

APARAJITA

Political Empowerment of Women Project Completion Report Phase I & Phase II (2nd Draft)

(For the Period of December 2011 – February 2017)



Implementing Organizations

Abdul Momen Khan Memorial Foundation (Khan Foundation)

Democracywatch

PRIP Trust

Steps Towards Development

Date of Submission

28/12/2016

Submitted to

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Acronyms and Abbreviation

ACC	-	APARAJITA Coordination Committee
ADP	-	Annual Development Plan
A-NGO	-	Alliance NGO
BL	-	Baseline
CCMC	-	Community Clinic Management Committee
DMC	-	Disaster Management Committee
DW	-	Democracywatch
EP1	-	End of Project Phase 1
EP2	-	End of Project Phase 2
EWR	-	Elected Women Representative
KCE	-	Knowledge, Communication and Education
KF	-	Khan Foundation
LG	-	Local Government
LGA	-	Local Government Authority
LGI	-	Local Government Institution
NAV	-	Networks of Activist Volunteers
NNPC	-	Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Committee
P-EWR	-	Potential Women Representative
PIC	-	Project Implementation Committee
SC	-	Standing Committee
SDC	-	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
SMC	-	School Management Committee
STD	-	Steps Towards Development
UDCC	-	Union Development Coordination Committee
UNUF	-	Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum
UP	-	Union Parishad
UZP	-	Upazila Parishad
VGD	-	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	-	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WID	-	Women in Development

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Part 1: Summary (Snapshot), Strategic Review and Outlook

Implementing Organization: Abdul Momen Khan Memorial Foundation (Khan Foundation), Democracywatch, PRIP Trust and Steps Towards Development	
Project name: APARAJITA- Political Empowerment of Women	Type of report: Project Completion Report
	Reporting period: December 2011- February 2017
Receiver of the report: SDC and APARAJITA Coordination Committee (ACC)	
Background The completion report brings together the individual and consolidated reports for Phase I (December, 2011-November, 2015) and Phase II (December, 2015-February, 2017). It seeks to provide a reflective and self-critical analysis of what was accomplished, what was achieved and what were the challenges. It is based on the project documentation, project reports, M&E data, as well as reflections of the project staff accomplished for the process documentation of the project, “APARAJITA- Political Empowerment of Women” and this program has engineered a pioneer role in contributing towards the political empowerment of women for changing the environment and culture of political inclusive process for empowerment of women. APARAJITA had demonstrated added value of Four (4) organizations working together. This is a unique and innovative programmatic model, bringing FOUR NGO’s on a common Platform with a consortium approach, having unified strategies for harmonizing deep experiences and capacities of individual organizations. This has been craft-fully designed to benefit from the resultant synergies, through joint action in combining expertise towards the possibility of attaining a critical mass to lobby for a paradigm shift in the process of Political Empowerment of Women. These Alliance NGO’s have designed this unique Model with a spirit of mainstreaming women from the local communities for Political Empowerment, promoting Gender Equality and for asserting Constitutional Rights of Elected Women Representatives (EWR) and Potential Elected Women Representatives (P-EWR) from the local communities for strengthening Local Government Institutions, upholding Networks of mutual support. This very Model has infinite potential to enhance responsive and prompt local services for having significant impact on poverty situation through accelerating the process towards establishing a culture of Accountable Local Government Functionaries particularly in the process of sharing of knowledge on monitoring and capacity development. As an entity, the project has gained visibility and legitimacy and has developed its own “brand value”. At national level and even at regional level, also there is a unique strength of being an entity which is backed by four Independent Organizations (Khan Foundation, Democracywatch, PRIP Trust and Steps Towards Development) with their own histories and credibility. The program funded by SDC, playing a significant role in the national development process through building capacity and confidence among the elected women representatives in 40 Constituencies under 40 Districts. The program is highly relevant and extremely important in the current political context, particularly for Women. After Completion of the first phase (November 2011- December 2015), in order to continue the assistance to APARAJITA during the 9th Union Parishad Election, 2016 and for measuring the impact of first phase interventions the second phase of APARAJITA project was designed which was essential. Considering first phase experience and different recommendations from Mid-Term Review, Theory of Change, End Phase Report (First Phase), Project Completion Report (First Phase) the second Phase of APARAJITA was designed. Although the focus of the project was to assist APARAJITA candidates during the UP Election and Municipality Election necessary adjustments were taken in to place in terms of project logical framework, implementation modalities and project approaches. Main results achieved and implementation performance of the project Phase I and Phase II based on defined outcomes: 1. Increased participation of women in LGIs election During the project period, 10th Parliament Election (2014), 4th Upazila Parishad Election(2014), 1st Upazila Women Reserved Seat Election (2015), 10th Municipality Election (2015) and 9th Union	

Parishad Election (2016), 1st Zila Parishad Election (2016) held where women leaders contested and elected in different positions. Major achievements of those elections are as follows:

- In the 10th Parliament Election, 4 APARAJITA (1 EWR, 3 P-EWR) contested, one for the general seats and the other 3 for the reserved seats. 2 of the reserved seat contestants have been elected as Parliament Members.
- During the reporting period, 122 APARAJITA (50 EWRs and 72 P-EWRs) contested for Vice Chairman Position in 4th Upazila election from where 43 (16 EWRs and 27 P-EWRs) have been elected and 3 EWRs contested for Upazila Chairman Position, unfortunately no one was been able to get elected as Chairman.
- Since APARAJITA's inception it has been advocating for Comprehensive Upazila Parishad. In 2015, finally Upazila Parishad Reserve Seats of Women Members Election took place, where a total of 402 EWRs contested against 205 seats, while 195 APARAJITA were elected which can be claimed as a solid achievement for increasing political participation of Women.
- Total 585 Women leaders participated in the 1^{0th} Municipality Election, 2015, where 278 were APARAJITA and 307 Non-APARAJITA. Total 03 Women contested for Mayor Position, 03 women contested for general seats. In total 93 APARAJITA won where 45 was EWR and 47 was P-EWR amongst them 2 P-EWR elected as Mayor and 91 as Reserve Seat member.
- In the 9th UP election 2016 held at 496 out of 519 Union a total of 5365 (11 women per UP) women candidates contested for the UP election where; 20 women contested for chairman position (14 APARAJITA); 48 for general seats (42 APARAJITA) and 5297 in reserve seats where 4277 were APARAJITA. It was found that only 8% (342) of the candidates were from disadvantage population and 73% of APARAJITA were politically affiliated. In election a total of 1199 EWRs, P-EWRs and NAV won in the election where 3 were Chairman, 4 as general members and 1192 as members of reserve seats.
- On 20 November 2016, schedule for Zilla Parishad Election was announced where a total of 84 women leaders collected nomination from 40 districts, against total 200 seats. One women leader collected nomination for the general seats, rest of them are preparing themselves for reserve member seats, In total 39 of the candidates got elected for reserved seats.

2. Enhanced capacities of Women Leaders and recognized their leadership skills by constituents and their male colleagues.

- Through the project intervention, women leaders were included in different capacity development programs which resulted inclusion of women in different committees of LGIs and Service Delivery Organizations. Women Leaders successfully performed their roles and responsibilities and played pro-active roles in different initiatives. Findings of Baseline Survey (2011) show that, only 38% EWRs were Chairpersons of 596 Standing Committees (SC) at Union Parishad, as a result of project interventions (Capacity Development, Advocacy, Awareness Building) 100% of the EWRs became Chair of UP SC. Beside this, 1501 P-EWRs and 1287 NAVs incorporated as members in different SC after the 9th UP Election 2016. Previously the number of P-EWRs and NAVs were very low.
- Beside Standing Committees gradual improvements in inclusion of APARAJITA in different service delivery committees were observed throughout the project period, (CCMC BL-527; EP1-1233; SMC BL-317; EP1-1157, AES BL-583 EP1-1193; DMC BL-101, EP1-726).
- Capacities of EWRs P-EWRs and NAV have increased to a great extent preparing them for "Future Leadership". As a cascading effect, by integrating EWRs in various networks and forums by Women leaders has made them accepted as valuable members within the existing formal institutional structure. It has also created connections between women leaders and local communities of leaders, opinion makers and social activists.

3. Increased Women Leaders' political affiliation with political parties, communication and networking with different stakeholders

- During inception period of the project, numbers of women leaders' involved with political parties was nominal. Project encouraged APARAJITA to get involved into different committees of Political Parties, Forums and Networks, as well as influenced political parties to include

APARAJITA in different committees of respective political parties. Result shows that, APARAJITA demonstrated their capacities and confidence by involving themselves in committees of political parties, (BL- 210, EP1- 1597, EP2-3633)

- In Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF) a total of 255 APARAJITA were involved in EP-1, where the baseline was 189. In terms of Municipality Association of Bangladesh (MAB) the number was 67 as per EP1, and 24 as per BL. After the election of UP and Municipality, the new membership registration process is still in progress.

4. Contributed to ensure pro-poor and gender sensitive public services

- APARAJITA involvement in leadership position of various Committees who contributed to ensure accountability of Union Parishad and different Service Providers (Schools, Community Clinic, Agriculture Services).
- At the end of EP-1 (2015), total 1374 EWRs visited 1119 Community Clinics and provided their feedback to higher authority of concern department; 1157 EWRs involved in SMC and they visited 1586 Primary Schools to identify problems, such as water and sanitation, drop out etc.; 1063 EWRs were involved in monitoring Agriculture Extension, Livestock and Fisheries Services and 855 EWRs visited 1767 plots, Agricultural Firms and Ponds. As a result of monitoring, delivery service improved to a great extent.
- It was found that, almost all Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) are involved in Safety Net Services (SNS); in four years, a total of 3,414,171 persons received Safety Net Support without facing challenges in the project area. (F-1,631,440; M-1,782,730).
- UP distributed 2, 18,311 VGD cards, where 14,509 VGD Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 1,473,106 VGF Cards and 330,761 VGF Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 848,426 Cards for old ages people and 23,706 Cards distributed by EWRs for elder people. EWRs prepared lists of poor and disadvantage people to locate proper people in the list, and which reduced leakage of resources, the process was facilitated by APARAJITA.

5. Women Leaders influenced to make LGIs more accountable

- Through APARAJITA initiatives, LGIs are changing their mindset and attitude with a culture of becoming more accountable and transparent. EWRs motivated UPs to established 755 Bill Boards or Citizen Charter in 167 UPs. Community People became aware about UPs services from the Citizen Charters. As a result quality of public services (Health-ensured transparency in the process of checking and receiving of allocated medicine 4221 times, 2095 pregnant women has been listed; Education- prevented drop out of 2977 and ensured stipend to 449,529 students; Agriculture-363872 poor farmers received agriculture inputs, 39297 poor female farmers received trainings) has improved and became pro-poor. Role of EWRs have been recognized by different stakeholders.
- Throughout the project period APARAJITA facilitated the open budget and planning process, during 2011 the involvement of APARAJITA as well as constituents were very low, 387 (28%) EWRs reported that they were involved in Local Government Planning and budget preparation, In EPY-1 the 1,455 EWRs (84%) attended in the preparatory meeting of Open Budget and in EPY 2, Total 1223 (78%) EWRs were involved in the budget season, as the budget and planning process initiated during January – July, 2016; former UP Representatives were involved with the process.
- In regard to this, a total of 489 EWRs and P-EWRs were nominated for JOYEETA Award in three years, while 251 of them were awarded.

6. Gender Sensitive Laws and Provision are enacted

- Through Advocacy interventions at local level, APARAJITA achieved recognition as an effective collective force at National and District level and established relationship with Government, Political Parties, Media, Women's Movement and LGIs Networks. These vertical linkages established by the Project, amplified the voices of the locally elected women, heard at the national level, giving greater recognition and acceptability.
- APARAJITA advocated for involving EWRs in the member panel of Village Courts, comprehensive Upazila Parishad, exclusion of TIN Numbers for women in LGIs elections, which helped women candidates to allocate gender sensitive election symbols. As a result of APARAJITA advocacy, Village Court (amendment) Act 2013 was made, Upazila Parishad

Reserve Seats of Women Members Election 2015 was held, Election Commission considered to withdraw TIN provision for the next LGIs election and to allocate gender sensitive election symbols for women candidates.

- In order to showcasing APARAJITA key success and in demand to include 33% women in all level of committees of political party four regional workshop been organized, where 671 EWRs, PEWRs were present. Participants shared their experiences regarding women in politics and governance. Specific recommendations were made in all four conferences.
- On 27 February, 2017 APARAJITA organized experience sharing event at National level following the experience of four regional conferences, where the women leaders shared their experiences and demand to accelerate women's advancement process in Bangladesh to donors, policy makers and associate forums, networks. Notable recommendations were, Election Commission should negotiate with political parties to ensure 33% women representation in the committees of political parties by 2020. Policy makers did recognized the findings shared in the meeting as barriers and would like to consider those for further development.

7. Provision for Technical Information and Advisory Support for Women Leaders are made available

- Achievements included, provision of useful and timely information to EWRs and P-EWRs, who became fully aware about rules and regulation for ensuring "Governance" and their involvement in Local Government Bodies and with local service delivery agencies, with services and allocations which are made available to the UPs and UPZs through various Government Programmes and Schemes with a strategy to provide access to citizen's. In addition to that information, advisory support were provided to Candidates on election process from resource center (local offices) e.g. assisting in filling up nomination paper, bank account opening, TIN opening, preparing campaign strategy and manifesto etc. by NAV and APARAJITA staff.
- Based on experiences and skills, a total of 600 facilitators were identified for nurture and skills development, which have helped to assist and facilitate APARAJITA into their day to day activities. Even after project phase out the facilitator group will continue their facilitation role to APARAJITA, Community and LGIs.
- Developed a Web-based Databank, where all information of EWRs, P-EWRs and all other project related information are preserved and used as such information made available 24 hours to all. In addition to that M&E results are visualized in dashboards.

Main steering implications for next period of interventions:

- As the project was seen as a longer term intervention, "Exit Plan" was not envisaged. Although, sustainability of the impact should have been planned from the project design phase itself, however there exist substantial elements which can contribute to sustainability of the initiative. Last five and a half years' experience has projected that, it is not enough to work through only formal spaces, processes and structures of the Local Government but also to work directly with Formal Institutions. By definition Political Empowerment and Leadership has to go much beyond such boundaries and address/engage with the Informal Structures and processes, as well as with the Political Party Structures.
- Women have to engage themselves with Male Political Leadership for changing political and cultural environment which only can happen where women and men work together for making gender friendly political arena. In order to change the political culture and practices of the local government bodies or the local wings of the political parties where more women have to take a proactive role, where space and opportunities have to be created. This will require strategic engagement with Male Counterpart through common programmes and addressing Political Parties directly, so that they can engage Women fully in their structures and processes, which will include for ensuring provisions of the RPO, in terms of membership of women and inclusion in committees and nominations.
- Along with LGIs, Male Representatives engagement, awareness needs to be raised among constituents on gender equalities which will change their mindset to treat women equally and

promote women in leadership position.

- An important experience which cropped up from this project was to engage Women Leaders in economic development activities within their constituencies, not only in terms of allocation of “Safety Net Program”, but also in Local Development Planning and Strategy Formulation, Resource Mobilization for their Constituencies (from NGOs, private sector and government sources) and from their Constituencies (tax collection). Not only do they need to address the economic needs of their Constituents but to be acknowledged as “Leaders”, and they must also have economic capacities and abilities to support their own Political activities, without being dependent on other Male family members, particularly for breaking the barriers of Patriarchal System.
- The approach to Capacity Building adjusted when it was realized that some Elected Women Representatives can contribute as “Trainers” and would have greater acceptability from the other EWR and P-EWRs. The project also had to take on board the change in political context with politicization and involvement of Political Parties at the local level and in Local Government Bodies. Besides supporting role of NAV to EWRs who also emerged as potential leaders.
- Budgetary and Human Resource limitations affected effectiveness of this component but the project was able to exploit the government’s efforts in digitalization up to the UP level and on the overall development of ICT access and use, along with the priority of Grants Strategy.

Financial Information: The budget for reporting period was BDT 456,509,861 and expenses BDT 441,319,815 with 97% of burn rate

Date of report :

Name and signature of person responsible

Part 2: Introduction

The programme APARAJITA- Political Empowerment of Women was designed by SDC and with the Consortium Partners over a year-long period, through a consultative process, facilitated by external consultant. The entry-cum-opening proposal was approved in October 2010 with Four-Year Pilot-Phase and the project formally started in December 2011. The design focused on a key gap in the SDC local governance portfolio - a programme that would exclusively address Women's Political Empowerment. The design process was innovative and challenging to bring a number of NGOs, all working in the area of women's political empowerment and Local Governance on a common platform. Each had its own ideologies, networks, and ways of working, identity and also with a niche. The design process focused on agreeing on common goals and refrained from focusing on individual organizational agendas.

The first year primarily focused on Capacity Building of EWRs and in the second year EWRs became more active in LG activities like budget preparation, expenditure monitoring, supervising social Safety Net programs and enhancing interaction and building relationships with local government administrations and different service delivery institutions. EWRs vertical linkage with Upazila and District administration and Political Parties has become more visible in the third & fourth year and EWRs became more interested to participate in upcoming elections. The second phase was designed in order to continue the support to APARAJITA and to measure the impact of the Capacity Enhancement Interventions in 9th Union Parishad Election, 2016. Some of the Union EWRs were enhanced their networking by greater involvement with local government associations.

The project followed a combined approach of three strategic action lines:

- 1) **Capacity and skills development** to strengthen women's knowledge about local governance issues and develop required qualities for action in the policy arenas. APARAJITA capacity building approach is transformative; it focuses on the need for EWRs to put knowledge into practice and on changing their attitudes and behavior. The project supports mentoring between current and former elected women representatives, establishes peer to peer learning schemes and a 'resource pool of women.
- 2) **Reinforcement of Evidenced Based Policy Advocacy** by facilitating national and regional events (workshop, seminar, campaigns). Grassroots experiences and lessons were systematically channeled into public debates. The project also organized regular events with Female MPs (Members of the Parliament) and also collaborated with media
- 3) **Establishment of Networks and functioning KCE-HUB** at sub-district, district and national level. Four selected partner NGOs had built upon their involvement with existing Networks and Partnerships with grassroots' organizations which engaged for women's promotion within Local Government Institution. Strong linkages to allies for crisis support and resource mobilization were developed (e.g. with NGOs, Advocates, Journalists, Trainers, Female Members of National Parliament)

As was captured in the MTR report of 2014 four elements set this programme apart: 1) the power of bringing four organizations together to work to a common goal of women's political empowerment, building on their own networks and practices built over a long period of time in different geographical areas; 2) recognizing the overtly political nature of this work and building it into the design of the programme partnership from the outset; 3) emphasizing the importance of fostering a culture of voluntarism and moving away from incentives for participation; and 4) supporting over time to a structural change in power relations to move to representational politics.

Theory of change: APARAJITA's theory of change was not spelt out at the beginning of the project and understanding was not been uniformly built across all levels of the four organizations. According to MTR in 2014, the realization was reinforced about ambitious result framework and its' outcomes can only be delivered in at least two phases. Unclear

hierarchy between the outcomes, with an implicit sequence and inter-dependence was later addressed by developing a ToC to build a common understanding of the project, adjust to new realities and also think towards the new phase of the project.

The ToC prepared allowed the programme to make explicit previous assumptions and logic, review these as well as the changed context and re-strategise the program while bringing in lessons learned on what works and what was missing in the last four years. **The ToC developed is provided in Annex B.**

2.1 Background

Despite provisions for Local Government in the 1972 Constitution of Bangladesh, genuine decentralization, development and capacitating of local government remains limited. The enabling and relatively progressive regulations laid down in the Constitution and subsequent amendments are not fully applied in practice. Over the last decade there has been much interest in strengthening local government and the then Government pledged continuing support for decentralization reform. As such reforms are politically sensitive; progress is contested and consequently slow. Some progress has been made in terms of the political empowerment of women and elected women representatives are proving their value in raising the concerns of women and poor. This project seeks to support elected women representatives and potential elected women representatives to develop further, represent their constituencies well and amplify women's voice so that women and poor can exercise their rights to information and local services.

2.2 Basic information of the project

The program 'APARAJITA: Political Empowerment of Women' funded by SDC intends to build the confidence, knowledge and capacity of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) and Potential Women Representatives (PEWRs). The program encourages networks of mutual support so that they can fulfill their obligations to their electorate and contribute to making local government and local service provision more responsive, especially to the needs of women. The program is an innovative and contextualized in line with the current approach. It brings together Four NGOs (Democracywatch (DW), Khan Foundation (KF), PRIP Trust (PRIP) and Steps Towards Development (Steps)) as implementing partners with complementary expertise and diverse geographical coverage (40 constituencies under 40 Districts covering 521 Union Parishads, 57 Upazila Parishads and 44 Municipalities) to support the Capacity Development of EWRs and the creation of an effective framework for mutual support for EWRs. In the Second Phase, due to modification in constituencies by the Election Commission, Local Government Division reduced the number of project intervention area (40 constituencies under 40 Districts covering 519 Union Parishads, 56 Upazila Parishads and 44 Municipalities)

The program started at the end of 2011 and the first phase concluded in November 2015. The Second Phase started on thereafter and ended in February 2017. The original intention of the design was for a two phase programme of nine years in total. The Process Documentation report provides more information on this.

APARAJITA: Political Empowerment of Women (Phase I)

3.1 Project goal, outcomes, outputs and indicators

Overall Goal	Indicator
Rural and urban poor (especially women) in Bangladesh are getting information and enhanced, responsive and prompt local services	% rural and urban poor experiencing prompt, respectful and responsive service provision (in the phased priority areas of i. primary education, ii. Health, water and sanitation, iii. Justice and policing, iv. Agriculture, v. disaster preparedness & response (in selected vulnerable areas only). % reduced leakage of resources intended for the poor to the non poor % decrease in transaction costs (including full opportunity costs) for the poor seeking local services
Outcomes	Indicator
Outcome One: Elected Women representatives are accountable to their constituencies and together with potential future EWR and former EWR are collectively requiring gender and poverty sensitive practice in local service delivery and assuming leadership roles.	Increase in number of women contesting reserved seats (% with more than 3 women contesting). % Increase in women contesting general seats, % women elected in reserved seats seeking election to general seats. % increase in number of women in senior positions (e.g. Mayor, UZP/UP chair, Chair of Standing Committees, LGA, PIC, lead role in village court/shalish) % rural and urban poor experience being listened to and responded to as citizens by their EWR and value EWR's effectiveness in improving local service provision Recognition/value of vertical and horizontal EWR networks (all party) by number/type of participation in policy debate on women issues (invited spaces). Frequency, type of inclusion of women and women's issues on APPGs. Actions taken by EWR to promote pro poor & gender sensitive service provision (% over baseline and % success rate) EWR more respected, assertive and influential
Outcome Two: Provisions (legal framework incl. ordinance & directives), political commitment and public opinion conducive for inclusion and participation of EWR (and potential EWR) and for promoting gender sensitive service provision at community level	Inclusion of proposals for reform in revised ordinances and directives (% uptake, % concessions) National Framework for LG Capacity Building highlights all new and special provisions for gender sensitive planning & budgeting % increase in public opinion towards greater inclusion/participation of EWRs in facilitating service provision in the prioritized thematic areas
Outcome Three: Information, technical and advisory support for EWR valued, used and continuing	Yearwise incremental % increase in requests for information and advice from KCE Hub by EWR Increasing % EWR value the local NGOs and volunteers supporting role
Outputs and Indicators	

Outcome One	
Output 1.1. EWR capacity, confidence built and understanding of the values /practices of representational politics actualized.	# training, exchange visits, workshops on democratic & representational politics & required skills such as communication, assertiveness # , type and% usage of simple guidelines & supplementary materials (information pocket books, IEC materials) # EWR diaries and % used for self-monitoring # , frequency, type, usefulness of mentoring & support provided by NAVs. % EWR who have a regular 'buddy' # & type usefulness of mentoring support, peer to peer learning provided by EWR & F-EWR % EWR know service provision entitlements (prioritythemes phase wise)
Output 1.2. Potential future EWR (P-EWR) identified and nurtured	# P- EWR identified (disaggregated by age, background, ethnicity, religion, political party), % P-EWR contesting elections, % P-EWR involved in output 1.1. activities, % P-EWR using campaign packs
Output 1.3. Electorate and institutional colleagues opinions on EWR contribution to good governance positively influenced	# , type and usefulness of citizen engagement (formal (open budget, ward assemblies etc) & informal (EWR facilitated meetings, ' <i>clinics</i> ' etc) # , type , response to events promoting democracy &EWR achievements (e.g. Democracy Fair,documentaries etc) # ,type of activities promoting co-operation betweenEWR and EMR & response to these # , type of activities promoting cooperation betweenEWR and Administration & response
Output 1.4. EWR engagement (monitoring, raising voice) with service providers for better service provision enhanced	# , type UMMC, thematic Standing Committees orsimilar platforms actively participated in by EWR # , type & usefulness of actions taken by EWR tovoice constituents demands &improve local servicedelivery
Output 1.5. EWR networking for advocacy and mutual support (collective action) enhanced	# Parliamentary constituencies with active vertical networks. (% of programme total) Evidence of active use of networking for amplifying\ electorate voice and ensuring connectedness (MPUZZP- UP-citizens). # , type and usefulness of EWR network events (% time spent disaggregated by time on advocacy work, administrative tasks, mutual support (– decreasing % time on admin) # and usefulness of events to share best practice
Outcome Two	
Output 2.1. Gender issues in LG reform influenced	#EWR included in law review committees, consultations regarding proposed amendments to laws, ordinances, directives

	#, type, usefulness of research to inform & provide evidence for proposals # and type of EWR Network events to debate, develop position papers etc
Output 2.2. LG issues and debate (especially related to constraints for EWR inclusion/participation) raised in public domain to gather wider support for change in legislative framework	Proposals for legal and institutional amendments published and in public domain (# & type of press releases , published material) # and type of public platforms for debate (media, internet, consultations)
Outcome Three	
Output 3.1. KCE Hub is functioning, recognized and used by EWR	#EWR using Helpline by type of enquiry (advice /information), increasing use and usefulness over time # & type research and advocacy publications cited (by whom, frequency) and used (basis for workshops, dialogues, position papers)
Output 3.2. Imp-NGOs and networks of activist volunteers (NAV) have adequate reach, competence , capacity and legitimacy to continue advancing political empowerment after the end of the project	Geographic coverage of Imp NGOs and NAV # NGO workers and volunteers with demonstrated knowledge and skills to provide continuing support to EWRs (#, type training & orientation provided)
Output 3.3. responsive support provided to emerging theme-based EWR networking initiatives	location, level of activity and interconnectedness with baseline # type of programme support requested by EWR Networking

3.2 Project stakeholder analysis

APARAJITA has successfully completed four years of operation through vigorous interactions with different stakeholders and was able to adequately address the needs and interest of the primary target groups e.g. Elected Women Representatives (EWRs). Accordingly, APARAJITA started its journey with a total of 11,188 direct stakeholders which includes, 1779 Elected Women Representatives (EWRs), 4720 Potential Women Representatives (P-EWR) 4689 Network of Volunteer Activist (NAV). In order to implement the planned activities efficiently, APARAJITA interacted with relevant secondary stakeholders including Local Government Institutions (Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Municipality), Local Administrations (Central and Local Level), relevant Service Providers (GO-NGOs) and Community People. APARAJITA used several factors to generate positive leadership among local women includes motivation, mobilization, guidance, supporting environment. Stakeholder's involvement with the project's operations and that helped EWR's and P-EWRs to ensure information and enhanced, responsive and prompt local services for rural and urban poor (especially women) in the working areas. District Legal Aid Committees, Standing Committees, Union Disaster Management Committees, Union Committees to Prevent Trafficking and Violence, BUPF, MAB, One-stop Crisis Centers have been intensively involved with APARAJITA activities throughout these years. APARAJITA also engaged MPs, District Judge, Chairman of Zilla Bar, Panel Lawyer, Zila Police Super and others with project activities. APARAJITA has also been engaging with several networks including Citizen Watch Groups and Women Lawyers' Network which has reinforced and assisted them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

3.3 Evolution of the context

In the current political context, a programme focused on women's political empowerment is highly relevant and extremely important. The importance of women's political empowerment as a part of, and contributing to, women's overall empowerment is subscribed to both nationally and internationally. It has long historical antecedents in Bangladesh with its roots in the Language Movement, the anti-Pakistan movement and even earlier the anti-British movement. It is seen as an end in itself but also as a means of attaining other goals such as women's full participation and engagement in processes of governance and development. Key international conventions and agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action have emphasized the importance of increasing numbers and contribution of women in decision making at all levels and of political participation. Five Year Plan of Bangladesh Government has emphasized the issue of gender and the Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-16) included an objectives "to promote equality between women and men in sharing of power and decision making at all levels" and to enhance the participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life" as well as to 'increase women's representation in governance and administration including at all tiers of local government'. The National Women Policy 2011 has emphasized and set objectives on Political Empowerment of Women. Under this objective, a few provisions has been highlighted as follows

- *To make all our efforts to motivate political parties including the mass media to ensure increased and active political participation of women.*
- *To implement awareness raising program to make people conscious of the achievement for political rights of women and its benefits.*
- *To ensure 33 percent representation in phases inside the political parties.*
- *To inspire the political parties to nominate women at increased rate in the election.*
- *To raise awareness about secure the political rights of women and to urge conscious voting with this end in view. Implementing voter training program from grassroots to national level.*
- *To motivate NGOs including women's organizations to participate in publicity campaigns to press for active participation of women in politics.*

- *To raise number of women's seat in the Parliament to 33% and to take initiative to direct election in the extended seats for women.*
- *To arrange direct poll in the extended seats at all levels of local governments.*
- *To appoint substantial number of women in the higher levels of decision making.*

Many of the contextual factors identified and analyzed for the present phase of the project document are still valid with strategic importance: The legal and procedural framework for local government, the provisions for service delivery and social protection at local level and the close relationship between citizens and local government bodies. Among the newer trends, one of the major issues is growing polarization of local government and the increasing participation of local women leaders in political parties. Political victimization and unrest, violence, corruptions are contextual factors that still continue. Local government bodies are still not strong in terms of authority or resources, political commitment to their strengthening of Local Government is not consistent with women's participation in terms of numbers ensured, and representation is still weak.

However since the formulation of the project the political context has become more difficult at both national and local level with a narrowing of political diversity, a strengthening of the ruling party's control over national and local level politics and increasing partisan control over local government. While the policy commitments to women's political empowerment and decentralization are still strong the acceptance of critique and NGO/CSO contributions are less tolerated. Another change is that increasingly women and men participating in local level elections and functioning as elected representatives have to pay allegiance of the political parties, whether as members, supporters or having to recognize that they are a factor and have to be given their dues. During this period there has been change in LGIs election procedures as well as in the political context. Though previous local government elections used to be non-partisan, government decided to make local government elections partisan from 2015 onwards for Mayor and Chairman Position in the Municipality and Union Parishad. This system would affect women's participation in LGIs election negatively.

3.4 Strategic link to outcomes of SDC's cooperation strategy

According to Country Strategic (Year 2013- 2017) Focus for Bangladesh on Local Governance, SDC in Bangladesh intends to facilitate decentralization and devolution of power to Local Government bodies by working directly with LGIs. Priority is given to enhance the role of the civil society in addressing the needs and rights of the poor and marginalized people. As APARAJITA project determined the expected 3 Outcomes, the focus of the project is very much in line with SDC's cooperation strategy.

3.5 Consideration of Poverty Issue in the Project Interventions

Overall women's contribution in development of Bangladesh is globally recognized. Unfortunately, the political space for women's participation still remains a challenge and "Poverty" cannot be addressed without involvement of "Women" in politics. The APARAJITA focuses on Women's Political Empowerment for expanding space of women in the political arena, targeting a gender responsive and equitable power structure. Ultimate goal is to enhance accessibility of the community people to the public services by the EWRs to empower grass roots and marginalized people and disadvantaged women for gaining access to the public services for exercising their fundamental rights to free them from "Poverty", through the Safety Net Programs, which is contributing to poverty alleviation. The program targeted to benefit a total of 5 million poor and disadvantage people through program intervention; although no direct support been designed the idea is to provide support through capacity building of elected women members, and potential women leaders and monitoring of service providing institutions and Local Government Institutions as well. The service monitoring and placing women leaders in the decision making body will allow to practice a pro-poor service delivery and reduce leakage of resources and will be able to target actual beneficiaries for Local Government services.

3.6 Major Activities undertaken

- Baseline Study Conduction.
- Identification of EWRs and PEWRs
- Training on (a) “Roles and Responsibilities of EWRs and Accountability to Services Delivery Mechanism”, (b) “Leadership development, Communication, Advocacy and Networking” and (c) Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and participatory budget to EWRs and P-EWRs.
- Refreshers Training
- Networking and Formation of Upazila Forum
- Provide support to EWRs to organize and facilitate of the thematic standing committees (Education, Health and Agriculture)
- Facilitate to organize WID committee meeting.
- Provide support for Service Monitoring of different service providing organizations.
- Monthly Meeting of EWRs, PEWRs.
- Awareness raising Campaign on different women issues (day observation, 16 days activism campaign, door to door campaign)
- Exchange Visit of EWRs, PEWRs (Inter and Intra org.)
- Conduct research on different advocacy issues.
- National & Local Level Seminar for Policy Advocacy
- Development of IEC & Learning Materials
- Establishment of Gender Resource Center and provide assistance to Women Leaders.
- Facilitate peer to peer (horizontal and vertical) learning and mentoring

3.7 Implementation strategy

This programme was innovative in nature which brought together four NGOs with complementary expertise and diverse geographic coverage to support the capacity development of EWRs and the creation of an effective framework of mutual support for EWRs. It was assumed that the intervention will encourage the internalization of the key principle of accountability by EWR through assisting them to take on monitoring of their own activities as well as actions and reaction of service providers to their interventions themselves. They will also seek the opinions of their electorate on their achievements. The capacity building approach expected to be transformative in that it will focus on the need for EWRs to put knowledge into practice and on changing their attitudes and behaviour. Through on-the-job mentoring, linkage with role models and best practice as well as provision of simple tools and guidelines, EWRs will become more responsive and accountable in their day to day service to their constituents. The programmes were designed to facilitate training, coaching and mentoring to EWRs through local implementing NGOs, networks of volunteers and social activists, role model -EWRs and former EWRs.

All four A-NGOs had existing connections with partner NGOs at local level. Criteria for involvement in this programme were clarified, rigorously applied in selection and clear terms of reference and orientation provided to ensure that these Implementing NGOs will take a facilitation role. The project undertaken situational analysis for their operating areas and identify an appropriate constellation of capacity building providers to support the EWRs. Compared to these other donor interventions APARAJITA’s exclusive focus on development and support to local women leaders and linking them up to national level policy frameworks sets APARAJITA apart. Its particular characteristics of support to transformative politics both in how it managed through the 4 organizations with different characteristics and histories as well as its emphasis on voluntarism demonstrates a different way of working.

3.8 Outcomes achieved

Outcome # 1: Elected Women Representatives are accountable to their constituencies and together with potential future EWR and former EWR are collectively requiring gender and poverty sensitive practice in local service delivery and assuming leadership roles.

Indicators

- 1.1: Increase in number of women contesting reserved seats (% with more than 3 women contesting). % Increase in women contesting general seats, % women elected in reserved seats seeking election to general seats.*
- 1.2: Increase in number of women in senior positions (e.g. Mayor, UZP/UP Chair, Chair of Standing Committees, LGA, PIC, lead role in Village Court/Shalish).*
- 1.3: Rural and urban poor experience being listened to and responded to as citizens by their EWR and value EWR's effectiveness in improving local service provision.*
- 1.4: Recognition/value of vertical and horizontal EWR networks (all party) by number/type of participation in policy debate on women issues (invited spaces). Frequency, type of inclusion of women and women's issues on APPGs*
- 1.5: Actions taken by EWR to promote pro-poor & gender sensitive service provision*
- 1.6: EWR more respected, assertive and influential*

Achievements on this outcome have been extremely rewarding. This had been the major focus of the programme where most of the budget and human resources have been exhausted. The elected women representatives (EWRs) have built their capacities and acceptability within the political arena and were able to influence decisions and allocation of resources that has appeared to be delivering more pro-poor and gender sensitive services. There is now much greater awareness of and respect for the role of Women Elected Representatives, given by the public and their institutional colleagues; the EWRs have also been able to demonstrate and operationalize their understanding of the rights and responsibilities associated with these positions. There is growing understanding of accountability to voters or constituents, even if the EWRs and their constituents are still operating in a patronage model of politics. However there is a clearer evidence of how public representatives can make local level service providers accountable to the LGIs, for what they should do and the services they should provide. Changing attitudes, understanding and behavior is a gradual process and it is unrealistic to expect rapid change in ways of behaving and relating to voters, constituents and changing from patronage to representational politics. It is a continuous process. Even as a programme focused solely on women's empowerment APARAJITA realized that to bring about broader change, it is absolutely necessary to work with elected male representatives so that they too can change the patronage mode of politics and be supported to change the way in which they operate to make it more Gender balanced and Gender Sensitive.

Since the new local Government Act (2009) functionalize, a number of opportunities for creating women's political participation have emerged. In particular, the efforts to reactivate UpazilaParishads mean that there is an opportunity to encourage vertical linkage between UP level, UZP and with MPs. In 2015, the Elections for the Reserve Seats in the Upazila finally took place. In APARAJITA working area, a total of 402 EWRs contested in the UpazilaParishad Election 2015 (Reserved Seat) against 205 seats while 195 were elected. The project had worked to strengthen vertical linkages from grassroots to national levels,

- a) to create opportunities for enhanced grass-roots driven policy dialogue and better understanding of the real needs of women and those living in poverty in particular; and*
- b) to establish mutual support mechanisms between tiers of government for women to achieve their potentials.*

These two levels have started to show results in terms to greater involvement in Policy Dialogues and Advocacy and greater solidarity and networking among women representatives at all levels.

Table One of Annex A shows that, there has been considerable progress in the number of women who are interested in contesting elections. As the UP elections are on-going at the time of the drafting of this report (April 2016) we still do not have the final figures of how many actually contested for elections and who many have won.

There was a significant number of women who contested the 4th UPZ elections and 43 (16 EWRs and 27 PEWRs) have been elected as Vice Chairman and 03 EWRs contested for Upazila Chairman Position. In the 10th Parliament Election, four women representatives (1 EWR, 3 PEWR) contested, one for the general seats and the other three for the reserved seat, where two of the reserved seat contestants have been elected as Parliament Members, which is a significant vertical break through..

There was a tremendous increase in the number of women (EWRs and PWRs) who assumed leadership positions in the Local Government bodies as Panel Chairs, Chairs of Standing Committees, LGA, PIC, lead role in Village Court/Shalish. The baseline result projects that in 521 project UPs; that EWRs are Chairpersons of only 596 Standing Committees where there should be 1563 EWRs according to the Local Government regulations, at the end of the project a total of 1563 women Chairperson of the Standing Committees, the project influenced UPs to formulate Standing Committees during 2013. A total of 2,954 women (1563 EWRs & 1391 P-EWRs) are involved in Standing Committees of whom 618 are poor and 242 are disadvantaged. Not only has there been a tremendous increase in numbers the women are also included in committees traditionally considered to be male domains.

EWRs are visibly, actively and effectively working to improve service provision for citizens through greater interactions with Services Providers who are involved in Community Clinic Management Committees, School Management Committees of Primary Schools, Union Disaster Management Committees and in monitoring of Agricultural Services. EWR/P-EWR involvement in leadership position of various local civil society organizations such as Club, Samity, Citizens Group etc. who are contributing to ensure accountability of service providers, has tripled from 400 persons (23%) during the baseline to 1211 P-EWRs and more than 900 NAVs are also playing similar roles. The project has provided themselves efforts for recognition of the value of vertical and horizontal EWR Networks which has yielded results, such as greater integration in Networks, Solidarity Building and Experience Sharing where women facilitated to participate in policy debates on women issues, both by Local Government Associations, Forums and APARAJITA's own events.

The number of women involved in Local Government Planning and Budget Preparation has increased four times between the baselines to the end of the project period. Although women representatives had claimed during the baseline that they were involved in Safety Net allocation and ensured gender and poverty sensitive allocations, there has been a clear documented increase in poverty and gender sensitive service delivery during the project period.

There has been a qualitative change in the way EWR's perceived in their Communities. They are, respected in their families and in their Communities. They have been able to demonstrate their capacity and knowledge in the UP and in various Sectoral Committees; they have developed their confidence and became more assertive and influential. One of the measures of external recognition is that, a total of 326 women leader from APARAJITA (EWR, P-EWR) have been nominated for the Award of "JOYEETA" and 164 of them are awarded. Another indicator is that 713 EWRs received position in Political Parties at Union, Upazila and District levels.

Outcome # 2: Provisions (legal framework including ordinance & directives), political commitment and public opinion conducive for inclusion and participation of EWR (and potential EWR) and for promoting gender sensitive service provision at community level

Indicators

2.1: Inclusion of proposals for reform in revised ordinances and directives

2.2: National Framework for LG Capacity Building highlights all new and special provisions for gender sensitive planning & budgeting

2.3: Increase in public opinion towards greater inclusion/participation of EWRs in facilitating service provision in the prioritized thematic areas

As APARAJITA project aims to change the existing political practices and behavior towards women policy reformulation supposed to be one of the most important component for the project. This is a long term outcome dependent on the work developed in outcomes 1 and 3. Its achievement lies outside the first phase of this programme, and it is likely that there will be only substantial progress on this outcome by the end of phase 2. However, some progress has been made to identify some of the key issues relating to constraints to women's participation in political arena. It is a continuous and on-going process.

A total of 9 national level advocacy seminars on contributions of EWRs in governance, challenges of women in existing local government laws and challenges of the UP Standing Committees, gender equality have taken place. From those Seminars, a total of 50 Recommendations were placed before policy makers. The negative aspects of partisan election, the need of 33 percent of women participation in political parties and local government elections were highlighted by 30 leading electronic and print media. Advocacy issues have been identified after conducting 7 separate studies which incorporated community voice related to gender and LG issues. Influential people such as Ministers, Member of Parliament and High Government Officials were present at those programs and committed to address and include relevant issues for policy formulation and reformulation. APARAJITA influenced Policy Makers to formulate law and make electoral process for member and councilor position to be non-partisan through national advocacy and policy debates.

Through advocacy interventions at local level, APARAJITA achieved recognition as effective collective force at national and district level and established relationship with Government, Political Parties, Media, Women's Movement and LGs Networks which has helped them to get access in political structure, government agencies for mitigating existing challenges. APARAJITA established working relationship with NILG to a great extent and the capacity building learning experience contributed developing modules for ICBP program under National Capacity Building Framework. In this process, LOGIN and RSCD-India provided technical and knowledge support. APARAJITA Alliance members are playing vital role in LOGIN Bangladesh Country Platform.

Outcome # 3: Information, technical and advisory support for EWR valued, used and continuing.

Indicators

3.1 Year wise incremental % increase in requests for information and advice from KCE Hub by EWR

3.2 Increasing % EWR value the local NGOs and volunteers supporting role

This outcome provides the information and advisory support to the EWRs. This is a key contribution to the development of the competence of the EWRs and to building a broad-based and informed group of volunteer activists to take forward the understanding of political empowerment at the local-level. Progress has been limited due to staffing issues as well as difficulties in understanding how to operationalize this outcome, which was weakly developed in the programme document. In order to address some of the existing weaknesses in this outcome, APARAJITA needs to develop an overarching strategy that can direct its work on the management of knowledge, information, documentation, communication, research, learning and advocacy. This should focus by operationalizing knowledge management and learning systems, as well as identification of the key information needs and gaps that the EWRs require, based on their experience to date. This may need technical assistance to guide the programme through the design of the necessary elements, structures and systems to ensure effective use of information and knowledge, and learning across the four organizations, particularly at field-level, and through, EWR's peer-to-peer learning.

In addition, the boundaries between this outcome and outcomes 1 and 2 are unclear, making it difficult to separate out interventions in this area from interventions in the other two outcomes and increasing the difficulties for reporting. In particular the NAV network and its effectiveness (output 3.2) most clearly fit with the delivery of outcome 1, as does support to EWR networking (output 3.3). Much of the work of the KCE Hub fits more clearly within outcome 2 and the use of information to inform advocacy, as well as the use of information to feed into the capacity and understanding development of EWRs (under outcome 1).

Achievements include the provision of useful and timely information to EWRs and PWRs so that they have complete knowledge about of the rules and regulation for steering of governing their involvement in local government bodies and with local service delivery agencies, for ensuring services and allocations which are to be made available to the UPs and UPZs through various government programmes and schemes and how to facilitate Citizen's access to these services. The strategies used by the APARAJITA Alliance members for this has included Resource Centres which were set up, keeping necessary documentation both in hard copies and on-line, advice and mentoring, printing selected information in the EWR monitoring diaries (see below), enabling access to a telephone help-line and encouraging for sharing of experiences and information among EWRs, PWRs and NAVs. (See Table 2 in Annex A)

3.9 Outputs and Performance from December 2011 to November 2015

This chapter will review results achieved over the project period by output and will include reflections on particular issues for a critical assessment of the process followed, challenges and lessons learned.

Output 1.1 EWR capacity, confidence built and understanding of the values /practices of representational politics actualized.

Capacity development confidence building had been identified as critical areas of need for the EWRs during the project design phase and also during the earlier experience of the APARAJITA Alliance members. During the baseline it was found that out of 1733, 1064, 61% EWRs did not received any training, only 669, 39% EWR received training from government and different organizations on various LGIs related subjects.

APARAJITA alliance provided following trainings to EWRs and P-EWRs:

- (a) "Roles and Responsibilities of EWRs and Accountability to Services Delivery Mechanism"
- (b) Training on public entitlement
- (c) "Leadership development, Communication, Advocacy and Networking"
- (d) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and participatory budget

In the reporting period, 1764 EWRs and 3126 P-EWRs received training and 4,969 EWRs and P-EWRs participated in Refreshers course on "Roles and Responsibilities of EWRs and Accountability to Services Delivery Mechanism, and Communication, Advocacy and leadership public entitlement, and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and participatory budget. 70 Government officials were involved as facilitator to conduct training sessions and covered 364 unions.

ANGOs facilitated exchange visit among EWRs. There are 84 of Exchange visit have conducted involving 1441 EWRs covered 37 different Upazilas. During this visit EWRs have shared their experience regarding challenges, limitations, opportunities and threats through formal and informal interaction. From the visit it has developed some common strategies to mitigate the common problems of EWRs in LGI.

Other capacity building and information sharing activities included the following:

- APARAJITA Alliance members produced 4550 diaries and distributed these to EWRs, P-EWRs, Chairpersons/Mayors/Vice Chairs and secretaries for self-monitoring, and asses the achievements of their contributions on regular basis.
- APARAJITA Alliance members addressed the issues in terms of roles and responsibilities of EWRs, their involvement and regular monitoring activities of service delivery institutions (Primary schools, Community clinic and Agriculture related issues, and dealing mechanism), field staffs addressed relevant circulars through regular coaching and mentoring to the EWRs and P-EWRs.
- Total 50000 Posters and 2000 Desk Calendar has been printed and distributed in this year. 937 Posters have been framed to display in LGUs. Total 3200 New Year's greeting card, 40000 Leaflet and 19600 Journals have been printed.

The results achieved are documented in table 3 of Annex where we can see that knowledge about budgeting and planning processes among EWRs has increased from 26% to 76%; attendance in ward meetings has increased from 41 to 82% and the number of EWRs who had seen the LG Act 2009 increased from 29 to 100%.The text box 1 provides critical reflections on the capacity building process, adjustments made and lessons learned,and text box 2 provides reflections on the importance of involving men in a women's political empowerment programme.

Output 1.2 Potential EWR (P-EWR) identified and nurtured

APARAJITA Alliance members identified total 1764 EWRs, and 3126 numbers of P-EWRs are involved in the APARAJITA program in the working areas. During the baseline it was found that, 3458 P-EWRs and 1334 EWRs had received trainings on various fields. Out of 3458 P-EWRs, 1620 P-EWRs have not received any training. During the project this gap was fully addressed and during the project period 1764 EWRs and 3126 P-EWRs, received trainings on “Leadership development, Communication, Advocacy and Networking including Citizen’s Rights, Public Entitlement and Citizen’s Score Card for Social Accountability”.

P-EWR’s involvement with networks/social committees/NGO activities:

Baseline: About 2854 of the P-EWRs are not affiliated with any types of committees. On the other hand 603 P-EWR are involved with networks/ social committees/ NGO activities, Local government development program committees, project implementation, School Management committees, Hospital management Committees. Among them 442 EWR are holding vital positions. 398 P-EWR are affiliated with different NGO activities.

Present status: A total of 1211 P-EWRs have been included in leadership position of various local organizations such as: Club, Samity, Citizens Group etc who are contributing to ensure accountability of service providers. In addition ensure accountability to service providers, these P-EWRs also plays active role in the decision making process of civil society organization (CSO). A total of 927 NAV included in leadership position of various local organization such as: Club, Samity, Citizen Group etc. i.e. they were included as members in Standing Committees, Citizens Groups, Clubs and Samities.

Political Affiliation

Baseline: Among 3458 women leaders, total 376 are directly involved with political parties, 397 of them are not directly affiliated with party politics but they are supporting them and have willingness to join a political party soon. Rest 2684 women leaders are not involved with party politics.

Present status: By the end of the project period 1597 EWRs i.e. 90% EWRs had political affiliation. Box 3 of Annex Provides the reflection on the processes followed by the project in addressing P-EWRs and its evolution, the challenges and the lessons learned

Women’s involvement in political parties

An issue common to both EWR and P-EWR’s leadership and political empowerment is their participation in political parties. The political context for local government is changing rapidly with evidence of increased politicization and activity of political parties at the grassroots. The parties are an important arena for APARAJITA’s work, and the programme now needs to assess strategies for improving women’s empowerment within the parties as an important element of the strategy to embed women’s political empowerment in mainstream politics. The Baseline showed that a significant number of EWRs at the UP level are non-political persons. The data analysis shows that in terms of affiliation with political party out of total 1733, 285(16 %) EWRs are directly involved with various political parties. 347(20 %) EWRs are indirectly involved. On the other hand 1101(64%) EWRs are not affiliated with any political parties. (See graph 6 for baseline and graph8 for achievement over the project period in Annex C)

Output 1.3 Electorate and institutional colleagues’ opinions on EWR contribution to good governance positively influenced

Numerous meetings with EWRs and different service delivery institutes (Village Court, Ansar, teachers and SMC members) were organized; SKF meetings with SKF and WID sub-committee and SKF meetings with political party representatives, journalists and local govt. administration representatives were held. The meetings contributed towards effective performance of EWRs and public service providers through sharing experiences and opinions on their achievements and challenges in performing roles and responsibilities of EWRs and Public Service Providers. SKF played an active role in sensitizing governance at different institutions took part and maintained regular communication with different LGIs, Educational institutions, NNPC. Joint and interface meetings contributed towards effective performance of both EWRs and Public Service Providers through sharing experiences and opinions in the service provisions and delivery.

Output 1.4 EWR engagement (monitoring, raising voice) with service providers for better service provision enhanced

This has been a key focus of the project and significant results as well as achievements have been achieved as discussed in chapter 2 under Outcome 1. To recall APARAJITA provided support EWRs to organize and facilitate 1640 number of the thematic standing committees (Education, Health and Agriculture).

1764 EWRs included as chair out of total Standing Committees in LGIs under APARAJITA working area and in Y 1 (56), Y 2 (335), Y 3 (618) & Y 4 (402) P-EWRs were Co-opted as members. EWRs monitored 642 Government Primary Schools and 536 Community Clinics. 1157 EWRs involved in SMC, 1233 EWRs involved in CCMC and 1193 EWRs involved in Agriculture services. (See graph 7 year-wise evolution of EWR involvement in CCMCs in annex C).

Output 1.5 EWR networking for advocacy and mutual support (collective action) enhanced

This has also been a key focus of the project and significant results as well as achievements have been achieved as discussed in chapter 2 under Outcome 1. To recall the following took place over the project period

- 1012 meeting of vertical and horizontal Network of EWR with the Standing Committees was held in four regions. Further, in this period, 158 issue based events was organized.
- 1466 EWRs involved in Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum, 92 EWRs involved in BUPF and 26 in Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB).

Output 2.1 Gender issues in LG reform influenced

Nine National Advocacy Programs were organized; focusing on the negative aspects of partisan election at LG, contributions of EWRs in Governance and Service Delivery, hindrance of women related existing Local Government Laws and Challenges of UP Standing Committees where a total of 507 key people were present in those meeting who were in a position to influence policy formulation. A total of 1258 participants were present in those 9 National Seminars; A television talk show (22 May 2015) on participation of Women in City Corporation election telecasted by Channel I and two women representatives from Dhaka City Corporation (North and South) and one representative from civil society participated in the event which was moderated by Media personality Md. Jahangir.

52 door to door campaign, 159 video screening and dialogue at UP level; 37 video screening and dialogue, 9 door to door campaign at Upazila level, 10 door to door campaign, 10 APARAJITA conference at district level.

In the national seminars, 80 Recommendations were placed before the Policy Maker and other Actors in the Local Government for review of the existing policies concerning the status of women leaders in the UP Standing Committees and exercising their democratic rights.

Through local level campaign local people as well as representatives from government and service institutions were made aware about the contribution and necessity of women leadership at LGIs.

Output 2.2 LG issues and debate (especially related to constraints for EWR inclusion/participation) raised in public domain to gather wider support for change

During the reporting period the APARAJITA Alliance assessed the field experiences and understood the key challenges to implement present local government laws. A-NGOs keeping documentation, discussing the issues and challenges in forum meetings and networking meetings, prioritized the issues and share among NGOs and local media. In the first phase, NGOs have prioritized four main Issues to address at local and national level for review and changes. The issues are:

1. Defining roles and responsibility of EWRs
2. Recognizing and make functional of the Standing committees
3. Local government to play an active coordinating and facilitation role to ensure services
4. Promoting gender responsive budget, planning and monitoring

Output 3.1 KCE Hub is functioning, recognized and used by EWRs

In the baseline report it was found that in the APARAJITA working area; 3,21,335 people received different services from information center during last six months (December 2011-May 2012); where 1,17,560 (37%) were female. The progress made in this area can be seen by the following:

- Under KCE Hub 40 gender responsive centers/local offices addressed and functioning in 40 Districts, provided Local government laws, circulars and service related information.
- EWRs are getting information by using “Helpline” developed by government (16256 & 10921).
- APARAJITA website (www.APARAJITA-bd.net) and Databank (www.databank.APARAJITA-bd.net) have been developed.

Output 3.2 Imp-NGOs and networks of activist volunteers (NAV) have adequate reach, competence, capacity and legitimacy to continue advancing political empowerment after the end of the project

Over the project period 452 workshops with NAV took place at UP and UPZ level where a total of 12499 NAV (F 4685 M 7814) were present; 471 quarterly meeting (with total participants 5475; (F 3521; M 1954) were organized with the Union based Networks of Volunteers (NAV); 1 Annual coordination meeting (F 8, M26); 4 orientation of Staff (participants 39 per meeting). The NAV members have been well oriented with their roles and responsibilities and at the same time their participation and involvement have been increased in the process of decision making and implementation at the grass-roots levels. Other activities carried out included the following:

- 845 EWRs 799 P-EWRs, 4394 Volunteers (M- 2763 and F- 1631) and 175 EMR Participated in the observation of International Women day to uphold women development issues and to create a positive environment for women. International women’s day observation organized jointly with govt. and the numbers are not available for 4 years.
- Total 731 (M 380, F 351) (Y1: 34, Y2: 101, Y3: 328, Y4: 268) Volunteers co-opted in different standing committees of UP (Male 105 and Female 97).
- Volunteers motivated and developed skills to play a significant supportive role to assist EWRs and P-EWRs; they also support parishad in emergency needs. 132 Volunteers support the coastal community in Coxes bazaar and Chittagong during the Storm

“Mahashen”. Box 5 provides some reflections on networking with activist volunteers, the process followed, lessons learned and challenges faced. (Please see Annex A)

Output 3.3 Responsive support provided to emerging theme-based EWR networking initiatives

Total 51 meetings of UNUF with MAB, BUFP and other LG associations at Upazila level were held in year four of the project. A total of 1550 (1201 female and male 349) attended those meetings; 29 events were organized to observe International Women’s Day, National Legal Aid Day, International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women; 88 UP level legal aid committee meetings organized by Upazila forum and observed Standing Committee Meetings. On these occasions total 5265 beneficiaries (Female 2554 & Male 2711) participated in these events. National barriers that impede women’s active participation in electoral process were addressed in the meetings and recommendations were made. APARAJITA forum provided responsive support to emerging theme based networking initiatives and observed various days.

During this reporting period, 623 monthly meetings were conducted for institutionalization of the Networks “Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum”. The rights-holders meaning the service receivers have been aware of their entitlements and at the same time the duty bearers meaning EWRs have become accountable to the community people.

3.10: Finances and Management

Name of ANGO	Total budget	Expenditure	Burn rate
Steps Towards Development	82,789,308	80,437,453	97%
PRIP TRUST	83,925,205	80,523,041	96%
Democracywatch	83,703,622	82,402,844	98%
Khan Foundation	86,260,486	84,834,533	98%
TOTAL	336,678,621	328,197,871	97%

In four years of the project total budget was 336,678,621 and expenses 328,197,871, with 97% “burn rate”.

Part 4: APARAJITA: Political Empowerment of Women (Phase II)

**APARAJITA: Political Empowerment of Women
(Phase II)**

4.1 Project goal, outcomes, outputs and indicators

Overall Goal	Indicator
Disadvantaged and poor women improve their wellbeing through women political empowerment.	60% of LGIs are taken initiatives to create enabling environment for women representatives
	80% of EWR's received targeted support from LGI's
	70% of EWRs having decision making power in LGI's
	65% women leaders are taking initiatives to protect rights of women, poor and disadvantaged
	60% rural and urban disadvantaged and poor women experiencing prompt, respectful and responsive service provisions. (key priority areas e.g. education, health, agriculture, legal justice and information)
Outcomes	Indicator
Outcome One: EWRs and P-EWRs influence LGIs and Local Level decision making process	1.1: # of women candidates participated in local government elections
	1.2: 65% of EWRs initiate actions to promote pro-poor & gender sensitive service provisions (baseline 50%)
	1.3: % of female members included in different committee of LGIs and other service delivery institutions (100% standing committee; 60% at service delivery) (baseline 100% Standing Committee; 40% at Service delivery)
	1.4: 50% of key stakeholders' proactively influencing gender-discriminatory policies and laws (Baseline not available)
Outcome Two: GoB took initiatives to reform gender responsive policies, laws and directives	2.1 # of agenda proposed and granted by relevant parliamentary standing committee's meeting
	2.2 One(01) discriminatory issues in the RPO (provision of TIN) taken up to policy makers for reform.(baseline Not applicable)
Outcome Three: EWRs use information, technical and advisory support provided by APARAJITA project and LGIs	3.1 60% of APARAJITA have access to APARAJITA data bank/ Gender Resource Centre and information received as per their need (baseline 20%)
	3.2 60% APARAJITA using Union Digital Centre and information dissemination to community people (baseline 36%)
Outputs and Indicators	
Outcome One	
Output-1.1: EWRs and P-EWRs perform their responsibilities as per LGs act rules and regulations	1.1.1: 80% of potential candidates of APARAJITA oriented regarding their roles and responsibilities
	1.1.2: 70% of elected representatives at UP and 60% at Municipality are from APARAJITA.
Output-1.2: EWRs and P-EWRs take leadership role in different forums and networks to influence	1.2.1: Over 100 of APARAJITA are in the leadership position (president, secretary, treasurer) of existing platform, network and forum
	1.2.2: 1779 of APARAJITA are members of platform, network and forum

decisions in favor of women, poor and disadvantaged	1.2.3: 400 APARAJITA identified and developed as facilitator
Output-1.3:EWRs and P-EWRs ensures services as per government rules and allocations for women, poor and disadvantaged	1.3.1: 311 (50%) of LGIs are responsive to provided poor and gender sensitive services (Social Safety Net, legal, education and health)
Output-1.4: EWRs and P-EWRs participate general and reserve seats at LGIs elections	1.4.1: 150 No. Of APARAJITA contested as candidates in general seats
	1.4.2: Minimum 3,000 no of APARAJITA contested in reserve seats
	1.4.3: At least 50 Aparajita contested as candidates in UP chair/Mayor in upcoming Election
Output-1.5:EWRs and P-EWRs engage in different political parties and its committees	1.5.1: 20% of APARAJITA are positioned in different committees of political parties
	1.5.2: 50% of APARAJITA affiliated with political parties
Outcome Two	
Output-2.1:Elected Women Representatives roles, responsibilities are defined in policies	2.1.1: % of allocation increased for women, poor and disadvantaged in LGIs budget
	2.1.2: Increased authorities of women representatives in LGIs
Output-2.2: Women friendly election circular and order are available	2.2.1: Tax Identification Number (TIN) deleted from the criteria for candidacy
Outcome Three	
Output-3.1:EWRs and P-EWRs getting regular information as per their needs to strengthen capacity	3.1.1: Increased demand of information by APARAJITA
	3.1.2: Increased demand of information by EWRs, PEWRs
Output-3.2: More community people are using union digital center	3.2.1: Increased participation in action of the community
	3.2.2: # of EWRs and PEWRs assisting community people
	3.2.3: # of community people using Union Digital Centre

4.2 Project stakeholder analysis

In October, 2015 government amended the RPO (Representation of people's Order) for local government elections and enacted a law for partisan election. Four Elections (Municipality Election, UPZ Parishad (Reserve seat), Union Parishad and Zilla Parishad) were held within project period and under this amendment Municipality Election, Union Parishad Election held under political banner. As a result a number of challenges emerged for women leaders such as change in local power structure, influence of political parties over the nomination process of LGIs, nomination business, patriarchal mindset of political parties and social elites against nominating women candidates for contesting in LGI elections. On the other hand this change created opportunities for women leaders to get into party politics and its committees. To address the change context APARAJITA program facilitated networking process with political parties with EWRs, PEWRs and NAVs. The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Local Administration and the Civil Society for empowerment of 1764 Elected Women Representatives (EWRs), 5190 Elected Male Members (EMRs), 519 Secretaries, 4671 Potential Women Representatives (PEWRs), and also for engaging equal number of Network Volunteers Activist (NAV) for supporting EWRs. Besides that, it has interacted with secondary stakeholders like Journalists, Local Government Institutions (Upazila Parishad and Municipality), NILG, Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, Bangladesh Election Commission (ECB), Local Government Associations, Local Administrations, and relevant Service Providers (GO-NGOs) as well as Community People. Considering the changed context after the LGIs election, the project decided to include Chairmen, Male Members and Secretaries in the orientation and training programs.

4.3 Evolution of the context

In the current political context, a program focused on women's political empowerment is highly relevant and extremely important. The importance of women's political empowerment as a part of, and contributing to, women's overall empowerment is subscribed to both nationally and internationally. It has long historical antecedents in Bangladesh with its roots in the Language Movement, the anti-Pakistan movement and even earlier the anti-British movement. It is seen as an end in itself but also as a means of attaining other goals such as women's full participation and engagement in processes of governance and development. Key international conventions and agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action have emphasized the importance of increasing numbers and contribution of women in decision making at all levels and of political participation. Five Year Plan of Bangladesh Government has emphasized the issue of gender and the Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-16) included an objectives "to promote equality between women and men in sharing of power and decision making at all levels" and to enhance the participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life" as well as to 'increase women's representation in governance and administration including at all tiers of local government'.

In October, 2015 government amended the RPO (Representation of people's Order) for local government elections and enacted a law for partisan election. Four Elections (Municipality Election, UPZ Parishad (Reserve seat), Union Parishad and Zilla Parishad) were held within project period. Apart from Zilla Parishad Election 2016 all elections during the period held under political banner. As a result a number of challenges emerged for women leaders such as change in local power structure, influence of political parties over the nomination process of LGIs, nomination business, patriarchal mindset of political parties and social elites against nominating women candidates for contesting in LGI elections. On the other hand this change created opportunities for women leaders to get into party politics and its committees. Many of the contextual factors identified and analyzed for the present phase of the project document are still valid with strategic importance: The legal and procedural framework for local government, the provisions for service delivery and social protection at local level and the close relationship between citizens and local government bodies. Among the newer trends, one of the major issues is growing polarization of local government and the

increasing participation of local women leaders in political parties. Political victimization and unrest, violence, corruptions are contextual factors that still continue. Local government bodies are still not strong in terms of authority or resources, political commitment to their strengthening of Local Government is not consistent with women's participation in terms of numbers ensured, and representation is still weak.

However since the formulation of the project the political context has become more difficult at both national and local level with a narrowing of political diversity, a strengthening of the ruling party's control over national and local level politics and increasing partisan control over local government. While the policy commitments to women's political empowerment and decentralization are still strong the acceptance of critique and NGO/CSO contributions are less tolerated. Another change is that increasingly women and men participating in local level elections and functioning as elected representatives have to pay allegiance of the political parties, whether as members, supporters or having to recognize that they are a factor and have to be given their dues. During this period there has been change in LGIs election procedures as well as in the political context. Though previous local government elections used to be non-partisan, government decided to make local government elections partisan from 2015 onwards for Mayor and Chairman Position in the Municipality and Union Parishad. This system would affect women's participation in LGIs election negatively.

Considering the changed context after the LGIs election, the project decided to include Chairmen, Male Members and Secretaries in the orientation and training programs. Current trend of politicization of LGIs election resulted in decreased number of women's participation in general seats and chairman position. Prominent women contestants did not get political support to be contestant in LGI Election. Due to increase of election expenditure and use of money and muscle; women leaders were marginalized. As a result, approximately 85% EWRs are newly elected and thus many prospective women contestants could not contest and come out successfully. On the other hand newly elected EWRs have been emerged as women leaders. In order to implement the planned activities efficiently, APARAJITA interacted with relevant secondary stakeholders including Local Government Institutions (Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Municipality), Local Administrations (Central and Local Level), relevant Service Providers (GO-NGOs) and Community People. APARAJITA used several factors to generate positive leadership among local women includes motivation, mobilization, guidance, supporting environment.

4.5 Strategic link to outcomes of SDC's cooperation strategy

The SDC has a reputation of evolving Local Government System under a worldwide cooperation plan; it provided financial and technical support to Government as well as NGOs who worked in the same purpose. The cooperation strategy also focused on changing the situation of poor and disadvantaged with its programs. APARAJITA focuses on Women's Political Empowerment for expanding space of women in the political arena, targeting a gender responsive and equitable power structure. Ultimate goal is to enhance accessibility of the community people to the public services by the EWRs to empower grass roots and disadvantaged women for gaining access to the public services. (e.g. Health Center & Community Clinics, Primary Schools, Agriculture, Safety Net Services etc.) in accordance with SDC strategy.

4.6 Consideration of Poverty Issue in the Project Interventions

Overall women's contribution in development of Bangladesh is globally recognized. Unfortunately, the political space for women's participation still remains a challenge and "Poverty" cannot be addressed without involvement of "Women" in politics. The APARAJITA focuses on Women's Political Empowerment for expanding space of women in the political arena, targeting a gender responsive and equitable power structure. Ultimate goal is to enhance accessibility of the community people to the public services by the EWRs to empower grass roots and marginalized people and disadvantaged women for gaining access to the public services for exercising their fundamental rights to free them from "Poverty", through the Safety Net Programs, which is contributing to poverty alleviation. The program targeted to benefit a total of 5 million poor and disadvantage people through

program intervention; although no direct support been designed the idea is to provide support through capacity building of elected women members, and potential women leaders and monitoring of service providing institutions and Local Government Institutions as well. The service monitoring and placing women leaders in the decision making body will allow to practice a pro-poor service delivery and reduce leakage of resources and will be able to target actual beneficiaries for Local Government services.

4.7 Major Activities undertaken

- Group meeting for Mentoring and Coaching (UP)
- Planning and Service monitoring with local govt. (UP)
- Meeting with Local Citizens (EWRs, PEWRs, Community) (UP)
- Leadership Capacity Building for women representatives and candidates (UZP)
- APARAJITA Upazila platform formation/activation. (UZP)
- Meeting with other forums networks. / Meetings (UZP)
- Meeting with Upazila service providers and constituents / Tracking for services and safety net programs. (UZP)
- Facilitators and Mentors Development (EWRs/PEWRs) (Dist)
- District level sharing meeting with different stakeholders (MP, DC, UNO, Service Providers, receivers, MAB, BUPF, EWRs) (Dist)
- Study and Research (N)
- Process Documentation (N)
- Policy Advocacy (N)
- Sharing meeting with Media (Dist)
- Meeting with NAV for providing support to EWRs and P-EWRs (UZP)

4.8 Implementation strategy

This program was innovative in nature which brought together four NGOs with complementary expertise and diverse geographic coverage to support the capacity development of EWRs and the creation of an effective framework of mutual support for EWRs. It was assumed that the intervention will encourage the internalization of the key principle of accountability by EWR through assisting them to take on monitoring of their own activities as well as actions and reaction of service providers to their interventions themselves. They will also seek the opinions of their electorate on their achievements. The capacity building approach expected to be transformative in that it will focus on the need for EWRs to put knowledge into practice and on changing their attitudes and behavior. Through on-the-job mentoring, linkage with role models and best practice as well as provision of simple tools and guidelines, EWRs will become more responsive and accountable in their day to day service to their constituents. The programs were designed to facilitate training, coaching and mentoring to EWRs through local implementing NGOs, networks of volunteers and social activists, role model -EWRs and former EWRs.

All four A-NGOs had existing connections with partner NGOs at local level. Criteria for involvement in this programme were clarified, rigorously applied in selection and clear terms of reference and orientation provided to ensure that these Implementing NGOs will take a facilitation role. The project undertaken situational analysis for their operating areas and identify an appropriate constellation of capacity building providers to support the EWRs. Compared to these other donor interventions APARAJITA's exclusive focus on development and support to local women leaders and linking them up to national level policy frameworks sets APARAJITA apart. Its particular characteristics of support to transformative politics both in how it managed through the 4 organizations with different characteristics and histories as well as its emphasis on voluntarism demonstrates a different way of working.

4.9 Outcomes achieved

During the reporting period from December 2015 to February 2017, the following achievements have been identified under the three Outcomes of the project:

Outcome # 1: EWRs and P-EWRs influence LGIs and Local Level decision making process.

1.1: # of women candidates participated in local government elections.

In the Municipality Election 2015, APARAJITA candidates contested for different positions and got elected. Compared to Municipality Election, 2011 women candidates in Mayor Position decreased a lot. In 2011 the number of women candidates for Mayor Candidates were 26, but in 2015 the national figure decreased to 08. At APARAJITA working area a total of 03 APARAJITA (01 EWRs, 02 PEWRs) contested for Mayor Position which is nearly 37.5% of total women Mayor Candidates. Political parties are not interested to nominate women leaders as they fear of losing the seats to their opponents, as well as they do think the women leaders are not capable for contesting in Major positions in LGIs election.

Type of Candidates	# of candidates in Mayor Position	# of elected in Mayor Position	# of candidates in Commissioner Position (General)	# of elected in Commissioner Position (General)	# of candidates in Commissioner Position (Reserve)	# of elected in Commissioner Position (Reserve)
EWRs	1	0	0	0	123	46
PEWRs	2	2	3	0	146	45
NAVs	0	0	0	0	3	0
Non-APARAJITAS	0	0	0	0	307	40
Grand Total	3	2	3	0	579	131
Table: # of candidates contested in different position and elected members						

In 44 Municipalities, in total 579 women candidates contested for reserved seat (4.4 candidates per reserve seat); among the reserve seat members 91 elected women are from APARAJITA (46 EWRs; 45 P-EWRs), rest 40 of the elected women are from outside APARAJITA intervention.

The Election Commission of Bangladesh (ECB) amended the UP (Conduction of Election) Rules 2016 and the UP Election Code of Conduct in the official gazettes, for conducting the UP Election under Political Party Banner, as a first time in Bangladesh. Due to sudden decision change in election procedures, political parties had limited time to cope with the new procedures and systems. Women candidates who were getting prepared for the election had limited time to adjust and adopt with the change.

Type of Candidates	# of women candidates in Chairman Position	# of elected women in Chairman Position	# of candidates in Member Position (General)	# of elected women in Member Position (General)	# of candidates in Member Position (Reserve)	# of elected women in Member Position (Reserve)
EWRs	3	0	16	2	1170	211
PEWRs	11	2	19	0	2921	935
NAVs	0	1	7	2	136	46
Non-APARAJITAS	6	1	6	0	1070	259
Grand Total	20	4	48	4	5297	1451

In total, 5365 (11 women per UP) women candidates contested for different positions in 496 UPs in 9th Union Parishad Election, 2016. Total, 20 women contested for chairman position, where 14 are from APARAJITA (03 EWRs, 11 PEWRs), rest 06 women are from Non-APARAJITA intervention. Total, 04 women candidates got elected in Chairman Position, all of them are backed by the ruling party.

Total 48 women contested for general seats, 42 from APARAJITA (16 EWRs, 19 PEWRs, and 07 NAVs), rest 06 candidates are from Non-APARAJITA. Total, 04 of the women got elected for general seats; all of them are APARAJITA candidates (02 EWRs; 02 NAVs).

In total, 5297 (3.56 women per reserve seats) women candidates contested for reserve seat position, where 4227 are from APARAJITA (1170 EWRs, 2921 PEWRs, 136 NAVs); During the reporting period results from 1454 reserve seats were available, where 211 of them are EWRs, 935 are from PEWRs, 46 are NAVs and rest 259 are Non-APARAJITA. Total 14.5% EWRs got re-elected in reserve seats. Most of the candidates, 73% are affiliated with different political parties. Among the political affiliated contestants 61% AL, 11% BNP, 0.75% Jatiyo Party, 0.29% Jamate-E-Islami and 0.17% CPB supporters.

On 20 November 2016, schedule for Zilla Parishad Election was announced where a total of 84 women leaders collected nomination from 40 districts, against total 200 seats. One women leader collected nomination for the general seats, rest of them are preparing themselves for reserve member seats, In total 39 of the candidates got elected for reserved seats.

1.2: 65% of EWRs initiate actions to promote pro-poor & gender sensitive service provisions

In FY 2016-17, Union Parishad completed its budget and planning process through open budget season. As the budget and planning process initiated during January – July, former UP representatives were mostly involved with the process. Total 1223 EWRs were involved in the budget season. BDT 1,037,156,819 was allocated for 519 Union Parishad in total, where BDT 163,426,288 was allocated for poor and disadvantage women. As per monitoring report BDT 871,179,731 were expensed in FY 2015-16. About 1231 EWRs are involved with distributing services under Social Safety Net, near about 3 million poor and disadvantages women were served through different services under social safety net services under Union Parishad.

1.3: % of female members included in different committee of LGIs and other service delivery institutions

After the UP Election 2016 the first initiative by the newly elected UP council was to formulate the Standing Committees. In total 429 Union Parishad out of 519 formulated new Standing Committees. Total 1283 EWRs (100%) holding chair position in at least one Committee. APARAJITA project facilitated in the process to formulate standing committee as per rules, and negotiated with list of PEWRs and NAVs to include them as members, because of the intervention APARAJITA have been able to incorporate them in different standing committees. As a result 1501 PEWRs and 1287 NAVs incorporated as members in different standing committees. In previous standing committee the number of PEWRs and NAVs were so low.

According to the Monitoring Report, newly elected women members are involved with 1192 (67%) Community Clinic Management Committees, in this reporting year total 2359 Community Clinic were visited 8281 times by EWRs. They were involved in different development and monitored day to day activities of Community Clinics.

Total 1083 (61%) EWRs affiliated with different School Management Committees as well. In total 1118 Schools were visited by EWRs in total 1784 times. EWRs took responsive actions to reduce drop out of children, providing names of poor and disadvantage students for scholarship, and overall management of Schools.

Beside Health and Education, Elected Women Representatives (EWR) also worked to provide improved agricultural services to farmers. Total 1121 (63%) EWRs were involved with the specific services, in total 1751 agriculture plot/livestock/fisheries and poultry farms were visited by EWRs.

In 2015-16 total 811 Women Leaders were involved in Disaster Management Committees at different level (e.g. District, Upazila, and Union), and regularly attending meetings and in different initiatives as well.

In total 1285 PEWRs and 1260 NAVs were reported to involve in different committees and various leadership positions.

Through measuring facilitation skills and leadership role, total 171 EWRs and 148 PEWRs were selected as facilitators. APARAJITA project would like to bring them up front for various roles with improve facilitation skills and leadership roles.

1.4: 50% of key stakeholders' proactively influencing gender-discriminatory policies and laws

Community people are being sensitized on service delivery and discriminatory laws and provisions through different media interventions. Government officials, service providers as well as constituents were made aware regarding gender sensitive service mechanisms and related laws and provisions. During the pre-election period, women leaders along with NAVs and civil society members held series of talks and processions to withdraw TIN provisions for candidacy in Union parish Election, 2016. Women leaders were also took pro-active initiatives to reform poll symbols which were indicated as gender insensitive.

Outcome # 2: GoB took initiatives to reform gender responsive policies, laws and directives

Indicators and Achievements:

2.1 # of agenda proposed and granted by relevant parliamentary standing committees' meeting

- Relationship established between A-NGO's and relevant ministries and focal persons. Still there is no significant development to achieve the outcome but follow up initiatives and lobbying will continue to achieve the outcome.

2.2 One (1) discriminatory issues in the RPO (provision of TIN) taken up to policy makers for reform

- The government initiated mandatory Tax Identification Number for the Upazila Parishad Reserved seat election and municipality election reserved seat candidates in 2015 election. The APARAJITA's (EWR's, P-EWR's and NAV) showed their strong reaction against the intervention or process and finally the government has postponed this provision in the Union Parishad Election 2016. Project related stakeholders, APARAJITA and forums were vibrant and aided to reform the provision of mandatory TIN number for contest in the election. An Advocacy framework has been prepared in order to influence policy makers to promote gender sensitive provisions and laws; a total of four regional advocacy programs will be held in four divisions.
- APARAJITA in association with LOGIN BCP and other several institutions organized a three days' workshop on 26-28 July 2016 at Bangkok, Thailand on women political empowerment. A five member delegation team participated the workshop from Bangladesh and portrayed APARAJITA success and overall achievement of Bangladesh in the arena. Although the workshop was scheduled at Dhaka, but the terror attack on 01 July at Holy Artizan caused to shift the Workshop at Thailand. Following the success of the event held on 26-28 July 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand on women political empowerment, APARAJITA would like to organize a workshop in future for sharing learning of other countries with Grassroots Local Government Women Leaders and creating space for other participants to learn about grassroots achievement of Bangladesh on this issue.

- In order to address the existing challenges regarding women political empowerment, four regional level experience sharing conferences were organized; the first program was held at Barisal on 29 January, 2017 then in Natore at 01 February, 2017 and later on at Rangpur on 08 February, 2017 and the final one held at Sylhet on 19 February, 2017. In total 671 of the project stakeholders were present, and expressed their experiences of women leadership and APARAJITA. Member of Parliaments, Local Administration, Election Commission representatives, Political Party Leaders, Public Representatives and Service Providers were also present in different programs. Women Leaders expressed their demands in front of the policy planners, and they ensured that they will take proper steps to fulfill their legitimate demand.
- With the Experience of four regional conferences, APARAJITA alliance held a national level seminar at CIRDAP International Conference Hall on 27 February, 2017. Total 160 Elected Representatives, Potential Women Leaders, ANGO field Staffs participated the occasion. Deputy speaker of the 10th National parliament, 02 MPs, The Ambassador of the Embassy of the Switzerland in Bangladesh was also present among the guests. Significant findings from the all four regional level conferences were presented in the conference. They expressed their gratitude and solidarity with the demand of the Women Leaders and assured that they will take further steps to fulfill their legitimate demands.

Outcome # 3: EWRs use information, technical and advisory support provided by APARAJITA project and LGIs

Indicators and Achievements:

3.1 60% of APARAJITA have access to APARAJITA data bank/Gender Resource Center and information received as per their need

- Aparajita data bank is now ready for the use of EWRs, P-EWRs and NAVs. Information is up to date; field level information is updated regularly. Some time they use the data bank by the help of Aparajita field level staffs. 167 have used databank and 2279 were benefitted from gender resource centers. The resource centers provided advisory and technical support in pre, during and post-election period (nomination paper fill up, opening bank account, opening TIN numbers and other information related to election process). Women candidates were provided with ideas for preparing election campaign strategies; materials were also provided from resource centers. This data bank has been used as ready reference where all LGIs related information are available also EWR and PEWRs can get contact details of their peers of 519 UPs, 56 Upazilas and 44 Municipalities. Moreover, this data bank preserves all APARAJITA Project related information which can be used by interested stakeholders. In addition to that information of grass root women leaders of those unions can be received instantly.

3.2 60% APARAJITA using Union Digital Center and information disseminated to community people

- EWRs were proactive in improving knowledge base and thus requesting for updated information and advice from UP Digital Centers and also Helpline” developed by government (16256 & 10921). In total 1262 EWRs visited UP Digital Centers and 401110 male and female were) were benefitted through getting information from those centers. Information received from the centers was pro-actively shared by EWRs to their constituents and PEWRs.

4.10 Outputs & Performance from November 2015 – February 2017

Output-1.1: EWRs and P-EWRs perform their responsibilities as per LGs act rules and regulations

Right after the UP election 2016 APARAJITA project realized that most of the newly elected Union Parishad Representatives are not experienced with UP Laws and their roles and responsibilities, a total of 519 training were been held where total 7,266 UP Representatives and Secretaries were participated. Before the UP election, total 630 nos. of group meeting was conducted against 1,500 No. of planned events under this output. Total 14,344 individuals (F-5,190; M-9,754) participated in the group meetings. The event Group Meeting for mentoring and coaching was considered as one day capacity building training for UP Body, it was decided that each ANGO will conduct 1 group meeting for mentoring and coaching after the UP Election, 2016. A total of 519 training were conducted under these activities. Total 7,266 individuals (F-2,076; M-5,190)

In order to achieve the output, APARAJITA project initiated 760 number of planning and service monitoring activities with Local Government Institutions, where UP representatives along with potential women leaders visited service providers office and planned to improve the services as well as periodically monitored their activities. Along with the activity, Women Representatives held Ward meeting to identify local needs from the community and tried to reflect their demand through LG budget process.

Election Result of APARAJITA Candidates

During Municipality Election 2015 and UP Election 2016 APARAJITA project provided information and technical support such as filling up nomination form, providing assistance in opening bank account and dealing with political parties, as a result none of the nomination form were rejected during the scrutiny. Both in Municipality and UP Election the success rate of APARAJITA candidates were overwhelming.

10th Municipality Election, 2015

Among 133 total elected women representatives 93 (70%) are APARAJITA (46 EWRs; 47 P-EWRs), among them 91 elected as reserve seat councilor and two of them were elected as mayor in Municipality Election, 2015

9th UP Election, 2016

Total 1199 (82%) APARAJITA (213 EWRs, 937 PEWRs, and 49 NAVs) elected in various positions among total 5305 elected representatives in 9th UP Election 2016. Among them, 03 (02 PEWRs, 01 NAV) of the APARAJITA elected as Chairman, 04 (02 EWRs, 02 NAVs) as general members and rest 4227 (1170 EWRs, 2921 PEWRs and 136 NAVs) as Reserve seat members.

Zilla Parishad Election, 2016

On 20 November 2016, schedule for Zilla Parishad Election was announced where a total of 84 women leaders collected nomination from 40 districts, against total 200 seats. One women leader collected nomination for the general seats, rest of them are preparing themselves for reserve member seats, In total 39 of the candidates got elected for reserved seats.

Output-1.2: EWRs and P-EWRs take leadership role in different forums and networks to influence decisions in favor of women, poor and disadvantaged

In total, 1779 of APARAJITA are members of Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum. As APARAJITA project stakeholders mainly Upazila Chairman and UP Women Representatives are heading most of the position at Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum. As Upzila Vice Chairman are by default holding the President position, and in 50 Upazila Forum APARAJITA UP women representatives are holding secretary position and 37 of the treasurer are affiliated with APARAJITA project. In total 143 APARAJITA (EWRs 106; 37 PEWRs) are holding leadership positions at Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum. Based on the skills and experiences of APARAJITA, 600 APARAJITA identified as facilitators and 18 received as ToT. APARAJITA project facilitated total 44 Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum meeting.

Output-1.3: EWRs and P-EWRs ensures services as per government rules and allocations for women, poor and disadvantaged

APARAJITA project held 10 meetings at district level in presence of MP, DC, UNO, Service Providers, as well as service receivers, to ensure gender responsive planning and budgeting at all intervention area. In total 405 LGIs (405 Union Parishad) allocated total 0.67% budget as gender allocation of total budget in FY 2016-17. Total 1223 EWRs were involved in the budget season. BDT 1,037,156,819 was allocated for 519 Union Parishad in total, where BDT 163,426,288 was allocated for poor and disadvantage women. As per monitoring report BDT 871,179,731 were expensed in FY 2015-16. About 1231 EWRs are involved with distributing services under Social Safety Net, near about 3 million poor and disadvantages women were served through different services under social safety net services under Union Parishad.

Output-1.4: EWRs and P-EWRs participate general and reserve seats at LGIs elections

In Municipality and Union Parishad Election a total of 5950 women candidates participated for different position including Mayor, Chairman, General and Reserve seats. Majority of the candidates are APARAJITA. In Municipality Election, 2015 total 03 APARAJITA contested as Mayor, 03 contested as General Councilor and 272 APARAJITA contested as reserve seat Councilor. In UP Election, 2016 a total of 14 APARAJITA contested in Chair Position, 42 of the APARAJITA contested for General Member Seats and 4227 contested as reserve seats. APARAJITA project identified and nurtured interested women leaders to order to make them ready for participating in municipality and UP election. Although a lot of women leaders were interested to contest for Mayor and Chairman Position, due to the political party nominated candidacy a lot of women candidates failed to negotiate and were not interested to go against party decision.

Output-1.5: EWRs and P-EWRs engage in different political parties and its committees

As most of the mainstream political party in Bangladesh are not updating their committee at all the level, most of the information regarding the Output is not present or up to date, Bangladesh Awami League formulated its district level committee at 2011, and BNP formulated in 2009, after that only central level committee was reformulated as a result most of the position holders are inactive and the committee is not functional. As per data, only 496 (3.3%) APARAJITA are holding different position in different political parties. The political context for local government is changing rapidly with evidence of increased politicization and activity of political parties at the grassroots. The parties are an important arena for APARAJITA's work, and the programme now needs to assess strategies for improving women's empowerment within the parties as an important element of the strategy to embed women's political empowerment in mainstream politics. As the Local Government Election was political party based, the number raised by huge number then previous phase, 1620 (27%) APARAJITA expressed that they are affiliated with various political parties, majority of them are affiliated with ruling political party Awami League.

Outcome # 2: GoB took initiatives to reform gender responsive policies, laws and directives

Output 2.1: Women Representatives Roles and responsibilities are defined in policies

Under this output APARAJITA project emphasis mostly to remove barriers such as TIN and election Laws, as a result the output were not complied much, although in the first phase gender sensitive practices helped to achieve the output, in order to demand for defining specific roles and responsibilities, APARAJITA project held four regional Advocacy workshop at four divisional cities; focusing on the negative aspects of not having separate roles and responsibilities for women representatives, hindrance of women related existing Local Government Laws and Challenges of UP Standing Committees where a total of 53 key people were present in those meeting who were in a position to influence policy formulation.

A total of 671 participants were present in those 4 Regional Advocacy program; 40 APARAJITA conference at district level were also held for demand of specific roles and responsibilities.

APARAJITA project started gender responsive planning and budgeting at LGIs from the first phase, during the second phase the LGI budget and Planning were held during the UP Election, 2016 and the previous elected UP representatives mostly participated in the process. All over, 1534 Elected Women Representatives were present in the ward meeting and open budget meeting, and allocated 0.67% of total budget for women and children.

Output-2.2: Women friendly election circular and order are available

As previously in the Municipality Election the Tax Identification Number (TIN) was mandatory and a lot of APARAJITA faced difficulties for not having the TIN number in place, as a result before the UP election APARAJITA hold advocacy program to influence Election Commission and Government to initiated mandatory Tax Identification Number (TIN) to withdraw. The APARAJITA's (EWR's, P-EWR's and NAV) showed their strong reaction against the intervention or process and finally the government has postponed this provision in the Union Parishad Election 2016 and gender sensitive symbols were allocated for women. Women leaders and candidates signed petition and submitted in Election Commission Office at District Level. Due to their strong voice, Election Commission allocated gender sensitive symbols for Women Candidates and also withdrawn TIN provision for UP Election, 2016.

Outcome-3: EWRs use information, technical and advisory support provided by APARAJITA project and LGIs

Output-3.1: EWRs and P-EWRs getting regular information as per their needs to strengthen capacity

From the last year of the first phase it can be seen that, different initiatives including Resource Centers at District Level, Databank were established. APARAJITA stakeholders regularly visited those centers and demanded for different information. During the Election, Candidates visited resource centers for assistance, even who were not affiliated with the project also seek for information and were provided with necessary help. Currently, Under KCE Hub 40 gender responsive centers/local offices addressed and functioning in 40 Districts, provided Local government laws, circulars and service related information. EWRs are getting information by using "Helpline" developed by government (16256 & 10921) and were also informed from Resource Centers. APARAJITA website (www.APARAJITA-bd.net) and Databank (www.databank.APARAJITA-bd.net) have been functional and equipped with related information. Beside this intervention, the publication materials enhance capacity building of APARAJITA's, others elected representatives of LGI, NAV. Through the publication the relevant information can be available for the Aparajita and relevant stakeholders.

Output-3.2: More community people are using union digital center

Beside Information provided by the GRC and databank, EWRs seek for information from Union Digital Center (UDC) as well as informed their constituents for collecting services from UP Digital Center. In this reporting year, almost all the EWRs and PEWRs proactively influence community people for using the UDC, and let the community inform about various services of UDC. Total 14,50,814 people used and collected information from 519 UDC.

4.11 Finances and Management

Name of ANGO	Total budget	Expenditure	Burn rate
Steps Towards Development	29,967,906	26,983,996	90%
PRIP TRUST	28,792,856	28,343,825	98%
Democracywatch	30,690,555	27,418,454	89%
Khan Foundation	30,379,923	30,375,669	99.98%
TOTAL	119,831,240	113,121,944	94%

Part 5: Lessons Learnt

5.1 Good Practice and innovation:

A lot of good practices and innovations explored and practiced by the A-NGOs. Through learning sharing mechanism ANGOS took good practice of others and overcome different challenges.

Developing Facilitators Group: The project initiated to develop facilitators from APARAJITA for utilizing their knowledge, skills and practical experiences among their peers groups and other stakeholders. As a part of this initiative, project provided ToT to 18 out of 600 identified prospective facilitators who will render their facilitation role even after the project phase out. At the same time they are recognized as local resource group.

Mentoring and Coaching: In addition to budgetary activity APARAJITA staff mentored women candidates to make them aware on Election Laws and Regulations, Process of Nomination Paper submission; supported them in Campaign Strategies and Networking. This process enhanced women candidates' knowledge, techniques and confidence for participation in election timely dissemination of relevant information: All kinds of election information were timely disseminated by APARAJITA staff with the support of NAV. Gazettes, Circulars, Laws, TIN nos. and other relevant information were given to women candidates. Additional information on demand was also collected and provided to the recipients.

APARAJITA Coordination Committee (ACC): APARAJITA Coordination Committee (ACC) is the highest decision making body of the project. All decisions regard to the APARAJITA project shared and approved by ACC, which is recognized as participatory decision making management system through a process. ACC meeting has bonded A-NGOs which has created scope for bottom up approach with horizontal and vertical learning and also created ample opportunities and scope for learning new issues and subjects in the project implementation process. Provision of ACC meeting has bonded A-NGOs which has created scope for a model of "Supplementing and Complementing". Spirit of cooperation has developed within the A-NGOs to work as a "Team".

Nurturing Potential Women Leaders: In addition to nurturing EWRs, the project also nurtured potential women candidates involving in capacity building and other activities. Inclusion of Volunteers in the project implementation has brought a new dimension to the graduation process of Political Empowerment of Women.

Involvement of EMRs: Participation of the Elected Male Members in the project interventions accelerated the political process for empowering the EWRs for gender equity. Ward meetings before Open Budget Session helped to identify actual needs and demands of community.

Exchange Visits: Inter-organizational visits were organized for project staff as well as EWR, P-EWRs and NAV. Through these visits, staff and women leaders explored good practices of A-NGOs and LGIs and tried to replicate learning's in their respective Organizations and LGIs.

Meeting with Service Providers: APARAJITA promoted interaction process among EWRs, PEWRs and with community People, especially who are from excluded groups, women and disadvantaged for ensuring better services of LGIs. Views and opinions of the community people were respected and seriously considered by EWRs in various strategic Forums, Committees, meetings. Moreover, service providers such as Teachers, Health Workers, and Agriculture Officers of UP and UPZ level projected their sense of accountability to the Community People. Lawyers involved in different APARAJITA Forums and Legal Aid Committees played active role to provide Legal Aid support, including Legal Advice and

Procedures to poor and disadvantaged women and children. It has also supported the Government procedures, as well as disadvantaged and poor members of the community.

Resource Centers: ANGOs established resource centers at field level, where EWRs, PEWRs and NAVs regularly received information, learning materials, laws, circulars, gazettes regarding local government. Through regular visit, stakeholders achieved required information, knowledge on various issues.

Databank: APARAJITA databank has been developed where information of EWRs, P-EWRs and NAV along with their biography and individual achievements are available. Moreover the system has dashboard where results of outcomes can be seen and updated. At the same time, it has the provision of archiving all documents of the project e.g. annual reports, case studies, laws and circulars through e-System.

Valuing Voluntarism: Various monitoring and accounting methods could be tried to capture and account for the financial value of the voluntary contributions being made. Currently all four organizations provided additional contributions to APARAJITA that could not be accounted in the budgets. Various categories of volunteers attached with the programme provided quality time and services to the project which is beyond monetary values. Some of the core staff of the ANGOs also provided technical contributions which are not financially compensated. This is a particular characteristic of APARAJITA, grounded with the Principle of Voluntarism, where fiscal benefits were not offered for attendance of meetings or trainings. This is distinct from other programmes, and often caused serious problems for APARAJITA, where they are working with the same Constituents, who now constantly complain that they do not receive the same benefits.

Capacity Building for UP bodies: Chairman and male members of UP bodies had negative attitudes towards women members as they were getting all benefits of the project. However, many Chairman and male members of UPs had the demand to provide capacity building support for them. In last election brought many new chairman and male members who needed training. Considering the context, training was organized for whole body including male members and Chairman which helped to establish a good rapport with new set up of elected women leaders.

Harmonized Activity and Budget: Based on the previous experience; uniformity was brought in activities, budget, and frequencies of activities in the project which was resulted in bringing /highlighting all program results and achievements in a common platform. The reporting and monitoring system for program and finance significantly improved and became easier because of harmonized activity and budget.

Resource sharing and decision making: Resource sharing and decision making process among all ANGOs are recognized as a unique and very good practice that has contributed to uniformity in designing training modules, M&E, organizing national seminars and publishing IEC materials etc.

Training for UP bodies and NAV: In the last UP election 2016, more than 80 percent of elected members are newly elected as new members of the body who needed capacity building training. Considering the context, project organized one day training for the UP bodies which was highly appreciated by participants. As a result male members became aware about the roles and responsibilities of female members. It is assumed that those trainings will create good working relations amongst male and female members and will also create a sense of ownership with APARAJITA. Considering the effectiveness of NAV in supporting APARAJITA's in the 1st phase, project decided to turn "meeting of NAV" into the mode of one day capacity building training". Those training were really effective as most NAV members rated training as fruitful.

Case Study Publication: 20 Case studies have been published in the Sokoler kotha, a newspaper on Local Government on the Challenges and Opportunities of APARAJITA's

while working in the LGIs. The publication has helped to disseminate their achievements and experience among the LGIs communities

Timely dissemination of relevant information: All kinds of election information were timely disseminated by APARAJITA staff with the support of NAV. Gazettes, circulars, laws, TIN nos. and other relevant information were given to women candidates. Additional information on demand was also collected and provided to the recipients through resource centers and databank.

5.2 Challenges

Influence of Political Parties on Nomination: In UPZ election (2014), participation in the UPZ Chairman and Vice Chair post was determined to large extent by the Political Parties, therefore, EWRs and PEWRs who were not affiliated with any Political Party had difficulties to contest and win the Election. Use of “money and muscle” in the LG Election was also another serious challenge for EWRs and PEWRs as most of the time they had difficulties cope with the rich and influential people for contesting in the elections.

The Electoral Process and Culture Dominated by “Money and Muscle”: The electoral process of LGIs predominantly controlled by money as a result women leaders were systematically marginalized and institutionally deprived for entering into the political process as responsive candidates with in their constituencies for creating gender balance political structure at the lowest local government tiers for empowering for women to become more effective leaders as a paradigm shift.

Engagement with Political Parties: This is a strategic opportunity to deal with partisan politics through a common platform focusing on women’s political empowerment. This project demonstrates how organization can adhere around a process of political empowerment of women and provide a platform for effective political engagement for changing political empowerment. The contents of this programme and approaches applied are complementary to other donor supported programmes, as well as contributing to the policy and political aims of the Bangladesh Government, Local Government Division and Political Parties. The project has popularized women empowerment issues beyond political ideology, when women activists from different political parties are working together in a platform on a common agenda for increasing women political participation. In the present political context it is a challenge to bring members from different political parties around one table. To some extent, APARAJITA has made a major break-through in the political participation process for creating gender sensitive political structure.

Male Engagement: Engagement with Political Parties is a major issue for further road map. All four A-NGOs agreed on the importance and engagement with Political Parties for empowering women in the political arena and increasing their participation in LGIs as Peoples representatives, but there has been no agreement or strategies how and when to engage with Political Parties. Given the high political and sensitive nature of the program, there is a need to conduct in-depth analysis for developing political sensitive strategies and approach through fine-tuning in the next phase.

Political unrest: The first four months of 2014-2015 working period, political violence and unrest severely disrupted planned activities which created hindrances to implement the project activities at central and local level timely and effectively. As a result, most of the activities have been shifted and reorganized.

Existing Patriarchal Cultural and Structure of Local Government Institutions: Most of the Elected Male Representatives (EMRs) are still casketed within traditional patriarchal attitudes and values on Women Leadership at large. EMRs projected negative attitudes towards EWRs and PEWRs Electoral process and culture dominated by “money and muscle”

Negative Attitudes of Male Members and Chairman: Male members and Chairmen had strong reservation and resistance to give access to EWRs for Parishad's activities. EWRs had to combat to establish their rights and to get access to different Committees. Since APARAJITA took initiatives to sensitize Elected Male Representatives (EMR) through providing mentoring and coaching, training and discussion, overall relationship & the culture is changing. As a result; negative attitude of EMRs is gradually evaporating towards EWR's as their counterpart.

Difficulties in moving from four organizations to one program: Some of the basic components of a programmatic approach are not in place due to some initial start-up problems, and the individual contracts each organization has with SDC which has continued to reinforce four separate organizations rather than promoting the programmatic approach envisaged: these include harmonized budgeting, reporting, and implementation practices.

Staff Ratios: It is important to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of staff with the right skills, salaries to attract high caliber field workers, and attributes to support the empowerment of women leaders. Staff capacity in coaching and mentoring should be monitored and developed – through training and accompaniment. It is extremely challenging working with women leaders who are both much more experienced in politics but also less skilled in other areas (since they sometimes lack formal education, knowledge about local government rules and regulations, etc). Given the importance of coaching and mentoring and the time and human resource intensive nature of this work, the issue of numbers of staff and quality needs to be revisited as part of the planning for a future phase

Election violence: Massive violence between ruling party candidates, rebel candidates and opposition parties created panic among voters. As a result there was absence of enthusiastic voting. More than 100 people including women and children were killed in the election violence.

Discord among elected and potential women leaders: Most cases women leaders could not show their unity, solidarity among themselves during the election. 'Local political leaders' influence, petty grouping, conflict and money played a big role in getting nomination and contesting to the election. It appeared that emerging conflicting relationship among women leaders started pre-election situation and became a crucial issue of the project. The contestant who lost in last election, they thought that they left out as they did not have any formal position and mandate in the UP.

Election Expense increased: The election expenses in the current election have increased significantly compared to the last elections. Some candidates who contested in the reserve seats had to spend even 7, 00,000. A candidate had to spend around 3 to 7 lac for contesting in the election. This expenditure has affected women participation in the election. However, still women leaders depends on their family income for election expense.

Delayed oath and Involvement of Candidates: From the starting date of election schedule until oath taking date; it was not possible to conduct any events for the instructions of Ministry of Local Government for not to conduct any activity with newly elected representatives and also the activities of UPZ Nari Unnayan Forum. Therefore, some of the activities could not be accomplished. Moreover, election violence hindered to organize events in some UPs. At the same time several UPs were under lock and key where it was tough to conduct any kinds of activities. False cases were filed against rebel candidates and candidates of opposition parties were forced to leave home. Those situations affected the low rate of program implementation.

Patriarchal attitudes of families and societies: Candidates were pressurized by families to withdraw their candidacy to give the chance to other members of family. At the same time women candidates were mostly discouraged by their husbands, in-laws to contest in senior position like chairman and general seats. Political leaders, local elite, religious leaders discouraged women to contest in general and reserve seat.

Delay Formation of Standing Committee: In some of the UPs, SC was formed many days after taking oaths. Consequently Planning and Service monitoring with local government could not be accomplished in the scheduled time.

Drop out of activities: Considering time and context of field some of the activities were dropped and budget of some activities were reduced as well in the month of September 2016. As a result project could not fulfill the target activities meeting of other forums/networks, facilitators and mentors development, Capacity Building of Women's Political Leaders under national capacity building framework, Regional APARAJITA coordination meeting/ exchange of experience, learning meeting (inter-APARAJITA), Sharing meeting with media etc. At the same time, mode of some of the activities were changed such as instead of the event district level sharing meeting with different stakeholders an event on EWRs conference/gathering will be organized and budget was changed as well and instead of Policy level advocacy, regional advocacy was organized; instead of EWR's Diary, a book on Case Study Published.

5.3 Important findings from reviews and self-evaluations:

As a continuing endeavor Aparajita monitors local government elections realizing the importance of free, fair, credible and neutral elections, highlights women participation issues relating to elections for the purposes of achieving its objectives. The importing findings of currents LGIs elections are as follows:

- First time Political Party Candidacy in Chairman Position and Uses of Party symbol;
- Majority of the candidates affiliated with ruling party;
- Election process certainly shifted from social dimension to political party dimension
- Majority candidacy was influenced by political party, as a result social leaders left out from election candidacy.
- Women candidates in chairman and general seat were determined by the political support, as a result socially popular candidates left out through this process.
- Marginalized women left out from local govt. election as candidates, as a result representation of the marginalized people may reduce then previous elections.
- Participation of previously elected candidates and potential leaders of APARAJITA increased in this election as candidates.
- Because of the political party influence (relationship, economic), a significant number of women (new faces) selected as candidates.
- Patriarchal mindset and cultural practices of political party influenced to nominate women as candidate for Chairman and General Seats.
- Insufficient time and lack of knowledge of political parties on new election process which create major contradictions between decisions of local and national political leaders
- Candidates did not get proper support and protection as per Election Gazette and circular from Election commission due to lack of preparation of the Election Commission at different levels

5.4 Future Direction

The program has been a unique and innovative in nature and its scope of work and its design for implementation modalities. It did not initiate with any predetermined solutions, but adjusted its approaches as it moved along, and the management arrangements with the ACC and the APO allowed this kind of flexibility, it is also a model of "Experiential Learning".

The importance of investing in the quality of field staff through continuous learning and feedback has been highlighted, especially as the programme was working in an evolving socio-political environment and responding to the needs of a particular group of women engaged in local government and local politics and who were challenging the local power

structures. Their capacity building could not be of a standard approach, but needed to be innovative, responsive and also challenging.

An important lesson learned was that advocacy is not “one-off” but needs to be sustained, both at the implementation and policy formulation level, with enough human and financial resources dedicated to it. It is necessary in future by creating scope of anchoring advocacy for women political empowerment with the SDG goals and 7th FYP. Programmes such as APARAJITA which are seeking to bring about structural change in policies, processes and behaviors which have to have a long-term visions and strategies and plan for long-term processes, for higher realistic impact. It has also become even more clearer that political processes and structures have to be challenged and changed by both women and men through deep involvement and partnership processes. Leadership development of both women and men has to be considered together and male involvement is essential. The consortium approach has brought these 4 NGOs on a common Platform to deal with the existing challenge of Political Empowerment of Women to have a Culture of Equity for progressing Democracy in Bangladesh.

There is a lack of political will of the government and the political parties to include women in politics in both local and national level. Though every political party has to include 33% women in leadership position, percentage has not been satisfactory. Recent election and its result has found that very few women were given nomination in Chairman, Mayor and general seats by political parties. Only 29 women elected as Chairman in the UP election. Considering the context, it is important to advocate with ECB and political parties to ensure the RPO provision (inclusion of 33% women in political parties).

It has been evident that, for political empowerment of women, elected and potential women leaders need to secure leadership position of political parties if they want to influence the decision making process. Recent system of partisan election has accelerated the needs of involving political leaders of different tiers with different events of the project. For effective performance of women leaders, it is strategically vital to include male political leaders in project activities. The project involved political parties and their leaders with the project activities like seminars, dialogues, and exchange meetings at local and national level.

Uniformity in activities, budget, and frequencies of activities in the project resulted in bringing /highlighting all program results and achievements in a common platform. The reporting and monitoring system for program and finance significantly improved and became easier because of harmonized activity and budget which can be replicated in next phases.

Annex A: Analysis of year wise progress

Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators

	Baseline status by Outcome Indicator Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators	Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)	Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017
1.1 Increased representation	- Total 1058 (59%) EWRs expressed their deep interest to contest for upcoming LG elections, where 41% of the interested candidates were willing to participate for general seats. - Total 98 of them expressed willingness to contest as UP/UZP Chairman and Municipality Mayor. (71 UP Chair, 23 UZP Chair, 04 Mayor)	<u>Increase in number of women contesting reserved seats (% with more than 3 women contesting). % Increase in women contesting general seats, % women elected in reserved seats seeking election to general seats</u> - During the reporting period, 122 women (50 EWRs and 72 P-EWRs) contested for Vice Chairman position in 4th Upazila election from where 43 (16 EWRs and 27 PEWRs) have been elected and 3 EWRs contested for Upazila Chairman position. In 10th parliament election, four women representatives (1 EWR, 3 PEWR) contested, one for the general seats and the other three for the reserved seat. All three reserved seat contestants have been elected as parliament members. - During the reporting period, a	<u># of women candidates participated in local government elections.</u> - Total 585 Women leaders participated in the 10th Municipality Election, 2015, where 278 were APARAJITA and 307 Non-APARAJITA. Total 03 Women contested for Mayor Position, 03 Women contested for general seats. In total 93 APARAJITA won where 45 was EWR and 47 was P-EWR amongst them 2 P-EWR elected as Mayor and 91 as Reserve Seat member. - In the 9th UP election 2016 held at 496 out of 521 Union a total of 5365 (11 women per UP) women candidates contested for the UP election where; 20 women contested for chairman position (14 APARAJITA); 48 for general seats (42 APARAJITA) and 5297 in reserve seats where 4277 were APARAJITA. It was found that

Baseline status by Outcome Indicator Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators	Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)	Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015-February 2017
	total 402 EWRs contested in the Upazila Parishad Election 2015 (Reserved Seat) against 205 seats while 195 was elected. All the candidates received advisory support (such as obtain TIN number, opening Bank account, and affidavit from notary public etc.) from the project. • Total 3697 APARAJITA (1708 EWRs, 1989 PEWRs) expressed their deep interest to contest for upcoming LG elections, where 8.6% of the interested candidates were willing to participate for general seats. Among them 321(221 EWRs, 100 PEWRs) in general seat, Total 41 (31 EWRs, 10 PEWRs) of them expressed willingness to contest as UP Chairman.	only 8% (342) of the candidates were from disadvantage population and 73% of APARAJITA were politically affiliated. In election a total of 1199 EWRs, P-EWRs and NAV won in the election where 3 were Chairman, 4 as general members and 1192 as members of reserve seats. • On 20 November 2016, schedule for Zilla Parishad Election was announced where a total of 84 women leaders collected nomination from 40 districts, against total 200 seats. One women leader collected nomination for the general seats, rest of them are preparing themselves for reserve member seats, in total 39 Women got elected in reserve seats.

<i>Baseline status by Outcome Indicator</i>		<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)</i>	<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017</i>
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
1.2 Access to leadership roles	- Total 19 EWRs from UP enlisted as the Panel Chairperson while, 75 EWRs have performed their responsibilities in absence of UP chairman during Baseline data collection; - During Baseline, 709 (19%) projects implemented by EWRs as the chair, out of total 3722 in Baseline year of the projects; 681 of EWRs engaged in PIC as chair out of 1779 EWRs. - There are 13 standing committees in each UP and each of 12 UP members should be chairperson of only one of the standing committees. According to Local government Act 2009(Union Parishad) it is mandatory that one third of total standing committees should be chaired by EWRs. - In 521 project UPs; there should	<u>% increase in number of women in senior positions (e.g. Mayor, UZP/UP Chair, Chair of Standing Committees, LGA, PIC, lead role in Village Court/Shalish)</u> - Total 362 EWRs from UP enlisted as the Panel Chairperson while, 176 EWRs have performed their responsibilities in absence of UP chairman during the reporting period. - During this period, 8437 (25.39%) project implemented by EWRs as the chair, out of total 33217 in 4 years of the projects; 1711 of EWRs engaged in PIC as chair in the final year out of 1779 EWRs. - Total of 2,954 women are involved in standing committees Poor- 618; Disadvantaged- 242 - A total of 1634 EWRs included as the chair of standing committees of Union Parishad and Municipalities, where 67 EWRs in Finance and Establishment, 42 in Accounts and Audit, 355 in Education, Health and Family Planning, 133	<u>% of female members included in different committees of LGIs (100% standing committee;) (baseline 100% Standing Committee)</u> - During this period, 2050 (31.56%) project implemented by EWRs as the chair, out of total 6494 in the reporting period; 1379 of EWRs engaged in PIC as chair. - After UP election 2016, all EWRs become a chair of one Standing Committee as per UP Act 2009. Beside this, 1501 P-EWRs and 1287 NAVs incorporated as members in different SC after the 9th UP Election 2016. Previously the number of P-EWRs and NAVs were very low. The result shows that EWRs in previous UP election who

Baseline status by Outcome Indicator
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators

Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)

Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017

be 1563 EWRs as chairperson of the standing committees. Findings of baseline survey show that EWRs are chairpersons of only 596 standing committees

- Regarding gender issues most 626 (36%) EWR reported that they have participated in village Salish to ensure justice for women who encountered violence. Other gender related activities mentioned that protest against early marriage, dowry settlement and sexual harassment, settling divorce cases and they provided

in Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, 24 in Tax Assessment, 92 in Tree Plantation, Environment Protection and Others, 117 in Water and Sanitation, 48 in Rural Infrastructure Development, Maintenance and Others, 20 in Law and Order, 422 in Family Conflict Mitigation and Woman and Children Welfare, 134 in Birth and Death Registration, 115 in Social Welfare and Disaster Management, 85 in Culture and Sports.

- 402 persons from P-EWRs and 268 from NAV were co-opted as members of different Standing Committees.
- UP conducted 94,871 Village Courts during last 4 years where 1674 EWRs were involved as Jury Board Members (94%). At the same time 193,763 Shalish held during this period on family, land dispute, separation, violence against women etc. where 2821 EWRs and P-EWRs were involved in decision making process.

defeated in last UP election 2016 also included as Standing Committee members. This indicates that their experience are honored and recognized by UP Council.

- UP conducted 18,034 Village Courts during the reporting period where 905 EWRs were involved as Jury Board Members (58%). At the same time 85,504 Shalish held during this period on family, land dispute, separation, violence against women etc. where 16,868 (20%) cases EWR were involved in decision making.

Baseline status by Outcome Indicator		Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)	Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
1.3 Quality of response	services including financial assistance for welfare for women and children.		
	- During the last 6 months a total of 24663 cases were held in village court of 512 unions. In 6656, 27 % cases EWR were directly involved in decision making process. - A total of 27087 Salish took place in Last 6 months. 1056, 37%EWRs were directly involved in, 9532, 35 % Salish and gave their decisions 4422 respondents 2492, (56 %) are fully satisfied and 1045 (24%) are moderately satisfied with the performance of the EWRs of their locality. 2898, (66%) of the respondents mentioned that they personally know the EWRs 2627, (59 %) respondents have commented that EWR visited their area at least once in last 6 months. 565,(13%) respondents mentioned that they approached EWRs for consultation and	% Rural and urban poor experience being listened to and responded to as citizens by their EWR and value EWR's effectiveness in improving local service provision 1233 EWRs involved as the member of Community Clinic Management Committee 1374 EWRs visited 1119 Community Clinics and provided their feedback to higher authority of concern department. 1157 EWRs involved in SMC and they visited 1586 Primary	% of female members included in different committees of other service delivery institutions (60% at service delivery) (baseline 40% at service delivery) At present newly elected women members are involved with 1192 (67%) Community Clinic Management Committees, in this reporting year total 2359 Community Clinic were visited 8281 times by EWRs. They were involved in different development and monitored day to day activities of Community Clinics.

Baseline status by Outcome Indicator
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators

Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)

Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017

- assistance They approached EWRs for assistance to have access to safe drinking water and sanitation, financial support, birth registration, to have VGD/VGF Card, Shalish, character certificate and development of infrastructure mainly roads etc.
- The respondents who approached EWRs 660, 15% said that they received assistance. Not all were happy.

- Schools to identify problems, such as water and sanitation, drop out etc.
- 1063 EWRs were involved in monitoring Agriculture Extension, Livestock and Fisheries Services and 855 EWRs visited 1767 plots, Agricultural Firms and Ponds. As a result of monitoring, delivery service improved to a great extent.
 - A total of 537 EWRs actively involved in the committee of Union Disaster Management Committee.

- Total 1083 (61%) EWRs affiliated with different School Management Committees as well. In total 1118 Schools were visited by EWRs in total 1784 times. EWRs took responsive actions to reduce drop out of children, providing names of poor and disadvantage students for scholarship, and overall management of Schools.
- Beside Health and Education, Elected Women Representatives (EWR) also worked to provide improved agricultural services to farmers. Total 1121 (63%) EWRs were involved with the specific services, in total 1751 agriculture plot/livestock/fisheries and poultry firms were visited by EWRs.
- In 2015-16 total 811 Women Leaders were involved in Disaster Management Committees at different level (e.g. District, Upazila, and Union), and regularly attending meetings and in different initiatives as well.
- In total 1285 PEWRs and 1260

<i>Baseline status by Outcome Indicator</i>		<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)</i>	<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017</i>
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
1.4 Measuring quality of networks EWR involvement with networks/social committees/NGO activities and Horizontal linkages	- Out of 1733 EWRs only 400, 23% are involved in various NGOs, Social organizations as members, some of the holding important management position such as president, general secretary and advisor. They are acting as Adviser/Convener/Chairman/Vice-Chairman/Secretary/ general member etc. in these committees. - The data available shows that only 322 (21%) out of 1567 EWRs at UP level are affiliated with Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF). 13, 15% EWR out of 88 EWR (Vice Chairman) interviewed at upazila level is	- A total of 1211 P-EWRs (70%) have been included in leadership position of various local organizations such as: Club, Samity, Citizens Group etc who are contributing to ensure accountability of service providers. In addition ensure accountability to service providers, these P-EWRs also plays active role in the decision making process of civil society organization (CSO). - A total of 927 NAV included in leadership position of various local organization such as: Club, Samity, Citizen Group etc. i.e, they were included as members in Standing Committees, Citizens Groups, Clubs and Samities. - Involvement of EWRs in different committees, networks and other interactions have resulted in confidence building to participate in different forums, social functions. The process also enhanced recognition and	NAVs were reported to involve in different committees and various leadership positions. 143 Women Leaders are holding leadership positions (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) in Naree Unnoyan Forum at 56 Upazila. - Involvement of EWRs in different committees, networks and other interactions have resulted in confidence building to participate in different forums, social functions. The process also enhanced recognition and

<i>Baseline status by Outcome Indicator</i>		<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)</i>	<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017</i>
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
	affiliated with Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB).	dignity. 1363 EWRs participated in 2520 meeting of Union Development Coordination Committee-UDCC 1553 EWRs attended in Ward meeting. 255 EWRs are involved in Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF). 67 EWRs are involved in Municipality Association of Bangladesh (MAB). - Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum conducted 324 meetings where 1523 EWRs were present.	dignity. 56 EWRs are involved in Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF). 23 EWRs are involved in Municipality Association of Bangladesh (MAB). 1217 EWRs are involved Upazila Nari Unnayan and holding different positions.
1.5 Pro-poor services	- Pro-poor activities include their direct involvement in selection and distribution of cards for widow allowance, old age allowance and maternity benefits. In addition 261,(15%)EWR reported that they were also involved in land settlement issues. - Almost all EWRs were involved in Safety Net programs such as distribution of VGF and VGD cards, widow and elderly allowance, Kabikha (food for	- Actions taken by EWR to promote pro poor & gender sensitive service provision (% over baseline and % success rate) - A total of 3,414,171 persons received Safety Net Support without facing challenges in the project area. (F-1,631,440; M-1,782,730). UP distributed 2,18,311 VGD cards, where 14,509 VGD Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 1,473,106	65% of EWRs initiate actions to promote pro-poor & gender sensitive service provisions (baseline 50%) A total of 1,580,197 persons received Safety Net Support without facing challenges in the project area. UP distributed 55,865 VGD cards, where 13,572 (24%) VGD Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 1,233,674 VGF Cards

<i>Baseline status by Outcome Indicator</i>		<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)</i>	<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017</i>
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
	work), Kabita (cash for work) etc. In addition some EWRs mentioned that they have assisted the poor in development of small projects such as fishery, poultry, cattle rearing (contact build with departments, training or financial assistance) and sewing. • Out of 1733 EWRs, 387(28 %) EWRs reported that they were involved in Local Government Planning and budget preparation.	VGF Cards and 330,761 VGF Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 848,426 Cards for old ages people and 23,706 Cards distributed by EWRs for elder people. • UP confirmed employment for 534,071 people from “40 days program for employment”. From this program EWRs confirmed employment of 16,796 persons • During the reporting period UP distributed 340,257 cards for widows out of which 49,609 cards has been distributed by EWRs; • 1,816,487 women received benefit under gender allocation schemes. • 1,455 EWRs (84%) attended in the preparatory meeting of Open Budget. • A Total of 326 women leader from APARAJITA (EWR, P-EWR) have been nominated for the award of “JOYEETA” and 164 of them are awarded. • 713 EWRs received position in	and 255,072 (21%) VGF Cards distributed by EWRs for poor and disadvantage people. UP distributed 209,539 Cards for Old Aged People where 30,287 Cards distributed by EWRs for Old Aged People. • During the reporting period UP distributed 81,119 cards for widows out of which 15,154 cards has been distributed by EWRs; • 51,175 women received benefit under gender allocation schemes. • 1,058 EWRs (66%) attended in the preparatory meeting of Open Budget. • In regard to this, a total of 163 EWRs and P-EWRs were nominated for JOYEETA Award, while 87 of them were awarded. • 1642 EWRs received position (President- 284, Secretary- 214
1.6 EWR's are respected , assertive and influential	• Total 4422 respondents 2040 (46%) are fully satisfied and 1045 (24%) are moderately satisfied with the performance of the EWRs of their locality. • Total interviewed people of		

<i>Baseline status by Outcome Indicator</i>		<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator in Four Years (December 2011- November 2015)</i>	<i>Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017</i>
Table 1: Achievements against Outcome 1 Indicators			
	4422,1564 (38%) have replied that they know about the rules and responsibilities of EWRs. • 556 (13 %) respondents mentioned that they approached EWRs for consultation and assistance.	the political parties at Union, Upazila and District levels. • 553 EWRs took action against 5,823 incidents of violence against women (2005), early marriages (707), child trafficking (387) and minority issues (180).	and Member-1144) in the Political Parties at Union, Upazila and Pourashava levels. • EWRs took action against 2,365 incidents of violence against women (55), early marriages (833) and prevention of Dowry (1477).

Table 2 Achievements against Outcome 2 Indicators

Outcome indicator	Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015- February 2017
GoB took initiatives to reform gender responsive policies, laws and directives	<u># of agenda proposed and granted by relevant parliamentary standing committees' meeting</u> - Relationship established between A-NGO's and relevant ministries and focal persons. Still there is no significant development to achieve the outcome but follow up initiatives and lobbying will continue to achieve the outcome. <u>One (1) discriminatory issues in the RPO (provision of TIN) taken up to policy makers for reform</u> - The government initiated mandatory Tax Identification Number for the Upazila Parishad Reserved seat election and municipality election reserved seat candidates in 2015 election. The APARAJITA's (EWR's, P-EWR's and NAV) showed their strong reaction against the intervention or process and finally the government has postponed this provision in the Union Parishad Election 2016. Project related stakeholders, APARAJITA and forums were vibrant and aided to reform the provision of mandatory TIN number for contest in the election. An Advocacy framework has been prepared in order to influence policy makers to promote gender sensitive provisions and laws; a total of four regional advocacy programs will be held in four divisions. - APARAJITA in association with LOGIN BCP and other several institutions organized a three days' workshop on 26-28 July 2016 at Bangkok, Thailand on women political empowerment. A five member delegation team participated the workshop from Bangladesh and portrayed APARAJITA success and overall achievement of Bangladesh in the arena. Although the workshop was scheduled at Dhaka, but the terror attack on 01 July at Holy Artizan caused to shift the Workshop at Thailand. Following the success of the event held on 26-28 July 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand on women political empowerment, APARAJITA would like to organize a workshop in future for sharing learning of other countries with Grassroots Local Government Women Leaders and creating space for other participants to learn about grassroots achievement of Bangladesh on this issue.

Table 3 Achievements against Outcome 3 Indicators

Baseline survey results	Achievements in Four years by outcome indicator	Achievements by Outcome Indicator during December 2015-February 2017
539 Persons (Female and Male) received gender and local government related information from Gender Resource Centre/local offices. 273,762 of Persons (Female and Male) became benefited through getting information from Information Centers	• EWRs motivated UPs to established 406 bill boards or Citizen Charter in 167 UPs. People became aware about UPs services from the citizen charters. • 1709732 Persons got benefited getting information from Information Centers (Male- 1060034 and Female- 649698) in different regional offices get updated on the LG laws, circulars, gender and leadership development books, Area based service delivery information. • EWRs are getting updated information by using government supported “Helplines” (16256 & 10921). • Enhanced the relationship and communication with local level development institutions, and improved the services. During the period 521 UPs information center was functional, 2,311,547 people received information. The centre used for taking photographs, exam results, admission information, job information, calling and emailing abroad. • A databank has been posted in the web which are used to document profiles of EWRs, their achievements, learning materials for tracking changes and impact on their lines due to APARAJITA. • During this period 1,709,732 EWRs, EMRs and P-EWRs visited Resource Center and collected information on Gender, leadership and relevant Local Government Laws, Circular, rule etc while 108 EWRs received service of government through hotline such as UP Helpline LGSP-II (Hot line # 16256). 804102 people collected information from UP information centers. Currently, 1088 EWRs are maintaining APARAJITA Dairies.	<u>60% of APARAJITA have access to APARAJITA data bank/Gender Resource Center and information received as per their need</u> • Aparajita databank is now ready for the use of EWRs, P-EWRs and NAVs. Information is up to date; field level information is updated regularly. Some time they use the data bank by the help of Aparajita field level staffs. 167 have used databank and 2279 were benefitted from gender resource centers. This data bank has been used as ready reference where all LGIs related information are available also EWR and PEWRs can get contact details of their peers of 519 UPs, 56 Upazilas and 44 Municipalities. • The resource centers provided advisory and technical support in pre, during and post election period (nomination paper fill up, opening bank account, opening TIN numbers and other information related to election process). Women candidates were provided with ideas for preparing election campaign strategies; materials were also provided from resource centers. Moreover, this data bank preserves all APARAJITA Project related information which can be used by interested stakeholders. In addition to that information of grass root women leaders of those unions can be received instantly. <u>60% APARAJITA using Union Digital Center and information disseminated to community people</u> • EWRs were proactive in improving knowledge base and thus requesting for updated information and advice from UP Digital Centers and also Helpline” developed by government (16256 & 10921). In total 1262 EWRs visited UP Digital Centers and 401110 male and female were) were benefited through getting information from those centers. Information received from the centers was pro-actively shared by EWRs to their constituents and PEWRs.

Table 4 Comparison of baseline situation with end of project situation with respect to Output

Baseline	End of project (Phase I)	End of project (Phase II)
521 Project Union have 4118 Project Implementation Committees (PIC) on that 887 EWR's are present as Chairperson of these committees.	521 Project Union have 11440 Project Implementation Committees (PIC). Of that 1711 EWR's are present as Chairperson of these committees.	519 Project Union have 2050 Project Implementation Committees (PIC). Of that 1379 EWR's are present as Chairperson of these committees.
457 respondents (UP secretaries) reported, planning and budgeting of their unions was prepared through participatory process in open meetings. Local people both men and women were participated in such events.	501 respondents (UP secretaries) reported, planning and budgeting of their unions was prepared through participatory process in open meetings. Local people both men and women were participated in such events.	621 respondents (UP secretaries) reported, planning and budgeting of their unions was prepared through participatory process in open meetings. Local people both men and women were participated in such events.
5% UPs in APARAJITA areas have Five Year Plans	13% UPs in APARAJITA areas have Five Year Plans	15% UPs in APARAJITA areas have Five Year Plans
140 (26%) EWRs have knowledge about Budget and Planning process.	1341 (76%) EWRs have knowledge about Budget and Planning process.	1557 (87%) EWRs have knowledge about Budget and Planning process.
Every Union has nine (9) wards. According to the act each ward should have two ward meetings in a year. It may be mentioned that each EWRs are supposed to attend 6 meetings in 3 wards per year. During last one year out of Total Number of 1733 EWRs 709, 41% attended two ward meetings a year	In Y-4 out of Total Number of 1764 EWRs 1451, (82%) attended two ward meetings.	In Y-5 out of Total Number of 1764 EWRs 1513, (86%) attended two ward meetings.
Out of 1733 EWR, only 500 (29%) EWRs have seen the local government Acts (UP, Upazila and Municipality) 2009. They have gone through it but do not have clear understanding about the contents. Rest 1233 (71%) EWRs have not even seen the Acts	Out of 1764 EWR, 100% of them have been provides with the Local Government Acts (UP, Upazila and Municipality) 2009 by project intervention and also provided training and orientation to make them understand.	Out of 1764 EWR, 100% of them have been provides with the Local Government Acts (UP, Upazila and Municipality) 2009 by project intervention and also provided training and orientation to make them understand.

Table 3 Comparison of baseline situation with end of project situation with respect to Output

The text box 1 below provides critical reflections on the capacity building process, adjustments made and lessons learned. And text box 4 provides reflections on the **importance of involving men** in a women's political empowerment programme.

Box 1 REFLECTIONS BY THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Capacity building was one of the core strategies of the APARAJITA project. Throughout the life of the project lessons were learned and the approach was adjusted to make it more effective. A multi-pronged approach was taken to capacity building which included training, access to information, networking and coaching and mentoring of women leaders by A-NGO field staff.

A training needs assessment was carried out on the basis of which the capacity building approach and modules were designed, both for staff and the EWRs and PWRs. The training was designed in three modules covering capacity development, leadership and service delivery. The training was followed by the individuals preparing action plans which the field staff would then follow-up. The follow-up was done in the form of coaching and mentoring i.e. guiding and encouraging the women to take various initiatives while advising them how to do so in a way that would develop their self-confidence and ability to undertake actions on their own.

At the beginning of the project period the preparation of the modules was undertaken by the four organisations jointly. However as there was not an inception period to the project, the preparation of the modules held up project delivery. It was therefore decided to go ahead using the NILG strategy on capacity development and each of the four APARAJITA Alliance members used their own materials and their own approaches. For example KF included elected male representatives and UP secretaries. DW had a one-day orientation for elected male representatives. Each organisation had a different number of days for each module.

As the project progressed it was decided to bring in the NAVs, elected male representatives and PWRs into the training but by then there were budget constraints and the adjustments that could be made were limited. These adjustments were made to address the need to engage the male representatives and overcome their antagonism and also in response to the finding that NAVs and PWRs also had great potential to become leaders.

A good practice in the capacity building was to use government agency staff as resource persons. EWRs and PWRs could become acquainted with the local government staff and contact them as and when required.

Another lesson learned in the course of the project was that if successful EWRs were involved as trainers then participants would react very favourably and would respond better to their peers. This then became part of the training strategy to involve them as master trainers.

The resource centres set up by the APARAJITA Alliance members served to develop the capacity of EWRs and PWRs by giving them access to information, materials and government circulars. Participation in the Women's Development Forums also contributed to capacity development by allowing exchange of experiences between them.

Training is one of the main components of capacity development but there were also some other activity like coaching & mentoring, exposure visit, attending seminars, workshops contributed a lot to build a capacity of EWRs/PEWRs. These activities engaged the project staff to a great extent as they needed extensive time and effort but yielded significant results.

Box 2 Involvement of Men

BASELINE FINDINGS

“At our working area **406 (23%)** EWR’s have confirmed that they are not getting support from their Male colleagues. Most of the cases EMR are not cooperating with EWR, not taking their opinions in meetings. **279, (16%)** expressed that they are unable to fulfill the demand of their people in their constituency; because of their EMRs Non-cooperation”.

REFLECTIONS BY THE PROGRAMME TEAM

While the project was focused on working with elected women representatives and potential women representatives: bringing about changes in their capacity and leadership and also in the functioning and culture of the local government bodies, it was realized from the beginning that unless their male counterparts were involved the women would not be able to function and would not be able to bring about changes on a larger scale. The demand for involvement of the men was first raised by the EWRs themselves as they faced the greatest resistance from male elected representatives, and then also by the men. This issue was also highlighted during the MTR of the project in 2014. However this was not part of the original project design: activities had not been designed and budget provisions had not been made. For some of the APARAJITA Alliance members men were involved in the NAV groups. The Khan Foundation had planned for day-long workshops with the whole UP in year one and three. The other APARAJITA Alliance members also started to bring in some male members to attend some of the trainings so that the men would be aware of what information was being given to the women. This created awareness of what legal rights women had been given and also of practical needs for women working in the UP – such as sitting space and toilets. Another strategy was to ensure that the UP activities were conducted with both women and men, such as ward, budget and UP coordination meetings. The various interventions succeeded in improving the working environment for the EWRs and gaining some commitment from the elected male representatives.

However it was also discovered how difficult it is to involve UP chairs in training sessions because of their multiple responsibilities. One of the strategies used to overcome this was to involve them as resource persons who would be invited to speak.

As part of working with other stakeholders the project also discovered the key role played by a Secretary in the UP as a facilitator, gate-keeper of information and as the assistant to the Chairman. It was discovered that it is needed to establish a good working relationship between him and the project as well as between him and the EWRs.

An important lesson learned is that any such future interventions should build in working with and involving elected male representatives, UP Secretaries and UP Chairs, in constructive ways, from the very beginning.

Box 3 provides the reflection on the processes followed by the project in **addressing PWRs** and its evolution, the challenges and the lessons learned

Box 3 REFLECTION ON POTENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS

This is an area where the thinking of the project has evolved over time. According to the design of the project it was proposed to work not only with elected women representatives but also with other potential women leaders or representatives (PWRs) who would support the EWRs. This raised a question of selection – how would the project and the APARAJITA Alliance members know which women were potential political leaders? Elected women leaders were more easy to identify. It took more time to decide on and identify who the PWRs would be. The baseline helped identify women who were interested in elections to the UPs and/or had already contested such elections. Therefore many of the selected PWRs were women who had stood for elections but had lost. Besides this mechanism it was difficult to identify PWRs unless the NGO has been working in that community before and had already identified such women. Some key informants were also interviewed to seek their views on who the PWRs were in their community. A question that emerged was whether through these methods of selected PWRs alternative leadership or women from more excluded groups could be reached and included as PWRs.

Another challenge was that there was a tendency for EWRs and PWRs to see themselves as rivals for the same posts in the UPs. It was not automatic that they should want to collaborate. It took time and effort for the A-NGO staff to be able to convince both sides that they had common interests in working together to promote women's leadership in general, in various capacities and positions, not limited to the UPs alone.

Although identified as a specific target group or stakeholder group in the project design, in fact it was not very clear which activities they would be involved in and how the project would support their leadership development processes. In retrospect it seems that there were not enough activities for them and not enough focus on their development.

In order to develop ways and means of involving PWRs the project decided to involve them in the monitoring of service agency activities, promote their inclusion in UP standing committees, and also in UP level networks. These strategies also allowed leadership development of the PWRs.

A lesson learned was that it was important to work with a larger number of PWRs than specified by the project as there would be drop outs over the project period. By working with a larger number of PWRs at the beginning of the project it was possible to have the necessary minimum number by the end of the project. The project wished to have a ratio of 3 PWRs for each EWR.

REFLECTIONS BY THE PROGRAMME TEAM

In the course of the project life there has been a gradual increase in party political activities at the local level, with local government elections and bodies being gradually influenced by political parties and nominations were also supported by various parties, although unofficially. While the project was being designed there it was not an assumption that political party participation could be a route to political empowerment. Only recently with the amendment of the local government act has nomination for UP Chairs been made on the basis of political parties (although there is an option for independent candidates). Therefore the politicisation of local government elections is now a given and the various stakeholders have to take this into account.

Women however, have traditionally been outside the ambit of political party activities and have come to local government from a background in social work, development work and community leadership. However there has been a gradual realisation that integration into the political parties might be a route to women's political leadership and might provide them with apprenticeship and support for their activities and political negotiations with other members of the UP.

The Representation of People Ordinance (RPO) has also been amended to ensure greater democracy within the parties and greater representation of women. Parties are encouraged to take on more women as members and ensure 33% representation of women in various committees, by 2021. Parties too have found that younger women are more interested to be part of the party, more mobile and also help the parties reach the other women who may not interact directly with the parties. The parties are also on the lookout for new potential leadership and often make overtures to women who are active in local government and also local women's organisations.

It has been observed that once in local government posts most of the women also assume political party affiliations – either that of their families, or that of the UP Chair or that of the local MP. These selections then help her to network with a particular party, to consolidate her position in the UP or to enable her to make various alliances and negotiation. However the APARAJITA project has been mentoring EWRs and PWRs to enter the party hierarchies and monitoring their progress.

Although by joining a party the EWRs (or PWRs) might hope to become stronger, but the internal party culture is generally not women friendly or democratic. If a woman is offered a post it is generally that of Women Convenor of the women's wing. However it is felt that inclusion of women in the parties in greater numbers is the first priority and then issues of culture and internal democracy can be addressed.

The APARAJITA Alliance has shifted its approach and now have included issues of working with political parties and inside the parties, to the capacity building modules. It remains to be seen what will be the advantages and disadvantages of having NGOs engaging with political parties on issues of women's leadership. A lesson learned for the future is that it is necessary to maintain pressure on the political parties for the implementation of the RPO provision of 33 % women.

Box 1 WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN DIFFERENT COMMITTEES: REFLECTIONS BY THE M&E TEAM

It was a strategy of the project to bring in EWRs into different committees related to the UP and service delivery agencies. This entailed giving EWRs (and also Chairs of UPs and male members) information through the training provided and through the follow-up coaching, on government provisions for that one-third standing committees members should be women from the reserved seats and they should chair atleast one-third of the standing committees and project implementation . Copies of the necessary circulars were made available – in hard copies and through the resource centres. The LGSP help lines were accessed to support this information. It was not enough to have inclusion of women. It had to be ensured that they could play an effective role. Therefore orientation was given on how to manage and chair meetings, how to set the agenda and also how to carry out practical measures to keep the standing committees active. Also the project worked to ensure that the EWRs (and later PWRs) be included in service agency committees such as in education, health and agriculture.

As the project progressed an adjustment made was the inclusion of PWRs and NAWs into the various committees at the local level. They were sometimes involved as the co-opted members or in support functions. A lesson learned was that women were given the chairmanship of “typical women’s committees” such as health and education and there was an attempt to promote chairmanship of other more traditionally male committees. Also once women gained confidence in chairing and managing committees they also felt capable of playing similar roles in political parties. The practice of working through and chairing committees has contributed to women’s leadership development and helped them gain credibility and recognition by the community.

A challenge faced in making the standing committees effective was that it was difficult to maintain the interest and commitment of general committee members who did not have any financial benefits (or even compensation for costs of attending meetings) or social recognition for the work they would do, leading to growing apathy and falling attendance. The weak role of the standing committees is not a matter that EWRs or other members can resolve, but a structural issue that needs to be addressed more generally.

An enabling factor for the functioning of the standing committees is the fact that LGSP allocations depend on satisfactory functioning of the standing committees. Therefore there is an incentive to hold the meetings, or at least show that they are held.

Case study

Shefali's initiative for Establishing Community Clinic



Ms. Shefali Khatun was living in Mongolpur village, Khanpur union, Birampur upazilla. Her family consisted of 3 sisters, one brother and her parents. Her father was a farmer and her mother was a homemaker. In spite of having eagerness, due to poverty, she could not complete her education fully and had completed till medium level. Then suddenly one day, her marriage was fixed with Md. Mossaraf Hossain, son of Md. Mojahar Ali of the same village. Md. Mossaraf Hossain was a simple Assistant teacher at a Regi. Primary School. After some months of marriage, physical and mental torture was started upon Shefali

by her husband. In the meantime, a baby girl was born. Before dying; Shefali's grandfather gave 3 decimal lands to her. Shefali's in-laws demanded to write down that land in the name of Shefali's elder brother-in-law. Shefali did not agree on this and therefore, her in-laws threatened her to dismiss her marriage. Later on, they forced her husband to give her divorce. Shefali's dream to live with her husband and offspring got destroyed. Helpless Shefali did not get any proper judgment even after taking help of the Law. The value of lives of mother and her child was determined through the money of mohrana which was 28, 900 Tk. Shefali's hard days started. She got the opportunity to work for societal development activities with various NGOs initiatives. She worked there for seven years and during this time, she worked so hard that she was noticed by the community and very famous. Due to mass fame, she stood in the UP election in 2011. Her competitors were 4 other people. After being elected as the women representative in Union Parishad, her life turned. People Services can't be accomplished through coordinating with male members. But Shefali was elected to work for the people. 6800 people live in her village but even after that there was no community clinic. The Chairman was informed for this but he did not take any action. Subsequently, she submitted application to past chairman and took advice from him. When she was submitting application to the THO of Birampur Upazilla, the current chairman resisted her. Being transferred after 6 months, Dr. Poritosh Chandra Roy directly invigilated the place and made a committee and sent to the Civil Surgeon of Dinajpur. After getting approval from the Engineer, Shefali collected approval from MP and later on submitted to the Minister by herself on April 26, 2014. On April 29, 2014, engr. visited the place and measured. On May 10, the registration of land was done. On May 29, 2014, the foundation was laid.

Birampur, Dinajpur

Source: Annual Operational Report 13-14, Democracy Watch

Box 4 provides the critical reflections of the process followed by the project around networking, challenges faced and lessons learned.

Box 4 NETWORKING REFLECTIONS

It was envisaged that EWRs would be assisted to form networks and join existing networks so that they would receive support and advice from each other and be able to build movements for social protest and change.

At the upazila level APARAJITA has supported the formation and inclusion of EWRs into upazila-level women's development forums. For the EWRs this is an important mechanism for building solidarity and collective voice:

At the time of the Midterm review there is evidence of duplication of effort with two forums in operation in some upazilas - the women's development forums set up by UZGP (and chaired by the UZP woman vice-chair and financially supported by the UNDP/SDC project) and the NariUnnayan Forums set up by the LGSP (supported by PRIP). Each of these project initiated forums claim to have legitimacy and recognition by government. Despite this duplication, the EWRs supported by APARAJITA are using these forums to review and exchange their experiences and using the collective strength of the forum to resolve issues when dealing with the local administration and difficult UP chairs. There is clear evidence of the growing collective agency and voice of EWRs that is being built through these forums.

There is also evidence that EWRs are getting involved in other higher levels of networks for example upazila women vice chairs in 6 upazilas in the working areas of Democracy Watch have become members of the divisional committee of the Upazila Parishad Association of Bangladesh (UZPAB), and in other areas EWRs are members of the district and divisional committees of BUPF.

Democracy Watch, has had six-monthly constituency coordination meetings to bring together the women leaders in a parliamentary constituency. This helped to build the vertical linkages between elected political representatives and increases the accountability of the MP to his/her constituents.

The incomplete decentralisation to upazila level remains a limitation to vertical networking. The project design assumed that the UPZ would be a vital link between local and national levels. However, the limited authority of the UPZ and unclear roles with the continued control by central administration over allocation of funds and decision-making at the local level, the room for political negotiation and effective local government at this level is highly constrained. This in its turn constrains the effectiveness of women elected as vice-chairs to the upazila, often a nominal position with no authority and no influence.

What has been achieved is that the EWRs are more aware of where to go for what kind of assistance and are familiar with local administration and government agency offices and staff. Various government agencies have involved the EWRs in various committees such as anti-trafficking and violence against women committees. The EWRs are able to contribute to these committees and speak out in the meetings. They feel more confident and also that they are part of a wider community that goes beyond their ward and their UP.

Box 5 provides some reflections on networking with activist volunteers, the process followed, lessons learned and challenges faced.

Box 5 NETWORK OF ACTIVIST VOLUNTEERS (NAVS): REFLECTIONS BY THE PROGRAMME TEAM

There are a number of issues emerging from practice that need to be resolved including a review of the support to the potential elected women representatives and the network of activist volunteers to assess whether the choice of participants is continuing to reproduce an existing social and political elite or whether the programme is actively developing access to leadership opportunities for poorer and more disadvantaged women and men.

The project sought to connect EWRs and PWRs with community level volunteers who are involved in social and political causes on their own, without any remuneration or expectation of such. The project sought to organize them into groups or networks. Such volunteers would support the women leaders, advise them and help them in the monitoring of services. As women leaders are socially and politically weaker it was assumed that they would need such support.

NAVs were not well defined in the project document and were not part of the main programme. They included both women and men of different age groups. Each of the APARAJITA Alliance members used them differently. DW had expert groups to which the EWRs could go for advice. Others had young NAVs who could be employed as entrepreneurs in the information centres. Steps had groups of social entrepreneurs who were involved in service monitoring. For Khan Foundation the NAVs were a defined stakeholder group with specific responsibilities and separate activities, for which there was also a lump sum budget. Steps, DW and KF arranged for orientation for the NAVs once identified.

Although it was assumed at the beginning of the project that the NAV would mainly play an advisory role, in the course of the project they became helpers for the EWRs. As the NAV members were mainly identified by the EWRs they chose them from among volunteers who had helped them during the elections.

Among the achievement of forming such network was that a group of social/political activists became more familiar with governance processes at the local level. They served as outreach workers for the project and worked without any fees. The EWRs would sometimes help the volunteers find jobs or work.

The MTR had seen the potential of developing the NAV as future leaders. Based on this observation the programme selected some "Master NAVs" with the most potential and of these some stood for the next UP elections. Also the programme decided to give them some refresher training to further develop their capacity. A common problem of working with volunteers is their greater drop out rates. Another response to problems encountered during the project period was to try and develop a shortlist of NAV members so that in case of drop outs other volunteers could be taken on.

Annex B: ToC: Narrative: APARAJITA Theory of Change (ToC)

Completed on 29.7.15

Prepared by Maheen Sultan

1. What is a ToC

A Theory of Change (ToC) has been defined as “A logical series of changes that can reasonably be expected to lead to a desired impact” or a “representation of how and why a complex change process will succeed under specific circumstances”. It is like a ‘results chain’ with context, explanations and hypotheses added which allows a results-oriented programming process. It maps cause and effect relationships leading to ultimate desired long-term, sustained change. It is a process and a product which must be plausible and based on sound analysis of context, flexible in order to adjust to changes in contexts and events as they unfold and adaptable in the face of experience. It also facilitates long-term learning process. It can be used as a road map to desired outcomes which spells out how to get to where you want to go and can form a basis of agreement of all partners what needs to happen and who does what. As it provides a framework for implementation (required interventions/actions) it allows on-going checks to see if you are on track and can form the basis for evaluation.

2. Why a ToC for APARAJITA:

It was felt necessary to develop a ToC for APARAJITA for several reasons.

Firstly it is important to have a common understanding of what the project is seeking to achieve and how among the four partner NGOs as well as at all levels of implementation. Terms such a women’s political empowerment need to be clarified and consensus reached on which dimensions the programme will focus on, how these will be defined and measured. Programme staff at all levels must have the same understandings in order to be able to work effectively together and achieve the most results.

Secondly as the project design and project document are complex and multilayered it was important to clarify the results chains or causal relations so that the programme can assess and adjust its course on the basis of the achievements and constraints experienced, as it progresses.

Thirdly it is important to articulate and make explicit the various assumptions so that the programme can periodically check whether these are still valid and make adjustments accordingly. The social and political context is constantly changing both nationally and locally, and not always in the same directions. A programme has to be attuned to both national and local opportunities and constraints to make the most of these realities as well as protect itself and programme participants from the negative consequences of these changes.

Fourthly it allows the planners and implementers to check if the various levels of indicators have been set, whether the most relevant ones have been identified and also reduce the number of indicators to focus on the most important ones.

The ToC prepared allowed the programme to make explicit previous assumptions and logic, review these as well as the changed context and re-strategise the programme while bringing in lessons learned on what works and what was missing in the last four years. **It has become a road map for the next phase of the programme.**

3. Context

Many of the contextual factors identified and analysed for the present phase of the project document are still valid: The legal and procedural framework for local government, the provisions

for service delivery and social protection at local level and the close relationship between citizens and local government bodies. Among the newer trends one is the growing politisation of local government and the increasing participation of local women leaders in political parties. Political victimization and unrest, violence, corruption is contextual factors that continue as important. Local government bodies are still not strong in terms of authority or resources, political commitment to their strengthening is not consistent and women's participation in terms of numbers ensured but representation is still weak.

4. Strategies

While elaborating the ToC some of the following strategies were clarified and emphasized and some of the existing strategies were modified

- Working with women leaders, inside and outside LGI, not only PWL, EWR and volunteers
- Constituency building: Importance of building relations with constituency – both men and women so that they accept and support women's leadership
- Working with male reps/leaders to create change in political culture and practices
- Transformative Leadership which is developed through social and political engagement.
- Women's leadership development/political empowerment both means and an end
- Challenging present leadership models and forms of decision-making in UPs and parties
- Addressing economic empowerment issues to strengthen political empowerment.
- Leadership to be developed through movement – but can NGOs promote political/social movements. Need to broaden understanding of movement – what is the right vehicle for movement – need to go beyond NGO ingredients of movement.
- How to influence hidden power, which is constantly changing and shifting – women/men have to be able to analyse power, articulate this understanding and take appropriate measures
- Need to understand women and men's motivation to be leaders and work with it. Need to sustain women's interest in being leaders inspite of setbacks.
- Alliance building: Working with local government associations and political parties and local women leaders to link up with local NGOs and women's organizations

5. Components of the ToC (see attached diagram in Annex 1)

The project will work with local level women leaders, both within and outside local government bodies. It will develop their capacity through training, on-the job coaching, peer-learning, networking and also through social and political mobilization with CSOs, citizens, political movements. It will facilitate closer ties with the constituency, both women and men, to increase the accountability of the leaders to their constituency and also to enable them to better represent them by gaining an in-depth knowledge of their needs and priorities. The programme will link up the women leaders with existing networks of local government representatives, both NGO and government, as well as other issue based networks so that they can build solidarity and credibility for their demands.

Women leaders will develop their credibility and acceptability to the community, to the local government bodies, to the local administration and to the local political players. This will be done through their practical experience, their knowledge and the experience of working together with different actors in the relevant fora.

It is not enough to work through only the formal spaces, processes and structures of the local government. By definition political empowerment and leadership has to go beyond such boundaries and address/engage with the informal structures and processes as well as with the political party structures. This has been one of the lessons learned from past experience. Another lesson learned is that women have to engage with male political leadership and certain political changes can only be brought about by women and men working together for example in order to change the political culture and practices of the local government bodies or the local wings of the political parties. This

will require engaging with the men through common programmes and addressing the political parties directly so that they engage women fully in their structures and processes. This will include ensuring that the provisions of the RPO in terms of membership of women and inclusion in committees and nominations, are implemented.

An important area of work will be to engage women leaders in economic development activities of their constituencies, not only in terms of allocation of Safety Net provisions but also in terms of local development planning and strategy formulation, resource mobilization for their constituencies (from NGOs, private sector and government sources) and from their constituencies (tax collection). Not only do they need to address the economic needs of their constituents to be acknowledged as leaders, they must also have the economic ability to support their own political activities, without being dependent on other family members.

An important area of leadership will be to work with both local administration and service departments to ensure that local citizens are able to access services and Safety Nets and demand accountability of these agencies on behalf of their constituents. This will involve gaining knowledge about policies and procedures in these areas, being involved in various oversight committees (such as health watch committees), working closely with local authorities so that the needs and priorities of the area and its most disadvantaged populations are reflected in budgets, plans and allocations.

Certain structural and legal changes are needed so that local government bodies as a whole can become more democratic and stronger, which will allow both women and men to exercise their leadership and serve their constituencies. Such changes will be advocated for by the project. These will include advocacy for local government reform to increase rights and authority of LGIs and members; setting up a equitable and effective system of reservations for women and increasing resources for local governments.

6. Assumptions/Risks

Women leaders will be at risk when they start breaking out of the current stereotypes, demanding more power. There is likely to be backlash by male leaders and religious conservative forces who will lose power and also local administration when they will be faced by women leaders demanding accountability. These women leaders will need to be protected and advised on how to deal with the opposition and threats, which might be physical, social and also reputational. It is assumed that the political climate will allow the "rule of law", democratic spaces will be preserved and there will be adequate security for women and male leadership.

Political parties have not been positive so far about including women and have been reluctant to place them in decision-making positions. The project will attempt to engage with them to change their practices and culture, which will not be an easy task. This will need a strategic approach and close monitoring and is likely to require adjustments along the way. There is an assumption that male and female champions can be found in the political parties. It is hoped that it will be possible to create a consensus among political parties, LGI, Public Institution and community of the importance of women's leadership.

There is an assumption that existing laws and policies, if made accessible and understandable, and if the relevant information is provided, can be used to influence decision makers and implementers and that services and institutions will function according to these provisions. It is also assumed that laws can become user friendly and access to justice can be expedited and ensured. It is envisaged that if women leaders have access to the right information they will be able to exercise their rights and play effective roles, performing their responsibilities and hold the leadership positions.

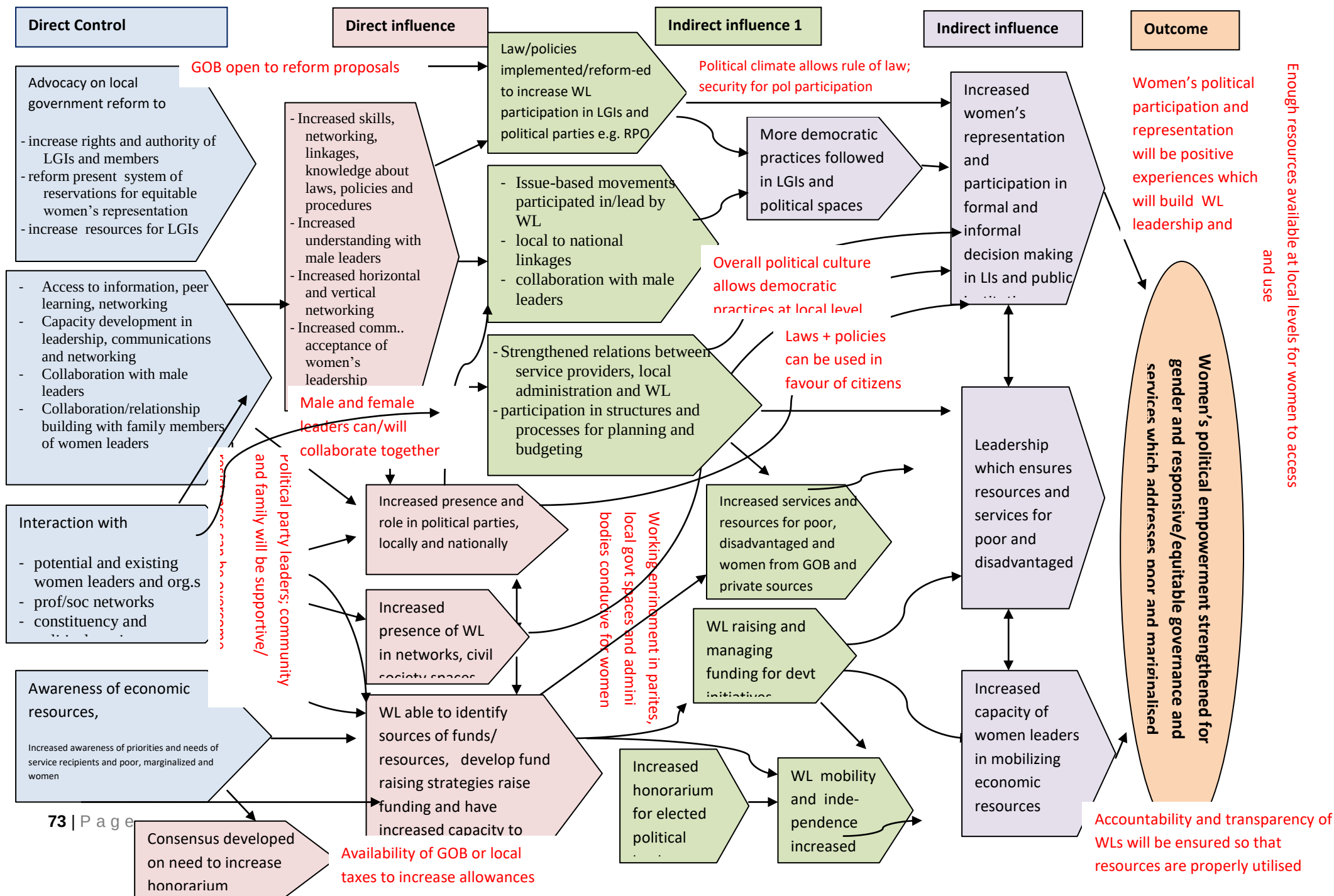
There is a risk that in the present context of domination by the majority party and the tendency to select candidates by MPs of the ruling party, alternative candidates, both women and men, will lose interest and will be dissuaded by their peers, well-wishers and family members. Special efforts will have to be making to counter such pressures.

Another set of assumptions concern the availability of various economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs and the availability of various economic resources for women's development. It is hoped that women leaders involvement will lead to increased transparency and accountability on use of collected taxes, women leaders will be able to manage funding and ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds; and women will not be blamed for increased tax collection. Also in order for their demands for increased allowances to be considered favorably it is assumed that government decision-makers will be favorable to their demands and GOB/LGI budgets will allow for increased allowances.

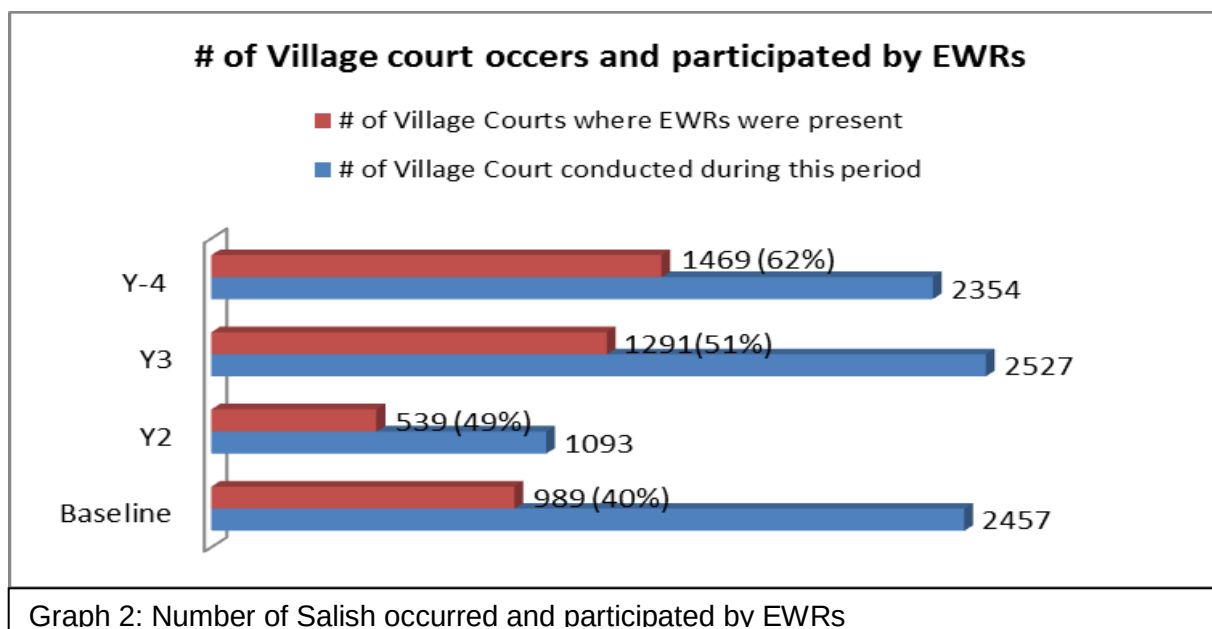
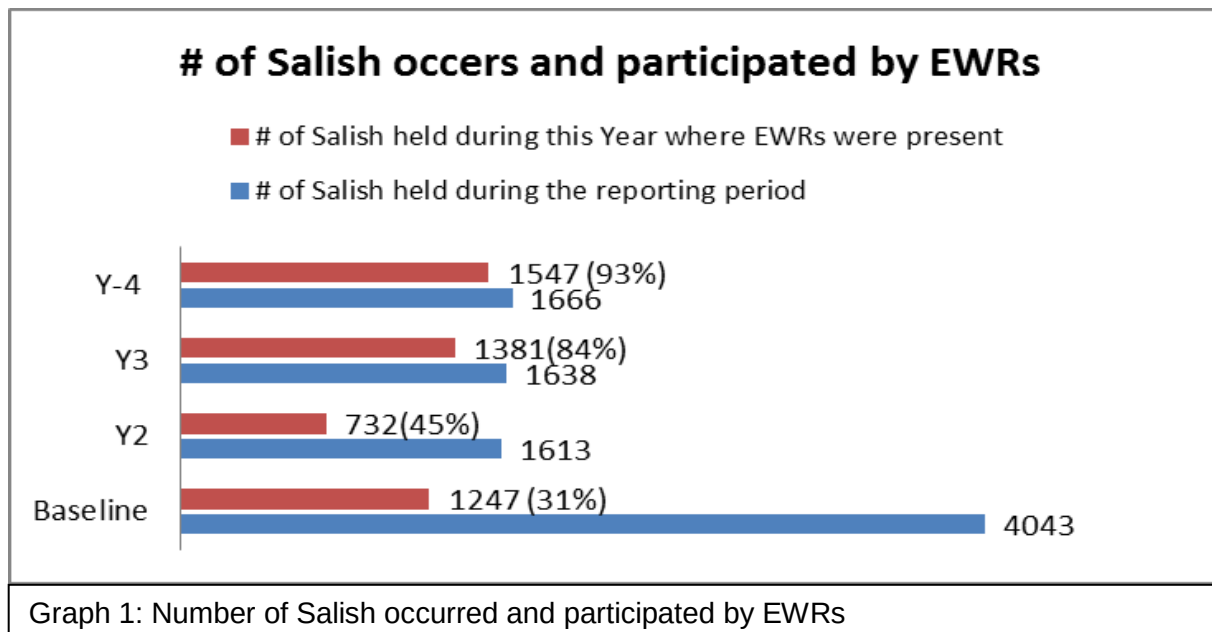
In order for women leaders to play an effective role in enabling access to services and social protection for the poor and disadvantaged in their constituency it is assumed that there will be a favorable or positive attitude among the service providers and local administration and the women leaders will be able to demand and institute accountability for the implementation of laws and policies concerning these as well as reduce corruption and leakages. This also assumes existence of an enabling environment (pro-poor and pro-women) in various institutions/committees in LGIs, local administration and service agencies.

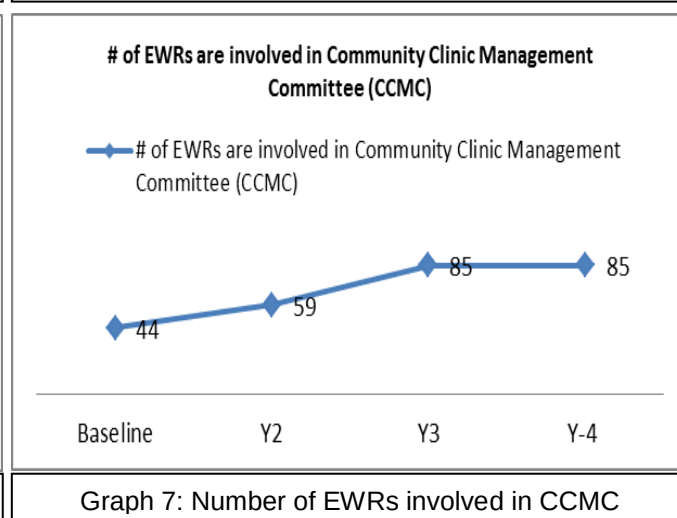
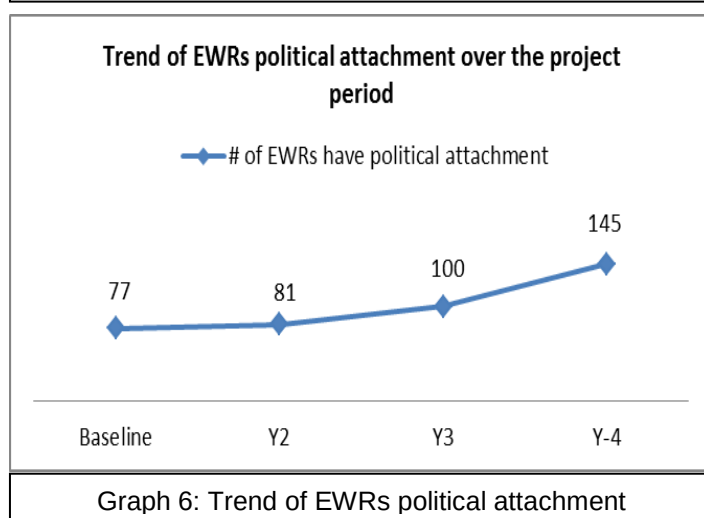
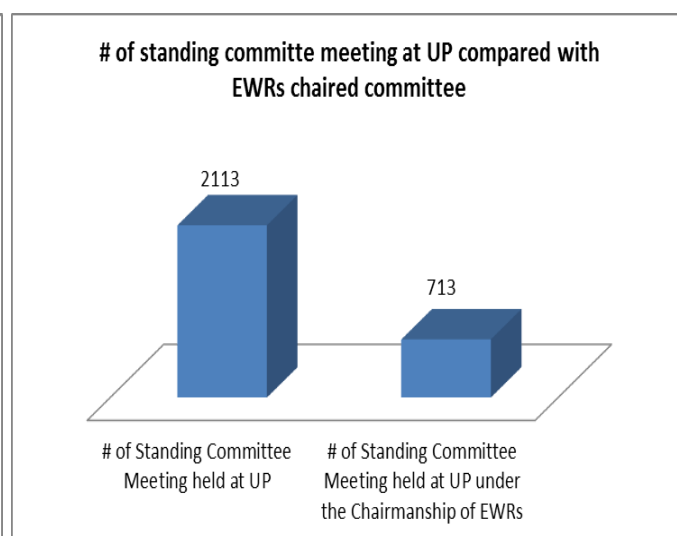
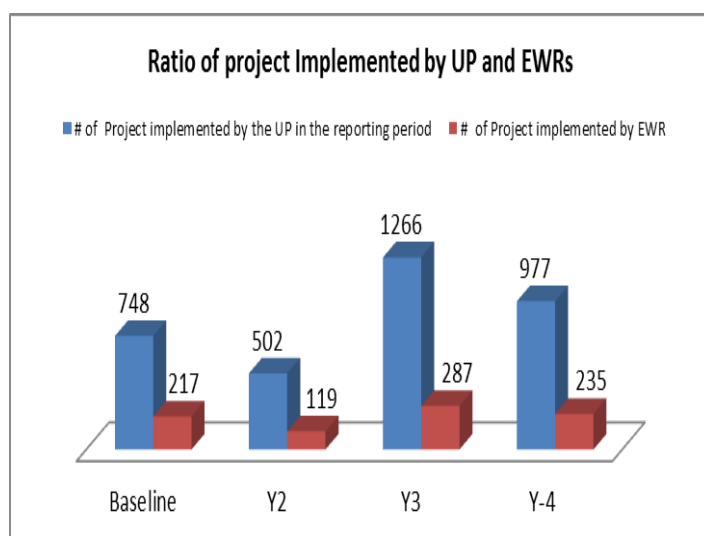
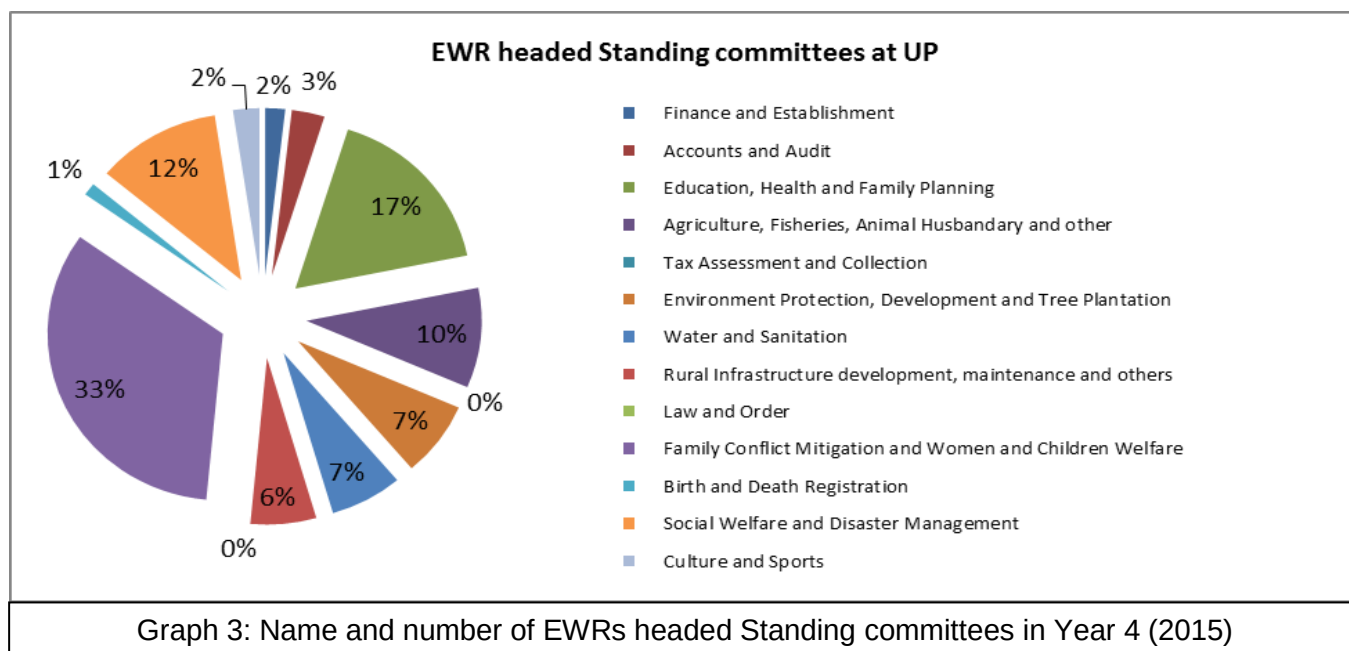
Yet another set of assumptions concern the relationship women leaders will have with their constituents – that they will be able to interact with their voters directly and in a sustained manner; women leaders networks and associations able to raise demands coherently and consistently; women leaders can sustain mobilization on specific issues; women lead movements will not be hijacked by other interest groups; women leaders will have the opportunities to put their knowledge to use and that there will be an enabling environment (pro-poor and pro-women) at various institutions/committees so that women leaders can plan an effective role in planning and budgeting.

A more detailed sheet contains the indicators and assumptions for each of the components of the

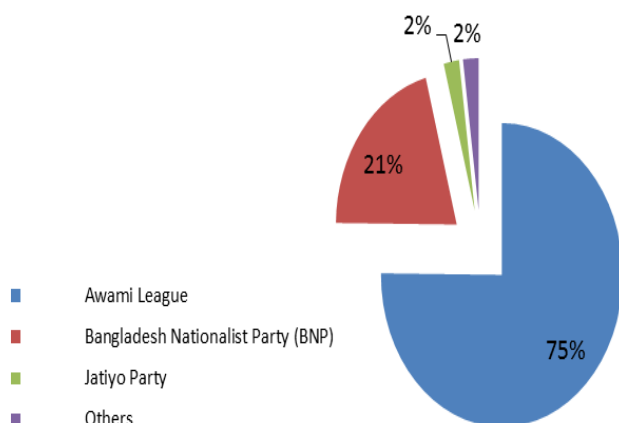


Annex C: Graphs and Charts



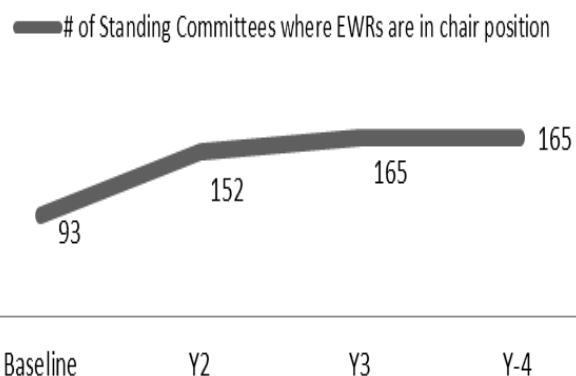


EWRs political party attachment



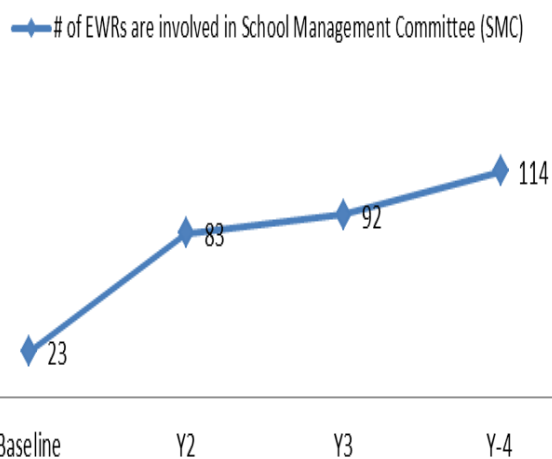
Graph 8: EWRs political party attachment

of Standing Committees where EWRs are in chair position



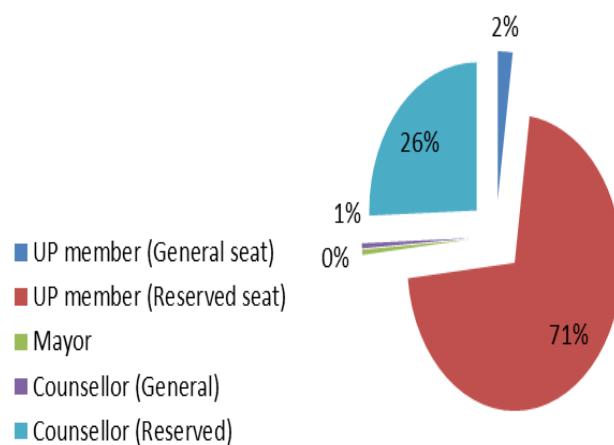
Graph 9: Number of standing committee where EWRs ate in chair position

of EWRs are involved in School Management Committee (SMC)



Graph 10: Number of EWRs affiliated with SMC

of PEWRs showed their interest to participate in next LGI Election



Graph 11: Ratio of PEWRs interested to Participated in LGI election

Annex D: Result Framework

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
	1. Elected Women representatives are accountable to their constituencies and together with potential future EWR and former EWRs are collectively requiring gender and poverty sensitive practice in local service delivery and assuming leadership roles.					
1.1	Increase in number of women contesting reserved seats (% with more than 3 women contesting). % Increase in women contesting general seats, % women elected in reserved seats seeking election to general seats.					
	# of Women were contested in last Upzila Election	0	0	22	0	
	# of EWRs participated for Upazila Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of PEWRs participated for Upazila Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of EWRs participated in general seat for Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of PEWRs participated in general seat for Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of EWRs participated in reserved seat for Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	6	0	
	# of PEWRs participated in reserved seat for Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	16	0	
	# of Women elected in last Upazila election	0	0	9	0	
	# of EWRs elected as Upazila Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of PEWRs elected as Upazila Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of EWRs elected in general seat as Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of PEWRs elected in general seat as Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	# of EWRs elected in reserved seat as Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	1	0	
	# of PEWRs elected in reserved seat as Upazila Vice Chairman	0	0	8	0	
	# of EWRs were contested in Upazila Parishad for women reserved seats	0	0	0	53	
	# of EWRs elected in Upazila Parishad for women reserved seats	0	0	0	23	
1.1.1	# of EWRs showed their interest to participate in next LG Election (Union Parishad, Municipality)	175	181	175	184	
	UP General seat	2	41	16	44	
	UP Reserved Seat	116	110	122	114	
	UP Chairman	24	4	3	3	
	Upazila Chairman	1	2	3	2	
	Upazila Vice Chairman	7	1	3	3	
	Poura City Mayor	1	1	1	1	
	Poura General seats for Counsellor	0	0	0	1	
	Pourashova Counsellor Reserved	17	15	16	16	

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
	Not interested	7	7	9	7	
1.1.2	# of EWRs have political attachment	77	0	100	145	
	Awami League	0	0	0	109	
	Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	0	0	0	30	
	Jamat-e-Islami	0	0	0	0	
	Bangladesh Workers Party	0	0	0	0	
	Bangladesh Communist Party	0	0	0	0	
	Jatiyo Party	0	0	0	3	
	Others	0	0	0	3	
1.1.3	# of EWRs got assurance from political parties for nomination of next election	0	0	0	119	
	Awami League	0	0	0	93	
	Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	0	0	0	20	
	Jamate-Islami	0	0	0	0	
	Bangladesh Workers Party	0	0	0	0	
	Bangladesh Communist Party	0	0	0	3	
	Jatiyo Party	0	0	0	3	
1.1.4	# of PEWRs got assurance from political parties for nomination of next election	0	0	0	163	
	Awami League	0	0	0	110	
	Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	0	0	0	50	
	Jamate-Islami	0	0	0	0	
	Bangladesh Workers Party	0	0	0	1	
	Bangladesh Communist Party	0	0	0	2	
	Jatiyo Party	0	0	0	1	
1.1.5	# of PEWRs showed their interest to participate in next UP Election	0	0	0	180	
	UP General seat	0	0	0	4	
	UP Reserved Seat	0	0	0	128	
	UP Chairman	0	0	0	0	
	Not interested	0	0	0		
	Pourashova City Mayor	0	0	0	1	
	Pourashova General seats for Counsellor	0	0	0	1	
	Pourashova Counsellor Reserved	0	0	0	46	
1.1.6	# of EWRs are holding party position at local level	0	0	0	42	

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
1.2	% increase in number of women in senior positions (e.g. Mayor, UZP/UP chair, Chair of Standing Committees, LGA, PIC, lead role in village court/shalish) (cf baseline)					
1.2.1	# of EWRs are enlisted in the panel Chairmen as of Nov 2015	0	0	0	18	
1.2.2	# of EWRs are working as Acting Chairmen	0	0	0	17	
1.2.3	# of Project implemented by the UP in the reporting period	748	502	1266	977	
1.2.4	# of Project implemented by EWR	217	119	287	235	
1.2.5	# of EWRs engaged in PIC as chair	97	119	142	162	
1.2.6	# of Village Court conducted during this Year	2457	1093	2527	2354	
1.2.7	# of Village Courts where EWRs were present	989	539	1291	1469	
1.2.8	# of EWRs were in jury board of Village Courts	0	0	0	154	
1.2.9	# of Salish held during this Year	4043	1613	1638	1666	
1.2.10	# of EWRs were involved in decision making process of Shalish	1247	732	1381	1547	
1.2.11	# of Salish held during this Year where EWRs were present	1247	732	1381	1362	
1.2.12	# of Standing Committees where EWRs are in chair position	93	152	165	165	
	Finance and Establishment	0	6	3	3	
	Accounts and Audit	0	8	5	5	
	Education, Health and Family Planning	0	12	28	28	
	Agriculture, Fisheries, Animal Husbandary and other development Activities	0	13	16	16	
	Tax Assesment and Collection	0	1	0	0	
	Tree Plantation, Environment Protection and others	0	7	12	12	
	Water and Sanitation	0	20	11	11	
	Rural Infrastructure development, maintanance and others	0	8	10	10	
	Law and Order	0	0	0	0	
	Family Conflict Mitigation and Women and Children Welfare	0	55	55	55	
	Birth and Death Registration	0	9	2	2	
	Social Welfare and Disaster Management	0	6	19	19	
	Culture and Sports	0	7	4	4	
1.2.13	# of PEWRs involved/co-opted in the Standing Committees	0	0	0	25	
1.2.14	# of PEWRs are in leadership position	0	0	0	135	
1.2.15	# of NAV coopted in the different Standing Committees	0	0	0	0	
1.2.16	# of NAV are in leadership position	0	0	0	0	
1.3	%Rural and urban poor experience being listened to and responded to as citizens by their EWR and value EWR's effectiveness in					

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
	improving local service provision(cf baseline)					
1.3.1	# of EWRs are involved in Community Clinic Management Committee (CCMC)	44	59	85	85	
1.3.2	# of Community Clinic Monitored/visited by EWRs	0	0	37	76	
1.3.3	# of EWRs visited Community Clinic	0	0	101	110	
1.3.4	# of EWRs are involved in School Management Committee (SMC).	23	83	92	114	
1.3.5	# of Schools Monitored/visited by EWRs	27	0	51	55	
1.3.6	# of EWRs visited schools and played proactive roles	13	0	107	93	
1.3.7	# of EWRs are involved in Agriculture extension services.	48	0	78	80	
1.3.8	# of Agriculture plot/livestock/fisheries/poultry Monitored/visited by EWRs	0	0	0	32	
1.3.9	# of EWRs visited agriculture plot/livestock/fisheries and poultry firms	0	0	0	21	
1.3.10	# of EWRs are involved in Disaster Management.	18	0	37	39	
1.4	Recognition/value of vertical and horizontal EWR networks (all party) by number/type of participation in policy debate on women issues (invited spaces). Frequency, type of inclusion of women and women's issues on APPGs					
1.4.1	# of EWRs attended Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC) meetings	165	165	162	165	
1.4.2	# of UDCC meeting held	168	0	240	276	
1.4.3	# of EWRs attended ward meeting	163	0	119	160	
1.4.4	# of EWRs are involved in Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum (BUPF)	165	165	165	165	
1.4.5	# of EWRs are involved in the regional committee of Municipality Association of Bangladesh (MAB)	2	2	2	12	
1.4.6	Quarterly meeting were conducted institutionalization of the Networks "UpazilaNariUnnayan Forum"	0	0	85	102	
1.5	Actions taken by EWR to promote pro poor & gender sensitive service provision (% over baseline and % success rate)					
	Beneficiaries received Safety-net support (VGD, VGF, widow allowance, elderly allowance and other benefits) without any hassle in the project working areas					
1.5.1	# of EWRs attended the Open Budget Preparation meeting	126	0	119	159	
1.5.2	# of Distribution of VGD Cards	0	0	49416	9876	
1.5.3	# of Distribution of VGD Cards by EWR				3199	
1.5.4	# of EWRs assisted in distribution of VGD Cards in this reporting period			19766	3199	
1.5.5	# of Distribution of VGF Cards		200947	279641	59831	
1.5.6	# of Distribution of VGF Cards by EWRs				17043	
1.5.7	# of EWRs assisted in distribution of VGF Cards in this reporting period			67803	17043	

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
1.5.8	# of people received old ages allowance		46714	61650	13831	
1.5.9	# of EWRs assisted for getting old age allowance			14425	3400	
1.5.10	# of poor people employed in "40 days program for employment"				32934	
1.5.11	# of EWRs provide assists of poor people to get employment through "40-day employment project				11246	
1.5.12	# of Widow received allowance		20849	22791	11821	
1.5.13	# of Widow received allowance by EWRs				3412	
1.5.14	# of EWRs assisted in Widow allowance			6452	3412	
1.5.15	Amount allocated as gender allocation	3572079	2751150	0	4414000	
1.5.16	# of women got benefit under gender allocation scheme	0	0	0	0	
1.5.17	Expenditure of gender allocation 2013-2014	0	0	0	0	
	Education					
1.5.19	Initiatives for preventing drop out of students	31	44	37	57	
1.5.20	Infrastructure renovation work (toilet, playground, furniture, instruments)	3	1	1	2	
1.5.21	Distribution of stipends among students	2	7	5	11	
1.5.22	Contributed in SMC meeting decisions implementation	4	4	9	17	
	Health					
1.5.23	Check and receive allocated Medicine	23	31	55	55	
1.5.24	Infrastructure renovation work (toilet, Seats, furniture's)	0	1	1	7	
1.5.25	Prepare list of pregnant women	0	0	0	31	
1.5.26	Aware people for taking treatment from CC	0	0	0	55	
	Agriculture					
1.5.27	Distributed agriculture inputs among poor farmers (Seeds, Fertilizer, Technology)	7	5	5	13	
1.5.28	Help to provide training for poor and female farmers	5	13	10	23	
1.5.29	Provide help to afforestation (tree plantation)	5	7	14	55	
	Union Digital Center					
1.5.30	Aware people for taking Information service from UDC	55	55	55	55	
1.5.31	Visit UDC	55	55	55	55	
	Women Affairs					
1.5.32	Prevention of early marriage	175	112	105	145	
1.5.33	Prevention of dowry	175	152	167	172	
1.5.34	Provide Training	0	0	0	0	

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
1.6	EWR more respected, assertive and influential (% opinions cf baseline)					
1.6.1	# of Women from the APARAJITA project working Areas are nominated for Joyeeta Award December 2013	0	36	0	35	
1.6.2	# of Women from the APARAJITA project working Areas awarded for Joyeeta Award	0	0	33	31	
1.6.3	# of EWRs got position in the political parties at Union, Upazila and District level	51	0	0	77	
1.6.4	# of EWRs were involved in protecting social unjust issues/incidents	181	181	181	181	
	Violence against Women	175	152	167	172	
	Early Marriage	175	112	105	145	
	Child Trafficking	62	41	33	170	
	Minority issues	12	7	13	8	
	Others	175	175	175	175	
1.6.5	# of social issues/unjust incidents were protected by EWRs					
	Violence against Women	345	501	454	530	
	Early Marriage	313	313	313	287	
	Child Trafficking	17	17	17	14	
	Minority issues	17	8	21	8	
	Others	214	201	356	412	
2. Provisions (legal framework including ordinance & directives) , political commitment and public opinion conducive for inclusion and participation of EWR (and potential EWR) and for promoting gender sensitive service provision at community level						
2.1	Inclusion of proposals for reform in revised ordinances and directives (% uptake, % concessions)					
2.1.1	# of news published in different Printing and Electronic Media	0	0	17	20	
2.1.2	# of National events organized	0	0	1	1	
2.1.3	# of Persons who can influence in policy formulation attended in national advocacy events	0	0	47	42	
	Govt Official	0	0	0	0	
	Law makers	0	0	2	8	
	Civil Society	0	0	25	30	
	Member of Local Govt Associations	0	0	20	11	
2.1.4	# of Local level events organized	50	50	50	47	
2.1.5	# of Persons who can influence in policy formulation attended in national advocacy events					

SL	Information	Baseline 2012	Y 2 (2013)	Y 3 (2014)	Y 4 (2015)	Y 5 (2016-17)
	Govt Official	60	52	70	41	
	Law makers	8	12	15	12	
	Civil Society	1204	1015	1350	1250	
	Member of Local Govt Associations	180	192	214	201	
2.2	National Framework for LG Capacity Building highlights all new and special provisions for gender sensitive planning & budgeting					
2.3	% increase in public opinion towards greater inclusion/participation of EWRs in facilitating service provision in the prioritized thematic area					
2.3.1	# of EWRs are involved in Community Clinic Management Committee (CCMC)	44	59	85	85	
2.3.2	# of EWRs are involved in School Management Committee (SMC).	23	83	92	114	
2.3.3	# of EWRs are involved in Agriculture extension services.	48		78	76	
2.3.4	# of Schools Monitored by PEWRs	13		23	17	
2.3.5	# of CC monitored by PEWR	12		17	22	
3. Information, technical and advisory support for EWR valued, used and continuing						
3.1	Yearwise incremental % increase in requests for information and advice from KCE Hub by EWR					
3.1.1	# of Persons (Female and Male) received gender and local government related information from Gender Resource Centre/local offices	413	437	501	613	
3.1.2	# of Persons (Female and Male) became benefited through getting information from Information Centers	413	437	501	613	
3.2	Increasing % EWR value the local NGOs and volunteers supporting role					
3.2.1	# of EWRs maintained diaries	0	37	51	80	
Additional Information						
3.2.2	# of EWRs motivated UPs to established bill boards on Citizen Charter in UPs	0	0	0	0	
3.2.3	# of Exchange visit during this reporting period	0	0	0	10	
3.2.4	# of issue based events out of planned activities were organized					
3.2.5	# of Standing Committee Meeting held at UP	1485	0	2053	2113	
3.2.6	# of Standing Committee Meeting held at UP under the Chairmanship of EWRs	389	0	452	713	
3.2.7	# of Standing Committee Meeting held at Municipality			97	91	
3.2.8	# of Standing Committee Meeting held at Municipality under the Chairmanship of EWRs	40	0	31	30	
3.2.9	# of EWRs were involved in protecting social unjust issues/incidents	9	0	11	51	