	May 2012 to Dec 2016	Teknaf, Ukhiya	Cox's Bazar
	Sisimpur Enhancing Essential Life Skill Project	January, 2014-October 2016	Raipura	Narsingdi
TdH Netherlands	Protection of Children from Hazardous Labour Project	January-December 2015	Savar	Dhaka
VERC-Micro-Credit program	Piloting of integrated program in Kaliakair	2012 on going	Kaliakair	Gazipur

Children's Education Resource Center (CERC) Program

Since 1979 VERC is implementing own funded education program in Savar area with four ECD centres and five NFPE (Non-formal Primary Education) centres running with 249 students. Four of the ECD centers are used for testing out innovative learning materials to enrich the education for the pre-primary level learners in addition to regular curriculum so that the findings can be shared with stakeholders of the same nature of program in the sector and preparing the children as learners for the primary level.

VERC run NFPE centers are to support the primary level education needs of the children of the marginal income group families living in the municipal areas of Savar. The Govt. primary schools are not within easy reach of the families and these are already over pressured. Marginal families are mostly from different areas of the country seeking employment opportunity for survival. They live here with family members and they want to get their kids attending school for being educated and securing a better life in course of time. It is difficult for the children to attend schools located at a distance of about 2 kilometers everyday as a result the children remain out of school. For lack of required number of schools in the township that suit their level of income and livelihood pattern, they are bound to find alternatives and VERC NFPE schools are a good means to that end. The housewife mother being new in township finds it difficult to take the kids to the school and bring them back home requires extra time ignoring the pressure of household tasks. The NFPE centers are suitable to the families for the reasons like – easily accessible in neighborhood, needs no expenditure for transportation and children are less vulnerable to road accidents and the children can contribute to family needs in absence of the bread earner etc. Mobility in the township is expensive as well as risky for the children. The earning members of the households cannot take the kids to the govt. school spending time. The children mostly in these

families rather left at home to take care of the household while the parents are out for earning at day time. In addition, the timing of formal primary school is not friendly to the children of these types of families. The timing, basic curriculum and teaching method of NFPE centers are accommodative to the needs of the noted families.
During July 2015 to June 2016 period, the following achievements have taken place as outcome of multiple stakeholder involvement showing the potentiality of self-management mobilizing local resources and monitoring

SL No	Type of Activities	No. of Union	Progress (2014-15)					No. of Union	Progress(2015-16)				
			No. of Center	No of Teacher	No. of Children				No. of Center	No of Teacher	No. of Children		
					boys	girls	Total				boys	girls	Total
1	Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centers	1 Union and 1 Municipal	4	4	54	45	99	1 Union and 1 Municipality	4	4	60	61	121
	Non-formal Primary Education(NFPE) Centers			5	47	52	99		5	5	57	71	128
	Int. Literacy Day Observation		9	9	101	97	198		9	9	117	132	249

- A total of 121 ECD children got admission in VERC NFPEs in Class – I in January 2016, NFPE learners of Class – I. A total of 128 got admission into Class – II in govt. primary schools and other schools in January 2016.
- Positive aspects are – attendance rate is 97%, monthly refreshers are held regularly and all the teachers are trained, performance of students good and the success rate in exams is 98%.
- Community people bear 24% of the programme cost (Community Tk.48,000 and VERC – Tk. 2,00,000); Cost per student amounts to Tk.1,240.00 approx.

Sonargaon Sustainable Education Program

The 5th and last phase of **TdH Netherlands** supported project completed its three years duration in December 2011. Village Education Resource Center (VERC) has successfully implemented the project in 7 Unions of Sonargaon Upazila under the district of Narayanganj. Aminpur, Pirojpur, Mograpara, Boidder Bazar, Barudi, Naogaon and Jampur are the unions.

The project had been successful in demonstrating the effects of ECD and NFPE in children of the seven noted union areas and as outcome of the project a visible interest in community people of seven unions helped to sustaining the activities. There was a feeling generated in the people that the good quality pre-schooling should not die down; it should rather be continued at the interest of their children as such they sought for limited technical support from VERC and they mobilized local resources. Local administration as well as the Union Parishads took interest in supporting the people's initiative to keep on the efforts. Presently, a total of 45 schools are running in the area with community support.

During the reporting period, the following achievements have taken place as outcome of multiple stakeholder involvement showing the potentiality of self-management, mobilization of local resources and monitoring –

SL No	Type of Activities	No. of Union	Progress (2014-15)					No. of Union			Progress(2015-16)		
			No. of Center/ School	No of Teachers	No. of Children				No. of Center	No of Teachers	No. of Children		
					Boys	Girls	Total				Boys	Girls	Total
1	Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centers	7 Union and 1 Municipal	15	15	246	267	513	7 Unions and 1 Municipal	13	13	210	219	429
2	Non-formal Primary Education(NFPE) Centers		29	29	406	436	842		29	29	402	433	835
3	Model Primary School		01	6	168	188	356		01	6	166	172	338

Outcomes

- Monthly refreshers are held regularly and all the teachers are trained, performance of students good and the success rate in exams is 99%.
- Two ECD centers have been merged with Govt. Primary School as SBPSs.
- All of the 148 PSC passed students got admission in Mugrapara and Jampara High School for higher education
- Community people pays regular visit to the schools to keep things on track
- Community people bear 89% of the programme cost (Community Tk.24,74,400 and VERC – Tk.3,00,000) Cost per student amounts to Tk.1622 .00 approx.
- Education department officials of the government pay regular monitoring visit to the schools that helps as encouragement to contributions made by the community people ensuring wider coverage intended by the government.
- All of the 148 students attended in Primary School Certificate (PSC) Examination and 100% students passed the exam.16 students got GPA 5 and 2 students got scholarship from Habibpur VERC School.

Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ)

Bangladesh has achieved unimaginable success in Basic Education especially in access and equality with the assistance of development partners and non-governmental organizations under strong leadership of 'Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh'.

But the success of education in access and equality weakness was still found to achieve competencies in Bangla of the students of grade III and V at National Competency Test in 2011. From this evaluation it is found that especially reading skill is gradually decreasing from grade III to grade V. If this situation continues the foundation of Bangla language of some students will gradually weaken and later on, this weak foundation of reading skill of students may influence negative impact on overall education system.

Government of Bangladesh has prepared an integrated action plan named Third Primary Education Development Plan to eliminate these obstacles. Speeding up the endeavor of government is for

developing the quality of Primary Education through 'Reading Enhancement for Advancing Development (READ).

VERC is implementing READ project with the collaboration of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) with a view to sustain the READ activities after phasing out of READ project. The key objective is to increase reading competences among grade 1-3 students in READ- supported Primary Schools in the selected districts of READ. This project is implementing by the financial support of USAID with the technical support from Save the Children International.

Coverage:
A total of 270 government primary schools (120 newly nationalized primary schools and 150 government primary schools) in 10 upazilas are under 3 districts. About 47 concerned GoB Officials, 270 Head Teachers, 540 Assistant Teachers and 35,414 students have been covered during the reporting period.

The major activities of the project:

- Master Trainer Training on Reading Instruction and Assessment (RIA) and teacher basic and refresher training on RIA
- Academic Supervision Training for Head Teachers and training on instructional adjustment tools for Assistant Teachers
- Instructional Adjustment Tools (IAT) Master and Teachers training
- Reading Festival at school level
- IAT reflection and result sharing workshop
- M&E and MIS training for READ staff
- Training on ICT in Education
- READ Provided 6,156 leveled story books to the selected schools to make class room environment child friendly for better learning
- Parents gathering and Community Reading Camp for awareness on ways to assist children acquiring reading skills
- Assessment of students performance level

Outcomes of the period:

- A total of 27,317 students were assessed out of 35,414 students. The students were assessed in the areas of reading elements such as Phonemic Awareness, Letter knowledge, Vocabulary, Reading Fluency and Comprehension.
  - o For grade I only measured the reading elements Phonemic Awareness and Letter knowledge. Total participants 8703 participated in IAT exam among them 81% Mastery level, 14% developed level, 5% need improve level got in Phonemic Awareness and 83% Mastery level, 16% developed level, 1% need improve level got in letter knowledge.
  - o For grade II only measured the reading elements Letter knowledge. Total participants 9234 were participated in IAT exam among them 73% Mastery level, 25% developed level, 2% need improve level got in Letter knowledge and 74% Master level, 24% developed level, 2% need improve level got in Fluency.
  - o For grade III only measured the reading elements Vocabulary and Comprehension. Total participants 9376 were participated in IAT exam among them 68% Mastery level, 20% developed level, 12% need improve level got in vocabulary and 59% Mastery level, 23% developed level, 18% need improve level got in Comprehension.

Note: IAT = Instructional Adjustment Tools.
Mastery level = Students can answer 3 questions out of 3.
Developed level = Students can answer 2 questions out of 3
Need to improvement = Students can answer 1 or 0 question out of 3

- The Master Trainer group developed can conduct Bangla Teachers training on Reading Instruction and Assessment including project staffs, Upazila Education Officials and Instructor of Upazila Resource Center (URC).
- A total of 532 Assistant Teachers have gained knowledge and skills on Reading Instruction and Assessment. Now they have conducted Bangla classes based on acquired knowledge and skills. As a result, students learnt their lesson faster than earlier in joyful learning environment/print
- A total of 157 Teachers have gained knowledge and skills on how to develop digital contents for grade I-III. Having training on ICT in education training, the Teachers can develop digital contents

and conducing Bangla classes using multimedia. As a result students can prepare lesson with new tools and techniques and acquired learning outcomes smoothly

- The Master Trainer group developed can conduct IAT refresher training for assessment of students including project staffs, Upazila Education Officials and Instructor of Upazila Resource Center (URC).
- A total of 1099 Assistant Teachers acquired knowledge and skills on assessment using Instructional Adjustment Tools (IAT). Now they can conduct assessment based on acquired knowledge and skills. As a result, student's reading ability has been identified and teachers could take necessary steps based on students reading ability. So students have started learning faster than earlier.
- A total of 48 Community Literacy Volunteers have gained knowledge and skills on Community Reading Camp (CRC). Having training the Volunteers can conduct session of CRC based on acquired knowledge and skills. As a result, joyful learning environment has been created in CRC and students attained their learning outcomes smoothly.
- A total of 38 Classroom Assistants and Technical Officers participated in the Basic Training on READ and gained knowledge and skills on READ project. Now they can perform better than earlier.
- A total of 38 project staffs participated in the M&E and MIS training and gained knowledge & skills on basic M&E and MIS. Now they can monitor and manage data in a better way thus it is contributing in enhanced program quality.
- A total of 260 Head Teachers participated in the Academic Supervision Refresher Training and acquired further knowledge and skills on academic supervision. Having training on academic supervision, the Head Teachers can conduct academic supervision and provided feedback to the Bangla Teachers for enhancing their lesson delivery skills. As a result, students can prepare lesson with new tools and techniques and acquired learning outcomes smoothly
- A total of 35,414 Parents are now aware and active at homes assisting their children acquire reading skills.

SHIKHON

The SHIKHON program ensures quality education through adopting active teaching and learning methods and working hard to create a joyful learning environment, while following the curriculum and using the text books of the National Curriculum and Text Book Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh. A typical SHIKHON school is a community-provided, one-classroom school with a teacher from the same community who delivers quality teaching to a group of 30-35 children between 8 and 10 years old. Children in SHIKHON schools complete a 5 year primary education in 4 years, from the readiness class through grade five, and sit in the primary school completion examination. SHIKHON has developed class-wise and subject-based teacher's training courses that ensure that the community teachers provided SHIKHON students with a quality primary education. The Program has also published class and subject specific teacher's guides, to help support the teacher as they work to ensure that the children acquire the necessary competencies.

SHIKHON works in remote rural areas, riverine chars, (low lying flood and erosion prone areas) and haors (marshlands) and disaster prone areas in Rajshahi divisions of Bangladesh. Collaboration with Upazila and district primary education office is a key strength of SHIKHON schools and active participation of parents and community are also vital to the success of SHIKHON schools.

VERC SHIKHON project being implemented in 437 villages under 67 unions of 11 Upazilas of four districts in Rajshahi division. Total 402 NFPE schools and 229 EPE centers are running under the project.

Objectives of the project -

1. Increased access to cost-effective non-formal basic education for hardest to reach children in targeted communities;
2. Increased efficiency and quality of non-formal basic education services using holistic approaches for children to succeed in school; and
3. Increased collaboration between the formal and non-formal primary sectors to promote sharing and adoption of best practices

NFPE-2 and EPE -2 School/centers established:

Activities:

- Training for 88 regular staff and 631 volunteers under four field offices and one regional office.
- Continuing 268 numbers of NFPE schools activities under 3 field offices which are Raiganj, Kamarkhanda & Belkuchi on regular basis supported by School Management Committees (SMC).
- Functioning of 229 SHIKHON Clubs in 179 government primary schools and 4580 (2410 girl and 2170 boys) students took support through the clubs under 4 field offices. Provided necessary learning materials to the clubs.
- Establishment of hand washing station in 10 primary schools in Raiganj areas under the study is Nudging hand washing a cluster-randomized trial in Bangladesh supported by Oklahoma University.
- Organized a workshop with primary school teachers and education officers of Charmohar Upazila.
- Selected 10 EPE centers for piloting activity under Baraigram field office. Using audio device teachers will play the device using a memory card where already the word pronunciation has recorded.
- Follow up of monthly School Management Committee (SMC) and Center Management Committee (CMC) meeting.
- Organizing monthly parents meeting and sharing the progress of their children's performance.
- Organize 3 success celebration meetings with Upazila administration under Raiganj, Belkuchi and Kamarkhanda Upazila about project completion.
- Observance of different national and international day i.e. red letter days by SHIKHON Schools, International mother Language Day, Independence Day, Victory Day, Global Hand washing Day and International literacy Day.

Outcome:

- School visit and follow up by Parents, Government officials, GPS teachers and local administration on regular basis; teaching learning processes, model test, Grade end exam, health and hygiene situation has improved.
- Total 171 EPE centers' learners participated in annual examination with govt. primary schools. After successful pass Grade 2 all children take admission in class 3 at near primary school of their residence. Each learner gets a certificate from SHIKHON project for successful completion of Grade 2.
- Total 97.52% students passed and took admission in high schools through PECE result after NFPE-1st cohort completion. Parents and community people are happy for passing their drop out children and get opportunity to take admission in high school. In total 5612 children took part in Primary Education Completion Exam out of 5827. Total 5473 students passed in the exam and all of them took admission in class VI in high schools.
- The 14 primary schools' authority have got a full of trunk materials with 300 childish story books for their school and children as to set up a Mini library. These story books were provided in each GPS through UEO. GPS teachers using the materials during class time; Upazila Education Department of Chatmohar get clear concept about VERC, Save the Children and SHIKHON
- Teachers are using it as per guideline and share their daily experience with team. Baraigram Upazila Education Officer took part in the inaugural session of the activities; UEO handed over the devices among the teachers. UEO said it is a new idea in education sector if student exercise it regularly their skill will improve.
- Now school authority looks after their schools activities regularly and take initiative for further improvement particularly regarding, repair maintenance, student and teachers timing, material distribution among the children and ensure water and sanitation situation. Moreover, de-worming tablet covered all the children by communicating with union health workers as well as with the authorities of Upazila Health Complex. Total 631 School Improvement Plans (SIP) prepared by the committee.

- Community has taken different types of initiatives and provided materials i. e. jug, mat, tin, clock, national flag, water pot, ceiling fan etc. Parents and civil society takes part in repair of school house, committee members conduct session in absence of teachers; all these actions indicate community ownership.
- Parents are taking constructive decisions for progress of their child in meetings and get scope of sharing with teachers and supervisors. They are more aware about education, health, hygiene, nutrition and seasonal disease of their children. They also visit schools regularly and contributing in better result in exam, follow up their children's daily routine, sharing with school supervisors and provides necessary feedback.
- SHIKHON schools visited by different stakeholders such as SMC/CMC, DPEO, ADPEO, UNO, UEO, AUEO, Head Teachers and Assistant Teachers, UP Members and Health Assistant. The student attendance target achieved almost 90% enrolment in Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) schools. Potential parents and SMC members are taking responsibility to regularize the student.

Mainstreaming: Unsuccessful 139 (43 girls and 96 boys) students take admission in Madrasa and primary schools. 215 (81 girls and 134 boys)absent of PECE students are took admission on GPS in class IV and V. Field office wise PECE results as follows:

Name of Field Office	Total DR	Attendance in PECE	Result of SHIKHON Students							Pass	Pass %
			A+	A	A-	B	C	D	F		
Belkuchi	1603	1552	0	111	234	398	625	146	38	1514	97.55
Raiganj	2285	2169	16	385	438	471	625	203	31	2138	98.57
Kamarkhanda	1939	1891	8	155	278	378	694	308	70	1821	96.30
G. Total	5827	5612	24	651	950	1247	1944	657	139	5473	97.52

Community support sustains SHIKHON School:

In all 13 schools are functioning in communities according to SHIKHON model. Among the three field offices, 12 schools are running with EPE modality of pre-primary class and 1 is NFPE modality of class-2. The schools have some old materials beside it some storybooks, chalk, usable blackboard, khata, duster, mat and corner materials. The project staff maintained liaison with Upazila education department as well as primary schools for helping the committee to run the schools smoothly. Save the Children representative and VERC staffs follow up and support the teachers to operate the schools. Parents are more interested to enroll their children in community based SHIKHON Schools because the teachers are trained and more capable to conduct classes in child friendly and joyful environment. SMC members have been capacitated and they know how to operate the schools in their community for the disadvantaged children. They have trained teachers, school premises with different materials. As a result SMC members are ensuring teachers honorarium with the support of parents.

Information on community supported sustained SHIKHON schools:

Field Office	Sl no	Name of center	Implementation Modality	Total Student		
				Girls	Boys	Total
Kamarkhanda	1.	Karnasuti Madha	EPE	14	16	30
	2.	Karnasuti East	EPE	17	13	30
	3.	Karnasuti North	EPE	12	18	30
	4.	Jamtail North	EPE	17	8	25
	5.	Barapakuria	EPE	22	8	30
	6.	Barapakuria	NFPE, grade-2	19	16	35
	7.	Kayra Bhagalpur	EPE	23	7	30
	8.	Charsatbaria	EPE	9	20	29
	9.	Angaru East	EPE	13	17	30
	10.	Kayelgati North	EPE	12	6	18
Raiganj	11.	Taras Badha	EPE	21	9	30
	12.	Asanbari	EPE	15	15	30
Belkuchi	13.	Choto Chamtara	EPE	11	16	27
Total				205	169	374

SHIKHON Club support to slow learners to bring them in the merit list

Village Education Resource Center Started SHIKHON Program in 2013 in Pabna, Natore, Sirajganj and Bogra districts with financial support of European Union & technical support by Save the Children. The main objective of the project was supporting Hadrest to Reach Children through Basic Education. In 2013 from the beginning of the project, a survey status carried out in Chatmohar upazilla showed that 30% of children are slow learners and they drop out from school. The major cause of children drop out was class one and two has 2 books and three have 6 books. The number of books is the mental pressure on the children and they cannot cope with large number of books.

It can be noted here that SHIKHON started one-year school support activity named SHIKHON Club for the slow learners of class three in the Govt. primary schools. The objective of the SHIKHON Club was to make sure lesson through joyful teaching method and improve children competencies and regularity. In Chatmohar field office 880 children came under SHIKHON Club activities in 37 primary schools. One community supported facilitator teaching among the children six days in a week and 2 hours of each day with joyful learning materials. A total of 880 children appeared the class three final exam and most of the children achieved roll 1,2,3,4,10 and was admitted in class four; of them 137 children was placed in roll 1-10; 1st-8 children, 2nd-6 children, 3rd-10 children, 4th-7 children, 5th-23 children, 6th-16 children, 7th-16 children, 8th-15 children, 9th-16 children and 10th-20 children. In Pachuria Primary school 5 children are in roll 1-10. In class three Reiaz's roll was 29 and he secured the first position in class three final exams. In Saipai primary school, Sumy's roll was 23 in class three and she also secured first place in class three final exams. In Soraikol primary school Mahmuda's roll was 54 and she became first in class three final exams. In Vangura primary school, Suborna's roll was 36 and she got first in class three finals exams. In Koidanga primary school Joti's roll was 23 and she got first in class three final exams.

Ms. Maleka Khatun, the mother of Sumy said, "Amar maiya Sumy 1 number hobe ame kokhono chintai korini, amar maiya ke barite poranor moto kono manus nai, amra osikkito''.

Md. Mizanur Rahman, The Head teacher of Saipai Primary school said, 'the teaching learning process of SHIKHON Club is very attractive and help to increase the learner's competencies and if SHIKHON Club continues in my school, it ought to support our children to improve'.

DIPECHO-VIII

VERC is implementing the Disaster preparedness project with the support of Save the Children fund and European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection according to DIPECHO-VIII Action Plan in Bangladesh. The project provides technical support to the Primary and Mass Education Department, Education Ministry and education related authorities on ways to involve in planning for resource management and monitoring during disaster period. To provide technical support for National Curriculum Board to include disaster related lessons in the primary level text books and also develop efficiency of education administrator, teacher, School Management Committee for effective planning and implementation of disaster related activities at the school level. This project is being implemented by VERC in Savar Upazila under Dhaka district since September 2015.

Title of Action:
Learning resilience: Institutionalizing school disaster management (SDM) in the education sector in Bangladesh

Objectives:
To ensure children's right to education and protection by promoting uninterrupted and safe access to educational opportunities in the disaster-prone context of Bangladesh

Targeted Groups:
Students (GPS, Secondary school & NFPE), Teachers (GPS, Secondary school & NFPE), SMC Members, Parents, Community People, Govt. Officials, Union Parishads

Beneficiary Coverage of DIPECHO-VIII Project:

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Student	1203	1358	2561
Teachers	81	109	190
SMC	197	165	362
PTA/Guardians	92	156	248
Grand Total	**1573**	**1788**	**3361**

Major Activities:

- Organize orientation session for 17 School on School Disaster Management (SDM)
- Capacity building for 17 school leadership groups such as SMC, Teachers, PTA
- School Level Improvement Plan (SLIP) update of 7 Govt. Primary Schools
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) update of 7 NFE School.
- Organized drill in 14 schools on Earthquake & Fire
- Observance of International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction and National Disaster Preparedness day in 17 schools
- Ensure visibility with Earthquake and Fire related awareness message in 17 Schools

Outcomes of the period:

- Set out the roles and responsibilities of various actors i.e. teachers, students, school leadership groups in preparing for conducting, and evaluating the drill.
- Addressing a range of hazards as appropriate to the context.
- School Management Committee (SMC) have prepared School Improvement Plan (SIP) in 7 Non Formal Education (NFE) schools
- 17 schools have capacitated to conduct risk assessments in accordance with the standard guidelines for school level
- Developed 4 types of awareness raising festoon/materials and put on display in 17 schools as well First Aid boxes with medicine now available in 10 schools
- Awareness messages visible on the walls of 17 schools

HOPE Project (Holistic Approach towards Promotion of Inclusive Education)

Village Education Resource Center (VERC) is implementing HOPE Project in Dhaka and Sirajgonj districts. The ultimate goal of the project is to reduce discrimination against children with disability in the education sector and improving quality of education for all children through inclusive education approaches. The project is passing through the initial stage at field level. In the mean time several activities have gained popularity among the children such as inclusive education, CBR center support to disable children and out of school children as well as youth volunteer support. During the reporting period, 4 union parishads, 18 union data collection and 104 Govt. primary schools data collection of school level completed. Organized meeting with community, LGIs and govt. stakeholders. Collected data on Children with disability (CWDs) and out of school children with CWDs list prepared in 28 community meetings.

The project has three major components which will extend support to school going children and out of school children with CWDs, Community Based Rehabilitation Centre-CBR and Non formal schools. NFE activities have been functioning in isolated, slum areas and far away from government primary school areas. In addition, Community Based Rehabilitation Centre-CBR is one of another component which has directly touched result three. A total of 4 CBRs are functioning and accomplished successfullyunder 4 Union parishads coordination and collaboration among Upazila education department, teachers and SMCs.

Objectives:

1. In targeted communities, children with disabilities and their peers in the same age group have increased learning outcomes and wellbeing.
2. Strengthened capacity, methods and curricula of national teacher training institutes and of national education monitoring and information systems.
3. Local governments and communities take responsibilities to realize CWDs' rights to education and child protection.

Basic Information of the Project-

- Name of the Project- Holistic Approach towards promotion of inclusive Education(HOPE)
- Financial support- IKEA Foundation
- Fund management and technical support- Save the Children
- Project duration- April, 2016 to November, 2018
- Name of district: Dhaka, Sirajgonj
- Name of upazila: Savar, Belkuchi
- Name of union: Dhamsona, Pathalia, Bhangabari, Dhukuriabera
- Number of schools: 30

Target groups:

Student, Children with disability (CWDs), Teachers, Parents, SMC Members, Community members, Govt. Official, UP Chairman and members

Final beneficiaries (Belkuchi):

It is estimated that a total number of final beneficiaries is 27750 where 9202 are children and 1773 are CWDs, Parents GPS teachers 15, SMC-165, Govt. official 43 and 2 Chairmen, 24 UP members and journalist. Beside this VERC has been implementing two CBR centres. It is an open learning cum treatment place of all disable children

Final beneficiaries (Savar):

It is estimated that a total number of final beneficiaries is 34750 where 11202 are children and 113 are CWDs, Parents -22404, GPS teachers 131, SMC-832, Govt. officials 52 and 2 Chairman, 24 UP members and journalists. Beside this, VERC has been implementing two CBR centres. It is an open learning cum treatment place of all disable children

Major Activities:

- Increased quality of primary education service using inclusive approach for children in school
- Increased access to CWDs under community based rehabilitation mechanism
- Preparatory activities (Baseline Survey, Social Map, Data collection from school, Collection of data on children with disability and out of school children, Union Selection)
- Revise National teachers training curriculum including module on CWD and inclusive education
- Advocate for CWD right to education and for increased funding
- Local govt. Institution in the targeted communities have annual plan with decided budget to support education for children with disability
- Increased access to quality primary education for children with disability and their out of school peers in the targeted urban settings

SHIKHON Urban

SHIKHON Urban is a sub project of HOPE program of IKEA Foundation under the management of Save the Children International with three implementing partners. This project aims to contribute to the achievement of development goals in Bangladesh and to a national basic education framework by providing proper education to children and building awareness on the necessity of education in the society and other issues namely health-hygiene education for the children, conducting parenting session to increase the capacity of parents specially for supporting their children as guardians. The project's purpose is to promote access and increase basic education outcomes for 160,400 of the hardest to reach and marginalized children of 55 upazilas in Bangladesh through three partners.

Objective:
To contribute to the achievement of Bangladesh's development goals and to the national basic education framework.

Project at a glance:
VERC SHIKHON Urban has been working in 2 districts of 5 upazilas and thanas in, 10 unions, 2 wards and 32 villages under Dhaka division. Major components of the project are **–** *Non Formal Primary Education (NFPE),* Total number of center/school is 41, SHIKHON Urban activities have been implemented through 5 regular trained staff and 41 trained volunteers under one field office and one regional office. In total 769 (girls-421, boys-348) children are covered by the project as students who are reading in class V.

Activities:
- SMC meeting
- Parenting Education Sessions
- National and International Day observation
- Staff capacity building
- School visit
- PECE examination
- Communication with Govt. stakeholders

Outcome:
- Each SMC has a grade wise School Improvement Plan (SIP). They organize meeting on regular basis and they discuss about school performance and document their decisions as per agendas. The committees looked after their schools regularly and takes initiative for further improvement particularly school house rent, student and teachers timing, materials distribution among the children and ensure water and sanitation facilities, feeding Vitamin A capsule, Iron supplementation, de-worming for all children through communication with union health worker as well as Upazila Health Complex. Communities have supported with other necessary materials to the schools.
- Parents are participating regularly in meetings as a result they become aware about their children education, health hygiene and better livelihood. They send their children regularly and also communicate with school teachers to know the performance of their children.
- Different stakeholders visited SHIKHON urban schools like – Primary school teachers, UP Members, Chairman and Health Assistant and UP Secretary, Social Welfare Officer, VERC team, SCi team and Donor. They follow up the teaching learning processes, model test; Grade end exam, follow up teacher basic training, health and hygiene session and student attendance rate is 93% per month.
- 860 learners have passed in grade 4 examination out of 866 learners in the last 21-24 February'2016. Among them 361 learners got A+, 199 learners got A, 167 learners got A-, 92 Learners got B, and 41 Learners have got C grade.

Education and Protection for Refugee Children (EPRC) project

VERC is supporting 21 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and 52 ECCD centres in two Ruhingya Refugee camps in Cox'sbazar district where 8880 children are enrolled as students for education as per GoB curriculum with special attention on Myanmar language proficiency. In response to the practical need of continuity of education, VERC has been successful to create provision from class VI to Class – VIII with the support of Camp Administration and Education department and also runs 2 Myanmar language labs in two refugee camps.

A total of 961 ECCD children got admission in the primary schools in two of the refugee camps at the beginning of 2016.

Save the Children (SCi) as partner of UNHCR has been managing Education and Protection for Refugee Children (EPRC) Project in Nayapara and Kutupalong refugee camps under Cox's Bazar district since January 2012. IKEA Foundation is offering financial support the project. Village Education Resource Center (VERC) as implementing partner of SCi is providing basic education services to some 8880 children through, 21 Primary, 2 Secondary schools and 52 ECCD centers. EPRC has skilled staff both in SCI and VERC who works for providing quality education to the refugee children and promoting

child protection. The teachers are the main work forces who are directly responsible to ensure the education services. However, a number of other staff members who support the teachers in the form of training, mentoring, guiding, monitoring and supervising EPRC activities to maintain the standard of education. EPRC also uses some innovative resources to improve refugee children's education and promoting child protection that has been newly introduced in 2016. Along with its own innovative resources, EPRC project has also been using the resources developed by SCI's other programs (SHIKHON, PROTEEVA and Shishuder Jonno) those includes teacher guidebooks, parents' education manual, after school curriculum, story books, literacy boost, SHN materials etc and established teachers' resource centre in each school to gather the general and professional skills on teaching.

Objective of the Project:

- Ensure Quality of Education
- Ensure 100% Enrolment of School Aged Children.
- Ensure Participation of Rohingya Community People.

Activities:

- Parents meeting and parenting education session are two regular activities of EPRC project
- SMC meeting
- SAGs meeting
- Monitoring quality of teaching learning process and classroom visit.
- Regular shed visit
- Assist to visit by Govt. official and other stakeholders.
- School examination
- Communication and coordination with counterpart

Outcome:

- Head teachers have been able to improe the quality teaching learning environment
- The irregular and drop out learners back to school and increased attendance of children.
- Teachers have been capacitated to provide quality teaching/guidance for learners.

Sisimpur Enhancing Essential Life Skill Project

This project is under implementation in Raipura upazila with 38 Govt. Primary Schools, 13 Kindergarten Schools (KGS) and 1 madrasa in Raipura upazila under Narsingdi district (1 pourashava and 4 unions). Under the MOU with DPE (Department of Primary Education), this project is working only on Bangla reading and Life Skill based co-curricular activity in the primary schools highlighting how to be able to read Bangla and be aware on ways to protect oneself in various disaster situations.

Donor	:	USAID
Technical support	:	Sesame Workshop Bangladesh (SWB)
Duration	:	January 2014 to June 2016.
Target people	:	Primary school students – Class I to Class III

Project Objectives

1. Strengthening capacity of government school teachers on Reading focus Bangla teaching.
2. Developing educational materials for co-curricular classes on essential life skills like health and hygiene, social environment and water safety.
3. Contribute to national agenda on Early Childhood Development.

Activity:

- 85 Para teachers Refreshers training (4 batches)
- 189 subject base teacher refreshers training
- 2 times, 36 items learning materialsprovided to Schools
- Observance of International literacy day and International mother language

Outcomes:

- Para teachers and Subject teachers are able to support the subject teachers conducting class by using Sisimpur learning materials and method; weak learners being supported to improving Bangla reading and writing ability, conduct life skill sessions properly
- Learners can attract and use to read and write daily work as per lesson in class room by Sisimpur attractive and colorful workbook and other materials.

Day observation 21st February 2016

Material distribution by UNO and UEO at school level

Ending Child Labour in Bangladesh Programme

Ending Child Labour in Bangladesh is under implementation of Training and Communication Section of VERC in Savar Upazila, an industrial hub and satellite town of the capital city Dhaka. Due to its geographical location and industrial character, a large number of slum dwellers, poor and marginalized families are living in Savar. The children of these families are vulnerable and deprived of development and protection rights. They are also victim of abuse, exploitation and hazardous child labour. There is no government support for these underprivileged children.

In order to respond to the the issue, **VERC had implemented** the 'Protection of Children at Risk from Abuse and Exploitation and ensure their Development Project' **since January 2012 to December 2014 and** VERC had also **implemented** the 'Protection of Children from Hazardous Labour Project' for the year of 2015 as an extended project. With the almost similar objectives and activities VERC has been implementing the Ending Child Labour in Bangladesh Programme **since January 2016** as a consortium where five partners (UDDIPAN, BSAF, SEEP, SSS and VERC) and TDH-Netherlands are working through comprehensive approaches to eliminate child labour from Bangladesh and simultaneously, creating a child-friendly environment where the children participate in interventions to develop themselves. This project is also working with the parents, employers, civil society and government administration to create a social safety net-work for the children in critical situations. The VERC alone will reach about 17,939 people (Children – 7,715 and adults - 10,224) in the project period from 2016 to 2018 as per plan. The **Terre des Hommes – Netherlands is supporting the consortium of Child Labour programme.**

Activities done during the reporting period:

Children's Access to Education to reduce Child Labour:

In this reporting year (July, 2015 to June, 2016) has run 24 centers **and presently** is running a total of 22 centers at respective communities of Savar Upazila with the purpose to make access to Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) and ECD. Altogether 1199 working children (aged below 18 years) and children (aged 5 to 6) vulnerable to hazardous work are being taught in the reporting year. Learning materials for the children were provided as per need.

Life skills sessions were conducted in each NFPE centers while teachers have taught the classes on monthly basis. The learning was provided by involving children in games, drama, story-telling and different innovative exercises. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Teachers have enabled the children on decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, and empathy, coping with emotions and stresses gradually as per plan.

Children Participated in Annual Sports

VERC and Child Protection Monitoring Committee organized annual sports in different places where all the children from NFPE centres have participated. At 9 venues all 17 centres children have participated in the annual sports. All of the events were organized with joyful participation of the children, CLOs, CPMC members and project staff. One of the sports venues was the Upazila playground on 26 December, 2016 where children from Talbag, Anandapur, Vagolpur and Bank Colony centres

participated. Shaikh Abdul Halim, Executive Director of VERC chaired the award giving ceremony and Mohammad Quamrul Hassan Mollah, Upazila Nirbahi Officer was present as chief guest. Mr. Subash Chandra Saha, Director, Training & Communication Section of VERC, Upazila CPMC members were also present in the event. Upazila Nirbahi Officer awarded the prizes among the children along with a winter blanket from his own side to each child. The Agragamee Shishu Parishad's cultural group performed drama on bad effect of child labour in the prize giving ceremony of the annual sports while local cultural team of UDICHEE also rendered popular songs for entertainment of the audience. Almost the similar events were arranged in other venues where area based CPMCs, CLOs, members from local government, elites, project staff and the NFPE children were present to share the joy with children. Children from all ECD centers participated in year-end drawing & cultural competition. Prizes were distributed among the children in this connection.

Progress of making employers positive to protect children from HCL:

Children involved in hazardous labour are being protected through awareness building in the employers regarding negative consequences of hazardous child labour. The project has been trying to motivate employers to reduce hazards in work place. During the reporting period, a total of 40 meetings were organized (out of 40) with employers of child domestic workers and working children in 10 areas as per the plan during this time. These meetings have covered excellent number of participants where 787 employers attended against the target of 600. The meetings have discussed child abuse and protection, development and roles of the employers. They have given emphasis to send children regularly to the schools and monitor their progress. Some of the employers were explaining that they usually try to ensure children's attendance and help them to make progress. Teachers shared children performance result and demanded necessary support for the children who could not perform well.

Parents Sensitized on Child Protection through ECD Parenting Sessions:

Total 640 children are at risk of hazardous child labour have pre-primary education through Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme and their parents, guardians are being motivated through parenting sessions to help continue their study and saved from child labour. The project has conducted monthly parenting sessions with the parents of ECD children on regular basis. Involvement of parents in children's teaching-learning process is very important to make the process a success. In this the reporting period, the project has organized 84 meetings as plan where a total of 1957 (M-588, Female-1369) parents, caregivers and guardians of ECD groups have attended against the target of 2520 (M-756, Female-1764).

Community Leaders are organized and mobilized against Child Labour:

CPMC is a civil society organization called Child Protection Monitoring Committee the most important component of the project to ensure effective education for working children. CPMC has been emerging to act as a safety-net for children who are involved in hazardous child labour.

In this reporting year, 11 CPMCs are active with 181 social elites as pressure, advocacy group with local govt., business people and employers as per plan, of them 10 is Area Based CPMCs and one is Upazila level CPMC. Area Based CPMCs have sat bi-monthly and Upazila level CPMC sat quarterly meeting regularly. The CPMC members have decided to improve the working children lives. They have visited the employers to improve the children's safety level and to eliminate harsh working situations.

It is worth mentioning that the CPMC has become a self-started civil society child rights activist group to protect the children from child labour, exploitation and abuse. They arranged different wellbeing events for the children. In this reporting period, they have arranged a day outing for socializing the children of the project in Savar on 5 March, 2016. It about 80 children from NFPE centers have participated in this socializing programme. The children have celebrated the day with a lot of fun and amuse. They interacted with other children by participating in singing, dance and rich food and site seeing. The children of project staff, CPMC and guests were also participated in this socialization programme.

Agrogamee Shishu Parishad (a child led organization - CLO) to raise voice against child labour:

Large scale children's voices under the banner of ***Agrogamee Shishu Parishad*** have risen widely against child labour in Savar Upazila. A total of 5 child led organizations **(**CLOs), of them 4 is area based and one is Upazila level have been running with a total 421 (boy-177 and girls-244) where 109 executives members (boys-48 and girls-61) are working to reduce hazardous child labour in the project areas throughout different actions. In the meantime, they have sat their regular meetings and had developed a yearly action plan. They have also formed 5 cultural teams to perform dramas to make the people aware on child labour issues. Five cultural teams have also performed dramas to make the people aware on child labour issues. In this reporting period, a capacity building orientation on child rights was held to raise voices against child labour effectively where 102 CLOs' executive members (boys-50 and girls-52) had participated. The members of Agrogamee Shishu Parishad have made some visits to the child labour sites to observe the child labour situation as they could make a report and talk to the employers and Labour Inspector to reduce child labour.

Dialogue with Upazila Administration and Pourasava to reduce child labour

In this connection, the ECLP has arranged dialogues with the Upazila Parishad and with the elected body of Savar Pourasava to create a social safety-net for the children involved in child labour and their families. In these dialogues, the concerned duty bears like Upazila administration, Police, factory Inspector, Journalists, civil society etc were participated and they vowed to assist the vulnerable children as they freed from worst forms of child labour and enjoy child rights to flourish their full potentialities as a worthy citizen of the country.

Press Conference held at Savar Press Club:

Village Education Resource Center (VERC) and Child Protection Monitoring Committee (CPMC), Savar jointly organized a Press conference on the Roles of the Protection of Children from Hazardous Labour project to Implement the National Plan of Action 2012-2016 for eliminating Child Labour from Savar Upazila on 22 December 2015, at the Press Club of Savar. A total of 54 Journalists were present in the press conference from different print and electronic media. Shaikh Abdul Halim, ED and Ms. Rokeya Haque, President of CPMC were also present in the press conference along with other project personnel.

Formation of Child Rights Journalist Forum:

Ending Child Labour in Bangladesh Programme has formed a Child Rights Journalists Forum in Savar especially to support the children for ensuring their protection and overall rights. A 19 member committee is now active and working as watchdog of child rights for reducing child labour in Savar through reporting on worst form of child labour.

Skill training for poor Parents:

Ten members (8 females and 2 males) of the child labour families were provided short course of skills training in this 2nd half of the year 2015 as per plan. Nine participants had received training on Garment Machine Mechanics and one had received Dress Making & tailoring; of them, 3 have already got employment in factories.

International Literacy Day, 2015

The project staff, CPMCs' members and CLOs have observed the **International Literacy Day, 2015** on 8 September in this quarter. on this occasion, a colourful rally and discussion were arranged at the VERC premises. VERC staff and children from NFPE participated in the rally and discussion. The rally moved nearby areas chanting slogans on ensuring education for all emphasizing the marginalized people of the society. Later on, in the discussion Shaikh Abdul Halima, the Executive Director of VERC and Ms. Rokeya Haque, chairperson of the CPMC talked to the children on the importance of education that how changed our lives towards up-stairs. In addition, the project staff, CPMC members and CLOs have also participated at rally and discussion with Upazila administration where other social bodies have taken part. Dr. Enamur Rahman, MP was present in the event. 'Literacy and skills for the sustainable society' - was the main theme of the day. About one thousand people gathered to uphold the spirit of the day.

Outcomes of the period:

- The NFPE schools and ECD centers have contributed the children involved in hazardous child labour and the children at risk to be involved in child labour to enroll in education and had opened a window to escape from HCL, forced labour, abuse and exploitation. The NFPE schools and ECD centers are playing vital roles to reduce child labour in Savar. In this reporting period, a total of 311 of children (boys 139 and girls 172) have been saved from hazardous work, of them 200 (boys 82 and girls 118) have withdrawn from child labour and admitted to mainstream schools as regular students and 111 children (boys 57 and girls 54) have moved to light work (against the target of 150);
- Parents of ECD children have gained awareness through parenting sessions on issues like child development, the importance of playing games, child rights, discipline in children and protection against sexual abuse.
- Through ECLP intervention, children involved in works have started raising voice for rights and are claiming better environment and increased salary and reduced pressure of heavy duties.
- A very good relationship has been developed with the employers and they all participated very effectively in regular meetings. The meetings have discussed children's development and roles of the employers. They have given emphasis to send children regularly to the schools and monitor their progress. The employers expressed their contribution and facilities ensured for the betterment of children. This process is helping the project to motivate employers and have taken significant initiatives to reduce hazards i.e. providing safety devices at work place, reducing working hour, started following code of conduct (stopped using slang and beating), providing first aid facilities at work place and ensured schooling and entertainment
- The project has mobilized people, civil society, local government and administration, concerned people are coming forward to extend their support and the Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Savar is giving blankets to the children of NFPE centers in every year as a mark of support to the children.
- In this reporting period, a total of 249 vulnerable families of child labourers provided micro-credit support of taka sixty lakh for livelihood development as soft loan.

Stipend for Education:

VERC has introduced offering stipend to poor beneficiary off-springs in 2009 who obtains GPA-5 or A (+) in SSC exam and decides to continue education further. Under this program each student receives Tk. 500 (five hundred) on monthly basis for two years. This will continue as regular activity. The students can collect their stipend from the nearest VERC office. Through this program in the last financial year (July'14 to June'15) Tk. 0.59 million Tk. 5,94,000 (five lac ninety four thousand) has been offered from the service charge of its micro-finance program for 68 students. The amount of allocation is increasing annually to bring more students under coverage. As of 30th June, 2015, the cumulative amount of Tk. 31,43,495.00 has been offered as stipend for the total of 319 students.

Khadiza wishes to be a Journalist

It's a great pleasure to state that once house help girl **Khadiza Akter Afroz** (14) is now a regular student of grade seven at **New Sristy School & College** in Savar Upazila. She has created a new episode of her life by ending the profession of miserable household works. Now she is firmly determined to continue her education and she also dreams to be a Journalist by profession. She thinks that through her services she would work to reduce all kind of odds from the society especially discrimination, injustice and violence against the children and women. She wants to work to fetch a positive change for welfare of mankind.

Khadiza came to Savar satellite from Netrokuna, a very remote district of Bangladesh. She had travelled about 200 km from her birth-place with her parents for livelihood. Khadiza's poor family had been passing days in hardship in the village due to inadequate scope for earning an income for survival. Her father Md. Billal Mia (48) was a day labourer and mother Nur Jahan Begum (38) was house-maker before leaving the village. Khadiza has two younger brothers. Khadiza was in class in her village school.

After family migration to Savar, two things happened instantly, one - Khadiza out of school and secondly - she became a house help girl to share the burden of her poor family. Khadiza became one of the thousands of house help girls in Bangladesh and simultaneously she lost her rights to education and living with the family.

Thus the urban life of poor and migrated Khadiza's family started at a shanty where everything has to buy for survival. As a result, Khadiza's mother also got involved in earning as maid servant to support the five members' family.

The child protection staff of VERC found Khadiza while they were surveying the children involved in hazardous labour for enrolling them in NFPE centres for ensuring basic education and gradual withdrawal from hazardous child labour. It is mentionable that VERC has been implementing the Protection of Children from Hazardous Labour Project funded by Terre des Hommes – Netherlands since 2012 to protect the children those who are the victims of abuse, exploitation and hazardous child labour. It is almost over six hundred children involved in hazardous child labour and vulnerable to associated in child labour has been supported by the project to come out of the circle of negligence and poverty.

VERC staff met Khadiza's employer and her parents and convinced them on Khadiza's rights to education for development. Through this persuasion, Khadiza was admitted at VERC's Vatpara NFPE/ CDW School/Centre in 2013 and she studied there for two years along with her job as house help. In 2014, she passed the PSC exam with good result (score 4.08 out of 5). Then she (in 2015) got admitted in high school named New Ideal School in class 6. Her class teacher and Headmaster Md. Zillur Rahman of New Ideal School said, 'Khadiza is regular in school and she is attentive and eager in studies. She has performed well in all the subjects in the annual exam. She maintained laws of school. If she would be supported from family and other social safety nets, she will succeed in education and life.'
Khadiza hopes to complete her education to meet her dream. Khadiza's best efforts and determination also inspired her parents to support her vision.

Now, Khadiza is free from hazardous child labour and she is living with her family. She is no more child domestic worker. She is regular in school. Khadiza's mother Mrs. Nurjahan said, 'I'm very happy with VERC School, because it has helped my daughter in schooling and continuing education. I would support my daughter to run her education as she is very much eager to have higher education. I seek all of your assistances in this connection.'

WatSan and Technology

Bangladesh with a population 150 million has made significant progress towards providing water supply and the sanitation in the last two decades. According to the Joint Monitoring (JMP) report 85% people have access to safe water and 57% people use hygienic sanitation facilities. However, still there remain significant challenges if Bangladesh wants to ensure safe, affordable, reliable and sustainable services for all that requires a multi-pronged approach. This needs to address challenges posed by hard to reach areas and vulnerable people. It also needs to tackle the emerging issues like the negative impact of climate change and meeting the demands for services due to rapid pace of urbanization as well as strengthening sector governance through building the capacity of institutions to ensure quality, accountability and transparency. Considering the above reality WASH is still one of the focus program areas of VERC. The key objectives of the program is sustainable improvement in WASH and reduction of related risks of the poor and marginalized through effective mobilization and capacity building of community and local government. Throughout the reporting year, VERC has implemented seven projects with the support of five donors.

The projects cover 44 unions, 06 upazilas and 05 districts across the country. The key activities under the projects were community mobilization through CLTS process promotion, improving WASH facilities in community, schools and public places, Arsenic mitigation, capacity building, Improved Cookstoves (ICS) test, technology installation, linkage building, networking etc.

The noted projects cover the districts of Gazipur, Rajshahi, Sirajganj, Comilla and Dhaka. The WASH projects cover 23,756 people with improved access to safe drinking water, 157,256 people reached through education on hygiene and health, 50,486 people gained access to adequate sanitation and 985 people including LGI representatives, Teachers and SMC members covered through different capacity building training and orientation.

Ongoing Projects at a glance

Donors	Name of the Project	Duration	District
water.org	Community Initiated Sustainable 100% WatSan and Hygiene Behaviour Change, Kaliakoir, Phase-III	November 2013-January 2016	Gazipur
WaterAid-Bangladesh	Promoting Safe Water and Sanitation access and Hygiene Motivation among rural poor in Northern Bangladesh	April 2013- March 2017	Rajshahi
WaterAid Bangladesh	Rural WASH	April 2011-November 2015	Rajshahi
WaterAid-Bangladesh	WaSH Result	May 2014- March 2018	Sirajganj
unicef	Creating Arsenic Safe Unions with Sustainable Improvement of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Selected Unions of Daudkandi Upazila, Comilla	April 2016- March 2017	Comilla
Save the Children	ICT and Innovative Partnership Project	July 2014- June 2016	Dhaka
BMGF via NVF	Fresh Water Action Network- South Asia (FANSA)	August 2014-September 2016	Nationwide (Advocacy focused)

Detail of projects under implementation

Community Initiated Sustainable 100% WatSan and Hygiene Behaviour Change, Kaliakoir, Phase-III

The third and last phase of 27 months Community Initiated Sustainable 100% WatSan and Hygiene Behaviour Change project supported by water.org has been ended in January, 2016. The overall objective of the project was to promote safe drinking water and sanitation facilities in the project area empowering the community to improve public health and sanitation.

To achieve the objectives of the project, the following key activities were undertaken:

- Community mobilization initiatives through CBOs, Community Action Committee (CAC) and LGI were nurtured regularly. A total of 523 CBO meetings, 39 CAC meetings, and 129 WatSan committee meetings were organized.
- For safe water supply provision a total of 15 tube wells were renovated. Through community mobilization process, a total of 775 household level latrines were installed and renovated in different communities. Three public toilets were renovated in three working unions. Two School toilets have been constructed and two school toilets have been renovated in four different schools.
- National Sanitation Month and Global Hand washing day has been observed with the leadership of LGI and local administration at union and upazila levels.
- End line survey conducted in 500 households. Project phase-out workshops organized in three unions and one at upazila level.

Visible outcomes

The project has made improved environmental health situation in the target area of the project in Kaliakoir in terms of better WASH facilities in communities, schools and public places that are bringing benefits in terms of improved access to safe water, sanitation, hygiene behaviour and reduced disease burden. A total of 300 people have got access to safe water supply, 6826 people have got access to improved sanitation facilities and hygiene practice adopted by 22280 people.

Waste water is no more wastes: now being used for cultivating vegetables

Shahida Begum is a housewife of Sonatola village under Boali union of Kaliakoir upazila in Gazipur district. She had been living with her husband since she got married. Like other houses of the village, they didn't have any source of safe water in their house. Their latrine was not sanitary as well. They had to go a long way daily to get safe drinking water. This caused loss both of their time and labor. But they couldn't afford to set a tube-well in their house.

In the situation, Shahida came to know that, a non-government development organization called VERC is working in their locality on safe water, sanitary latrine and hygiene. A Community Based Organization (CBO) was formed by villagers through the facilitation support of VERC staff. This organization helps villagers find ways to live a healthy and hygienic life. It also supported people ensuring safe water, motivate and help villagers to build sanitary latrines at household level. Shahida Begum being accompanied by some of her neighbors, applied to get a tube-well through their CBO. VERC authority verified her application. Then, according to the decision of CBO, VERC supported Shahida Begum to install a tube-well beside her residence. Neighboring 24 families collect safe drinking water from this tube-well. By this time, they have upgraded their latrines that are now hygienic.

One day, participating in a courtyard meeting, Shahida Begum has known about how to use leftover waste water to cultivate vegetables. It made her realize that the tube-well she has installed in her house is saving her time and labor. She thought, she could cultivate vegetables in her yard and waste water might be useful for the purpose. She discussed with her husband and decided to cultivate vegetables in her yard. As the tube-well was very close to her yard, she could use enough waste water and thus lots of vegetables had grown there. This inspired others a lot. Now they are cultivating vegetables regularly. Not only they can meet the demand of nutrition of their family, but they are also selling some vegetable in the market. This is encouraging many more in the village to make productive use of waste water.

Promoting Safe Water and Sanitation access and Hygiene Motivation among rural poor in Northern Bangladesh

The rural WASH programme is under implementation in 7 unions of Durgapur upazila under Rajshahi district and helped form village WASH committees in each village it operates in; thus giving the community an independent role to mobilise and keep track of WASH-related changes in the area. Each committee is made up of 9-11 members comprising women and men representing all stakeholder groups. Each committee conducts monthly meeting to assess the existing water and sanitation situation of the entire village and identify issues that need urgent action. They select sites for community water sources, collect money and monitor the latrine usage and maintenance. The committee members are responsible for identifying ultra poor households in their communities that need VERC's assistance and grants from WaterAid Programme. To strengthen the capacity of committees are provided leadership and hygiene promotion training. To date, 104 committees have been formed. Through these committees, women empowerment is also addressed in the rural areas by recognizing women members through their voluntary contribution for the society. The duration of the project is April 2013 to March 2017.

Major activities carried out:

- Develop leadership skills among 500 CBO members imparting 52 batches of training so that they can lead the WASH activities at the community level.
- Increased awareness among 4712 rural poor people on the importance of personal, domestic and environmental hygiene by receiving hygiene message through organized 49 folk songs and 258 courtyard sessions.
- Increased awareness about WASH related curriculum in text book among Education department, SMC, Teachers and other sector actors through regular organized teachers association meeting.
- Increased the access of solid waste management system and enthused to keep their household and surrounding environment clean and tidy by developing 879 solid waste systems at HH level.
- Deep tube well is the most suitable safe water option as it is affordable and user-friendly. In view of this, VERC Rural WASH has provided 69 deep tube wells and 180 platform construction in all the seven unions of Durgapur Upazila. Each tube well covers 10 households on average. In order to ensure sustainability, ownership and further repairing and maintenance in the community, 10 per cent of the contribution cost is deposited in Bank accounts by community members. Laboratory analysis of the quality of water is done before installing the tube wells and after handing them over to the community. If the tests indicate arsenic contamination, then the tube well is sealed off and people are restricted from using the water for drinking and cooking.
- The school sanitation block helped to develop a common understanding in Upazila administration, Education department, School Management Committee, Teachers about the benefit from the system. Now they are willing to replicate the system in Govt. Supported schools.

Visible Outcome

Menstrual hygiene facilities in secondary schools were major factors in the rate of absence and dropout of adolescent girls. To address this issue, the project could successfully convince the secondary school authorities to provide separate latrines that have adequate water and waste disposal facilities for girls. As a result, more than 10 secondary schools throughout the entire upazila have constructed separate toilet facilities for girls and more than 30 secondary schools received MHM Almira and necessary materials from the MP concerned.

Rural WaSH, Bagmara, Rajshahi

The project is more focused on rights of poor and excluded people. The major outcomes of the project are, poor and excluded people are able to demand sanitation service, establish their access to sustainable WASH facilities. Policy makers, LGI & Service agencies are sensitized regarding WASH rights. Ultimately all the outcomes contribute for achieving national WaSH goal as well as MGD's. This is a 4.9 years project and will be ended in December 2015.

Major activities carried out during the reporting period:

- A total of 78 CBOs reviewed their CSA following CLTS approach and prepared 78 CAPs for implementation of the project activities. As part of that facilitated 1626 CBO meetings, 100 Mass campaigns on hygiene and WSP held with cultural performance to increase the Hygiene promotion practice and safe water handling at community level, which enhance the knowledge on WASH. 11 school hygiene campaigns with cultural performance held, which enhance the knowledge and practice. A total of 4997 hygiene beneficiaries covered by 451 hygiene sessions including MHM.
- A total of 4152 beneficiaries covered through the installation of 1096 hand washing devices at house hold level. Benefitting 404 girl students through the installation of toilet at a secondary school.
- Sanitation coverage improves among 9245 people through the installation and up gradation of 2045 hygienic latrines. Community dug 7 pits for hygienic management of the fecal sludge. Household level waste water and solid waste management situation also improved in terms of 593 solid waste management and 546 waste water management system development.
- 22 sharing meetings and 11 exit meetings held at UP level and 99 meetings held with WCAC.
- 1 batch training held for 21 project staff on rights, inclusion and rooted advocacy.
- 1 Wards form 11 unions awarded for best performing in responsive regarding WASH activities.

Visible outcomes:

Developed a networking and coordination mechanism among CBO leaders, CAC members and LGI bodies regarding WASH program follow-up and monitoring, LGI and service agencies are sensitized and responsive regarding WaSH rights. The project support has contributed in terms of increased hygiene sanitation coverage among 9245 people.

WaSH Result project

This new project is being implemented to contribute improvement of human well being and dignity of poor and excluded population in entire Royganj upazila (nine unions) through context-specific and scalable mechanism of access to WaSH. The four years project (1st April 2014 – 31st March 2018) will mainly focus on the vulnerable, marginalized, poorest of the poor community people especially women, children and the ethnic minority. The project will have important focus to accelerate present sanitation coverage of the area which is relatively poor compared to the national sanitation ratio. The uniqueness of this project is provision of 27 months follow-up, capacity building, advocacy and networking provision. The hardware installation work has been completed by end of December, 2015. Key objective of the project is to contribute improvement of human well being and dignity of poor and excluded population in Raiganj upazila through context-specific and scalable access to WASH.

VERC has successfully completed the output phase and embarked on outcome phase in nine unions of Royganj upazila and pursues the goal of achieving a sustainable influence in WaSH by improving the health status of children, adolescents, women and men. To ensure the sustainability of this project activities there have been undertaken and organized lots of tasks such as CWAC meeting, hygiene session with women and adolescents, child group session, school hygiene session, latrine superstructure improvement and unhygienic latrine renovation, Water quality monitoring test, promotion activity of WaSH marketing, hand washing device installation, Ward and Union WATSAN committee meeting, regular monitoring and follow up activity of project office. These activities are aimed to improved latrine with improved superstructure, ensure access and use of safe water for all purposes, raise hygiene awareness among the community people, promote hand washing device at household level and establish SaniMart in the area.

Major activities carried out during the reporting period:

- A total of 729 Community WaSH Action Committee (CWAC) ignited following CLTS approach and prepare and update 729 CAPs for implementation of the project activities. A total of 3190 hygiene promotion sessions (interactive popular theatre-IPT, women group, adolescents, campaign and day observation events) to increase the hygiene practice promotion at different levels including school, which enhanced the knowledge on WaSH both at community and institution level covering 79689 population.

- Increased safe water coverage for 10267 people through installation of 284 new safe water options (Tara-II extractable model) and renovated (platform construction) 563 water points at community level.
- Increase hygienic sanitation coverage among 18330 people through the installation and up-gradation of 4244 hygienic latrines. Household level waste water and solid waste management situation also improvement.
- Capacity building on WASH rights, TW caretaker & mechanic hygiene promotion held in 26 batches for CBO and LGIs.
- Two school sanitation blocks have been installed at two girl's high schools focusing menstrual hygiene and drinking water that has covered 315 students.

Visible outcomes:

- Integrated WASH plan developed in all the 09 unions and put on display in the office
- Project plan reflected in the printed upazila's five years development plan
- Increased budget allocation in 6 out of 09 unions for sanitation by LGIs; four UP bodies initiated the use of WASH budget for the poor and hardcore poor in terms of latrine distribution.
- ***SaTo pan*** is accepted in communities and market demand created
- Availability of safe water at household level for all purposes, reduced water borne diseases
- Students disseminating hygiene behaviour message in communities improved hand washing practice with soap with emphasis on hand washing after defecation and before taking meal.

Installation of a latrine device - a very special gift for disable Laila

Widow Laila Begum who lives with her only one son in Bashoria a remote village in Brahmangachha union under Royganj upazila, is 40 years old. She had three more children and all of them died of unknown disease. One day she felt sick at the time of delivery of her fourth baby. After delivery, she learnt that there is no energy in two of her legs. The delivery, which was attended by the neighbors, took a long time, she recalls. When we asked her what the reasons might be for her condition she said that she had a lot of hard work during her pregnancy, but there might have been involvement of evil spirit. When her family realized this they wanted to see the doctors in many places, but they could not afford it. Instead they tried various traditional healers in the area, but she did not improve and within two months she became disable. She could not move from one place to another without the help of others even go to the toilet. Family members started to neglect her and even many times they did not respond to help her during natural call and kept her in an unhygienic manner.

Disability of her troubled leg caused her pain and discomfort while using the household latrine built by her husband. When VERC started work in Brahmangachha union through CLTS approach, community people identified Laila's toilet as a discomfortable one for her use, they shared this with VERC staff. Union Facilitator and Project Engineer went to her house and talked to her about the design and accessories needed to improve the latrine to make it accessible to her considering her physical condition. She got one toilet chair, delivery pipe, two rings, one pit cover also the sub-structure of the toilet from the project free of cost. Her son made the super-structure with CI sheet spending Tk. 5,000.

This has ensured her sanitation independence as she can go to the toilet without other's help any time and keep herself neat and clean. She is very pleased getting the toilet from the project.

Ghurka UP female member providing support where it is needed most

Mrs. Farida Begum (35) is an elected Female member of Ghurka Union Pharishad (UP) under Royganj upazila of Sirajganj district. She is Ward # 1, 2 and 3. She had been dreaming of serving the poor as a UP member from her childhood.

Newly married bride after coming to her husband Md. Abdur Razzak's family in Shyamnai village she observed that many of her father in law's neighbours have no latrine. She has learnt about harmful effects of unhygienic latrine and water borne diseases by watching TV. She also has noticed that there is no latrine production centre nearby. The situation made them habituated in open defecation. To live up her childhood dream she motivated her husband to start latrine production business at Bhuyangati bus stand so that people in the neighborhood can easily buy latrine materials at a cheaper rate. Finally, her husband set up a sanitary latrine production centre near Bhuyangati bus stand. Simultaneously, she also started awareness raising mass campaign on sanitation issues. In 2011 Union Parishad election, she was elected female Ward member.

After being elected she distributed water seal latrine set among the poor households. When the WaSH result project started WatSan activities in her Ward, she availed the scope of technical support. Having the scope she engaged herself for 100% sanitation coverage in her Wards. She distributed 200 latrine sets among the poor and hardcore household from her husband's production center last year almost free of cost and 160 sets from Union Parishad allocation. Thus it made her a popular UP member among the Ward people and all over Ghurka Union.

She is now the advisor of Ward WatSan Committee of 1, 2 & 3 Wards of Ghurka Union. She attends meeting regularly with heart and hand. She regularly visits the areas in the Wards to follow up sanitation situation and hygiene practice with VERC staff and already has achieved her Ward # 1 as 100% sanitation coverage one. She said that VERC ignited my Ward people on sanitation and mass awareness on hygiene issues and now as outcome of the efforts, we do not see people defecating in the open as before. At present, most of the households have sanitary hygienic latrine. I think it is a great achievement for us and we feel indebted to VERC for its support.

Creating Arsenic Safe Unions with Sustainable Improvement of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Selected Unions of Daudkandi Upazila, Comilla

Goal of the Project:

Sustainable arsenic and microbiologically safe water provision, sanitation and hygiene for improved health and livelihood.

Objectives of the project:

- A quantitative, measurable reduction in arsenic exposure and the aim is to building up areas of contiguous arsenic safety. Approximately 21,500 poor and vulnerable people in 4 unions in Daudkandi Upazila are facilitated to gain access to and utilize functional arsenic safe water within 150 m of dwelling, all year round through DPHE installed water points.
- About 80% community people and school age children in 4 unions have improved knowledge and also about 10% improved practice of safe water handling, safe excreta disposal, hand washing at critical times and use safe water.

Major Activities

- A total of 63 communities ignited following CLTS approach and developed CAP for implementation the program activities. Facilitated 71 hygiene promotion sessions at different levels to enhance the knowledge and practice level on WaSH.

- 8848 Tube wells tested for Arsenic in four unions with the help of 416 local volunteers' teams. 3904 Arsenic safe water points identified. 54 Arsenic awareness sessions conducted.
- 136 Improved latrine installed and convert into hygienic through CLTS approach.

ICT and Innovative Partnership Project

The noted project is under implementation of Training and Communication Section. The project aims to improve WASH facilities in targeted schools through the use of ICT and innovative partnerships with children, youth and their organizations. Lacking or insufficient water and sanitation facilities are among the reasons for increased poverty as identified in the second and seventh Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). More than 50,000 children die from diarrhoeal diseases every year in Bangladesh. 40 percent of these deaths can be avoided through the practice of hand washing. Hand washing can also help reduce respiratory problems by 25 percent, according to a UNICEF study conducted in 2009. The WASH situation in many schools in Bangladesh is often deplorable and all schools have water sources on their premises, drinking water equipment is unhealthy or non-existing and toilet facilities very unhygienic. This situation seriously affects children, in particular girls' ability to learn and hinders their attendance.

Village Education Resource Center (VERC) accomplishment of ICT & Innovative Partnership Project in 30 secondary schools of Savar upazila as a leading organization successfully. The target of the project was improving WASH facilities in the targeted schools through the use of ICT and innovative partnerships with children, youth and their organizations. The project period has achieved significant results in all the 30 schools. As a result, remarkable change has occurred in the schools as the project could ensure accountability of school management committee (SMC), Children empowerment, improvement of poor WaSH situation at school level, enhanced skill on ICT use by children and Teachers, awareness building among all the levels of stakeholders, ICT based monitoring, development of leadership among the children through local level advocacy. During the project period (***July 2014 – June 2016***) VERC has implemented some major activities at different level.

Objectives:

Improved WASH facilities in targeted schools through the use of ICT and innovative partnerships with children, youth and their organizations

Target Group:

Students of 30 secondary schools in Savar, 30 School Management Committee Members.11 member's National Children taskforce (NCTF) Upazila committee and 11 member's NCTF National committee and Additionally the project will target approximately 50 local, district and national level decision makers e.g. Upazila and district education officers, standing committee members, members of Parliamentary Caucus, Parliamentary Standing Committee and Ministry of Education. Journalists will also be targeted as part of a media campaign.

Key Activities:

- Observance of Global Hand Washing Day and World Water Day in 30 schools
- Basic training on communication, motivation and facilitation and joyful session for 315 NCTF members
- NCTF members facilitated joyful session with the students in all 30 schools.
- Orientation for SMC members on school open budgetary process in 30 schools
- Prepared yearly participatory school annual plan and budget in 30 schools
- Organized open budget session in 30 schools
- Developed child friendly citizen charter in collabration with SMC members, teachrs and stuents in 30 schools and the same has been put on display in school premises for wider sharing
- Conducted day long training for 31 teachers and 55 students on basic computer and tab operation and distributed Tablet computer among 30 Schools.
- NCTF organize dialogue sessions with teachers and SMC members for claiming their rights, child friendly WaSH facilities, better education environment and child protection issues in 30 schools.
- Prepared wall magazine and displayed of in 30 schools.
- Organized art exhibition at Upazila level

- Shared project results among the journalist through organize of press conference.
- Organized a workshop at local level journalist and child activist to create scope to work with child journalist and award given ceremony on good reporting in media on WaSH issues to child journalist and professional journalist.
- Published NCTF Voice, Magazine and Photo book
- Organize two project final lesson learn workshop with school authority and NCTF

Outcomes of the Period:

- 58% schools have improved WASH facilities (with soap and bucket available in toilets) with 33% installed new facilities.
- 6 schools ensured running water facilities and also set up tube wells.
- 4 schools management committee renovated old and unserviceable toilets and 7 schools set up new toilets, 9 schools management committee appointed/assigned cleaners for cleanliness of toilets/bathrooms and classrooms etc. 30 schools management committee already provided baskets/dustbin in the toilets and class rooms for cleanliness of the schools.
- 2 schools installed separate toilets for girls and 4 schools installed wash basins in front of the toilets/ inside the bathrooms/toilets, 75% schools have established facilities for menstrual hygiene practice and girls get sanitary pad from the female teachers.
- 30 school NCTFs have purchased water filter on their own initiatives
- Students are now involved in planning, budgeting and open budget session in all the 30 schools and are confident to negotiate with school authorities
- Upazila Women and Children's Affairs Officer uses NCTF program structure to inform and address child protection issues in her department.

Changes Visible in Picture

Figure 1: Dairy Farm High School has renovated its unserviceable toilet

Figure 2: Launching of School Annual Report Publication by
Shaikh Abdul Halim, Executive Director, VERC

Figure 3: New toilet built for girl students with menstrual hygiene management facilities at Adorsho High School Ghugudia

Network (FAN)

Freshwater Action Network (FAN) is a major network of civil society organizations implementing and influencing water and sanitation policy and practice. Since 2001, FAN has been building national, regional and global alliances which are now gaining institutional strength. There are consortium of CSO networks in Global level with focal points in **Africa, South Asia, Mexico, Central and South America.** FAN South Asian Regional network members are - India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives. **FANSA-Bangladesh was e**stablished in 2008 led by **FANSA**.

Vision:

All people of Bangladesh have rights in access to water and sanitation (WASH) in an equitable manner.

Mission:

To empower civil society to raise their voice, strengthening Local Government Institutions for effective and exclusive dialogue with policy maker and to establish rights of all people emphasizing women and vulnerable communities on WASH through access to information.

Goal:

To ensure equitable WASH rights for all especially for vulnerable population by facilitating advocacy at policy level through linkage with grassroots communities where member organizations work.

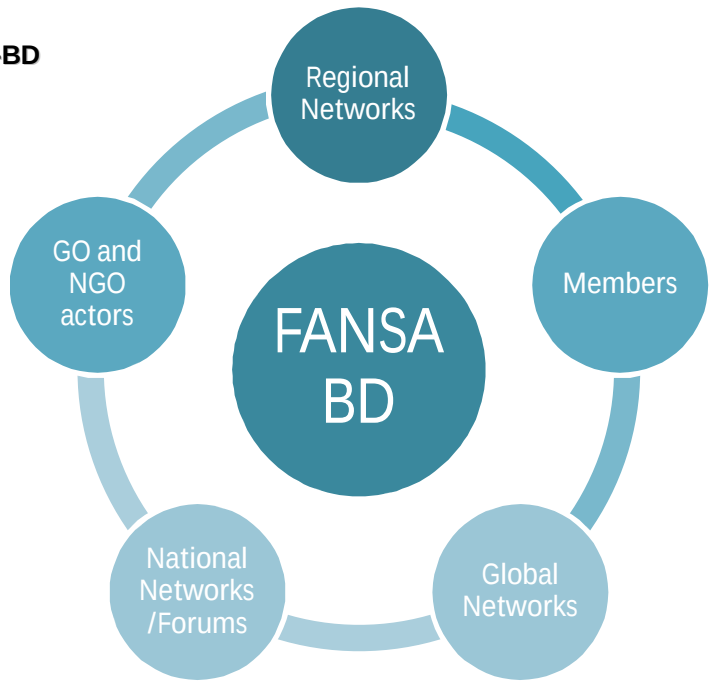
Objectives

1. To build capacity of partners, civil societies and CBOs to advocate at policy level
2. To strengthen Local government institutions to play their role in ensuring WASH rights for all people
3. To conduct issue based study on good practices, document lessons learned
4. To mobilize resources in WASH sector through advocacy at grassroots level
5. To create scope for access to information on WASH by all.

Role of FANSA-BD: Advocacy work at policy level

- Capacity building of member organizations
- Strengthening LGIs
- Conduct/facilitate research, document good practices and disseminate
- Networking and work as WASH information hub
- Resource mobilization

Network approach of FANSA-BD



Key Activities done in July 2015 to June 2016:

- Press conference on pre and post national budget
- CSO meeting organized before SACOSAN-V held in Nepal
- Attend National Sanitation Task Force meeting on Advocacy for Right to Water
- Study on Faecal Waste Management in Small Towns: A Critical Area for Policy Focus
- Study on Traffic light paper for SACOSAN-V
- Coordinate SACOSAN VI in Dhaka for FANSA regional participants
- Partnering Sanitation conference: Journey 2 Zero along with government and international and national partners
- Organized Preparatory meeting of CSO on SACOSAN VI
- Organized preparatory meeting of community representatives on SACOSAN VI
- Inclusion of the Voices of the Most Marginalized Groups at SACOSAN VI
- Published national study report name: LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: Voice of Women, Adolescent Girls, Person with Disabilities and Sanitation Workforce
- Hosted Steering committee meeting of FANSA in Dhaka
- Observation of Water Action Month
- Observation of Global Menstruation Hygiene Day
- National dissemination on sanitation rights of Person with Disabilities
- Knowledge sharing on FSM at regional level

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

VERC has been working on health and environment since long with support from development partners and by mobilising its own resources. Main objective of the program is to ensure access to affordable health services for the poor and marginalised along with prevention of communicable diseases giving priority to mother and child health situation in working areas. Environment being an integral part of health, VERC gives emphasis on issues of environmental hazards. VERC initiatives cover MDG goals 4,5,7 and addresses 1,2,3 and 13 of SDG issues.VERC operated two full fledged hospitals in Savar and Mirsarai. People of the said areas especially children and mothers are getting health services from the hospitals. Beyond this, VERC has been implementing two Rights Based Projects to establish health rights of the poor and marginalized people in different areas of the country. The ICS program supports communities with fuel-efficient cook stoves to improve health and preventing the ongoing trend of deforestation. VERC is also active with specific interventions in building capacity across selected climate change vulnerable area people to combat the challenges in a sustainable manner.

Visible outcomes:

During the reporting period the total number of patients was 13457 which was 13058 in the previous year, the total income from the hospitals was Tk. 15.81 million (Tk.1,58,11,884); expenditure was Tk.13.32 million (Tk.1,33,22,237) and net surplus was Tk.2.49 million (Tk. 24,89,647).

Smoke emission related health hazards reducing through the use of ICS. Goat rearing in slatted house has reduced disease vulnerability of goats as such people are now more encouraged in goat rearing as an alternate source of income in the area.

Construction of waste water wells with water point contributes to ground water recharging as well as protection of the surroundings of the tube-well platform. Safe water sanitation facilities support extened to HHs. WaSH related disease vunerability reduced.

Under the BRUP project areas CDC is that, the whole community is strongly bonded and collectively brought together under a common vision, realized RRAP; to help each other in times of disaster. A good example of neighborhood was observed on several occasions like- fire outbreak at Dakshin Tetultola. During the fire outbreak at Dakshin Tetultola, CDC mobilized the community to feed affected families by collecting money from locals, managed temporary shelters for two days following the blaze..

Under the ERHSA project areas there is a process of replication of best practices of effective Community Clinic management and service delivery system in a sustainable manner being replicated in adjoining unions in the Upazila. The Upazila Parishad and UPs are actively supporting CCs in terms of infrastructure development, improvement of services allocating fund from the annual budget. A meaningful coordination under guidance of the UP Standing committee is established for a sustainable mechanism for service delivery has been visible in the remote area.

Ongoing projects at a glance:

Donors	Name of the project	Duration	Union/ Ward	Upazila/City Corporation	District
VERC Own Fund	VERC Mother and Child Hospital	2004 on going		Savar	Dhaka
VERC Own Fund	VERC Mother and Child Hospital	2013 on going		Mirsarai,	Chittagong
Cordaid , the Netherlands	Establish Rights to Health Services through Advocacy (ERHSA) Project	January2012-December 2015	16 Union	Abhayanagor, Shivalaya, Chirirbandar and Babuganj	Jessore, Manikganj Dinajpur, Barisal
IDCOL	Improved Cook stove (ICS) program	1987 on going	66 Union	Savar, Keranigonj Kaliakoir, Mohanpur, Bagmara, Durgapur,	Dhaka, Gazipur and Rajshahi,
PKSF-CCCP	Community Capacity building to Face Challenges of Drought as an effect of Climate Change (CBFDCC) Project	February 2014-September 2016	04 Union	Niamotpur	Naogaon
CARE, Bangladesh	Building Resilience of the Urban Poor (BRUP) Project	January 2015-December 2017	02 Wards	01 City corporation	Gazipur

VERC Mother & Child Hospital, Savar, Dhaka and Mirsarai, Chittagong

Since early nineties, VERC had been working on mother and child health with overseas donor support and the then BPHC was one of them. The services were aimed at meeting the MCH service needs that the Government health services could not meet adequately. To this effect, VERC had a coalition with the GoB service providers supported by community based trained volunteers across Savar, Singair, Aminbazar etc. The efforts were successful in establishing a reputation of VERC in the area which faced a setback with the phasing out of project focused activities, Later on based on the experience, inspiration of the volunteers and demand for MCH services from the communities, VERC took initiative to organize a mechanism so that the mothers in the noted areas can have access to quality services at affordable cost. To this effect, a Mother and Child Hospital has been established in 2004 and continuing rendering services to the poor and marginalized people in Savar, Dhaka. The hospital based curative services are linked with the communities through a pool of volunteers with experienced of working with VERC for more long. This network helps ensuring ANC/PNC services, safe delivery and treatment support in general ailments. This program is now running in the area in a sustainable manner.

VERC experience and successes as noted above has encouraged VERC to extend similar service delivery mechanism in Mirsarai, Chittagong when an overseas supported health project was phased out in 2013. The present service provisions available with the hospitals includes services like – ANC/PNC, normal delivery, caesarean operation, general treatment, pathology, ultra-sonogram, ECG and all kinds

of easy to manage surgical operation. Health services are provided to VERC beneficiaries from these hospitals at a subsidized rate and offering grant support to deserving poor patients. To this effect, VERC staff members make a generous contribution to the subsidy fund on a regular basis.

IBIG Section is responsible for planning and managing the program as its corporate social responsibility.

Services available with Savar Hospital

Two MBBS (one consultant and one full time residential medical officer) doctors specially trained on maternal & child health is available to render outdoor services every day. For indoor treatment of patients 10 beds are available with an air conditioned operation theatre, a safe delivery room, an observation room and a post operative care room in the hospital. The hospital has also manager, counsellor, lab technicians, diploma nurses and paramedics to provide counselling to pregnant mothers, postnatal mothers and eligible couples for recommending FP methods. EPI program already started in a collaborative manner with Savar Pourasava through Savar upazila health complex. Besides this free health camps were arranged by the hospital in Savar, Dhamrai and Singair upazilas as regular activity. Every health related international and national days are also observed by the hospital.

Hospital services at a glance

Particulars	July 2014 to June 2015	July 2015 to June 2016
Outdoor **Se**rvices	2,673	**2,642**
Normal Delivery	65	51
LUCS (Caesarean Operation)	831	849
Other Operation	31	39
M.R.	18	62
D.E & C	73	39
Pathology	2,749	3,194
USG	1,791	1,948
ECG	08	02
Health Card (ANC)	1,434	1,152
EPI	1,445	2,118
Total	**11,118**	12,096

During the reporting period, the total income from the hospital was Tk. 15.81 million (Tk.1,58,11,884); expenditure was Tk.13.32 million (Tk.1,33,22,237) and net surplus was Tk.2.49 million (Tk. 24,89,647). The total number of patients was 12,096 which was 11,118 in the previous year.

Services available with Mirsarai Hospital:

The hospital proves both indoor and outdoor services to the patients coming from Mirsarai and adjoining areas. One MBBS doctor specially trained on maternal & child health is available to render outdoor services every day. There are also manager, counsellor, lab technicians, diploma nurses and paramedics to provide counselling to pregnant mothers, postnatal mothers and eligible couples for recommending FP methods.

The hospital at Mirsarai is equipped with ambulance, pathology lab and patient beds with doctors and other supporting staff.

Total Number of 1,361 patients received services during the reporting period. Out of those 703 rceived outdoor services, normal delivery 73, caesarean operation 14, other operation 167, ultrasonography 141, pathology 258 and D&C 5 patients. In the previous year total number of patients was 1940.

Normal and safe delivery services of hospital brings happiness to Fatema and her family

Fatema Akter lives in Khoyea-Chhara village under Mirsarai upazila of Chittagong district. She is 30 years old now. She is the third among 4 sisters. Her father was a freedom fighter and worked in Bangladesh Army as a soldier. Her mother is a housewife. When Fatema was 5 years of age she lost her father. After a few years, she lost her 2nd sister due to road accident who was working in a non-government organization named YPSA. After the death of earning members, father and sister; her family had been struggling hard due to poverty.

At her 16 years of age she got married with an unemployed youth. After one year of married life she gave birth to a baby girl. While delivering the 1st baby she had to face complications and she had to suffer from that for 5 years.

Once, Fatema went to VERC Mother and Child Hospital for seeing a relative after caesarean operation for delivery. Then she could learn that, poor mothers and children get treatment from VERC Mother and Child Hospital at an affordable cost. Beside this, poor pregnant mothers get antenatal and post-natal care also safe delivery services from the hospital. She was delighted to know all these and came to the hospital for services. From the very beginning of her 2nd pregnancy she started coming to the hospital and got consultations from the doctors and paramedics regularly. After 9 months of pregnancy one day at 4.00 am when Fatema began to feel labor pain at home, her mother contacted VERC hospital over phone. Instantly, she was carried to the hospital with the hospital ambulance. Hospital doctor observed that there was no serious complication with her, so they get prepared for normal delivery. On that day a cute baby girl was born through normal delivery. VERC Mother and Child Hospital provided the services at a minimum cost. Fatema and her baby are in good health now. Fatema and her family members are very glad to have the baby and has thanked VERC hospital management.

Community Capacity building to Face Challenges of Drought as an effect of Climate Change (CBFDCC) Project:

This project is under implementation of WatSan & Technology Section with PKSF support. This is a 36 months project started with the support of Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) since January 2014. Key objective of this project is to build capacity of the people to combat with drought caused due to climate change by undertaking appropriate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation mechanisms.

Major activities carried out during the reporting period

- Training of 199 tube well mechanics and care takers on repair and maintenance of tube wells
- Installation of Tara pump/Tara Dev tube well-167, (HH- 1783, Benf. - M- 3496, F- 3485.)
- Distribution of Sustainable and Hygienic latrine-158, (HH-501 Benf. -M-907, F-993.)
- Demonstrate and distribute Improved Cooking Stoves - 795.
- Training imparted on goat/sheep rearing with slatted housing system - 124.
- Training and Technical Support for Goat/Sheep rearing by slatted housing system-101.
- Provide financial and technical support for re-excavation of ponds-03
- Distribution of 1500 saplings among the beneficiaries living on the bank of ponds

Visible outcomes
Smoke emission related health hazards reducing throug the use of ICS. Goat rearing in slatted house has reduced disease vulnerability of goats as such people are now more encouraged in goat rearing as an alternate source of income in the area.

Construction of waste water wells with water point contributes to ground water recharging as well as protection of the surroundings of the tube-well platform. Safe water suport to 1783 HHs and 6981 beneficiaries ensured.

Access to sanitation facilities ensured for 501 HHs and 1900 members. WaSH related disease vunerability reduced.

One slatted house brings back prosperity to an old woman

Mst. Majeda Begum lives at Natipukur village of Chandannagar union in Niamotpur upazila. She with seven members of the family (husband, son, daughter in law, grandson and grand daughter) was passing her life somehow. Her son with his wife and children got separated due to hardships. Majeda Begum became helpless as her husband is suffering from chronic diseases and can't make earnings. She was passing days with the money she got against mortgage of 16 decimal lands. She had no other income source other than a small house on khas land for living. In the situation she started sheep rearing on sharing with others. But she had no shed for protection protecting the animals from rains, dirtiness caused diseases and many of the sheeps died. She also could not think of protecting them from disease for lack of information.

Majeda Begum became a member of the group for fighting against the climate change related hazards and participated in the group meetings and awareness raising sessions on climate change, disaster preparedness and ways to face problems. She was supported with one slatted house constructed in her yard as well as two days training support; subsequently she bought one young cow-calf by selling 5 sheeps. At present, Majeda Begum is rearing 6 sheeps in the slatted house, one cow and many poultry birds in a hygienic manner. She always takes care of her livestock and poultry birds by providing vaccines and treatment. Now she doesn't have any deprivation and insufficiency like before. She is very much thankful to VERC CCCP project for all the support she received.

Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) Program

The noted activities are under implementation of WatSan & Technology Section. Village Education Resource Center (VERC) has been working on Improved Cookstoves Program in Bangladesh since 1987. By the time VERC has been disseminating different types of cookstove models which were developed by BCSIR (government of Bangladesh) and ARTI (India). From our experiences we have found that the Improved Cookstove can save 30-60% fuels compared to traditional ones and make the kitchen smoke free. As VERC intends to introduce improved stoves in our proposed working areas, hence it will reduce a huge amount of CO2 and this amount of CO2 can be traded in the carbon market. So the program will actively be contributed in reducing the poverty and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and where possible achieve other benefit such as improved human health and conservation of biodiversity, in a sustainable manner.

Goal of ICS program:
Disseminate Improved Cooks Stoves to improve health for mother and children.

Objectives:
- Reduce Indoor air pollution (IAP) for improvement of health especially mother and children
- Protect environment by reducing CO2 emissions and deforestation
- Mobilize the community for ICS promotion and use

VERC-IDCOL ICS project:

This is a nationwide project of IDCOL to disseminate 3 million ICSs through partner NGOs by July; 2018. As a partner of IDCOL, VERC has been working in 6 clusters and targeted to promot 18000 ICSs.

Major activities carried out during the reporting period:

- Conduct baseline survey in Keraniganj and Durgapur Cluster
- Orientation on ICS for IBIG, WASH and ICS team
- Construction, distribution and installation of 15,241 ICS
- Develop IEC and BCC materials on ICS
- Engagement of local entrepreneur for ICS production and sale
- Organize different events for ICS promotion e.g. courtyard meeting, cultural campaign (Gomvira), school session, CBO/UP meeting, miking, cooking competition
- Conducted Water Boiling Test (WBT) of newly innovated portable ICS models

In addition, a ToT on Empowerment, Business and Leadership (EBL) training has been conducted with GACC support. Subsequently, one batch of training has been conducted for selected women entrepreneurs. Practical demonstration has been conducted on bio-char fuel production at VERC ICS production center, Savar, Dhaka.

Visible outcomes:

Newly innovated tire -3 portable ICS has become popular in community. Campaign, awareness raising at user level, schools, UPs, contributed in the increasing number of ICS users. Training of catalysts has been effective in installation and use and making an income for the catalysts themselves is also visible in the areas. Mother and children in user families feel the health benefits of the technology use in terms of reduced complications of indoor air pollution. Overall impact in terms of fuel use efficiency, Carbon emission, income generation, conservation of forest resources and environment. Production and installation services are available around and people can find alternate technology options that helps them choose the affordable one for their purpose which contributes in retaining the rate of ICS users in the areas.

Aduri Rani: a successful ICS promoter

Aduri Rani Rajbangshi lives in Mazirdia village in Kaundia union, Savar, Dhaka. She has seven members' family i.e adult male-3, adult female-3, child-1 (4 months baby). She used to cook with clay made traditional cook stove. It emits huge amount of smoke, shoots and took lots of fuel and due to heat it was very difficult to stay longer in the kitchen. She had headache, tears rolls out of eyes with problem of irritation while cooking. She has been using an improved cook stove for the last two years. It makes little bit difference to the way she cooks i.e. before cooking she needs to prepare all the cooking ingredients ready and she needs to change the placement of pots from first mouth to second mouth when the boiling point is reached during the cooking. She paid Taka 950.00 for the new double mouth cook stove with chimney in three installments. It was very difficult for her to pay in one shot because that time she was dependent on her husband's income. She prefers the new cookstove because her kitchen is smoke free now, it takes less fuel. It is cost effective, saves time and the new stove is a pride for her family. She is habituated in the cooking pattern of new stove. The improved cookstove made her daily life easier and comfortable. She spend less time for collecting fuel, she is involved in social activities and working as a female entrepreneur. Her husband is very sick and cannot earn. With the adoption of new cookstove, she has enough time and she thought she can promote and disseminate information to others as she get benefit directly and enjoying a healthy life. Now she earns money and can go outside her area. She is known to her community as a stove installer. Her monthly income is about Taka 4000.00 to 5000.00. She can contribute to her family which was not possible earlier. Now she is very happy and enjoying the work.

Building Resilience of the Urban Poor (BRUP) Project:

The Building Resilience of the Urban Poor (BRUP) under implementation by Village Education Resource Center (VERC) with the support of CARE Bangladesh and funded by C&A Foundation in Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) from January 2015 and scheduled to continue till September 2017. The overall goal of the project is to enhance resilience of targeted urban communities and institutions to get prepared for, mitigation, response to and recover from shocks and stresses. The project is working with people in 06 vulnerable communities residing in 02 wards (Tongi-55 and Konabari-12) of GCC. Some of the key interventions include formation and capacity building of community platform, women groups and children on different issues; formation and capacity building of Disaster Volunteers; risk assessment and risk reduction action plan; strengthening disaster management committees; mock drill/simulation; forum theater; capacity building of Fire Service and Civil Defense (FSCD) personnel; livelihood training and support; research and advocacy on emerging issues etc.

Overall Goal

Enhanced resilience of six targeted urban communities and three targeted institutions, reaching a total of 8,000 individuals (directly and indirectly) who can prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from shocks and stresses.

Objective 1:

8,000 urban individuals (direct 2,000 and indirect 6,000) in six communities have enhanced resilience strategies to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from shocks

Objective 2:

300 poor and extremely poor women in the six targeted communities are empowered to become better risk managers at the household and community levels, influencing decision-making related to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Objective 3:
Enhanced capacity and responsiveness of three targeted institutions to provide services to the communities to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from shocks and stresses.

ACHIEVING PROGRAM GOALS: KEY PROGRESS

The BRUP team has provided technical support and utilized a participatory community-led approach to ensure sustainability of initiatives over time. Since inception, BRUP has been successful in building community awareness, preparedness measures against local hazards, promoting women's empowerment, ensuring child development, building linkages with public facilities and other stakeholders, and fostering participation in various programs and workshops. Project has developed a participatory monitoring system and has regularly advocated with a range of government bodies and community representatives to ensure effective implementation. The activities of BRUP are as follows:

STRATEGIC GOAL 1:
Urban individuals in six communities have enhanced resilience strategies to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses

CDC is working as a driving force to build community resilience

CDC is the heart of community-led activities running under BRUP Project. At the beginning of the year, the project has developed a comprehensive training module and awareness raising materials for CDC. Skill development training and later refreshers on leadership skill, strategy to develop community Risk Reduction Action Plan, disaster preparedness and emergency response, importance of women leadership, WaSH, garbage management, etc. have been provided to develop their capacity and lead the development work. Afterwards, following a standard process all CDCs have developed their by-laws and annual development plan, which guide an effective and sustainable course of operations to ensure accountability and transparency to the community.

During this period, a total of 72 CDC meetings were held where average attendance rate was 82%. In this meeting, CDCs discussed existing problem issues and made decisions regarding ways to overcome problems associated with community-led garbage management system, implementation of Risk Reduction Action Plan, mobilize community contribution and Labour Contracting Society (LCS) approach, liaison and networking with local elected body, conflict management etc. Beside these, VERC organized the 02 days basic training for CDC members at VERC Participatory Development Training Center at Savar, Dhaka and the project also organized a one day's refreshers training for all the members.

Urban Community Volunteers (UCVs) working as First responder team
A total of 254 UCVs have been selected from two wards according to criteria set by FSCD and during this period, 90 UCVs has been finalized. Initially, 200 (male-123, Female-77) UCVs received a 03-days basic training facilitated by FSCD and have learned basics of emergency search and rescue, firefighting and first aid. Uniform and identity card authorized by FSCD has been provided to all 200 trained volunteers for easy identification. A list of UCVs of respective ward is on display in community and their names are also included in government database. In order to sustainability and institutionalization, these UCVs closely work with WDMCs and FSCD. Furthermore, in regular quarterly meeting, UCVs practice tools and equipment at local fire stations. During this reporting period, 24 quarterly meetings held for 08 sub-groups and attendance rate was 91%. Each sub-group is composed of 28 to 32 members on an average. In this period, trained UCVs have made some exemplary instances like prompt responder to acidents like- wall collapse at Konabari, fire break out at Kolabagan-Tongi, fire incident at a Kaliakoir Apparel factory etc.

Developed R*isk Reduction Action Plan –addressing communities' risks and vulneribilites*

To identify specific risks, hazards, vulnerability of communities, Government's customized Urban Risk Assessment (URA) tool has been practiced in six targeted communities. The URA process has been carried on with separate groups of women, children, elderly and elites to prioritize their specific needs and hazards. Based on the identified risks and hazards, Risk Reduction Action Plans have been developed in communities. Gender inclusive plan with different groups brouht out some positive result.

During this reporting Risk Reduction Action Plan has been developing in the 06 targeted communities and two respective wards of this project. Total 613 no participants (M-319, F-294) were participated in

URA process. Members of CDC, EKATA and Children Forum of the respective community, Ward Councilors and representatives of socially excluded groups (women, children, elderly persons and persons with disability), Asst. Medical Officer, Slum development Officers participated with this URA process.

Garbage Management System has ***established a model of cleanliness***

Community-led garbage management system has been established in all the six targeted communities. CDC is leading the overall supervision and management of this system. Initially, CDC members of the respective community took the lead to mobilize community, monthly fee collection, deposit the money in the bank account. The accumulated fee will be used to run the system after BRUP exits. Primarily to initiate the process BRUP provided van, drum, collector's fee (100% in 2nd year and 50% in the 3rd year of the project) and some associate accessories. Out of six targeted communities, two privately-owned communities already had a garbage management system, serving only the well-off. With the guidance of the CDC, the community led service has expanded to cover all inhabitants of the community. CDC has the sustainability strategy and action plan to carry on the process by involving the City Corporation. The communities also carry out 'Community Cleaning Day' every three months.

During a temporary dumping crisis, CDC leaders talked to concerned authority and worked out a solution with the help of respective Ward Councilor. The community led initiative inspired others too, an additional number of 70 households from an adjacent community of Uttar Tetultola and a nearby market got linked to the garbage management system. Zonal Executive Officer became inspired by the community led garbage management system and expressed his interest to cover the whole ward. Through this service, a total number of 6004 people (Female-2999 and Male-3005) are being served every month.

Forum Theatre *and mock drill enhancing mass awareness*

Forum Theatre appeared as an effective tool of delivering awareness messages from the youth. In this period, 02(two) forum theatre groups were formed in two wards. These two groups are utterly created by the very local young people and children to create a possessive feelings and community ownership over the group. Based on local hazards identified through FGDs, two scripts have been developed emphasizing on social and environmental issues.The groups then received training on performance and gone through a number of rehearsals. Transforming youth as a responsible individual, the initiative is flourishing their creativity as well. Gradually youth are becoming socially responsible and working as change agents in order to bring a positive change in the community.

A total of 24 shows are performed at surrounding areas and on an average of 717 people enjoyed each show. Besides community awareness, it is an additional recreation for the busy urban dwellers. The Tongi Forum Theater group also performed a special show at the 10th International Community Based Adaptation (CBA-10) conference. During this period, a number of 05 mock drills have been organized with technical assistance of FSCD. Per mock drill, on average 1240 people witnessed the practical demonestration of fire fighting and earthquake preparedness in surrounding areas covering communities, schools and factories.

Children Forum is promoting behavioral change

Children forums follow child-to-child approach to disseminate messages related to DRR and social issues. To facilitate regular sessions, awareness module and pictorial materials have been developed focusing on child rights, personal hygiene, disaster preparedness, etc. Regular sessions are conducted by following the modules twice a month. To include children's priorities in DRR planning and implementation, BRUP ensured children's participation in URA process and developing the RRAP.

Apart from these regular sessions, children can pass some quality times with their peer groups in Information Centers that seriously lacks in urban setup. Besides learning-sharing, children can take part in games, read books or just have a conversation. During the reporting period, 86% children (Girl-2780, Boy-2382 and Total-5162) were present in total 204 awareness sessions.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:
Poor and extremely poor women in the six targeted communities are empowered to become better risk managers at the household and community levels influencing decision-making related to Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Women are working as an effective disaster manager in community and household level through EKATA process

EKATA is considered as the nucleus of all endeavors to foster women's potentiality. Usually EKATA groups meet fortnightly to discuss a range of social issues. By this time, awareness materials and training modules have been developed to focus on disaster preparedness, violence against women, alternative livelihoods, savings and financial inclusion etc.

EKATA approach resulted in increased community cohesion and women's access to basic services and decision making power. Including women and girls' participation in 'Gender Vulnerability Analysis' and 'Urban Risk Assessment' (URA) helped to identify their hazards like- darkness in community streets after dusk, lack of WaSH facilities, violence against women issues etc. During this period, 288 meetings were held attended by 7256 members. Attendance rate was 88%.

Workshop with Service Providers (particularly Health and WaSH)

VERC and CARE Bangladesh jointly organized a workshop on "***Sustainable Service Delivery Strategy at Gazipur City Corporation"*** involving all stakeholders and service providers on WaSH. The workshop was power-driven by the Gazipur City Corporation on 15th of June 2016 at GCC Auditorium. The main objective of this workshop was – building effective coordination among the service providers and to ensure quality services in targeted communities. Through this workshop, a participatory action plan was developed and build consensus on regular basis which will make the existing services more improved, available, affordable and pro-poor.
One of the great achievements of the workshop was to form a working committee instantly by putting GCC. The working committee consists of eleven member organizations which are BRAC, Bondhu Welfare Foundation, BNWLA, CARE, DSK, Marie Stopes, PSTC, World Vision and Smiling Sun.

Creating resilient livelihood opportunity for the most vulnerable women and financial inclusion

Income diversifying efforts have found an effective mechanism to increase family resilience to face any emergency or sudden shock. Poor households in which women are more solvent often achieve greater progress in terms of resilience and sustainability. By this time, BRUP developed a comprehensive guideline and according to Well-being Analysis (WBA), CDC selected a number of 118 most vulnerable women from six communities through feasibility assessment for appropriate livelihood and crosschecking of the individual beneficiary. In this period, selected beneficiaries developed their own business plan. A basic orientation on business plan was provided to selected beneficiaries also. It was a pre-condition of support that each beneficiary has to open a bank account and practice regular savings to get the second installment. To foster financial inclusion, BRUP took a number of initiatives like- advocacy with bank staffs to come to the communities for operating the banking procedure, account opening free of cost, simplifying banking formalities etc. Women widely choose grocery shop, tailoring, tea stall, beauty parlor, vegetable shop, small hotel or restaurant as IGA. Apart from the livelihood support receivers, a good number of women have been encouraged to formal banking.

Gender Vulnerability Analysis

The effects of climate change and disaster consequences are not the same for men and women. There are social and natural differences. Disasters increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women. People of all classes especially the poor are the most vulnerable group to experience those disasters. Women's limited access to resources and decision-making processes increases their vulnerability. As a Result, it is so important to identify Gender vulnerability for proper intervention.

The specific objective was of this analysis to increase understanding of gender issues and needs in disaster risk reduction by explaining the causes of the communities vulnerability especially Women and Children and make gender sensitive risk reduction action plan. During this reporting period, 06 (six) no's Gender Vulnerability Analysis has completed at particular communities of this project.

Knowledge and Information Centre *a center of vast information at the community*

Project has been established six information hubs in six communities earlier, which will provide residents with information on service provisions, and strategies for coping with risks and vulnerabilities. So, the hubs are serving various purposes of the community as source of information, female gathering, child gathering etc. Beside these, information center also established fruitful linkage with different service providing agencies like Surjer Hashi (Smiling Sun) Clinic, Bondhu foundation, Marie Stopes, BNWLA and in this period, 888 communities received various services like health awareness, legal aid and information from these centers.

Raising awareness through Day observance in line with Community and Government

BRUP project observed a number of International days in line with Govt. agenda to raise public awareness and mobilize people to end violence against women and children. 'The 16 Day Activism Against Gender Violence'; 'International Women's Day' and 'World Day against Child Labor' have been observed with appropriate solemnity.

Focusing the days, discussion arranged with gender inclusive group (men and women), discussion with children and parents, organized quiz competition in community level. In addition, BRUP participated in district level talks and rallies. Community had remarkable contribution to make these arrangements meaningful.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3:
Enhanced capacity and responsiveness of targeted institutions to provide service to the communities to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from shocks and stresses.

Mainstreaming Ward Disaster Management Committee (WDMC)

According to the roles and responsibility of WDMC members, training module has been developed and based on that module, BRUP organized capacity development training for the members of two WDMCs, during this period. Following the training, WDMC members developed ward level RRAP for their ward through a participatory risk assessment process and BRUP is advocating to mainstream RRAP in development plan of GCC. Beside these, project organized quarterly basis meeting regularly. During this period, a total of 07 quarterly meetings were held where 133 members were present.

Raising Disaster Awareness through Day Observances

VERC observed "National Disaster Preparedness Day (NDPD)" and "International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR)" in line with local administration through rally and discussion session. To demonstrate practical preparedness measures, mock drills have been arranged to make the observance fruitful. Urban Community Volunteers took part with FSCD to demonstrate fire and earthquake preparedness.

Outcome of BRUP project in this period

One of the major outcomes of CDC is that, the whole community is strongly bonded and collectively brought together under a common vision, realized RRAP; to help each other in times of disaster. A good example of neighborhood was observed on several occasions like- fire outbreak at Dakshin Tetultola. During the fire outbreak at Dakshin Tetultola, CDC mobilized the community to feed affected families by collecting money from locals, managed temporary shelters for two days following the blaze. Beside these, other key outcomes have been achieved – such as Developed RRAP in 6 of the targeted communities and 2 wards. Provide technical and need based support for functioning WDMC. In this period, IEC and BCC materials developed for EKATA and Children Forum. Beside these a comprehensive module also developed for CDCs and WDMCs training. Formed 200 no's trained UCVs who are working as extended force of FSCD. In this period, livelihood guideline has been developed and robust relationships have been built with the GCC and Ward Councilors.

Establish Rights to Health Services through Advocacy (ERHSA)

This project is being implemented under the Training and Communication Section with Cordaid the Netherlands support by adopting a right based approach to health services. This project is under implementation in 16 unions of 4 Upazila under Barisal, Dinajpur, Jessore and Manikgonj district. VERC has been working with this project to ensure better health services for the vulnerable people through developing an interlocked and integrated system by mobilizing the Union Parishad (UP) as the key responsible institution. Through this project VERC has capacitated the health service providers in the Community Clinic (CC) and Union Health and Family Welfare Center (UHFWC), UP, UEH&FPSC, Press Club and Community People through training, resource mobilization, workshop and awareness rising activities very successfully in this reporting period. Partner NGOs (PNGO) were engaged to provide facilitation and technical support to the service providers, Union Parishad (UP) bodies clinic group, clinic support group and Health Watch Committee (HWC) has been working as a pressure group. Local press club has been working for lobby and advocacy to ensuring better health services.

Goal:
Access of poor people in quality and pro-people health services and system of union level health facilities

Specific Objective-1: Ensure quality health services for vulnerable people
Strengthen capacity of Health Watch Committee, UP chairmen, UP health standing committees and Upazila Hospital Management Committee to influence and pursue for delivery of quality health services.

Specific Objective-2: Self sustainability
Build capacity of the HWC, UP Chairmen, Union Education, Health and Family planning standing Committees, Community Group (CG) and TBA to continue programs after withdrawal of project support mobilizing own resources.

Specific Objective-3: Results demonstration
Pursue with policy holders through field demonstration and evidenced base result for policy change at national and local level.

Specific Objective-4: Media for lobby and advocacy
Engaged Civil Society/ Media people of local press club for lobby and advocacy to influence policy level for ensuring better health services

Stakeholder wise major activities carried out during the reporting period

Government Health and Family Planning staff:

To improve the overall situation of providing health services like attitude of service providers and coordination among service providers to vulnerable people there were some activities in action plan in this reporting period. Considering the importance of coordination between the actors, a total of 2 quarterly NGO coordination meetings were held with: Revitalization of Community Health Care Initiatives in Bangladesh (RCHCIB) for sharing quarterly progress report of the community clinic, findings of the field level including the gaps observed and best practices. 4 quarterly meetings were held with the Upazila level Health and Family Planning staff in this reporting period. A total of 2 quarterly meetings with Health and Family Planning department at district level was held where shared with best practices, IEC materials on use; they appreciated the interventions/ approach of the project especially the health/hygiene awareness ludu was interesting to them, they started use of the ludu in one area for awareness raising purpose.

Community Group
Community Clinic is the lowest strata in the health service sector in Bangladesh. So, it was the most effective way to enhance the health services situation and increasing the health rights to vulnerable

group under this project. And community group was formed for monitoring and support to the Community Clinics services. A total of 576 monthly meetings held with Community Groups where female and male ratio was 2805 and 6543.

Union Parishad Chairman, Health Education, Health and Family Planning Standing Committee (UEH&FPSC) and Health Watch Committee (HWC):

During this reporting year; a total of 64 Bi-monthly meetings were held with HWC and UEH&FPSC to share/ review progress on annual action plan and their roles and responsibilities where the female and male ratio was 107 and 213 respectively. In the same way, a total of 96 bi-monthly coordination meetings were held with Union Development Coordination Committee for sharing and review of progress against plan of action, challenges, problems which were faced. Also, 16 open budget declaration meetings were held during the period in the project areas.

Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA):

In this reporting year, TBAs have proved their importance and capabilities in the ERHSA project in terms of services required by the needy vulnerable pregnant women., 320 TBAs attended 6 Monthly meetings for information updating about pregnant and post partum mothers to make them more skilled to support the vulnerable pregnant mothers as helping hand of local level health and family planning staff Family Welfare Visitors (FWV). TBAs helped 1365 pregnant women to get to the CCs and FWCs for ANC and 360 risk mothers referred to Upazila Health Complex for improved care.

Press Club:

Media is playing a vital role in promoting good practices and initiatives of development organizations. Media can draw attention of policy level on any issue that has effectiveness and impact at national level. ERHSA project has successfully motivated and mobilized local government (UP) and community through HWC and other health committees to become partners in government health service delivery system. In this case, ERHSA project developed plan of action for local press clubs on lobbying and advocacy at local level and quarterly meetings with local press club held where 108 local correspondents were present (Female and Male ratio was 2 and 106). ERHSA project has motivated local media people for lobbying and advocacy at local and national level by engaging press clubs at Upazila and district level. Members of the press clubs were invited in the briefing session of the project and outcome of the project will be shared with them later on duly. Staff correspondent of different media who are also member of local press club has been encouraged to publish success stories and initiatives taken by ERHSA project in their publications.

Mothers Club:

Mother's club is a very important stakeholder in this project. In fact, there were many activities undertaken during the project and some of those were directly related to the mothers club. A total of 144 mother's clubs have been formed with 2160 mothers in this period. This club also assisted 699 post partum women to ensure vitamin- A capsule supplementation. To save money for emergency and delivery period, a total of 960 mothers received savings pot through 64 quarterly reception and welcoming events of pregnant mothers. For giving the credit support to selected mothers club members, they were linked with the partner's micro credit program for herbal plantation and marketing of produces. Under this activity, a total of Tk.3063000.00 has been given as credit support to 524 selected mothers for homestead level herbal plantation so as to supplement the family income and support medication of family members in times of need.

Day Observation:

In the project areas, 4 networks and alliances have been established with national, local NGOs who are actively involved in health rights and service deliveries. The network members usually observed World Health day, Safe Motherhood day, National Nutrition Week and Community Clinic Day as regular activities

Through these activities, Upazila level Government health service providers shared their services and opportunities with the audience so that they are able to inform and can take responsibilities to ensure services for the vulnerable people.

District level Press conference

Media is playing a vital role in promoting good practices and initiatives of development organizations. Media can draw attention of policy level on any issues that have effectiveness and impact at national level. ERHSA project has successfully motivated and mobilized local government (UP) and community through HWC and other health committees to become partners in government health service delivery system. In this case, ERHSA project involved press clubs as important stakeholders for lobbying and advocacy at local level. In this continuation project holding of national press conference was an important activity of ERHSA project. In December 2015, district level press conferences for sharing of project achievements have been successfully completed in four Upazilas. BKF Abhaynagar, Jessore organized district level press conference on December 19, 2015, SEDA Shivalaya, Manikgonj organized this press conference on December 15, 2015; CDS Babugonj, Barishal organized district level conference organized on November 25, 2015, UDDOG,Bochagonj,Dinajpur district level press conference organised on 17 December,2016. Where total 93 media representatives participated from the 4 district press club. Many electronics media like- ATN Bangla, SA TV telecasted this news and many local newspapers also published this press conference news.

National Press Conference held at Savar Press Club

Village Education Resource Center (VERC) arranged a National level press conference for sharing of the projects achievements on 24 December, 2015 at Savar Press Club. It was one of the effective and important activities of ERHSA project. Many of the national and local level journalists, media personalities were present there. A brief multimedia presentation was presented by Subash Ch Saha, Project Coordinator of ERHSA where project outcomes and achievements were narrated through multimedia presentation. There was an open discussion among the journalists, project staff and others regarding the project achievements. Many electronics media like “ATN Bangla”, ATN NEWS, Asian TV, SA TV, telecasted this news and national and local newspapers like- Daily Kaler Kontho, Daily Manusher Kontho and Daily Fulki, Daily Jalamoyee also published this press conference news.Executive Director of VERC, Shaikh Abdul Halima was the chair of this press conference. He thanked all the staff of ERHSA project and wished to continue good practices of the project.

Public Hearing

A total of 4 public sharing workshops were organized with different stakeholders at 4 Upazilas for sharing the service quality and facilities available at the Union level health service institutions. The main objective of the workshop was to inform community people mainly poor and marginalized, local government institutions, community clinics related CBOs and trained TBAs about the rules and functions of Government health service delivery institutions at the community, Union and Upazila level. Rules and functions of Community Group and Community Support Group were also highlighted in the workshops. As the monitoring focal person of union parisad-education, health and family planning standing committees rules and functions were also discussed in the workshops and respective ward members agreed to share their achievements in respect of monitoring union level government health institutions.

Outcomes of ERHSA project during the reporting period:

- The best practices are being replicated among the others CCs, a very positive impact being observed in outside the project unions. There are very strong and visible positive impacts in Siddhipasha, Shreedhorpur, Dehergati and Jahangirnagar Union parishads in Abhaynagar and Babuganj Upazila. These union CCs are not directly involved with ERHSA project but their representatives regularly attended the Upazila quarterly meeting. As a result in Nauli Community Clinic a total of 12 safe deliveries were performed successfully. Chairman of Siddhipasha and Shreedharpur union parishads allocated fund from their annual budget on healthcare,/ treatment purposes of poor patients worth Taka- 250,000.00 and 185,000.00.. Siddhipasha union parishad provided delivery table and sucker machine for Nauli Community Clinic.

- A total of 16 Union Parishads allocated fund from teir annual budget on healthcare,/ treatment purposes of poor patients worth Taka- 864200.00 and infrastructure development of CCs worth Taka- 710000.00.
- All the community clinics of project area initiative generating own fund by opening bank account. A total of 48 CCs have generated fund worth BDT-1,956,200.00 in January to June 2016 for sustainability of CCs. They are using the funds for purposes like - improvement of physical environment of the clinic, plantation, earthwork, purchase of medical accessories, installation of electricity connection (temporarily), buying/replacement of electric fan and bulb to ensure better service to vulnerable people
- Newly introduced system of Quarterly Reception and welcoming of pregnant mothers have been found effective in raising awareness in the family as well as in the mother on the importance of special needs of the pregnancy period, developing understanding on pregnancy issues in detail. In this project year a total 980 pregnant mothers got the reception and welcoming from this project. They also got a savings pot where they can save money for emergency period.
- A total of 16 Union Parishads uploads ERHSA project activities in their UISC web page As uploaded the information on the web that would create an opportunity to disseminate the best practices of ERSHA project at local as well as at the national level.

Mothers Club of Ruhigaon Village

Ruhigaon is a small village of Bochagonj upazila in Dinajpur district. With the cooperation of Village Education Resource Center (VERC), Society for UDDOG (a local non government organization of Dinajpur) has been implementing Establish Rights to Health Services through Advocacy (ERHSA) project in Buchagonj upazila. A Mothers Club was formed in Ruhigaon village under Nafanagar Union. The club started its journey with 20 members but now the number of member is 30. Mothers club arranges group meeting every month and discussions are held on issues like - maternal health, child health, various services of Govt. Community Clinic and its development. In pursuance of discussion/decisions, the members of the club had been raising fund for the community clinic by collecting food grains from the villagers during the harvesting season. The sale proceeds amounting to Tk. 1500 was handed over to Community Group which has been deposited in the bank account of the community clinic (14731, Sonali Bank, Setabganj Br. Bochaganj). Mrs. Afroza Begum, President of the mothers club regularly attends the monthly meetings of the Community Group and talks on the issues like mother and child health and nutrition, maternal health and activities of community group etc. The Community Group in its monthly meeting decided that the fund will be used for the purposes like- the development of the community clinic and simultaneously help the hardcore poor pregnant mothers to meet the emergency needs of the pregnancy period. Pregnant women are given reception by the project where the club also arranges nutritional supplementation diets like mixed 'khichuri' for the mothers as a means for motivation on nutritional dietary practice by collecting rice, vegetables and others ingredients from the villagers. Mother's club members are split into small groups and awareness sessions are held with pregnant mothers by using various health related flash cards and flip charts. The club helps attending the nearby Community Clinic and UH&FWC for 4 ANC and PNC services. They also arrange transport for the hardcore poor mothers to reach the Upazila Health Complex for safe delivery. They take care of mothers after delivery by providing needed messages and distributing Vitamin-A capsule.

Mrs. Afroza Begum has taken initiative by mobilizing the area people to buy a van ambulance to meet the trouble of hardcore poor mothers accessing GoB hospital services. On seeing this kind of practice in Ruhigaon village, people of Ward 5 and 6 are trying to adopt this practice for similar service under their Community Clinic. They also have started collecting fund for their community clinic.

Mothers are now well aware and happy in Ruhigaon village. Mother's club members are thankful to ERHSA project for such an innovative and great idea of mothers club.

LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT

VERC is implementing Micro Finance Program with the disadvantaged and underprivileged poor people particularly with women as per the program strategy. VERC is also reaching the poor ethnic minority to fulfil the demographic coverage goal with Micro Finance Program for overcoming their helplessness, dependency and deprivation in the society. From the very beginning of initiating Micro Finance Program, VERC is expanding the areas and coverage of people gradually in the remote and isolated areas of Bangladesh with a view to outreach coverage and the sustainability of the organization as well. The program sector is contributing to VERC in attaining self-financing status in terms of contribution from the surplus (Tk.38,38,000 in the reporting year). Besides, the area expansion and population coverage, VERC is increasing multidimensional lending service delivery system by opening different wings gradually keeping relevance with the market demand and ensuring access to comparatively big size of investment amount in the rural and urban micro economy sectors. It has introduced new dimensions of investment in agriculture with a view to contribute in making agriculture a more dynamic sector of development and emphasizing on health service sector empowering people to demand service from relevant service giving agencies. At the same time, VERC is providing skill development training in agriculture other income generating trades along with leadership development, human rights and awareness raising training to the loan recipients prior to starting income generating activities.

Credit and training support to people in program areas have enabling communities on maintaining environmental hygiene, proper composting in pits, through hygienic disposal of garbage in fixed places so that contamination can be prevented, along with vermicompost skill, pesticide free vegetable production by using pheromone trap, the wastes are now turned into resources contributing to increased crop production and increased income as well as health and nutrition. Large scale extension in the area has made benefits accessible to more and more farmers in the program areas. Insurance coverage is benefiting both the organization itself and beneficiaries in terms of recovery support on unexpected death of beneficiaries and their families, also in case of cattlehead morbidity and death.

Goal

To create a community force capable of planning, operating and managing need based development programs to overcome the socio-economic problems associated with poverty and improving socio-economic status.

Objective
To raise the economic status of the poor people by engaging them in income generating activities and consequently make them self-reliant and improving their social status.

VERC believes that without a positive change of the economic status of the poor people all types of development activities will prove to be futile and from this reality based feelings, VERC started Micro Finance program in selected locations of the country in 1982. VERC obtained PKSF Partnership in 1996 and Micro-Credit Regulatory Authority (MRA) awarded membership for operating credit program as per rules of the Government in 2006. VERC operates all of its Micro Finance programs in 2,073 villages of 297 unions under 56 Upazilas of 17 districts in Bangladesh. The program is managed by 597 staffs working under 66 branches spreading across the country.

Main activities carried out in each specific program in brief

Sl No	Program Name
1.	Jagoron
2.	Agrosor
3.	Sufolon
4.	Buniad
5.	Sahos
6.	Kuwait Goodwill Fund (KGF) for Promotion of Food Security in Islamic Countries Program
7.	Agriculture Unit and Livestock Unit
8.	Enhancing Resources and Increasing Capacities of Poor Households Towards Elimination of their Poverty (ENRICH) Program
9.	Developing Inclusive Insurance Sector (DIISP) Project
10.	UPP-Ujjibito project
11.	Skill for Employment Investment Program (SEIP)

1. Jagoron Program

Jagoron loan provides means for the poor families to take small loans to help them to be engaged in productive activities or to expand their small business. Thus it can help the poor to increase income, build viable business and reduce their vulnerability to external shocks. It is also a powerful instrument for self-employment by enabling the poor, especially women, to become income earners and agents of change. The clients of Jagoron Program are low-income persons who do not have access to formal financial institutions. Till June 2016, the number of Members was 79,666 in 5,170 groups; No. of Borrowers–53,652; Loan Outstanding (portfolio) Tk. 671.02 million (Tk.67,10,20,586); Savings Outstanding-Tk.309.73 million (Tk.30,97,30,964); and the recovery rate was 99.93%.

- The scope of project implementation has increased as outcome of imparted training on income generating activities side by side with micro credit support.
- About 5-7% beneficiaries are enhancing their status through proper use of micro-credit support and implementation of projects
- Health and Sanitation status improved 3.96%

2. Agrosor Program

VERC observed that there are many small entrepreneurs, small and medium scale market based businessmen and skilled workers in the rural and semi urban areas in Bangladesh who are struggling to expand their business due to lack of capital. Based on the realization, VERC has been lending Agrosor loan products in addition to its Mainstream Micro Finance to meet the demand of the large number of clients. VERC Micro Enterprise lending products

also covers previous borrowers of the Mainstream Jagoron program who have been successful in generating income by establishing different profitable schemes and made their production/scheme responsive to the market who have proven track of successfully passing several loan cycles. The status of members till June 2016 is 8,839 No. of Borrowers- 7,143; Loan Outstanding (portfolio)-is Tk. 439.17 million (Tk.43,91,72,231); Savings Outstanding amounts to Tk. 136.58 million (Tk. 13,65,86,617); and the recovery rate is 99.85%

- Capacity of the use of micro-credit support enhanced
- Job opportunities increased
- Increased rate of higher education in children
- Enhanced social status

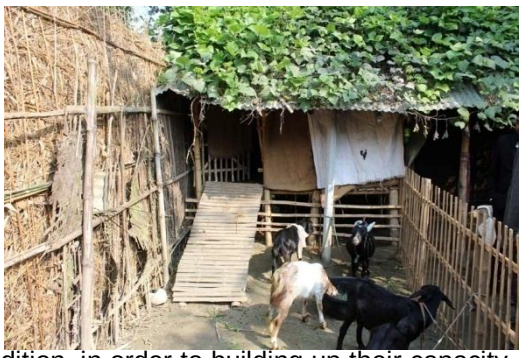
3. Sufolon Program

Through the implementation of micro finance activities, VERC has observed that most of the beneficiaries are involved in agriculture based seasonal activities. They face financial crisis for agricultural production purpose. As a result they are not getting expected output. To increase their production and make them financially well off, VERC has initiated to implement the Sufolon program. VERC firmly believes that this is a part of multi-dimensional microfinance activities assisting the farmers in due time with positive outcome. Till June 2016, No. of borrowers is 11,499; Loan Outstanding (portfolio) is Tk. 259.28 million (Tk.25,92,82,483) and the recovery rate is 99.93%.

Beef fattening activity is gaining popularity among the borrowers for making income can be mentioned as an outcome of Sufolon program. Eidul-Azha requires supply of a huge number of cattle heads for sacrifice as a result the price of cattle heads escalates in the markets. In the context of seasonal crisis, fattening has become popular across communities and to this effect; VERC offers financial support to interested borrowers to make an income. This is now a popular way of making seasonal income across the program areas and the demand for support is gradually increasing every year.

- Reduction in the use of hazardous pesticides
- Increased awareness, the use of de-worming tablets and vaccine increased
- Dynamism in the ivolvement of seasonal activities

4. Buniad Program



The people who can't fulfil their basic needs, having no permanent address, with little or no education and health support and not having little access to social benefits are known as Buniad. Most of these Buniad members are floating. So it is difficult to organize them as sustainable groups. VERC is trying to identify these people for group formation, supporting them for income generating activities and introduce them to social values since October 2005. Under Buniad program, 2,660 Buniad members received training support on various issues. In addition, in order to building up their capacity, VERC imparts training to them on various IGA and social issues. Till June 2016, number of members stood at 5,570; and borrowers 3,885; Loan Outstanding (portfolio) amount is Tk. 32.96 million (Tk.3,29,63,008); Savings Outstanding is Tk. 12.91 million (Tk.1,29,18,353) and Reco very Rate is 99.99%.

- Reduced number of extreme poor households
- Increased opportunities of undertaking more and more small scale projects
- Training on IGAs has increased the capacity of implementing project activities.

5. Sahos Program

The loans that are distributed among the poor families who are affected by man made as well as natural disaster are termed as VERC Sahos Program. Sahos Program means when the loan distributed among the enrolled members from disaster management in response to their demand for disaster preparedness, in times of disaster and for the post-disaster period recovery purposes. A borrower can take further loan as disaster management loan in disaster period though he/she has a regular unpaid or partially paid loan under the program on the condition of no overdue instalment remains pending.

In case of disaster preparedness loans the purposes are preparation for tackling disaster, fulfilling demand for food and basic livelihood related goods, for purchasing life saving drugs, for repairing of damaged house, latrine and for tube well repairing or reinstallation and for rehabilitation activities. After disaster, the borrowers can take disaster management loan. Under this program, beneficiaries can take a maximum of Tk. 10,000 as loan at a time. The duration of this loan is 12 months and service charge is 4% per year. Till June 2016 total number of borrowers was 1,826 and loan distributed Tk. 88,03,000.

6. Kuwait Goodwill Fund (KGF) for Promotion of Food Security in Islamic Countries Program

The goal of Kuwait Goodwill Fund (KGF) for promotion of food security in Islamic Countries by creating scope of distributing loan as per need for agriculture and agriculture related activities like - food production, preservation and market promotion for food and livelihood security. Its objectives are to make use of modern, effective and sustainable agricultural technology related knowledge and implement it in agriculture sector for increasing production to meet food deficiency reduction targets in the country.

Enrolled members of Jagoron program, Agrosor program and Sufolon program of VERC will be eligible for receiving this loan. This project has two sub components. 1) Loan support, 2) Capacity building and technical support. Till June 2016 no. of borrowers was 3,758; amount of loan outstanding is Tk. 117.74 million (Tk. 11,77,46,750) and recovery rate is 99.96%.

Outcomes

Capacity building training with technology support being offered from VERC in Bholahat, Shibganj, and Singair Upazilas of the country is promoting USG (Urea Super Granule) for rice cultivation. This has brought down the use of Urea from 35% – 40% ensuring continuity of nitrogen supply and increased production up to 20%. VERC also provides applicator for Urea deep placement in the field in the effort. The activities under the Livestock Unit has ensured reduced mortality rate (.56% compared to the previous year .33%) in cattleheads through free vaccination and low-cost deworming.

7. Agricultural Unit and Livestock Unit

From the experience of implementing various agro-based projects and programmes, VERC observed that agricultural production cannot be augmented without channelling technological and capacity building supports along with credit facility to the farmers. With this reality, VERC has established “Agriculture Unit” from October 2013 for extending sustainable agricultural technologies and services to the door-steps of marginal and small farmers with a view to increasing agricultural production as well as ensuring food security. During the reporting period 21 block demonstration has been established by providing 150 porous pipes, 2150 pheromone traps and, 690 kg Urea Super Granule (USG) to the farmers. In addition, result demonstrations has been undertaken in order to popularize high yielding zinc enriched variety of BRRIdhan 62 and summer tomato. Similarly, a specific method demonstration on compost preparation has been established in order to inspire the use of bio-fertilizer, a total of 156 demonstrations have been arranged to enhance native fish culture, composting, rice seed production and vegetables cultivation.

Livestock unit demonstrated improved technologies on goat rearing, dairy milk production, beef fattening and vermicompost production, fodder production in selected beneficiaries during this

period. There were in total 389 demonstrations at Singair upazila under Manikgonj district and Dhamrai upazila under Dhaka district.

Outcomes

The training has enabled community people in 15 Unions of 2 Upazilas (Dhamrai and Singair) on maintaining environmental hygiene through hygienic disposal of garbage in fixed places so that contamination can be prevented, along with vermicompost skill training, they have started using the wastes as organic manure through proper composting in pits. The wastes are now turned into resources contributing to increased crop production and increased income. The skill traning and its demonstration impact have aroused interest in significant number of farmers to produce and make use of the manure for increased agricultural production. The other important technology based skill training in the above noted area is for pesticide free vegetable production by using pheromone trap. During the reporting period, a total of 300 in 12 batches have been conducted along with field based demonstration was organized. The outcome includes availability of insecticide free vegetable in the area attracting whole sellers offering better price to the farmers and the pheromone trap technology is also on large scale extension in the area to make it accessible to more and more farmers in the program areas. This is benefiing the consumers as well as the farmers in terms of increased income, health and nutrition. This is also being applied in case of mango orchard in Bholahat and Shibganj areas.

8. ENRICH Program

ENRICH is a program conducted at the grassroots level focusing for overall household development of the poor. The programme targets poor families, working with them to enhance and maximize the utilization of their resources and skills. ENRICH aims to alleviate poverty not only through income generation but through a holistic approach targeting other crucial aspects of human life including health, education, youth development, community development, etc, the goal being sustainable development driven by the people themselves.

By working with selected households in association with the local government and committed stakeholders, ENRICH catalyses the households' efforts to lift them out of poverty. The overall goal of the programme is to ensure human dignity and freedom by gradually reducing poverty in a sustainable manner, towards total elimination at the household and community level in a union.

VERC is implementing ENRICH program in Laxmanpur union under Monohorgonj upazila of Comilla district. During the reporting period 100 sets of sanitary latrine distributed among 100 poor families, 10 set sanitary latrine distributed among local poor communities, 5 tube-wells installed, 10 culverts constructed, 2 beggers rehabilited by assets transfer. 4 general health camps, a special eye camp 207 static clinic and 48 sattelite clinics have been also organised in this period. Beside this 24 education centers have been set up and 589 students are continuing education in class I and II.

Outcomes

Out of 340 pregnant women 231 received ANC support, 96 had safe delivery support and 84 received PNC support from the project. Besides, the project organized special eye camp through which 165 patients had been offered treatment support and 13 were given cataract surgery service.

9. Developing Inclusive Insurance Sector (DIISP) Project

The project goal is to reduce the vulnerability and improve welfare of the poor through improved access to reliable and affordable institutional risk mitigation services through micro insurance, building upon the existing risk mitigation services. The objective of the project is to protect the livelihoods of poor households, especially women, from risks such as accidents, illness, theft or natural disasters- to secure their welfare and productive or unproductive assets through the development of low-cost inclusive insurance service coverage.

Project activities are divided into three components-

1. Microcredit Insurance: VERC is providing Microcredit Insurance services to the borrowers from October 2013. Under this insurance policy till 30 June 2016 number of 1,01,635 borrower took

policy and premium collected was Tk. 26.04 million. Claim paid was Tk. 15.45 million among 908 policy holders and fund balance was Tk.37.02 million.

2. Paramedic Services: Under this component, a member has to pay Tk.80-100 as premium for one year to get Paramedic Services. Up to June 2016 total number of 4014 benificiaries got treatment, moreover 3262 beneficiaries received services provided by specialized doctors. At that time service charge collected was Tk. 0.49 million.
3. Livestock Insurance: To obtain this policy the borrower has to pay 0.7% of loan amount as premium to get their cattle insured for the loan period. In the last financial year (July'15 to June'16) the amount of premium collected was Tk. 1.24 million and claim paid was Tk. 1.62 million. Up to June 2016 livestock Insurance fund balance is Tk. 1.76 million.

Oucomes

Organization and beneficiaries are mutually benefited in terms of recovery support on unexpected death of cattle, beneficiaries and their families.Opportunities created for the hardcore poor obtaining better treatment from renowned hospital. Health burden reduced as health services rendered by doctors are now available at the door-step at an affordable cost.

10. UPP-Ujjibito project

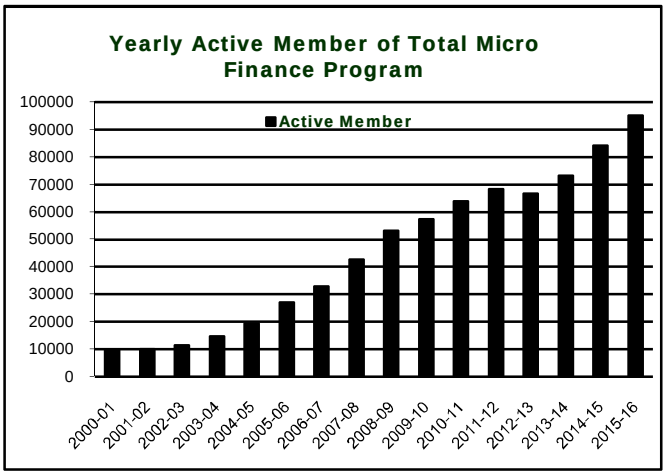
For reducing poverty and hunger of women headed and vulnerable ultra poor families VERC took initiatives through this project in the selected areas of Rajshahi district. Expected results of this project are: 1) women beneficiary and their families have the means to enjoy a standard of living 2) health and physical well-being of women beneficary and their families has significantly and sustainably enhanced 3) for enhanced empowerment and participation in society of women beneficary and their family members. Under the project, to enhance the capacity of beneficiaries, during the reporting period, VERC has imparted training on vermi compost to 25 members, handicrafts to 25 members, tailoring training to 25 members and goat rearing training to 100 members. Besides these, during the reporting period supports have been under this project includes - Seed distribution-90 kgs, Vaccination (Goat) - PPR- 500, Vaccination (Poultry)-RDV-500, Vaccination (Poultry)-BCRDV-500, Deworming-500, Goat rearing firm- 2, Nursery-1, Adarsha Ujjibito Bari-1, Small Business-1 and Vermi compost plant-25.

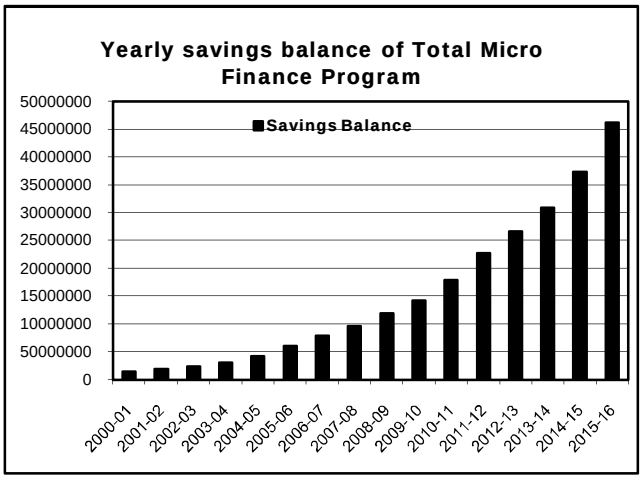
Outcomes

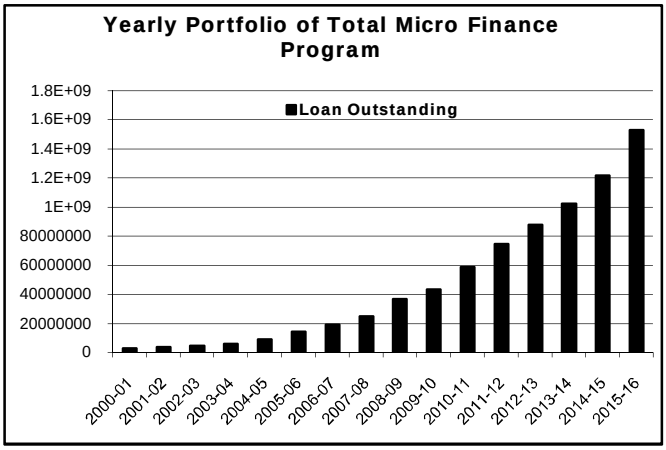
Through the project, poverty and hunger in 588 women headed families experiencing a gradual reduction. Mother and child health awareness is increasing among the project beneficieries. During the period 74 pregnant mothers received ANC service and 90 mothers received PNC services. A total of 211 chidren has been screened and 30 malnourished children were identified in the area who were gived counselling support and the nutritional status of 23 has already improved.

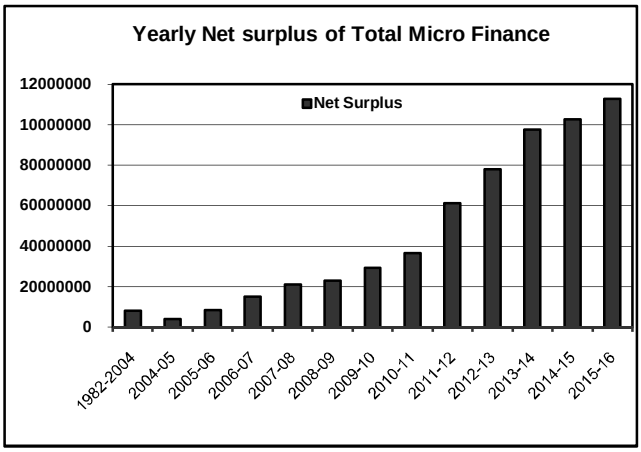
Total Program Implementation at a glance (Up to June 2016)

Particulars	Status of 2014-15	Status of 2015-16
No. of Branches	60	66
No. of Districts Covered	15	17
No. of Upazilas Covered	51	56
No. of Unions Covered	281	297
No. of Villages	2,014	2,073
No. Staff Involved (Operation)	563	597
Total No. of Group/Samity	6,329	7,299
Total No. of Members	84,035	94,999
Total No. of Borrowers	66,824	76,486
No. of Borrower (Cumulative)	0.61 Million (6,13,766)	0.71 Million (7,15,401)
Disbursement Amount (Yearly)	Tk 2,257.77 Million (Tk 225,77,75,000)	Tk 2,878.09 Million (Tk 287,80,91,000)
Disbursement Amount (Cumulative)	Tk 11,564.66 Million (Tk 1156,46,63,000)	Tk 14,442.75 Million (Tk 1444,27,54,000)
Realizable Amount (Yearly)	Tk 2,068.66 Million TK 206,86,66,068	Tk 2,568.48 Million TK 256,84,84,083
Realized Amount (Yearly)	TK 2,060.04 Million TK 206,00,40,643	TK 2,557.85 Million TK 255,78,50,379
Realized Amount (Cumulative)	Tk 10,347.31 Million TK 1034,73,10,065	Tk 12,905.33 Million TK 1290,53,37,228
Loan Outstanding (Portfolio)	Tk 1,217.35 Million (Tk 121,73,52,935)	Tk 1,526.78 Million (Tk 152,67,83,066)
Savings Balance	Tk 373.90 Million (Tk 37,39,06,791)	Tk 462.40Million (Tk 46,24,04,158)
Insurance Balance	Tk 28.25 Million (Tk 2,82,52,727)	Tk 39.94 Million (Tk 3,99,41,550)
Recovery rate	99.92%	99.92%



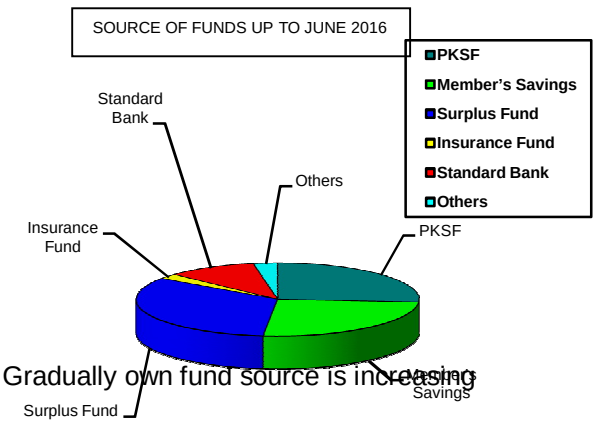






Source of funds up to June 2016

Source	Amount (In Tk)	Percentage
PKSF	47,41,99,997	26%
Surplus Fund	60,06,39,340	33%
Member's Savings	46,24,04,158	26%
Bank Loan	18,70,00,000	10%
Insurance Fund	3,99,41,550	2%
Others	4,99,00,152	3%
Total	181,40,85,197	100%



Gradually own fund source is increasing with increased surplus fund which is 33%. Member's contribution is also 26%.

Agriculture Advice Center: VERC operated two Agriculture Advice Center at Singair upazila under manikganj district and Dhamrai upazila under Dhaka district to solve farmer's problem instantly and timely informing farmers on upcoming hazards.

Collaboration and networking done during the reporting period

VERC has been taking part in PKSF organized workshops/trainings that are useful in enhancing the level of efficiency in staff members and making interventions more output oriented. Participation in the Exhibition that was held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka was a scope for wider dissemination/exchange of experience of working with the poor and marginalized.

IBIG contribution in terms of CSR: The Micro-Credit Regulatory Authority of the Government of Bangladesh has been asking the NGOs working on micro-credit in the country to make contribution

towards meeting the social development needs of the poor and marginalized people. This is necessary to help the poor and marginalized people securing a better living through increased access to employment and income and livelihood support including WaSH, health and education whereby organizational efforts will contribute in achieving the MDG targets. IBIG program of VERC is making contribution from its CSR allocation towards social development in different areas of the country supporting interventions on education, health, ICS and has been supporting a pilot initiative of VERC in developing an integrated total development approach program in a union in Kaliakoir. The contribution amounts to Tk. 38,38,000 for the reporting year and the total of till date contribution stands at Tk. 1,47,38,369.

VERC Sambhar: VERC has started a showroom inside VERC campus with the products of it's beneficiaries who are involved with various IGA project implementation since 2012. The beneficiaries take loan from VERC and they produce colorful and quality products for which they need market access to get right price of their products. In the context, VERC started the showroom cum sales center for marketing of the products by creating market linkage with the customers and buyers. Tk. 7,00,000 (seven lacs) has been invested from the service charges of VERC micro-finance program as preliminary working capital for VERC Sambhar.

Raw material for wig production has brought fortune to many including Asea's family

Asea Khatun lives in Goshaipur village under Manda upazila of Naogaon district. She is an IBIG group member in VERC Manda branch area. Md. Moslem Ali is her husband. She is a successful entrepreneur trading on women's disbanded hair. At present, 20 people are employed with the collection and processing of hair in the area making a good income for livelihood.

About 12 years ago she was simply an ultra poor woman struggling for survival with her husband, father in law, mother in law and two children. Her husband was a day labor. He was in difficulty to bear the family burden with his poor income. So poverty was their regular company. Asea was looking for doing something, but could not find any way out. Then she decided to be engaged as a housemaid. Even then she was failing to fight out the miseries of daily life; in such a situation she could hardly think of sending the children to school for education. After that, they could not get rid of poverty and could not afford education for her children. After being acquainted with VERC activities Aseea admitted herself as a member of VERC group under ultra poor program and she started to save Tk. 10 per week. After 3 weeks of membership she received Tk.4,000 as loan for small trade on cosmetics walking on foot. At that time Moslem Ali came to know that there is scope of trading on women's disbanded hair and that is profitable. Then he started collecting disbanded hair by exchanging cosmetics and selling those to a processor. Income on the trade started increasing gradually. After repaying the first loan, Asea received Tk.10,000 for the 2nd time and he started processing of disbanded hair with their 2nd time loan and saved money. He processed hair in his own factory and sends it to the exporter in Dhaka. He earned Tk 10,000 per month. Then Asea was graduated as a Jagoron member after changing positively and socio-economic life status. They admitted their children in nearest primary school. On the 3rd, 4th and 5th times she received Tk. 20,000, Tk. 30,000 and Tk. 50,000 as credit accordingly for the same business. Now they are earning about Tk. 25,000 per month from the business. At present, Aseea has a tin shed building hygienic latrine and a tube well for safe water in her yard. Two of her sons going to school and reading in class ii and iii respectively. Aseea thinks that in near future, it would be possible for her to establish a big factory and export her products to China. She is thankful to VERC for the change initiated in her life.

Missing bit of the story – formerly, she collected the disbanded hair moving door to door in villages within Manda upazila. These were then sold out to another trader of his area who used to process/straighten the stuff and sold it to another trader in Dhaka.

Piloting of Integrated Program in Kaliakoir:

VERC has undertaken an integrated project on pilot basis in Kaliakoir Upazila in Gazipur district. Its aim is to replicate the sectorwise best learning of VERC program/projets so that a ground for sharing can be installed in the easy to reach location for others. The area is located within the distance of one hour drive from VERC head office. After completion of ground works in the area, 7 ECD centers have been activated in collaboration with respective SMCs of Govt. primary schools; after selection and orientation of teachers, the centers have been running based on local resources and initiatives.Presently, 88 boys and 59 girls are attending class in the centers. A total of 7 trained teachers are engaged for the center on regular basis and their salary being paid jointly by VERC and by the parents.

A total of 8 WatSan CBOs have been involved in promotion of hygiene practice through message dissemination and followup support is being rendered to maintenance of sanitation facilities. A total of 12 existing IBIG groups are being linked with other development activities.

During the year Community Bsed Primary Health Care program has been started in Ward-9 (Ataboha Union) by engaging 4 Health Assistants with due training/orientation on preventive and primary health care. Activities are carried out maintaining linkage with he UP Educatin Health and Family Planning Standing Committee, UHFWC and the CC concerned.

VERC is extending staff support from IBIG for facilitation and resource mobilisation to carry on this innovative project. VERC senior magement team members along with other senior level program personnel are also involved in the project process.

Outcome:

- The centers have been successful to mainstream 53 boys and 39 girls in January 2015
- Community Pays 50% of teacher's salary.

Particulars	Achivement 2014-2015	Achivement 2015-2016
No. of ECD Center	4	7
No. of Children	96 (B-53-G-43)	147 (B-88-G-59)
No. of Teacher	4	7
WatSan CBOs	8	8
IBIG groups	12	12
No. of Community Clinic	-	01

CAPACITY BUILDING

Since its emergence VERC has been emphasizing people's participatory sustainable human development and capacity building of the development actors as facilitators and to institutionalize the lessons learnt from the development process as clearly enumerated in VERC's Mission statement and Strategy. In accordance with that the Training Program of VERC has been addressing its mission and strategy.

Training Program set the goal to enhance human potential, change the attitude and develop commitment of development actors at different levels to enable them to contribute in the development sectors. Accordingly, transfer the skill and knowledge, enhance human and institutional/ organizational capacity undertook series of capacity building activities since its inception.

Training Program has not only developed the capacity of VERC program staff, it also plays a key role in capacitating relevant government staff, LGI representatives and other NGO staff in order to contribute in the development sectors, particularly in the fields of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion; Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation; Governance; Gender awareness; Human Rights; Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Basic ToT, Motivation and Facilitation, Child Rights Programming, Child Protection,; Disaster Preparedness and Management; Community Mobilization, Education; Advocacy and Process Promotion; Early childhood development, Non formal Education, Primary Health Care, Nutrition, Micro Finance and Small & Medium Entrepreneurship Development. A total of 551938 participants received training since inception of the organization. During 2015–2016 the Program has covered 19392 participants and the participants have turned into efficient contributors in the development process in multiple ways.

Training imparted during the reporting period on contract basis:

Training on Community Mobilization and Facilitation for Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officer of Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Veterinary Field Assistant of Department of Livestock (DLS) and Field Assistant of Department of Fisheries (DoF) of government staffs:

Training & Communication program staff conducted Training on Community Mobilization and Facilitation for Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Veterinary Field Assistants of the Department of Livestock (DLS) and Field Assistants of the Department of Fisheries (DoF) of the government financed by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Community Mobilization and Facilitation Training was started on 24 May, 2015 and ended on 10 September, 2015. A total of 314 Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers (SAAO) of DAE, Veterinary Field Assistants (VFA) of DLS and Field Assistants of DoF participated in the training in 13 batches where SAAOs were 226 (Male-214, Female-12), VFAs were 47 (Male-47, Female-0) FAs 41(Male-41, Female-0) in the reporting period in Rangpur and Barisal.

Training on Nutrition for Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Veterinary Field Assistant of Department of Livestock (DLS) and Field Assistant of Department of Fisheries (DoF) of the government:

The Nutrition Training was started on 16 November, 2015 and ended on 27 January, 2016. A total of 451 Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers (SAAO) of DAE, Veterinary Field Assistants of DLS and Field Assistants of DoF participated in the training in 19 batches where SAAOs were 373 (Male-347, Female-26), VFAs were 46 (Male-46, Female-0) FAs 32 (Male-32, Female-0) in Rangpur and Barisal.

Outcomes of contract training of the reporting period:

- The Section has earned an income of Tk. 4,104,861.00 by imparting training to partners in the country during the reporting period and the amount of contribution to the General Fund amounts to Tk. 845,454.00.
- Exercise by participants of the training on community mobilization process through the use of PRA tools have been effective in terms of farmers group meeting facilitation
- Farmers groups are successful in ensuring balanced diet and good meal with the products of backyard poultry and nursery culture in their courtyard and surroundings
- The knowledge and skills of the training has been put into practice for safe food Storage and Food safety concerns at households practicing backyard poultry and small livestock and its preventive measures

Training support to VERC projects during the reporting period:

During the reporting year, various VERC projects were supported through the capacity building of 18627 staff and stakeholders in 822 batches of various training courses. On WatSan and Technology program 144 batches of training imparted where 2568 participants took part. On various education program issues 177 batches of training imparted and 4122 participants took part. Training on Livelihood program imparted 203 batches of training and 5312 participants took part. Health and Environment program imparted 298 batches of training and 6625 participants have been covered.

Outcomes of project training of the reporting period:

Capacity enhaced in program catalysts like teachers, volunteers, entrepreneures, students, SMCs, CPMC, CDC, Ward Disaster management committee, Women's groups and all types of CBOs active in program sectors in program areas across the country.

Staff development training in other organizations within the country:

To meet up program management and other conceptual and skill development capacity needs of staff members, a significant number of training in relevant organizations participated by staff members within the country. In all 77 staff members were trained by different sector expert organizations.

The above supports were available from PKSF, WaterAid, Save the Children, Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (GACC), John Hopkins University, Winrock international, USAID, IOM, Visionaria Network, IDCOL, FAO of the United Nations, Agakhan Foundation and Bangladesh Shishu Adhiker Forum (BSAF) while BRAC, CDF and InM (Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development) were the specialized development partner agencies for staff capacity building. The courses include ToT on teaching techniques, ToT on MIS, ToT on Survey Methods, Monitoring and Evaluation, Technology based (mobile) MIS, Gender and Women Development, Basic ToT, Savings and Micro-credit management, Accounts and Finance Management, Book Keeping and Accounting and Clients Protection Policy, ToT and Academic Supervision Refresher Training, Master Trainer Training on ICT in Education, Training on Supervisory Excellence, Master Trainer Training on Reading Instruction and Assessment, Training of Trainers Workshop on Empowered Entrepreneur Trainer Certification Program, Participated TOT on ICS to boost up technical knowledge on newly innovated portable with metallic lining stove (Tier -3), Participated Mason Training on ICS (Portable with metalic lining), ToT on Empowerment, Leadership & Business, Training on Empowerment, Leadership & Business for Female Entrepreneur of ICS, Hands-on Training on making Bio-char fuel, TOT on Grade-5, TOT on Nutrition,

TOT on Preprimary Professional Development, Training on CRC & Child labour Programming etc. for program staff of different program sections.

RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Since emergence VERC has been undertaking different types of community development research and related innovative activities. Later on Research, Evaluation and Documentation (RED) Section has emerged within VERC for conducting action research and piloting new initiatives which are documented and shared with the partners, stakeholders and donors. The studies are usually carried out by VERC itself and by engaging external program experts in consultation with donor agencies. It also extends support to interne students of graduation and masters level to undertake study on various development issues for academic purposes and sharing the findings with respective program sectors of VERC. Following are the types of studies carried out during the reporting period –

1. Studies done by external consultants:

i. Good practices of Downward Accountability Mechanism Practiced by Thirty Secondary School Authorities in Savar Upazila - study done by Mr. Enamul Huda. ***Key observations:*** this pilot project has created opportunities for the children to raise their voice for their rights for safe WASH facilities. Though this project have attained its objectives and brought some significant changes on WASH facilities and children participation in decision making process there is still long way to go to empower the children. NCTF district and central should be on board to support Upazilla and school NCTF to bring some long lasting changes.

ii. Evaluation of the "ICT and innovative partnerships – responding to well-known challenges for children in new ways" project in Bangladesh - study done by- By Rasmus Jørgensen, Senior MEAL Advisor, SCD September, 2016: WASH facilities improved in the project schools testifying to the increased empowerment of students and the improvement of accountability. The improvement in WASH facilities had in particular positive consequences for girl's wellbeing and attendance rates. ICT played a considerable role as enabling tool for the empowerment, but the organization and training of children in CR played an equally important role.

iii. Project impact evaluation of 'Community Initiated Sustainable 100% WatSan and Hygiene Behaviour Change, Kaliakoir, Phase-III, : The study has covered 500 households of the intervention area and the external consultant was Dr. Abdus Salam.

iv. Study on Faecal Waste Management in Small Towns: A Critical Area for Policy Focus, FANSA

2. In all 4 studies conducted by Interns as follows :

Savar University College – A group of 8 interns came to VERC for studies.

Title of the studies:

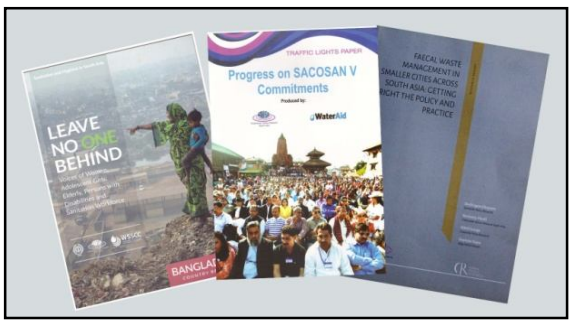
1. Outcome of ***Jagoron*** program of IBIG, VERC in improving the socio-economic status of group members in Savar area;
2. Role of ***Agrasar*** program of IBIG, VERC in improving the socio-economic status of group members in Savar area;
3. IBIG ***Fish culture*** program contributes in improving socio-economic status of beneficiaries in Singair, Manikganj;
4. Children engaged in households within Savar municipal areas supported by ***VERC - NFE schools*** continuing in education and other developments;

3. Internal studies done by VERC staff members working under different projects

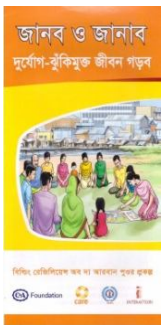
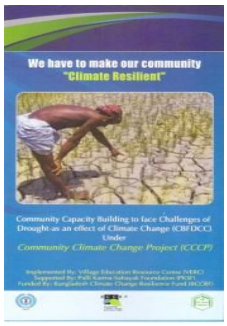
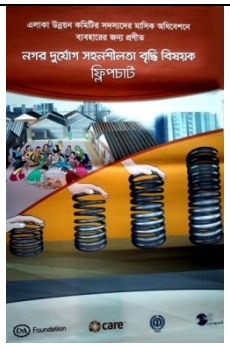
i. Impact Assessment of VERC Stipend for the Meritorious Poor Students Stipend awarded to 103 students in 2015 – 2016 fiscal year. A brief study was carried out to measure the efficiency of the program in August 2015 and that has revealed that all the 16 samples of the last batch of awardees have been continuing in study.

Publications:

1. Chhabir Galpo – a brief reflection of program success of ICT and Innovative Partnership Project.
2. A special publication of ICTand Innovative partnership project reflecting the role of NCTF (National Children's Task-Force).
3. NCTF Voice – a bi-monthly publication reflecting initiatives taken up by NCTF members under the ICT Innovative Partnership project.
4. Pocket Book for catalysts/program staff on urban disaster management issues like – fire, earthquake, waste management, water safety.
5. Adaptation to Drought – an experience in Community Climate Change Project (CCCP), of VERC-PKSF
6. TRAFFIC LIGHTS PAPER: Progress review report on SACOSAN – V commitments: FANSA
7. LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND: Voices of Women, Adolescent Girls, Elderly, Persons with Disability and Sanitation Workforce-Bangladesh Country Report , Fansa-BD
8. Study on Faecal Waste Management in Small Towns: A Critical Area for Policy Focus, FANSA
9. The quarterly publication on VERC programme in Bengali has been duly published as per schedule and they are: i) July – Sept. 2015, Vol – 3; ii) Oct. – Dec. 2015 Vol. 4 for the 37th year respectively.
10. VERC Annual Report, 2015 - 2016 compiled and published



IEC materials

		
Leaflet for information dissemination in program areas on urban disaster management issues like – fire, earthquake, waste management.	Program Brochure on Community Climate Change Project (CCCP)	Flip chart on urban disaster on community mobilization and action planning of BRUP (Building Resilience of the Urban Poor) Project.

Flip chart on Women Empowerment and Urban Disaster Management of BRUP (Building Resilience of the Urban Poor) Project	

Posters on ICS technology promotion		

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

The Administration and Finance Section provides financial and various other support services such as personnel management, procurement, logistic support, secretarial services, recruitment and placement, supervision, staff related matters and maintenance of vehicles according to the organizational rules and regulations. The section also keeps liaison with government and other non-government organizations regarding the administrative and financial matters.

All activities are carried out following the Service Rules and Financial Guidelines and other bi-laws of the organization. The Executive Director and the Director, Administration and Finance are directly responsible for overall administration of the organization. The Deputy Executive Director and senior officials of the other sections are assisting for smooth functioning of the administrative work and financial management system of VERC.

Management of VERC

General Council: The General Council is the highest body in VERC management system. Presently, the General Council consists of 21 members (19 individuals and 2 institutions) from among development workers, university teachers and officials from various types of organizations. The General Council elects the Board of Directors and meets once a year. If necessary it can hold emergency meetings.

Board of Directors: Presently, a 7 member Board of Directors elected by the General Council looks after the governance of the organization and advices the Executive Director in carrying out the organizational responsibilities.

The Executive Office: The Executive Director is responsible for overall administration and program implementation including keeping contact with government and non-government agencies and donors. To discharge his duties, he is assisted by the Deputy Executive Director and a number of professionals who have considerable experience in the field of rural development.

The 42nd Annual General Meeting was held on 10th March 2016. The meeting discussed and approved the Annual Report and Audit Report for the period of July 2014-June 2015 and the Annual Budget and Work Plan for the year 2015 - 2016. The meeting also authorized ED for appointment of the audit firm for auditing the accounts of VERC.

Four meetings of the Board of Directors were held during the year as per practice. Important policy matters, vital issues and problems related to VERC's current and future programs were discussed. The Board of Directors reviewed VERC's operations, provided guidance and direction to make VERC more effective and dynamic in the future.

Coordination Meetings: Staff meetings were regularly held at two levels. These were senior staff coordination meetings comprising the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and other Directors to review the ongoing program implementation process and take needed decisions that are needed for prompt action at the implementation level while quarterly Program Coordination meetings are held with the participation of all office/field programs in charges. These meetings are primarily held to ensure proper communication and coordination regarding implementation of activities for analysis, decision making and working out the needed solution to critical issues.

Physical Facilities/Logistics

Infrastructure: VERC has 7-storied own building on use as its head office, training and resource centre. It has three training rooms and one counselling room and accommodation for 57 persons. Three of the training rooms, one counselling room and 11 hostel rooms are air-conditioned. All the meeting rooms are fully equipped with audio-visual equipments.

The library is maintained with computerized cataloguing system for the books. It is a valuable resource unit of the organization that has more than 3427 reference books and 782 journals and various project documents.

Vehicles: To ensure smooth running of official assignments, VERC maintains a 5-vehicle transport pool at its headquarters. It also has a fleet of 212 motorbikes for use at the field level.

Office equipment: One hundred forty one computers and eighty one laptops are in use in the program management of the organization. An electronic mailing system significantly enhances communication with donors and other organizations. VERC maintains its accounts with software based accounting system.

Staff of VERC: The organization has a good number of experienced and dedicated staff. In the reported year VERC had a total of 2,009 staff including 395 regular and 1614 project/contract staff. A total of 71 staff are based at VERC head office and the remaining 1938 are involved in the programs that work under the guidance of project/area offices. There are 82 Branch offices at various locations of the country. During the year, 285 staff was recruited and 320 left. VERC has a system of annual performance evaluation of staff by a committee. During this year 32 staff was promoted to higher grades.

Financing of VERC

To ensure transparency and effective internal control systems, all of its transactions are made through bank accounts. VERC receives all of the grants from the donor agencies through its mother bank account of general fund. After receiving the funds, the amounts are transferred to the project bank accounts in respective project areas. The management of the organization has decentralized the signatory authority to the area staff members for smooth implementation of the activities at the field level.

There is an internal audit team which reports directly to the Executive Director time to time on the basis of field findings. The audit team conducts audit in all the areas over financial management related with program implementation process on quarterly basis. External audit farms are appointed by VERC Executive Committee, the audit firms conduct professional audit as per government rules and regulations.

The organization mobilizes fund from both external and internal sources to meet up its program implementation costs. The external sources comprise of the contribution from the donors and government while the internal source includes earning from sale of training, sale of facility, services, publication and service charges received from Micro credit, also as voluntary contribution from staff members for infrastructure development/maintenance purposes.

The source of funds during the year based on the audit report shown bellow

Source	Amount [in Taka]	Percentage
Donor Fund	510,767,443.00	10.75
VERC Income	738,279,251.00	15.53
Donor Loan Fund	454,200,000.00	9.56
Group Savings	386,720,628.00	8.14
Revolved Loan and other	2663,264,992.00	56.03
Total	**4,753,232,314.00**	**100.00**

Source	Amount Taka	Percentage
Institution Building & Income Generation	4,066,820,921.00	87.60
Capacity Building	64,099,302.00	1.38
Assessment, Planning & Evaluation	1,753,750.00	0.04
Water, Sanitation, Health & Environment	129,509,302.00	2.79
Education & Literacy	218,765,057.00	4.71
Material Development	1,460,967.00	0.03

Source	Amount Taka	Percentage
Disaster Management/Livelihood	14,343,489.00	
Management cost	127,719,659.00	
Capital Expenditure	18.207,187.00	
Total	**4,424,491,365**	**100.00**

Village Education Resource Center (VERC)
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
As at June 30, 2016

Particulars	FY 2015-2016			FY 2014-2015
	General Fund	Micro Credit	Total	
Property and Assets:				
Non-Current Assets:				
Property, Plant & Equipment	23,901,071	27,578,935	51,480,006	48,562,256
Investments :	300,000	125,750,000	126,050,000	131,954,726
Loan to Beneficiaries :	-	1,526,783,066	1,526,783,066	1,217,352,935
Current Assets:	19,954,648	133,973,196	153,927,844	173,351,955
Total Property and Assets:	**44,155,719**	**1,814,085,197**	**1,858,240,916**	**1,571,221,872**
A. Capital & Reserves:				
Cumulative Surplus	7,610,630	538,139,340	545,749,970	454,829,023
Reserve Fund	-	62,500,000	62,500,000	47,000,000
B. Long Term Liabilities :	1,699,348	474,199,997	475,899,345	532,511,842
C. Current Liabilities :	34,845,741	739,245,859	774,091,600	536,881,007
Total Fund & Liabilities : (A+B+C)	**44,155,719**	**1,814,085,197**	**1,858,240,916**	**1,571,221,872**
	-	-	-	-

The annexed notes from 1.00 to 23 form an integral part of the financial statements.

SD
Executive Director

SD
Director, Finance & Admin

Signed in terms of our separate report of even date annexed.

SD
M A Quader Kabir & Co.
Chartered Accountants.

Date: November 5, 2015

Village Education Resource Center (VERC)
Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Own Income
For the year ended June 30, 2016

Particulars	FY 2015-2016			FY 2014-2015
	General Fund	Micro Credit	TOTAL	
Income:				
Service Charge Realised	-	325,194,702	325,194,702	263,849,351
Training Income	3,480,000	25,163	3,505,163	5,811,028
Income from Health Service	-	719,812	719,812	883,928
Donation	1,004,793	-	1,004,793	1,172,828
Overhead Income	16,506,431	1,421,213	17,927,644	21,136,530
Interest on Bank Account and fixed deposit	38,200	9,494,253	9,532,453	12,053,730
Other Incomes	3,703,222	6,450,899	10,154,121	8,027,228
Total	**24,732,646**	**343,306,042**	**368,038,688**	**312,934,622**
	-		-	
Expenditure:				
Service Charge to PKSF	-	34,594,168	34,594,168	24,687,916
Operational cost	26,650,730	132,085,874	158,736,604	135,479,190
Training	584,255	2,731,649	3,315,904	3,485,834
Social Development Activities	1,438,804	4,398,500	5,837,304	3,244,436
Bank and other interest	-	41,000,523	41,000,523	27,423,577
Reserve for LLP, DMF and others	2,526,452	15,612,723	18,139,175	11,900,679
Total Expenditures	**31,200,241**	**230,423,437**	**261,623,678**	**206,221,632**
Excess of Income over expenditure	-6,467,595	112,882,605	106,415,010	106,712,990
	24,732,646	**343,306,042**	**368,038,688**	**312,934,622**
	-	-	-	-

The annexed notes from 1.00 to 23 form an integral part of the financial statements.

SD
Executive Director

SD
Director, Admin & Finance

Signed in terms of our separate report of even date annexed.

Date: November 5, 2015

SD
M A Quader Kabir & Co.
Chartered Accountants.

Village Education Resource Center (VERC)
Consolidated Statement of Receipts & Payments
For the year ended June 30, 2016

Particulars	FY 2015-2016			FY 2014-2015
	General Fund	Micro Credit	TOTAL	
A. Receipts :				
Opening Balance	34,165,167	105,414,599	139,579,766	109,961,575
Receipt from Donor	245,600,115	-	245,600,115	313,404,227
Training Income	3,480,000	24,163	3,504,163	9,066,116
Income from Health Service	-	700,065	700,065	14,946,120
Interest on Bank Account and fixed dep[osit	16,442,927	4,397,337	20,840,264	2,244,470
Loan Received from PKSF :	-	454,200,000	454,200,000	370,000,000
Loan Received from Others:	-	268,277,000	268,277,000	144,725,000
Loan Principal Realised :	-	2,557,850,393	2,557,850,393	2,060,040,643
Member Savings and Other Collection	-	386,720,628	386,720,628	324,217,490
Service Charge Realised :	-	323,745,940	323,745,940	263,310,026
Donation	2,421,633	-	2,421,633	1,172,828
Receipt from Operating Income	217,903,305	131,889,042	349,792,347	353,313,543
Total	**520,013,147**	**4,233,219,167**	**4,753,232,314**	**3,966,402,038**
B. Payments				
Loan Refunded to PKSF :	-	479,000,002	479,000,002	274,333,334
Training Exp	15,000	1,972,327	1,987,327	11,504,824
Social Development Activities	1,438,804	4,411,686	5,850,490	13,554,088
Capital Expenditure	1,515,826	5,125,957	6,641,783	6,788,374
Loan Refunded to Others:	25,664,599	144,757,000	170,421,599	172,679,000
Loan Disbursement :	-	2,878,091,000	2,878,091,000	2,257,775,000
Member Savings and Other Refund	-	290,112,327	290,112,327	234,531,722
Service Charge paid to PKSF:	-	34,594,168	34,594,168	24,687,916
Investment	300,000	30,300,000	30,600,000	36,277,370
Donor Project Exp	254,750,685	7,525,962	262,276,647	324,714,168
Operating Expenses	219,528,859	263,575,431	483,104,290	469,976,477
Closing Balance	16,799,374	93,753,307	110,552,681	139,579,765
Total	**520,013,147**	**4,233,219,167**	**4,753,232,314**	**3,966,402,038**

Visits and Special Events

	World Hand washing Day celebration in October 2010 at Upazilla Parshad premises, Savar, Dhaka
	Agriculture Advice Center operated by VERC in November 2015 at Chandahar Branch
	Mrs Susanne Kirk Christenpen Technical Advisor, SCi with NCTF School Committee in April, 2016 at Gazirchat A.M. School and College.
	School Sanitation Block handover ceremony of Protap Adarsha Girls High School Ullapara Sirajganj held on 16 January 2016 Mr. Tamim Imran MP inaugurates while Dr Khairul Islam CR-WAB looks on.
	Annual business plan and budget (2016-2017) workshop of IBIG program held at Rangamati Parjatan Holiday Complex, Rangamati during 14-15 May'2016.

Board of Directors

Nurul Islam Khan
Chairman

Dr. Ahmadullah Mia
Vice-Chairman

Mirza Tareq Md. Mamtazur Rahman, Secretary

Abdul Karim
Treasurer

Syed Nurul Alam
Member

Majeda Shawkat Ali
Member

Khondker Rebaka San-yat
Member

Professional Profile of General Council

Sl. No.	Name, Designation and phone number and email address	Profession	Member or service holder of any other NGO
1.	Mr. Nurul Islam Khan Chairman Phone-8914439, Mobile: 01713031847 khan.nurul@gmail.com	▪ Rtd. Additional Director, Social Service, Dptt. of Social Welfare ▪ Senior level Executive UN High Commission for Refugees, (UNHCR) Geneva	▪ Former Country Representative of ITDC ▪ Founder Member, ABC Secretary and Past President ▪ President, Nijera Kori ▪ Member BSEHR ▪ President, Nayan Action Foundation ▪ Member, TIB ▪ Vice-President, Democracy Watch ▪ Former Consultant UNICEF and now Freelancer
2.	Dr. Ahmadullah Mia Vice Chairman Mobile: 01746192907 aumia1941@gmail.com	▪ Rtd. Prof. Dhaka University ▪ Professor and Dean. Faculty of Social Sciences University of Dev. Alternative(UODA)	▪ Chairperson or Member of more than a dozen of professional bodies including Associations, Research Boards, Executive Board of NGOs, Expert Technical Committees at National, Regional and International levels.
3.	Mirza Tareq Md. Mamtazur Rahman, Secretary Phone- 7741295, Mobile: 01721176263, 01942850799	▪ Rtd. Deputy Director Department of Social Welfare	▪ Freedom Fighter ▪ Member CDD ▪ Life member Bangladesh Rtd.Govt employees Association.
4.	Mr. Abdul Karim Treasurer Phone 8120037 Mobile 01819218117 akarim.dba@gmail.com	▪ Rtd. Secretary, Government of Bangladesh ▪ Former Managing Director, MIDAS	▪ Treasurer-SAP
5.	Syed Nurul Alam Member Mobile-01711530990 Phone: 88 02 8118465 nalamsap@gmail.com	▪ Former Executive Director SAP-Bangladesh	▪ Chairman SPED ▪ Member NGO Forum ▪ Member Operajoy Bangla
6.	Ms. Majeda Shawkat Ali Member Mobile: 01819510913, 01713314837 Email: majeda.shawkat@gmal.com	▪ Chief Executive, Naria Unnayan Samity (NUSA)	
7.	Khondker Rebaka San-yat Member Mobile: 01819213450, 01716001179	▪ Executive Director Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP)	▪ Member, BWSC ▪ Mmber Gram Bikash Samity
8.	Ms.Tahrunnessa Abdullah Member Mobail-01713084024	▪ Rtd. Govt. Officer ▪ Freelance Consultant	▪ Ramon Magsaysay Award winner (1978) ▪ Chairperson- SAP ▪ Vice Chairman NGO Forum ▪ Member BRAC Governing Body ▪ Member PKSF Governing Body

Sl. No.	Name, Designation and phone number and email address	Profession	Member or service holder of any other NGO
9.	Ms. Shebika Sarkar Member Mobile: 01712620268	▪ Deputy Director Swanirvar Bangladesh	▪ Deputy Director Swanirvar Bangladesh
10.	Lt. Col. Muhammad Hussain (Rtd),Member Mobile: 01819528181	▪ Rtd. Army Officer ▪ Ex- Director, Pathokoli Trust	
11.	Mr. Md. Emranul Huq Chowdhury Member Phone office-8115 459 Mobile- 01711564826 udpn@agni.com	▪ Executive Director UDDIPAN	▪ Convenor ATSEC-BD ▪ Executive Board Member CDF ▪ Chairman BSAF
12.	Mr. Jainal Abedin Khan Member Mobile- 01552339869	▪ Rtd. Govt. Officer	▪ Member CDD ▪ Chairman, SANAK, Savar, Dhaka ▪ Member, MM Chaklader Mohila College, Savar, Dhaka-1340
13.	Ms. Sofia Islam Member Mobile-01715025780	▪ Rtd. Govt. Officer	▪ Retired Dev. Advisor, Canadian High Commission ▪ Member UST ▪ Member RIC
14.	Dr. Md. Wazihullah Patwary Member Mobile: 01716790567	▪ Freelancer	▪ Chairman, Mohamay Madrasha and Atimkhana. ▪ Ex. Chairman, BDSC ▪ Chair-Finance Committee M.M. New Model UC.
15.	Mr. S.M. Al-Husainy Member Mobile: 01711523410 Phone-8114338, 8117711 husainy@bol-online.com	▪ Rtd. Govt. Officer ▪ Ex. Chairman, Public Service Commission	▪ Chairman, Swanirvar Bangladesh ▪ Member-MIDAS, ▪ Chairman, Governing Council of Independent University etc. ▪ Consultant: ADB, World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, Government of Bangladesh etc.
16.	Advocate Nazrul Islam Member Mobile: 01715521795	▪ Legal practice	▪ EC Member CDD ▪ Secretary, HRDC
17.	Prof. Hafizul Islam Member Mobile:-01712612222	▪ Retd. Professor, University of Dhaka.	▪ Honorary Secretary- FDSR ▪ Governing body Member-UCEP ▪ Member-National Society for the Blind.
18.	Dr. Mohammad Alauddin Member Mobile: 01711409393 alauddin@uap-bd.edu	▪ Former Country Representative Pathfinder International	▪ Founder Trustee, University of Asia Pacific, ▪ Founder, Shahatan Nesa-Nayebuddin Academy ▪ Member, BOG, UCEP, FDSR and Gopalpur Upazila Kalyan Samity, Dhaka.
19.	Mr. Shahid Hossain Talukder Member Mobile: 01715103677 shahid_talukder@yahoo.com	▪ Freelancer	▪ Chairman, Uddipon
20.	Mrs. Salma Ali Member Mobile: 01711595203 bnwla@bdonline.com	▪ Executive Director ▪ Bangladesh Jatiyo ▪ Mahila Ainjibi Samity	▪ Member Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association ▪ Member South Asian Coalition for Human Rights and Democracy Watch ▪ Member, Federation of International Women Lawyer

Sl. No.	Name, Designation and phone number and email address	Profession	Member or service holder of any other NGO
21.	Swanirvor Bangladesh Organisational Member Phone-9116808	▪ Sociat Mobilization, Micro Cradit and Education	
22.	Bangladesh Association for Community Education, Organisational Member Phone-9345173, Mobile: 01715298053	▪ Education, Social Mobilization, Skill Development and Vocationa Education	

Senior Staff Members of VERC

Shaikh Abdul Halim	Executive Director	01713030863
Md. Yakub Hossain	Deputy Executive Director	01713030885
Md. Anwarul Islam	Director, Administration and Finance	01711849291
Subash Chandra Saha	Director, Training and Communication	01711404538
Md. Mainul Islam	Director, Education	01715095711
Md. Masud Hassan	Director, WatSan and Technology	01713017064
Md. Azmal Khan	Dirctor, Institution Building and Income Generation	01717471479
Md. Quamrul Islam	Director, Research Evaluation and Documentation	01716049018

Acronyms

ARI	Acute Respiratory Infection
BSAF	Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum
CORDAID	Catholic Organization for Relief and Development
CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation
CtC	Child to Child
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CBO	Community Based Organization
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DPHE	Department of Public Health Engineering
DAP	Differently Able People/Person
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
HYSAWA	Hygiene Sanitation & Water Supply
HBPS	Home Based Pre-School
IBIG	Institution Building and Income Generation
IGA	Income Generating Activities
IAP	Indoor Air Pollution
LC	Learning Centre
MFMSF	Micro Finance for Marginal and Small Farmers
ME	Micro Enterprise
NPA	National Plan of Action
NFE	Non Formal Edcuation
NFPE	Non Formal Primary Edcuation
PVA	Participatory Vulnerability Analysis
PPE	Pre-Primary Education
PROTEEVA	Promoting Talent through Early Education
PTPDI	Preschool Teacher Professional Development Initiative
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
PSTF	Pourashava Sanitation Task Force
RMC	Rural Micro Credit
SSB	Seasame Street Broadcast
SMC	School Management Committee
USTF	Union Sanitation Task Force
UP	Ultra Poor
WaSH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WatSan	Water & Sanitation
WAB	WaterAid Bangladesh
WSTF	Ward Sanitation Task Force
WPMC	Water Point Management Committee