PHOTO ALBUM
Watershed-empowering citizens
Foreword

"Watershed - empowering citizens" is a 5 year (2016-2020) advocacy program focused on WASH and WRM while other programs have a component on advocacy. This project has been implemented by DORP at Bhola Sadar Upazilla since 2017 and scaled up at Bangtali in 2019 with support from Simavi, IRC and Wetlands International. Alvro and GWA had given technical support on data for evidence and gender issues. Lobby and Advocacy, Budget Tracking, WASH and WRM were the main issues addressed by this project where main objective was to strengthening capacity of local CSO to do lobby and advocacy on sustainable WASH services.

Engaging people from different strata in the CSO platform and NGO Network were coached on these issues so that they can do lobby and advocacy by themselves. Enabling environment for Accountability mechanisms and systems development targeting excluded people was the process of achieving the target. Inter-stakeholder dialogues and policy practice along with implementation was also focused by this project while media has played a vital role in terms of awareness and integration. Local government institutes are playing the main role regarding water, sanitation and hygiene services in Bangladesh. Making them accountable and increasing participation from community people leads to increase of budget and better coordination among the stakeholders.

This publication is a reflection of those activities and achievement from last four years of implementation. DORP has played the main role in implementation at Upazilla level with a lottery of 2 Unions where Budget Tracking approach initiated and learning were shared with stakeholders at local and national level which triggered the scale up in other Unions of Bhola and adjacent Unions.

The pictures were taken during the activities organized by DORP and local CSO which are sometimes not in good quality. Additionally, pictures were taken randomly and selected by the team prepared the album including newspaper cutting. I would like to thanks the project team for their tremendous effort and successful completion of this project. Special thanks to WaterAid for leading the project in Bangladesh and connecting the networks for sharing best practices and learning.

Zobair Hasan, Director, DORP
Project Briefing

The main objective of Watershed program (2016-2020) is to strengthen capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to advocate and lobby in the interrelated fields of IWRM and WASH to ensure equity and social inclusion, as well as sustainable usage of water resources. It will contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal for universal access to water and sanitation services and water security (SDG6) by making the voices of citizens heard and strengthening governance and accountability. The Watershed programme is implemented in Bangladesh to improve governance for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and integrated water resource management (IWRM) so that all citizens, including the most marginalised, can benefit from sustainable services. The immediate goal is to enhance citizens’ ability to obtain information so that civil society organisations (CSOs) can advocate for change based on reliable, accurate data. In order for WASH/IWRM to become more inclusive, grounded in local context and sustainable in the long run, a model of civic engagement is needed that is: a) organised and vocal about the challenges and demands of marginalised communities; and b) capacitated to participate in state-society dialogues and processes related to WASH and IWRM.

2016-2020 Project locations

The working approach of Watershed Bangladesh demands intervention at two levels: one at the national level where policy influencing, coordination and dialogues are done with stakeholders of larger interest and impact; the other is at local level where capacity of CSOs are built and support is given to construct lobby and advocacy to influence the local government and policies, including budget at the local level.

WaterAid Bangladesh works at national level with stakeholders to improve and influence policies through coordinated actions in the sector.

The field level implementation is done in two sub districts (Upazillas): Bhola Sadar and Rampali. The intervention in Bhola Sadar has started since the first year of the project while in Rampali, it started in the end year 2019. The Bhola Sadar Upazila comes under Bhola district and Faraspur division while Rampali Upazila comes under Lanchamra district and Dhakalupur division. Both these sub districts are located in the coastal zone of Bangladesh and vulnerable to extreme climatic conditions such as cyclones, tidal surges and salinity.
Lobby and Advocacy

The main component of Watershed is lobby and advocacy to be done by CSO after their capacity strengthened where DORP coached them to do these with duty bearers. There are lots of achievements at ground realized during harvesting outcomes since 2017. Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. Advocacy includes activities and publications to influence public policy, laws and budgets by using facts, their relationships, the media, and messaging to educate government officials and the public. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organization undertakes including media campaigns, public speaking, commissioning and publishing research. In the social and economic development context the aims of advocacy are to create or change policies, laws, regulations, distribution of resources or other decisions that affect people’s lives and to ensure that such decisions lead to implementation. You need a clear lobby and advocacy action plan to be able to work strategically and to divide responsibilities and tasks within your network or coalition. Identify lobby and advocacy activities and messengers that may influence those in power. In order to accurately plan your lobby and advocacy activities, make sure you take into account the timing, procedures and budget cycles at the appropriate decision-making level.
Learning and sharing meeting with all stakeholders relevant to WASH and IWRM at Bhola.
Lobby and Advocacy

for ensuring sustainable WASH services which is the main approach of Watershed Program and to do that DDRP coached the Water Management Citizen Committee (WMCG), a local CSO for strengthening their capacity.

Civil Society Organization demands more WASH budget

Mohammad Zohair Hassan

It is understood that compared to the restructuring of 7 ponds and the budget allocation and the infrastructural and availability of water and sanitation, it is very necessary to increase investment in the sector. Local government and related service providers need to be urged to be more active in this matter. SDG cannot be easily achieved, must be done.

Media coverage

for awareness among stakeholder and mass people on WASH services and Budgets.
WASH service monitoring tools was shared with CSO at Naampal jointly organized by IRC, WaterAid and DRRP.

CSO members and government service providers at Dhaka participated in a consensus meeting.
Existing budgeting systems are fragmented through different regions, divisions, districts, and sub-districts. There are multiple systems for planning and budgeting, which can lead to inefficiencies and waste of resources. The challenges include a lack of coordination between different levels of government, inadequate data collection, and poor monitoring and evaluation of budgetary outcomes. The existing budgeting systems in Bangladesh are not aligned with the SDGs, and there is a need for a more robust system to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively.

Introduction

Existing budgeting systems in Bangladesh are fragmented through different regions, divisions, districts, and sub-districts. There are multiple systems for planning and budgeting, which can lead to inefficiencies and waste of resources. The challenges include a lack of coordination between different levels of government, inadequate data collection, and poor monitoring and evaluation of budgetary outcomes. The existing budgeting systems in Bangladesh are not aligned with the SDGs, and there is a need for a more robust system to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively.

Budgeting

The government’s budgeting process is a key component of its strategy to address the pandemic. The budget process involves various stakeholders, including the ministry of finance, the ministry of economic affairs, the ministry of planning, the ministry of health, the ministry of education, the ministry of agriculture, and the ministry of industry. The budget process is divided into two stages: the formulation stage and the implementation stage.

The formulation stage involves the development of the budget document, which includes the government’s revenue and expenditure plans. The budget formulation process is influenced by the government’s economic policy, the National Development Plan, and the World Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy. The budget formulation process is carried out by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The budget document is then submitted to the cabinet for approval.

The implementation stage involves the execution of the budget document. The implementation process is carried out by the various line ministries and departments. The implementation process is monitored and evaluated by the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The budget implementation process is influenced by the government’s economic policy, the National Development Plan, and the World Bank’s Country Assistance Strategy.
Pro-people wash budget: A sustainable development agenda

Published: Monday, 24 February 2014 at 11:08 AM - Issue: 37
Mohammad Rafiqul Islam

Finishing budgeting cycle of NARM in Bangladesh is a great development. Under the Skilled Trained Engineering (STE) project and Concerned LGIs (Local Government Institutions) in the designated two divisions, the rural sanitation and hygiene facilities are being improved and included in the LGIS' budget. This is a step towards developing a network of LGIs in Bangladesh.

Under the Md. Tarek Hossain's HRF (Health Reform Fund) at divisions and LGIs' critical departments project, the general health facilities are being improved. The budget improvement includes three social benefits: (a) Social Security, (b) Social Insurance, and (c) Social Assistance. The government is working on the budget implementation process and development program implementation, and the development assurance through the Nation Food Corporation (NFC). However, the development and budget of the nation food corporation is being reviewed and planned.

Implementing the government's budget is to ensure the survival of the low-income sector of the community. The budget plan is very significant. Ensuring the survival of the low-income sector of the community is a significant step. A significant step in ensuring the survival of the low-income sector is an essential effort. The government's development program is a significant step. The government's budget assurance through the NFC is the only significant step.
Observed Global Hand Washing day in 2018.

Women speaking in the coaching session on lobby and advocacy at Bholia with CSO reflecting voices are being listened.

Sustainable WASH services are very much dependent on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) where various stakeholder are involved.
WASH and IWRM

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and IWRM depend on each other. To ensure a sustainable supply of good water quality drinking water for all, water sources should be properly managed. Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) has been defined by the Global Water Partnership (GWP) as “a process which promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems”. WASH is an acronym that stands for “water, sanitation and hygiene”. Universal, affordable and sustainable access to WASH is a key public health issue within International development and is the focus of Sustainable Development Goal 6. There are three major obstacles to Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene services are:

1. Firstly, the lack of understanding on proper water resource management.
2. Secondly, operationalize of the policy and strategy at ground though improved coordination among relevant stakeholder.
3. Freshwater ecosystems risk pollution from untreated wastewater and degradation by overexploitation of groundwater.

DORP has worked at Bhola and Rampati Upazila on these issues through communicating with stakeholders and try to improve the coordination among them where Water Management Citizen Committee (WMCC) played the main role.
Changes are visible in WASH practices by excluded people at Bhola with improved services.

We can see the situation before and after of Watershed being implemented.
Women are happy to fetch water from nearby tube well which installed by DPHE.
Social mapping during Corona crisis as a service monitoring tool.

Canal re-excavation by Municipality and BWDB @ Bhola Sadar Upazila.

Canal water is being polluted by waste which should be addressed by Department of Environment and local administration.

Union IWRM committee meeting at Rampati.
Climate change is affecting rivers and canals at coastal regions of Bangladesh which can be addressed by IWRM.

Pond re-excavated by Department for Public Health Engineering (DPHE) at Bhoja Sadar Upazila.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) is working on embankment strengthening to protect river erosion.
Training on WASH service monitoring tools at Bhola with CSO by WaterAid and IRC organized by DORP

River erosion is a common problem for coastal regions specially at Bhola as an island.

Observed International Wetlands day at Bhola with relevant stakeholder.
Unwrap of Booklet “Pani Bidhima”
an easy version of water rules under water act at Bhola by Stakeholder.
Municipality of Rammugli installed a public handwashing station with separate chambers for women.
পানি বিধিমালা

সহজ পঞ্জা
Implementation of Water Security Plan

at Union level supported by local government departments.

Budget Tracking

The intention of budget tracking is to ensure that public resources reach their intended beneficiaries and that the funds are well spent, bringing value for money. It can be initiated by governments or by civil society, and can operate at a national, provincial, state or local level. WASH & IWRM Budget tracking is a process which helps to visualize the ground reality and to see how budget is allocated and utilized at Union Parishad in order to improve the WASH & IWRM situation. It can ensure budget for most marginalized people thus giving access to WASH services by all leaving no one behind which is the goal of watershed program. By implementing activities properly under budget tracking process can push for more resource availability at Union Parishad and Upazila level departments who are responsible for providing services on WASH and IWRM. There are three major obstacles to appropriate budget tracking are:

1. Getting access to information can sometimes be problematic.
2. Local authorities might view budget tracking teams as adversaries.
3. Following up on the findings of budget tracking is often the hardest and most crucial part.

DORP has tried to address these issues through engaging community people and CSOs by organizing Open Budget Dialogues, Pre-budget dialogues, wall painting, standing committee activation, campaign, etc.
CSO at Bhola and Ramgati organized Pre-budget and facilitated Open budget dialogue at Union Parishads which has been scaled up in other Unions by Upazila Parishad.

Bhola is prone to natural disaster every year like cyclone, river erosion, high tide flush flood etc.
National newspapers are focusing peoples needs on WASH through writings and publishing news.
A book was published with stories of water from notable writers in 2019 in Dhaka.

Enabling environment for accountability mechanism is very important to improve the system on WASH services. Pre-budget and Open budget dialogues at Union (lowest tier of local government) level as well as citizen scoring are part of the mechanism.

TV Talk Show’s organized with eminent persons working in WASH and IWRM sector.
Manuals published by DORP

Budget Tracking Manual 2020

Introduction:

A budget follows the same formula and budget plan. In a budgetary financial plan, it is an annual financial plan for a fiscal year. A budget plan is a financial plan for a defined period of time. A budget is a financial plan that allocates resources between alternative uses. It is a planned expenditure for a specified period.

Budget tracking is monitoring being used as a development aid to ensure that government funds are effectively and efficiently utilized not just in countries but also in different budgets. It helps governments, investors, and civil society organizations monitor the allocation of funds.

Budget Booklet published by Union Parishad

Human chain demanding more budget allocation and expenditure for 101.54 at Upazila level.
7m will go without safe water in FBD, says UNICEF report

Financial Express

Accountability mechanisms

Documentation and publication

for advocacy and stakeholders.
Gender and Social Inclusion

Inequality between women and men of different categories persists, thus social inclusion is crucial in water management and in all projects. Women and girls are responsible for water in the house, both in rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. In case a WASH committee is formed, women need to be in the leading positions. Often women’s names are included, but they are not invited in the meetings or they are not listened to. Their true participation needs to be ensured. It is often seen that the poorest categories, widows, who live alone, cannot afford anything for tube-wells or toilets, because they have no income at all. Sanitation and hygiene topics are usually taboo subjects to discuss. One is not supposed to talk openly about issues of defecating, urinating, menstruation, pregnancy, etc., thus neglecting the importance for health of all. DRR is trying to break this taboo in a decent way, using acceptable words, which respect dignity of women and men and everyone. The CSO at Bhora and Rampati have included women, disable, landless, daily labor, Dalit, nomadic people along with teacher, journalist, ex-government officials and journalist to be a reflection of all community people representation.

“After the installation of the tube well everyone told me that because of you we have got the tube well. People said: so many people tried before but couldn’t do it. After you became the member of the CSO, we could get a tube well. Because of you we are able to access clean and safe drinking water.”

“Citizens who know how to speak up can realize change, We empower citizens”
- Dutch Government
Capacity of CSOs have been improved through coaching for effective lobby and advocacy where inclusion of marginalized people is equally important to share their voice by themselves.
Advocacy meeting with BWDB on IWRM organized by CSO at Bhola

Court-yard meeting on Gender and Inclusion at Ramgati with community people.

People living on boats are most excluded in the society who also face challenges in natural disasters.
NGO network meetings happened for evidence based lobby and advocacy on WASH and IWRM both at local and national level.

Consultation meeting at national level on WASH and IWRM with relevant government and non-government stakeholders.
Coaching and training by GWA at Bhola with CSO and NGO Network members on Gender and Inclusion
The daily TRIBUNAL
Dhaka, Sunday, 6 May 2018

‘One water source for every 50 people soon’

Dhaka: After a long wait, every 50 people of a specific area of the city will have a single water source soon, said the chief of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) during a discussion with the media.

Dr. M. I. Jafar, Commissioner of the DNCC, said the corporation has been working on providing drinking water facilities to the people of the city. He added that the corporation is planning to provide water to every 50 people in the city through the construction of water sources. He said that the corporation has already started the construction of water sources in various areas of the city.

Watershed team member in Bangladesh from Implementing and consortium partners.

CSO members of Bhola.
Solution to drinking water crisis in coastal areas

The coastal areas of Bangladesh are experiencing a severe drinking water crisis due to the rapid depletion of groundwater resources. The government has been working on various initiatives to tackle this issue, including the construction of water supply projects and the implementation of rainwater harvesting systems. The rural population in these areas is facing difficulties in accessing clean drinking water, which is essential for their health and well-being.

Enabling Environment for Accountability Mechanism Through Citizen Scoring

The Citizen Scoring program is an innovative approach to improve the accountability of service delivery in the public sector. It involves the collection of feedback from citizens on the performance of government services. The program is designed to empower citizens by giving them a voice in the evaluation of services. By participating in the Citizen Scoring process, citizens can help to ensure that the services they receive are of high quality and meet their needs.

Kobinoor Begum speaking in a workshop reflecting empowerment of women especially from excluded people.

The workshop focuses on the empowerment of women, particularly those who are excluded from mainstream society. The session aims to raise awareness about the challenges facing women in accessing essential services and to explore strategies for addressing these issues. The participants are encouraged to share their experiences and ideas on how to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for all.

Water supply is providing services to the remote areas.
fetching water during covid-19 pandemic at Bhola.

Awareness on Covid-19 and Waters Security Plan implementation at Bhola.

Court-yard meeting on Gender and Inclusion along with needs of disables people at Bhola.

Union WASH standing committee meeting happening bi-monthly at Bhola and Ramgati.
Civil Society to Finance Ministers: Ensure Budget Processes are inclusive and transparent

Zobair Hasan
Development Organisation of the Rural Poor (DORP)
Bangladesh and SWA-CSO Steering Committee member

How CSOs are influencing pro-poor budgets in Bangladesh

For the upcoming Asia Finance Ministers’ Meeting, one of the key messages of the SWA-CSO constituency is for the Finance Minister to ensure budget processes are inclusive and transparent by creating mechanisms for participation by the most marginalized in the budget planning processes. In Bangladesh, CSOs are engaged in budget tracking through mobilizing communities to express their needs, and we can support the Government in opening up these spaces further.

Budget tracking in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) helps to understand how public budget is allocated and utilized to improve access to services for all. WaterAid defines budget tracking as a “sectoral and local financing study” with the “main objective [to] improve water and sanitation governance (responsiveness, equity, accountability and transparency) through citizens’ action, helping to make service providers accountable, responsive and ensuring that they provide services in a sustainable and equitable manner.” Engaging people in budget tracking will not only provide voice and space to the most marginalized but will also help to sensitize the authorities in solving issues like less budget allocation, timely allocation and proper utilization of funds.

Budget Tracking process has been undertaken through four approaches: (i) Campaign and Social Mobilisation (ii) Lobbying and Advocacy (iii) WASH service monitoring and (iv) WASH Budget Monitoring through a customized tool. This tool was used for systematic data collection from service providers such as the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and Union Parishad. Budget tracking is also considered as a vehicle to reach duty bearers under the 8-9.

CSOs have motivated citizenship of Union Parishadhs (the lowest tier of local government structure after sub-district) to display their Fiscal budget on their office wall so that it is visible to the community as to how much budget is allocated, how much is received and how much has been spent. This is subsequently published as a budget booklet. Furthermore, CSOs have organized pre-budget and open budget discussions through which budget is becoming an essential discussion item at the lowest tier of local government institutions, i.e. Union Parishadhs.

Increasingly citizens are getting the opportunity to get involved in the decision-making process of WASH service delivery at Upazila (sub-districts) level. About 15% budget for WASH from Annual Development Programme (ADP) is a commitment from Local Government Division (LGD) of Government of Bangladesh which is an opportunity for CSOs to explore and influence local authority to ensure those allocations for poor and marginalized. This guidance has been given through the Pro poor strategy of Bangladesh.

The community demand on WASH-related issues was shared with Upazila Parishad via petitions organized by CSOs. Thus, bottom-up and systematic lobbying was done through budget tracking initiatives in Bangladesh. The issues related to equity, gender and social inclusion cannot be addressed without involving and engaging local communities as well as CSOs.

Through budget tracking, CSOs were able to achieve the following positive outcomes:

- Increased budget allocation in unions due to lobby and advocacy of CSOs. The use of the WASH budget monitoring tool led to 13-15% increase in the annual budget at the Union Parishad level. The findings demonstrate that gender and social inclusion in budget monitoring lead to increase in WASH allocations for socially excluded groups if it includes processes that increase participation and access to information for socially excluded people.
- Budget is now open to all, thereby, increased accountability and transparency among duty bearers.
- Helped in mobilizing the community and ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders such as service providers, public representatives, and right holders.
- Addressing SDGs-6.8 support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management by which localizing SDG is ensured.
- Helpful to link local with national issues. Leaving No One Behind is a global as well as national commitment, using the Budget Tracking tool, we can check on the ground the follow up to the governmental UNICEF agenda.

We will continue to demand people’s participation in the budgeting process and create an enabling environment for CSOs to mobilize Local Government to establish inclusive accountability mechanisms to ensure that budgets are fully utilized for the intended purpose, efficiently spent and accounted.

Article Published: ©2020 Sanitation and Water for All
Watershed project has been ended with all global partners in 2020 and closed with launching ceremony namely Legacy Campaign.