

Male Engagement



“ **7,186**
Male Engagement participants ”

“ **6,202**
Male Engagement graduates ”

“ **328**
Male Engagement groups ”

NOBO JATRA NEW BEGINNING

USAID's Development Food Security Activity

INTRODUCTION

'Nobo Jatra-New Beginning' is a five year USAID Food for Peace Title II Development Food Assistance Project that seeks to improve gender equitable food security, nutrition and resilience in southwest Bangladesh. World Vision Bangladesh, together with the World Food Programme and Winrock International and 3 local partner NGOs, undertook the program in September 2015, integrating interventions in MCHN, WASH, agriculture and alternative livelihoods, DRR, good governance and social accountability and gender to achieve its objectives. Nobo Jatra is being jointly implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of the Government of Bangladesh in four upazilas under two districts—Dacope and Koyra upazilas in Khulna and Shyamnagar and Kaliganj upazilas in Satkhira- and it aims to reach 856,116 direct beneficiaries. The diagram on the right depicts the program's goal and purposes.



NOBO JATRA'S GOAL AND PURPOSES



NOBO JATRA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

Nobo Jatra aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supports vulnerable communities in the disaster prone southwest coastal region of Bangladesh to effect enduring change by addressing the following SDGs:



Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

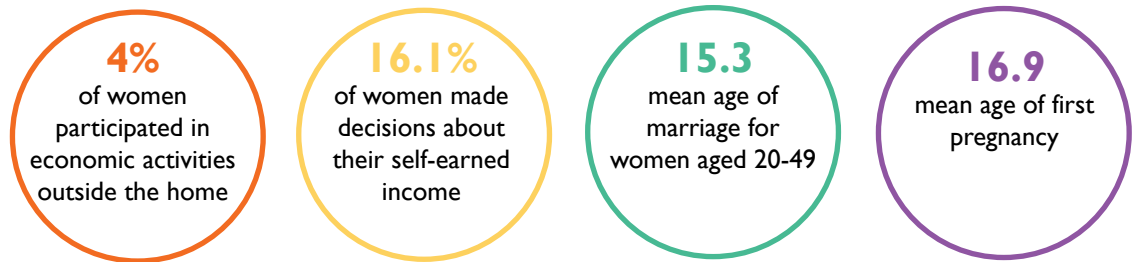
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

CONTEXT OF GENDER AND MALE ENGAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH AND THE SOUTHWEST

Bangladesh has made notable progress around key indicators such as poverty reduction, economic growth, and improvements around maternal and neonatal health. However, this growth does not necessarily translate into economic gains across both the genders. Women's involvement in gender stereotypical roles beyond that as wife and homemaker are still notably minimal in the southwest with only 4% of women participating in economic activities outside the home in comparison to 70% of males. Data from the Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey 2014 indicated that for 16% of women in Khulna, the husband controlled their cash earnings, which is higher than the national average of 13.1%. The median age of marriage was 15.3 among 20-49 year old women in Khulna, lower than the national average of 16.1 years with the mean age at first pregnancy standing at 16.9. In respect to decision making power for healthcare, household purchases, childcare, and visiting family/friends, women in Khulna have reported lower decision-making power than the national average. Nearly one in three ever-married women in Khulna reported acceptance of gender based violence, providing an alarming insight about intimate partner violence in the region.

The rigid adherence to traditional gender roles in both the community and household level mean



that men continue to hold a disproportionate amount of power and decision-making authority around important aspects of finance, healthcare, and other daily household activities. While women are somewhat indirectly involved in some small scale decisions, their experience is not always taken under active consideration, thus limiting their participation within their household and in the community.

Nobo Jatra undertook 2 rounds of formative research in an effort to better understand the context



and dynamics of gender and power dynamics. In the area of gender mainstreaming, the first formative research, the Nobo Jatra Gender Analysis, was conducted over 6 weeks in June 2016 to shed light on gender dynamics that may positively or negatively influence project outcomes. This report reaffirmed the ubiquitous need to increase the engagement of men in activities that have a direct impact on maternal, child health and nutrition. Subsequently, a further piece of formative research was undertaken to understand men's perception regarding masculinity and femininity, gender discrimination at household level and identify support required to build gender equitable relationships.

The results from the second formative study provided critical insight into the current context around gender and avenues for male engagement in the southwest region of Bangladesh. Interestingly, the complex dynamics surrounding income and financial status indicated that high expectations for men to be able to provide sufficiently for their families was embedded across many other aspects of family life. Financially stable men were viewed positively by both genders, with familial conflict and tension arising when men are unable to fulfil this stereotype. Indeed, given that most men engage in hard physical labour that pays minimally, they felt uncomfortable communicating their worries or grievances to their wives lest they be viewed negatively. Expectations around childcare and women's involvement in income generating activities outside the home were unchanged with men believing such household and childcare activities were the wives' responsibility and little participation was noted among the men.

2nd formative study



Dhaka, Dacope,
Shyamnagar



6 days



Focus group
discussions (FGDs)



In-Depth interviews (IDIs)

Men's interest in men's group participation (along with women's suggestions)

IDIs and FGDs provided individual men and women with the opportunity to tell the research team about the type of group educational activities they would like to participate in, types of subjects and themes they would like to discuss. Collectively, the suggestions were:

MALE ENGAGEMENT AS PART OF NOBO JATRA'S GENDER



Suggestions from men:

- How to build trust between husband and wife
- Conflict resolution between spouses
- Relationship advice and skills to have positive communication
- Practical knowledge about the Nobo Jatra project and its benefits for the family
- How men can be involved and benefit from the Nobo Jatra project



Suggestions from women:

- How to build respect for and recognition of one's work and responsibilities
- Build men's trust related to his wife's faithfulness and family commitment
- Sharing of decisions related to family well-being
- Equip men with knowledge of the Nobo Jatra project and its benefits
- Civil communication between husband and wife



TRANSFORMATIVE STRATEGY

In light of the formative research results, Nobo Jatra recognized the potential benefits of male inclusion with the project's larger gender strategy. Men play a crucial role in family stability and engaging men around positive parenting and caregiving is an important step in transforming inequitable version of "masculinity". Programmes seeking to involve engage men to be active members of change require the topic of gender to be neutral, sensitive, and transformative. Such approaches can result in interventions being successful in decreasing gender-based violence, and increasing awareness around gender inequity.

Modifying the MenCare groups

MenCare is a global campaign coordinated by Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice to promote men's equitable involvement as caregivers in the lives of their partners and children. MenCare's partners work at community, national, and regional levels by advocating for more gender equitable policies related to caregiving and for the development and adaptation of programs that work with fathers and their partners to prevent violence against women and children.

Building on the success of male involvement in changing attitudes and reducing violence against women, Nobo Jatra aims to pilot World Vision International's global MenCare campaign that promotes inclusive change and transformational shifts in gender norms. Within Nobo Jatra, the male engagement sessions seek to promote several important aspects including:

Promoting shared decision making

Promoting fair division of domestic and caregiving tasks

Improving and supporting healthy relationships within families

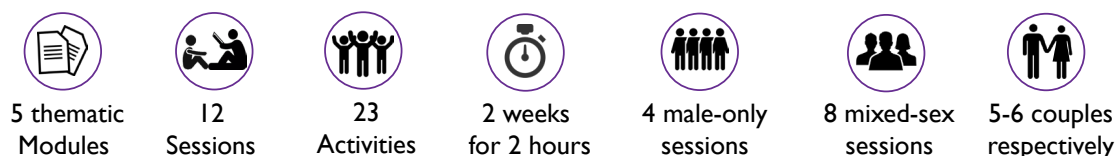
Supporting gender equity, non violence and discourage child marriage

Improving understanding of gender equity and the impact it has on relationships between men and women

Developing the manual for male engagement sessions

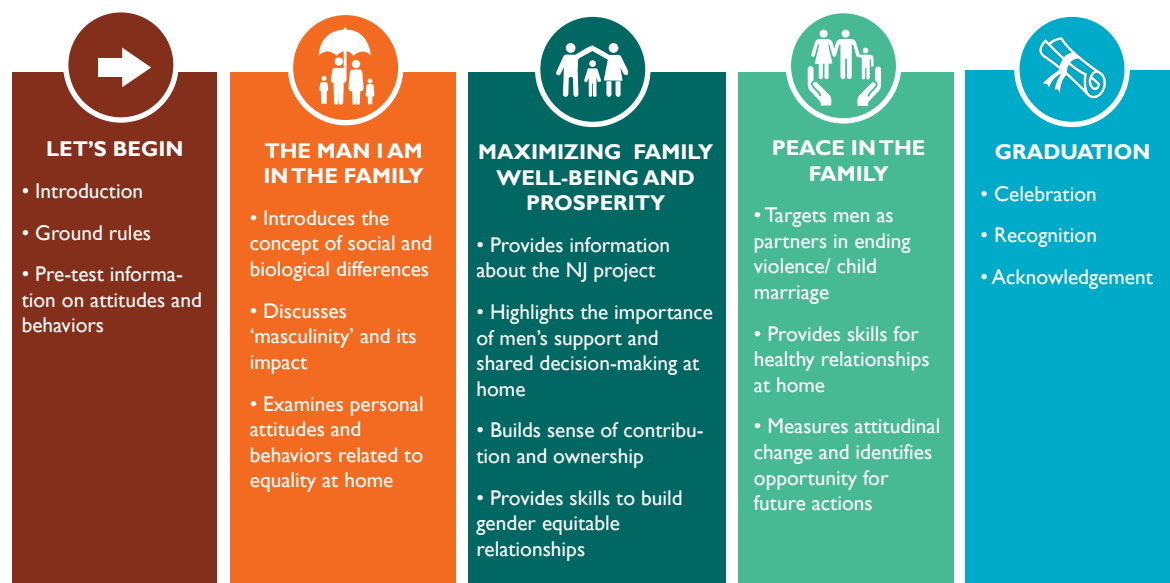
Working from experiences and lessons learned from the MenCare—Global Fatherhood Campaign to promote men’s equitable involvement as caregivers, Nobo Jatra’s manual also builds upon existing tools and guiding documents. Additionally, the manual used in Nobo Jatra’s male engagement sessions came through a systematic approach involving formative research (gender analysis using FGDs, and IDIs), Capacity Building Workshop (CBW), and a Training of Trainers (ToT), and pilot testing in the field. These findings informed a comprehensive, deeply contextualized module for male engagement, Family Well-Being and Family Prosperity, which serves as a critical element of the project’s gender component. The interactive and participatory module is designed to engage men’s groups to reexamine rigid gender roles and their consequences while also focusing on harmful practices such as early marriage. The manual is aimed at the male partners/husbands of female beneficiaries included in activities under the MCHN, WASH, Disaster Risk Reduction, Good Governance and Social Accountability and Gender components.

The content of the modules are based on research evidence, include substantial input from both male and female beneficiaries, is context-specific, and tailored to the needs and specific objectives of the project.

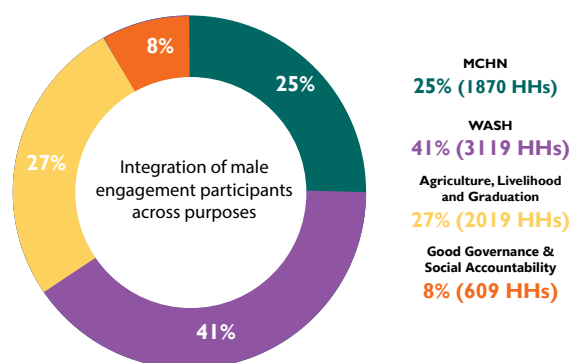


The following table provides an overview of the content covered by the manual:

TABLE 1: CONTENT OF TRAINING MANUAL



The figure on the right provides an overview of the distribution of male participants based upon their wives’ inclusion with the different components of the Nobo Jatra project.



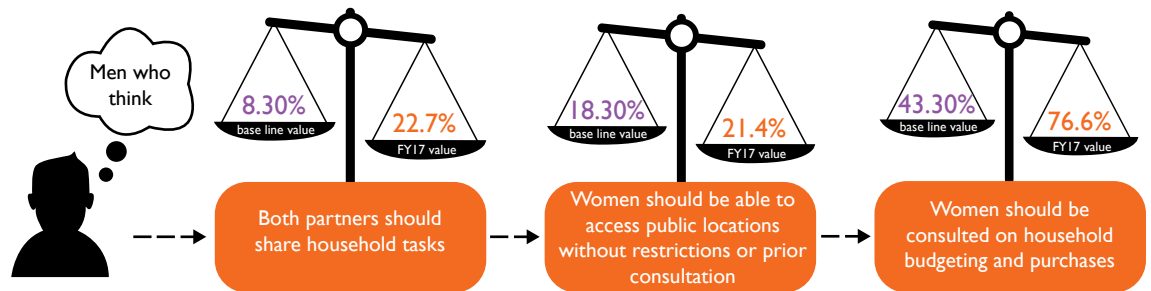
Implementation of the male engagement sessions

As male partners/husbands of female beneficiaries of any of Nobo Jatra’s component programmes, approximately 10-12 male participants are selected to be part of a group where by attending all sessions are required. These sessions are usually carried out in community venues such as mosques, schools, health clinics, etc. Selection of a safe and neutral location is an important aspect, allowing for comfort and familiarity to ensure meaningful conversations. Nobo Jatra’s Gender Officers (GOs) and Gender Technical Officers (GTOs) provide overall implementation oversight for each session. Additionally, some sessions were moderated by the Union Parishad chairman, and were reported to have positive acceptance among the session participants.

TARGET GROUPS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OVER TIME

Indicator	Target (2015-2020)	Achievement (Till date March, 2018)
No. of sessions	7,680	3,606
No. of participants	12,800	7,186
No. of groups	640	328

3,613 male members participated in male engagement sessions till date. This is a tremendous achievement and demonstrates positive changes in perceptions particularly when we compare with baseline values:

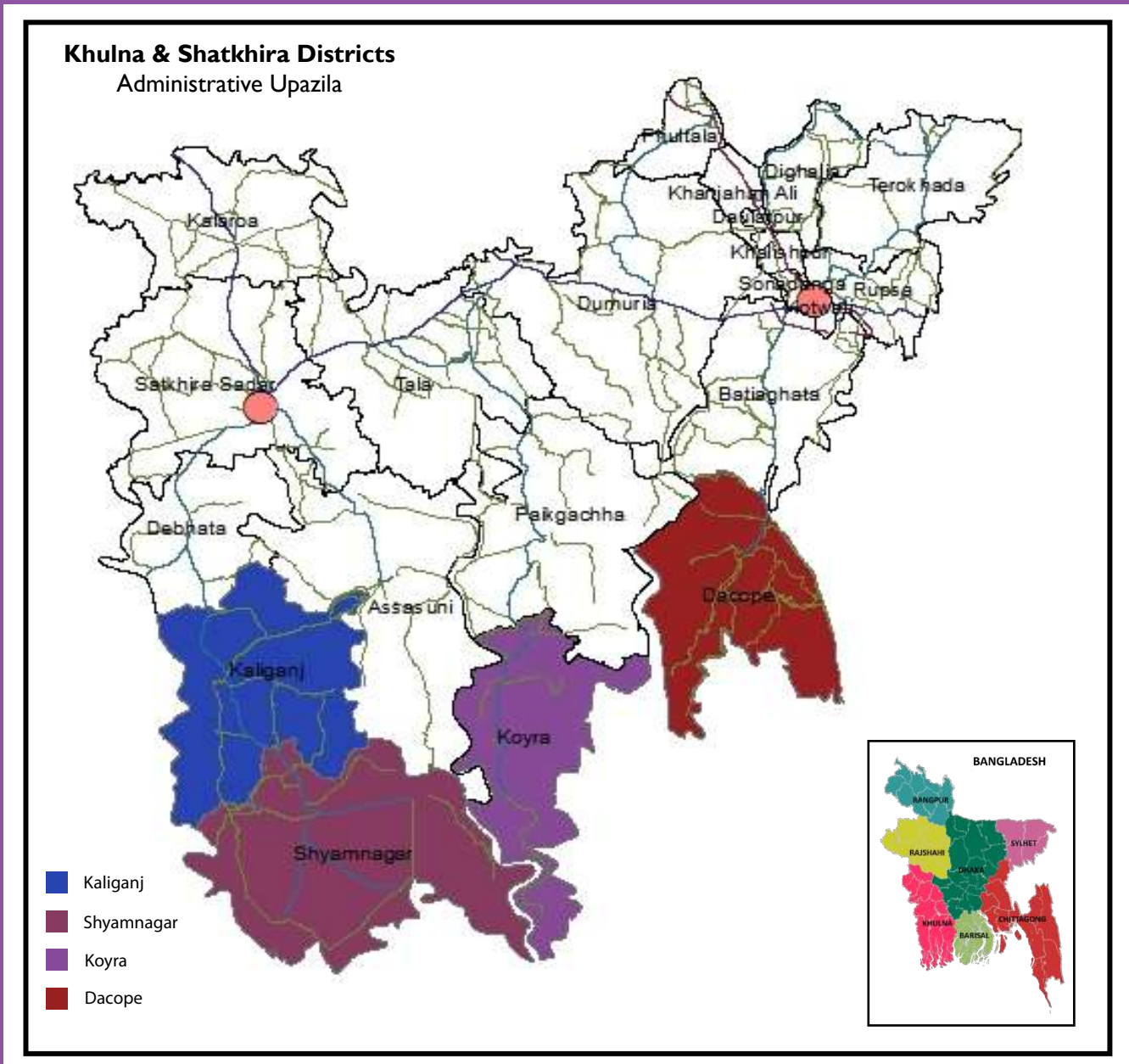


Monitoring and Evaluation

Nobo Jatra has invested in comprehensive monitoring and evaluation processes to understand the effectiveness of gender interventions and approaches. Concrete data will be used to report on Nobo Jatra progress, assess the impact of the project’s interventions, and share lessons learned with partners and stakeholders.



NOBO JATRA'S WORKING AREA



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