

Project Completion Report

(DECEMBER 2011 - NOVEMBER 2015)



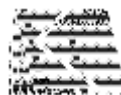
Submitted to:

**SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND COOPERATION SDC**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Submitted by:



KHAN FOUNDATION

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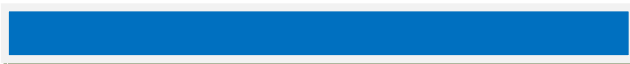
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Part-1

Operational Report



Implementing organization:	Abdul Momen Khan Memorial Foundation (Khan Foundation)
Project name: APARAJITA- Political Empowerment of Women	Type of report: Project Completion Report Reporting period: December, 2011 to November, 2015
Phase duration: December, 2011 to November, 2015	Receiver of the report: APARAJITA: Project Steering Committee/SDC
Main results achieved and implementation performance of the project/program: Khan Foundation (KF) has a long experience regarding participation of women in local government. It considers that women's participation in local government bodies remains generally insignificant if they are not aware of their roles and responsibilities. The systematic discrimination, lack of proper logistic support and noncooperation from counterparts all are seen as factors impeding women's meaningful participation in local government. At this backdrop KF has undertaken the project titled 'Aparajita: Political Empowerment of Women'. The project area covers 10 districts of the country and implemented since last four years. The year of December 2014-November 2015, is the last year of the project first phase and KF has successfully achieved most of the targets activities under three expected outcomes of the project interventions. KF contributed significantly to capacitate, sensitize and mobilize the stakeholders towards effective participation of women in the political power structures at local government level. KF has been able to provide its full support towards all the key areas of interventions. The organization has also been able to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in financial management and accounting procedure. The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political and socio-economic status is a highly important end in itself. In addition, it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development. The program politically engages women leaders and the used approaches are matching with other donor supported programs, as well as promoting the policy and political aims of the Bangladesh government and the political parties. Throughout the years there has been strong progress on outcome 1 and comparatively limited progress has been made on outcome 2 & 3. The last two local government election results were encouraging for Aparajita. Through participating in the Upazila Election 2014 & being elected, the women members have driven the project to more success. In the working areas of KF the election was held in 15 Upazilas. Total 41 (30 P-EWRs & 11 EWRs) participated in the election. 11 EWRs from the previous Upazila Parishad participated in the election. Of all the participants, 02 contested for the chairman seat. Four among the 11 former EWRs were reelected for their position and 11 P-EWRs elected for the post of vice-chairman, 27% EWR & 73% P-EWR won in that election. The most important thing to mention is that two women vice-chairman applied to the party forum for the reserved seat in the Parliament. Total 118 EWRs participated in the Upazila Parishad Reserve Seats of Women Members Election-2015, in the working areas held against 54 seats. Nomination Paper submitted by 148 EWRs, and withdrawn by 30 EWRs, Finally 53 EWRs were elected and amongst them 27 has been selected uncontested. Meanwhile, election results against two reserve seats remained withheld due to cast of equal number of votes by each leading contender and held reelections later. Election has been postponed against a reserve seat in Meherpur district due to ruling by the court. Other most mentionable achievements were the two P-EWRs elected as member (reserve seat) in the bi-elections in Brahmanbaria and a NAV member has been elected as a member of Pirojpur Union Parishad in Meherpur after a sudden death of a EWR of same UP. 33 EWR & P-EWR nominated for Joyeeta Award for their social benevolent work and 13 got awarded. At present P-EWRs are more encouraged in politics by the position result of the Upazila Election 2014. They are getting more connected to the standing committee & local committees. EWR & P-EWR are more interested all forms of activities of public relations which will drive them in politics & elections. Consequently the EWRs initiative of strengthening the committees and ensuring women participation in these committees has abled to form the Standing Committees successfully in all 152 UPs according to LG Act 2009. All the EWRs become the Chair of the Standing Committees and participating in the committee meetings on regular basis. A change has been seen in case of selecting Panel Chairmen and in many cases EWRs are upbringing responsibilities of acting Chairmen. Vice-Chairmen from Naogaon, Natore, Comilla has been nominated as Panel Chairmen and performing duties of Chairmen in absence of the EMRs. This also happens in Ups and 115 EWRs are also performing as panel chairmen. The execution rate (burn rate) for the phase covering December 2011 to November 2015 was 98%.	
Main steering implications for next period of interventions: Political unrest and instability may hinder smooth implementation of the project. 2. The political context for local government is changing rapidly with evidence of increased politicization and activity of political parties at the grassroots. 3. Amendment of local government laws for making elections to all local bodies partisan may causes political polarization. 4. Arbitrary rules/acts in Representation of the People Order (RPO) limit women participation in local bodies. 5. Negative attitude of the male representatives towards EWRs causes inconsistencies. 6. A software based data management system may introduce for central database.	
Date of report: 28 February, 2016	Advocate Rokhsana Khondker Executive Director

Chapter1: Introduction

Description of the project/ program and its intervention strategy: In its entirety, “Aparajita” was a four-year of first phase effort by KF to increase women’s political empowerment, defined by the goal as “Enable rural and urban poor (especially women) in Bangladesh to get information and enhanced, responsive and prompt local services which in turn will be expected to have significant impact on poverty”. The decision that such a program was needed was made in recognition of both the plight of rural women representatives in Bangladesh and their importance in the nation’s development. The SDC support project can be expressed as many ways like, taking initiatives to create a favorable atmosphere for the elected women representatives under local government so that they could involve themselves in decision making and could perform their designated tasks and responsibilities, get adequate allocation so that they could keep their electoral pledges.

Update of Stake holder Analysis:

Aparajita extensively worked for women representation and leadership at the local level. Several stakeholders have been involved 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, Union Disaster Management Committees, Union Committees to Prevent Trafficking and Violence, BUPF, MAB, One-stop Crisis Centers, KF’s Citizen Watch Groups, Women Lawyers Network have been intensively involved with project activities throughout these years. It also engaged MPs, District Judge, Chairman of Zila bar, Panel Lawyer, Zila Police Super and others with project activities. After getting involved with the project activities EMRs (including male chairmen) have observed noticeable changes in EWRs attitude and have demanded continuous coaching and mentoring for them also. During the tenure participation of district level election officers with APARAJITA operations has been remarkable. This has inspired EWRs and P-EWRs to develop their leadership skill and has encouraged them to participate in election as a candidate and played a great role to create awareness about the electoral laws and regulation. Especially for Upazila Parishad Election 2014 and Upazila Parishad Reserve Seats of Women Members Election-2015, their advices has helped candidates to fill nomination papers and for election campaign.

Evolution of the context (in particular political risks and opportunities outside of the control of the program): At the initial stage of the program most of the EWR stated that they face noncooperation of their male counterpart and Chairmen and they have several concerns about to EWRs involvement with the program. But the situation has changed gradually after incorporating male representatives with the program and getting their help. The gradual endeavor of KF and its local offices resolved the situation by their previous experience especially with their prolonged good relationship with the EMRs and created an assenting environment for EWR and EMR worked together comprehensibly. Through the activities of last four years the program has been created a working environment between EWRs & P-EWRs, on the other hand this has created a clearer rivalry between them during the local elections. There were several political impediments to the program. Political unrest and elections, specifically national elections, Upazila Parishad elections and updating of Voter Lists disrupted the smooth flow of project activities, which also prevented important stakeholders such as the local public representatives from attending the events. Sometimes the evaluation process and thereafter delay in the fund disbursement postponed the activities for a while and the natural calamities (cyclone Mahashen) appeared as a big challenge. This resulted many events being postponed and rescheduled. Although some determined events date has changed, however taking appropriate measures it was possible to implement each event successfully. Analyzing the attached result frame work including caparison and analysis between planned and achieved clearly shows the progress of the project (**See Annex – 3**).

Strategic link to outcomes of SDC’s cooperation strategy:

Aparajita is one of the key programs under SDC’s Local Governance Portfolio as a part of worldwide cooperation plan. SDC provided financial and technical support to the A-NGOs who endorsing their principle of working with local government. To achieve same objectives, it worked to ensure government services next to the people through the capacity building of target groups. This was a significant program as it had the potential to develop effective women leaders from the bottom up and to change the existing power structures within the local government to promote gender equality in these important structures. A network has been built in the working areas through cooperation and various ways of information exchange with the SDC funded other projects; participating each other activities. These initiatives helped to achieve the goals of SDC and APARAJITA for political empowerment of women.

Chapter- 2: Outcomes Achieved

Data has been collected and after data entry the compilation of data shows the progress of EWRs and P-EWR, improvement in service delivery and satisfaction graph of constituents. The most mentionable achievements during the reporting period (**December 2011 to November 2015**) are as follows:

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 and Achievements:

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.

- In the third year of the project a total of 41 (EWRs-11 and P-EWRs-30) EWRs and P-EWRs participated in the Upazila Election-2014. Four among the 11 former EWRs were reelected for their position and 11 P-EWRs elected for the post of vice-chairman of 15 Upazilas. Of all the sitting EWRs (11), 02 contested for the chairman seat and 01 UP level P-EWR contested for Vice-chair position. Four among the 11 former EWRs were reelected for their position and 11 P-EWRs elected for the post of vice-chairman, 27% EWR & 73% P-EWR won in the upazila election 2014. The most important thing to mention is that two women vice-chairman applied to the party forum for the reserved seat in the Parliament. KF's motivation has helped EWRs and P-EWRs to increase their interest and eagerness to contest in the said Upazila Election.
- In the last year of the project (phase – I) a total of 118 EWRs participated in the **Upazila Parishad Reserve Seats of Women Members Election-2015**. KF's motivation has helped EWRs to increase their interest and eagerness to contest in the said Upazila Election. The project staff also rigorously helped them to file their candidature, collect TIN number and affidavit.
- During the baseline 326 (65%) EWRs were willing to contest in the next election whereas at the end of the project 506 (99%) EWRs showed their interest to participate in next Local government Election. The interest rate increased 34%. In case of P-EWRs, 89% showed their interest to participate in next Local government Election.
- At the time of base line out of 499 EWRs 62% has political affiliation and only 19% were directly involved with party politics. Now 502 (99%) EWRs have political attachments of which 54% supports ruling party, 33% Bangladesh Nationalist Party, 6% Jatiyo Party and 7% others. 360 (70%) of EWRs are holding party position at local level. 420 (82%) EWRs and 353 (65%) P-EWRs got assurance from political parties for nomination of next elections.

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).

- 162 (32%) of EWRs are enlisted as panel Chairmen whereas the percentage was 04% at the beginning of the project and 26% EWRs has been bearing the responsibility as acting chairmen. Out of 3202 implemented projects 1058 (33%) project has been executed by EWRs and 81% of EWRs engaged in PIC as chair.
- EWRs are now actively participating in Village Court and Shalish and have started playing leading roles in decision making in Village Courts and Shalish. During this reporting period on an average, 9900 Village Courts and 18500 Shalish were held at the local level where 411 (81%) No. of EWRs was involved in decision making process of Village Court and 470 (92%) No. of EWRs in Shalish. But at the beginning of the project the involvement of EWRs with Village Court and Shalish were 40% and 56% respectively.
- The initiative of strengthening the committees and ensuring women participation in these committees has abled to form the Standing Committees successfully in all the UPs under APARAJITA working areas (152 Unions) according to Local Government Act 2009 and all the EWRs become the Chair of the Standing Committees and participation in the committee meetings have increased. P-EWRs and NAV involved/co-opted in the Standing Committees are 38% and 03% respectively whereas 10% and 0.8% were at the beginning of the project.

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.

- 445 (87%) of EWRs are involved in Community Clinic Management Committee (CCMC) and 125 Community Clinic monitored/visited by 492 (97%) EWRs; 450 (88%) of EWRs are involved in School Management Committee (SMC) and 152 primary school monitored/visited by 502 (98%) EWRs; 498 (98%) of EWRs are involved in Agriculture extension services and 1468 agriculture plot/livestock/fisheries/poultry monitored/visited by 483 (95%) EWRs. 250 (49%) of EWRs are involved in Disaster Management. The involvement of EWRs with CCMC and SMC increased 33% and 39% respectively as a result dropout rate of students decreased up to 10%; initiatives of infrastructure renovation work (toilet, playground, furniture, instruments) increased 5%; amount of distribution of stipends among students increased 7%; 15% increase has been seen in case of checking and receiving allocated medicine of Community Clinics.

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

- A progress has been seen in attending committee meetings by EWRs. All the EWRs attended 684 UDCC meetings and 458 ward meetings held in last year of the project. The attendance rate of participating UDCC meetings increased 34% compare to the baseline. EWRs involvement with BUPF and MAB has also increased around 5% and 3% respectively.

1.5: Actions taken by EWR to promote pro-poor & gender sensitive service provision

- EWRs took proper initiatives to support poor women for receiving VGD, VGF, Widow Allowance and other benefits under safety-net programs. It was evident that 454 of EWRs attended the open budget preparation meetings; total 21810 VGD cards distributed in year four and all the EWRs assisted in distribution of 3542 VGD Cards in this period; total 271611 VGF cards distributed and all the EWRs assisted in distribution of 63307 VGD Cards; 87406 of people received old ages allowance and 489 of EWRs assisted for getting old age allowance; 41975 of poor people employed in “40 days program for employment” and 454 of EWRs provide assists of poor people to get employment through “40-day employment project; total 30817 widow received allowance this year and 504 EWRs assisted in distribution of 6486 widow allowance.

1.6: EWR more respected, assertive and influential

- During the reporting period a total of 118 women from the Aparajita project areas are nominated for Joyeeta award and amongst them 43 women got the award; 318 of EWRs got position in the political parties at Union, Upazila and District level throughout the project tenure.
- A total of 6242 social issues/unjust incidents (violence against women 2584; early marriage 1361; child trafficking 516; minority issues 172; others 1609) were protected by EWRs and their involvement in protecting this issues/incidents have increased day by day. In the 1st year of the project 25% EWRs were involved in protecting incidents like violence against women whereas the percentage increased 95% in the final year; 11% EWRs involved in protecting early marriages in the beginning of the project but the percentage reached up to 24% in final year. Increment also seen in involvement of EWRs protecting social issues/unjust incidents such as child trafficking, minority issues.

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 and Achievements:

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

- 130 of news published in different Printing and Electronic Media in these years; two national level advocacy events have been organized and 130 influential persons (94 civil society members and 38 members of local government associations) attended in this advocacy events. Also 94 local level advocacy events have been organized throughout the years.

- The advocacy agenda of Aparajita was comprehensive Upazila Parishad and continuously advocated at different level (National and District). As per Upazila Parishad Election act 2013 and an Upazila Parishad reserve seats of women members' election has been held as schedule declared by the Bangladesh Election Commission.
- Village Court (amendment) Act 2013 is one of the key achievements of the 'Aparajita Project' which follows extensive advocacy endeavors. The amendment was made following several national and local level consultations i.e. comprehensive policy advocacy. Aparajita has been advocating for involving EWRs in the member panel of Village Courts throughout the years by arranging National Seminars. After this amendment, the Village Courts will be more compatible to offer justice services especially for women at rural level in a very efficient manner. The amendment includes the provision of a compulsory woman representative in the five member panel of Village Courts if there is any substantial interest of minor or women. The amendment already created a buzz amongst the EWRs and other key actors as it was a long awaited demand from all corners in order to empower the Village Courts Act to effectively activate Village Courts.

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

- Achievement has been yet to be identified under this outcome indicator at this stage.

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

- Frequency of interactions of EWRs with the community people, Service Providers and Upazila Administration has been increased and they have started meeting the community people in their constituencies formally and informally. Now 426 (93%) out of 456 respondents think that the involvement of EWR is much needed and that could ensure better service quality.

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

Indicators and Achievements:

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

- 427947 of Persons (Female and Male) became benefited through getting information from Information Centers whereas the number was 273349 in the beginning of the project. The percentage increases almost 57%. The percentage of receiving gender and local government related information from Gender Resource Centre/local offices is also increased remarkably.
- EWRs more proactive regarding improving knowledge base and thus requesting for updated information and advice from KCE HUB. 35% increase in requests for information and advice from local offices by EWRs.

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

- Interaction of EWRs with local NGOs and different community based organizations has been increased to some extent. 238 (47%) EWRs involved with different NGOs/KF. All the EWRs have diaries and almost 40% of them maintaining diaries regularly; 80% of EWRs motivated UPs to established bill boards or Citizen Charter in Ups.
- 18 Exchange visits arranged during this reporting period to promote the Aparajita concept and share good practices. These experiences encouraged participants to conduct standing committees meetings under their chairmanship. Only 4% standing committee meetings recorded at the beginning of the project but after Aparajita interventions EWRs lead standing committee meetings of the Union Parishads are conducting frequently and the percentage increased up to 85%.

Critical and transparent assessment of outcome achievement or assessment of likelihood to achieve the outcomes in the current phase if the outcome is not yet documentable: Reviewing the last four years achievements against target and monitoring EWR and P-EWR's performance, it was understood that APARAJITA augmented towards its expected goal. The initiative which had been taken according to the work plan is basically to conserve the privileges of the main target groups. It worked for a group of people involved with the development of mass folks, made them empowered to protect public interest. It was building capacity of EWR and P-EWR and also created an opportunity to make them organized. A field has to be prepared to contact regularly with local administrative high officials and to increase accountability towards citizen. It took the opportunity in the local government elections to mentor potential women candidates to stand for elections and contest. Support provided by the staff was a contributory factor for the small improvement in women's participation in Aparajita areas compared to the national figures. Joyeeta Award received by the EWRs and P-EWRs indicate there has been some progress in each of these leadership arenas where Aparajita has been active. A major achievement of the project of APARAJITA is to encourage each women leader to work for the welfare of the identical beneficiaries. The opinions which are hypothetically found from our research and studies provide demographic information of stakeholders, identified the status of EWRs, hindrance of women political empowerment and recommendations affords food for thought of the policy planners. Village Court (amendment) Act 2013 and Upazila Parishad Reserve Seats of Women Members Election-2015 for comprehensive Upazila Parishad are the key achievements of the 'Aparajita Project' which follows extensive advocacy endeavors.

Present information on direct and indirect, Positive and negative and unintended effects of the intervention:

One of the most positive effects of the intervention was that various components of the project are not only developing the capacities of EWRs, P-EWRs and NAVs but enable them to develop relationships and focus on promoting systemic changes. It included a nurturing component that they feel is a sustainable mechanism. It was found that there are different local government training programs but they are usually one off events. But this project was targeted as a continuous and long term process, which was well received by the participants. Another positive effect of this intervention was that it brought together all the different groups under one umbrella. There were collaboration among the different tiers of LGIs and this was a strong sign that development activities in the region will be successful. This project has created opportunity collaboration between EWR and government officials. The indirect effects of this intervention as highlighted was that EWR were interacting with government officials and service providers in an attempt to improve service delivery at the local levels which is likely to raise the standards of living of the constituents. One of the observations to highlight is that KF's previous experience with strengthening local government had a positive effect on the APARAJITA project in the sense that many of the EWR had previously received training from KF and had developed a relationship and partnership. With KF's involvement, they had trust and confidence in the project. Aparajita has proven itself as a highly relevant and strategically important project for creating gender balanced political leadership at local level and thus rationalize the continuation of the project under the SDC's current Country Strategy in local governance portfolio. The Upazila Forum has become one of the key platforms for women leadership. The members of Union & Upazila Parishad of neighboring areas have expressed their interest about the activities of APARAJITA, specially the women vice chairman of the neighboring Upazila are most interested in forming the same forums in their constitutional area. APARAJITA is working all through its working areas but it has observed the political influence, unexpected interferences by the chairman or male members, etc. are working as the obstacle to lag behind the women members. Experience, knowledge and expertise sharing among 4 Aparajita NGOs has contributed to cost effectiveness and team building. Inclusion of potential women community leaders in the project's capacity building area has widened the scope of increasing women political empowerment in transformative mode. This project promotes leadership skill of Elected Women's Representatives (EWR) and P-EWR through capacity development and effective networking of mutual support. The project helped for analysis and mapping of existing and anticipated capacity building interventions to avoid duplication and substitutions.

Chapter 3: Outputs & Performance according to the Yearly Plan of operation 2014

Outputs & Performance has been calculated according to the Annual plan of operations (APO). The below table has shown the outcome wise event implemented throughout the project tenure:

Detailed Project Activities	Number of Events			
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Outcome 1 (Capacity Building)				
Output 1 (EWR capacity, confidence built and understanding of the values /practices of representational politics actualized)				
Activity 1: Leadership Training	38 Batches			
Activity 2: Training on Public entitlements (Service delivery & Monitoring)	36 Batches			
Activity 3: Training on Capacity build-up	16 Batches			
Activity 4: Exposure Visit (Inside Bangladesh)		02 events	05 Events	08 Events
Output 2 (Potential future EWR(PEWR) identified and nurtured)				
Activity 1: Workshop with EWR and PEWR (Former, Present & Future)	14 Workshops			
Output 3 (Electorate and institutional colleagues opinions on EWR contribution to good governance positively influenced)				
Activity 1: Union Level Meeting with Constituents		152 Meetings	152 Meetings	152 Meetings
Activity 2: Upazila Level Meeting with Constituents		14 Meetings	14 Meetings	15 Meetings ¹
Activity 3: Pourashava Level Meeting with Constituents		11 Meetings	11 Meetings	33 meetings ²
Activity 4: Democracy Fair			07 Events	08 Events
Activity 5: Union Level Workshop for encouraging cooperative activities with EMR	152 Workshops		152 Workshops	
Activity 6: Pourashava Level Workshop for encouraging cooperative activities with EMR	11 Workshops		11 Workshops	
Output 4 (EWR engagement with service providers (monitoring and raising voice) for better service provision)				
Activity 1: Union Level Meeting with Local Service Provider		152 Meetings	152 Meetings	
Activity 2: Upazila Level Meeting with Local Service Provider		14 Meetings	14 Meetings	
Activity 3: Pourashava Level Meeting with Local Service Provider		11 Meetings	11 Meetings	
Output 5 (EWR networking enhanced)				
Activity 1: Constituency Level Sharing Meeting with EWR, WMP, MAB, BUPF, MMC & MEDIA	10 Meetings	10 Meetings	10 Meetings	10 Meetings
Outcome 2 (LG Advocacy)				
Output 1 (Gender issues in LG reform influenced)				
Activity 1: Monitoring & Research		1 Study research		
Activity 2: National Seminar on Gender Issues in LG Reform				1 Event
Output 2 (LG issues and debate raised in public domain to gather wider support for change in legislative framework)				
Activity 1: Monitoring & Research		1 Study research		
Activity 2: National Seminar on LG Issues for change in legislative framework				Rescheduled

¹Due to delimitation a new upazila called “Naldanga” of Natore district has been added with existing working areas.

² In the year 4 ward level meetings have been organized.

Detailed Project Activities	Number of Events			
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Activity 3: National Seminar (Advocacy and Networking Initiatives of APARAJITA)			1 Event	
Outcome 3 (Support Service)				
Output 1(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)				
Activity 1: NAV Identified, Orientation and nurtured	152 Batches	152 Batches	152 Batches	42 Batches ³
Output 2 (Responsive support provided to emerging theme based EWR networking initiatives)				
Activity 1: Constituency / Upazila Level Planning Workshop on EWR Networking initiatives	14 Workshops			
Activity 2: EWR networks Initiatives (Forum Meetings)	14 Events	58 Events	467 Events ⁴	158 Events
Activity 4: Forum Members Refreshers				26 Batches
Outcome 0 (startup)				
Output 1(Mapping and collection of materials completed (to avoid duplication/substitution)				
Activity 1: Planning meeting with I-NGOs	1 Meeting			
Output 2 (Facilitators selected, oriented and capable)				
Activity 1: Staff Recruitment and Facilitator Selection	1 Event			
Activity 2: TOT	1 Event			
Output 3 (IEC materials ready)				
Activity 1: IEC Material printing and documentation cost (Poster, Leaflets & Diaries)		Poster Binding – 937 Poster – 28000 Calendar – 2000 Dairy - 900	Dairy – 900 Calendar – 3200 T-shirt - 3000	Poster –30000 Handbook - 2000
Output 4 (EWR led monitoring system field tested and ready for roll out)				
Activity 1: Baseline Survey	10 Districts			
Output 5 Alliances NGO capacity strengthened				
Activity 1: Orientation for Staff	1 Batch			
Activity 2: Staff Coordination Meeting		6 Meetings	3 Meetings	2 Meetings

Implementation constraints and way to overcome them: In the last four years, the main challenges were political disturbance, completion of audit work. Due to this, lots of changes had to be made in the work plan. Organizing day long events with local government representatives was a challenge and because of their busy schedule, the events times were hampered. Good impression of Khan Foundation in field level has made it easier to overcome these constraints and organize events successfully. However, lot of other problems made it difficult to work smoothly and had to reschedule the plan. Travelling from one district to another was also a problem because of strikes and blockade. It is quite evident that by implementing the project in 10 selected districts, KF has created massive community awareness on women's political rights as well as disseminating the messages regarding the critical issues which are hindering meaningful participation of women in local government process. It is pertinent to note that KF's activities under the project is not limited to only geographical locations, it's as many as 30 other Upazilas outside Aparajita working areas are deeply familiar with the project activities. KF considers that more attention and collaborative efforts are to be given and more resources are to be mobilized with this end. Unquestionably, KF's involvements with different programs and activities have positive impact on establishing good governance and democracy in our country which is also a prerequisite for women's empowerment and ensuring their human as well as political rights.

³ Upazila wise orientations have been organized for NAV.

⁴ Bi-monthly forum meetings, Day observation (International Women's Day, Legal Aid day, Other National and International Days) have been organized under EWR networks Initiatives.

Chapter 4: Finances and Management

Financial Information: BDT 84,771,879 has been spent in the reporting period (**December 2011 to November 2015**) out of total original budget BDT 86,833,986 for 4 Years. The expenditure main line item includes project personnel, operation and activities under outcome: 1 (Capacity Building), 2 (Monitoring & Research and Networking) & 3 (Support Service) of the project. The burn rate of the project during the period (**December 2011 to November 2015**) is average 98% on the basis of total project budget BDT 86,833,986 which is 02% lower, due to inconsistent expenses under budget head of Steering committee cost share (NPF salary and office cost) and purchasing the Motor cycle in low cost (to ensure the access to after sales service and access to available parts in our project areas easily).

According to the APARAJITA program design, there are two types of activities; event-based activities and ongoing activities. These project activities which were carried out during the reporting period include mobilizing potential candidates as well as regular coaching and mentoring supporting the participation of EWRs in UZ elections, following up with EWR through diary, facilitating LGIs activities such as Standing Committee Meetings, Monthly Meetings, Ward Assembly, Budget Meeting, Village Court and Shalish, supporting EWRs & P-EWRs to monitor local public services, collecting Information, international day observations. The costs for conducting these activities had to be incurred under the budget head of “Project Implementation Costs” which includes personnel cost, operational cost and OH as there is no scope for including these costs under the head “Project Activity Costs”. This limitation in turn led to the expenditure ratio between the implementation cost including OH and the activity cost to 69% is to 31% although significant parts of this cost owed to activity costs and are parts of project implementation. It needs to be noted here, that the above project implementation costs should preferably have come under “activity” costs rather than “implementation” costs because these are project activities and have specific outcomes.

Details are given in the part of Finance and Management (**Annex 4.1- Form 1-A**).

Significant budget deviations: Though the political unrest at the beginning of the third and fourth year of the project causes of reschedule of program a little bit. KF local offices observed the situation, updated its work plan in consultation with stakeholders and through this process they were successfully implemented almost all the activities. Staff increment provided as per joining date, discontinuation of staff and new appointment in the field causes less burn rate than annual budget. Local office rent has been increased and few offices have been shifted due to project need and considering local context. Due to the power failure of few computer hard disks and mother boards have damaged and some of them affected repeatedly therefore maintenance cost has been increased. Motor cycle repairing cost and fuel price has also been increased so that the burn rate has also increased. Due to Inclusive field monitoring & increase in number of field visit the monitoring cost has been increased. Following organizational policy causes increase in travel, per diem & local transportation cost.

For details please see (**Annex 4.2- Form 1-B**).

Outlook (Cash Flow Forecast) for the next 12 months and the rest of the phase: Details are given in (**Annex 4.3- Form 2-A**).

Human Resources including diversity management issues: Khan Foundation has implemented APARAJITA through team work where vertical and horizontal communications were ensured. Program Coordinator was responsible for the field operation of the project which was being implemented in different ten districts through ten field offices. 37 full time project staff including 01 PC, 01 TC, 01 MRM, 01 MRO, 01 PO, 01 AAO, 01 AO, 10 FCs, 18 FPOs, 2 FPONs, KF had given posting two of its existing program officers as program officers (Networking) under this program. As per program strategy the functions of these staff were close communication and rapport building with different networks. In addition Executive Director was also in position of APARAJITA as Program Advisor. The changes happened in Admin and Accounts officer post of this project had faced a lot challenges due to their leaving. To overcome the challenges an immediate replacement has been made and although having those obstacles the project activities were running smoothly with the cooperation of all full time project staff.

Chapter 5: Lessons Learnt

- Engage women and women's groups in global, national and local governance processes and mechanisms through building new alliances and partnerships, especially with men, trade unions, alternative trade groups, etc. and facilitate this process by providing necessary resources, assistance and information.
- Ensure women's efficient engagement in socio-political decision making through organizing political literacy training, providing access to mass media and new information and communication technologies.
- Strengthen capacities of local governments, in particular for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, to address effectively women's empowerment and poverty eradication concerns in policy advocacy and dialogue at local and national levels.
- Mobilize and allocate LGIs resources to meet the social and economic needs of both women and men, especially those in poverty, and ensure that the design and implementation of all budgetary processes promote women's economic opportunities and equal access to productive resources and address the basic needs of women, especially those living in poverty. .
- Strengthen economic and financial governance and promote accountability and equality through the implementation of gender-responsive budget initiatives at the local levels.

Good Practices:

- Aparajita has brought together four NGOs (Democracywatch, Khan Foundation, PRIP Trust and Steps Towards development) with complementary expertise, diverse geographic coverage, different histories and approaches that create an environment of co-existence. In the planning stage, it was thought to be challenging of working with A-NGOs but they have demonstrated the added value of working together. The project has shown that differences can be overcome through a common platform focused on women's political empowerment.
- Over the last four years, implementing capacity-development initiatives, initiating or supporting mentoring programs for women leaders, facilitating EWR's access to LGIs resources, building solidarity between civil society groups on common issues, initiating or supporting cross-sector co-operation on women's political participation, mobilizing and co-operating with local women's movements, providing issue-based advocacy and research support to EWRs, encouraging political party leaders to develop or sign up to platforms on gender equality, Aparajita has played a vital role in supporting transitions to – and in monitoring the resilience of – political empowerment across the working areas. As a result, there is increasing recognition that the existence of active women leaders is an integral component and important indicator of a women empowerment.

Important findings from reviews and self-evaluations:

- As a consequence of program “Aparajita Upazila Forums” were formed at the working areas but later it was observed that “Upazila Nari Unnayan Forum” has been formed under government patronage program with the support of NGOs. To avoid overlapping in some areas the local administration adopted the existing Aparajita forums to sustain its individual identity and it was ensured not to divert forum to its objectives. It had a chance of duplication to take same initiative of more than one organization and it was a challenge.
- APARAJITA inspired the EWRs and P-EWRs to take part in the social benevolent work and their participation in such work is more significant for getting peoples satisfaction and support than that of routine bound daily government work. The self-motivated initiative of collecting primary data by the EWRs and P-EWRs during the tragic collapse of Rana Plaza and helped the victims in getting compensation from government was another example of social benevolent work. None the less the initiatives taken by EWRs, P-EWRs and NAV members are very appreciable and may be exemplary for the others.
- Successful implementation of first phase has clearly suggested that the direct implementation of project by KF through its staff and resources is more effective than using local NGO partners as I-NGOs. Although, KF has its NGO network and is dependent on them for various activities to promote sustainability, for the APARAJITA program, the best approach is direct intervention.

- Over the years, trend of increasing political influence on LGIs gradually inclining EWRs towards party politics. According to our study most of the EWRs have affiliation with ruling political parties. LGIs are becoming more politicized and would eventually grasp the local governance system. Considering the changing situation EWRs are need to be well-placed in LGIS to negotiate for their rights.
- Electing greater numbers of women to LGIs can thus build confidence among women, contribute to strengthening policy agendas, and increase trust by the electorate in the political system. The presence of women LGIs, however, can also lead to broader, positive changes in the social and cultural perceptions of women's capacity. The presence of strong, capable women in LGIs can result in changes in societal perceptions, and can help combat gender-based stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes.
- After four years of continuous mentoring and follow-up, the APARAJITA program has developed capable and effective women leaders who are prominent in their communities. Now it is important to take this step further and ensure women's leadership within the political parties. The idea is to promote women's political empowerment and bring about political transformation not just in their communities but practice democratic norms within the parties.
- As a result of constant efforts for ensuring meaningful participation of women in local government process, the community is being realized that women's participation along with men provides more benefits to all. The project intervention has also addressed the present relationship between local administration and elected female representatives which are characterized by mutual mistrust. The project has brought significant change in the LGIs of its working areas and contributed to capacitate the Elected Women Representatives together with Potential Women Leaders. Without empowering elected women representatives, gender and poor responsive services of LGIs cannot be ensured.
- EWRs of Aparajita project areas have proved that if they are empowered, they can perform better as the elected male representatives (EMRs) and cope with existing challenges. Capacity Building initiatives through Training have highly motivated EWRs and P-EWRs. Coaching, nurturing and mentoring supports along with training played positive role on retaining EWRs on the right track of their performance. Rapport building with elected male representatives, government officials of local administration, civil society members, and community people has created space and opportunity for accomplishing planned activities. It was evident that EWRs are more trust worthy than EMRs in relation with service delivery. Community people shared that EWRs are less involved with irregularities and corruption, therefore, they always depend on EWRs for getting services from the LGIs. EWRs and P-EWRs have evidently built strong network with different associations, forum, institutions, local NGOs and civil society. This networking has upheld EWRs and P-EWRs social and political position that helps them to create access to all institutions.
- One of the key learning for Aparajita is that the project has able to popularize women empowerment issues beyond political ideology, even activists from different political parties are working together in a platform which aims to increase women political participation. In present political context it's impossible to raise an issue which could bring everyone in one line, to some extent Aparajita have done major progress in political participation and gender issues which have been agreed to the EWRs and PEWRs.
- 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 and financial management system. Resource centers at the local level are one of the innovations for EWRs and P-EWRs, Male representatives and volunteers. It is used as common space of EWRs for gathering, sharing and learning equally.

Part-2

Annexes



Abbreviations

AAO	:	Admin and Accounts Officer
AO	:	Accounts Officer
A-NGO	:	Alliance NGO (i.e. Democracy Watch, Khan Foundations, PRRIP Trust and Steps towards Development)
CSO	:	Civil Society Organizations
DC	:	Deputy Commissioner
EMR	:	Elected Male Representative
EWR	:	Elected Woman Representative
FC	:	Field Coordinator
FPO	:	Field Program Officer
FPON	:	Field Program Officer Networking
GoB	:	Government of Bangladesh
IEC	:	Information, Education and Communication
KCE	:	Knowledge, Communication and Education
KF	:	Khan Foundation
LG	:	Local Government
LGSP	:	Local Government Support Project
LGUs	:	Local Government Units
MAB	:	The Municipal Association of Bangladesh
MOU	:	Memorandum of Understanding
MRM	:	Monitoring and Reporting Manager
MRO	:	Monitoring and Reporting Officer
NILG	:	National Institute for Local Government
NAV	:	Network of Activist Volunteers
P-EWR	:	Potential elected woman representative
PIC	:	Project Implementation Committee
RSCD	:	Resource and Support Center for Development
SAO	:	Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officer
SDC	:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SS	:	Support Staff
UP	:	Union Parishad (Council)
UNO	:	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UZP	:	Upazila (sub-district) Parishad (Council)
PC	:	Program Coordinator
SPO	:	Senior Program Officer
PO	:	Program Officer
THO	:	Thana Health Officer
TOT	:	Training of Trainers
TC	:	Training Coordinator