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 Security Activity implemented by World Vision Bangladesh, together with the World Food Programme and Winrock International, in partnership with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB).

Purpose 1:
Improved nutritional status of children under five years of age, pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls

Purpose 2:
Increased equitable household income

Purpose 3:
Strengthened gender equitable ability of people, households, communities and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from natural shocks and stresses

Purpose 4:
(Cross-Cutting): Improved gender equitable food security, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable people within Khulna & Satkhira districts in Bangladesh

GOAL:
Improved gender equitable food security, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable people within Khulna & Satkhira districts in Bangladesh

Social Accountability through Citizen Voice and Action

NOBO JATRA’S GOAL AND PURPOSES

622 Village Development Committees

11,818 Committee members

520 Union Parishad Standing Committees

INTRODUCTION

200,495 Households

856,116 Participants

4 Sub-districts

40 Unions

5 Years

856,116 Participants

Sub-districts

Unions

Years
Social accountability refers to a broad range of actions that citizens, communities and civil society organizations can use to hold government accountable. The way in which local government is administered, supported and managed is crucial. This is the level of administration closest to the people and through established legal covenants, this is positioned as a platform for citizen engagement. The Union Parishad Act of 2009, for example states that each Union Parishad (UP) should form Standing Committees to support decision making.

However, results from a Nobo Jatra led resource mapping survey indicate that Standing Committees in project locations are not consistently active and where they are, the majority are administered by poor governance and documentation. Similarly, although a number of Village Development Committees (VDCs) were found to be active, the majority did not comply with the required criteria. As such, weak accountability and incompetent administrations remain major challenges for the state. This is compounded by the reliance on a centralized model of governance, in which the most important decisions related to resource allocation are taken at the central level, with limited collaboration across different ministries and sectors.

### Purpose 3:
Improved social accountability and national policy engagement of service provision for vulnerable men and women

#### Sub-purpose:
Increased responsiveness of market-based local service providers (WASH & Agriculture) to meet the needs of vulnerable men and women

**Intermediate Outcome:** Agreement on service delivery standard between LSPs and GoB institutions

#### Sub-purpose:
Increased responsiveness of Govt. service providers to meet the needs of vulnerable men and women

**Intermediate Outcome:** Union level standing committees are active & functional

#### Sub-purpose:
Vulnerable communities raise demand on social and technical services

**Intermediate Outcome:** Empowered VDCs and community groups to influence decision-making bodies

**Activities**

- Link LSPs with GoB for promotion of service and accountability
- Organize dialogue between LSPs and community
- Activate & train union-level standing committees on social accountability and good governance
- Conduct open budget meeting
- Train UP chairman and members on open budget and Ward shava
- Engage in evidence based local and national level policy dialogue
- Train VDCs, including Gender focal points
- Facilitate VDCs to develop and share action plans with GoB
- Form CVA working group and capacitate citizens to roll out CVA
- Increase collaboration between CVA coordination group and Government

**Activities**

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Gender Integration

Underpinning Nobo Jatra’s good governance and social accountability strategy is a clear commitment to facilitate women’s access to leadership positions and strengthening their role in decision making. This includes creating an enabling environment for women’s participation, ensuring government quotas on women’s representations are fulfilled using CVA audit tools, and ensuring that the process to identify community needs are inclusive of women.

Nobo Jatra facilitates linkages between LSPs and government service institutes creating opportunities for LSPs to meet government officials on a regular basis to seek their support and promote accountability for service delivery.

VDCs are the central mechanism for community development planning and implementation in Nobo Jatra and their purpose is to ensure continuation of the project’s mandate after the project is phased out. Nobo Jatra facilitates the reactivation of over 600 VDCs in its working areas and strengthens the capacity of VDC members, enabling them to carry out their roles and responsibilities more effectively.

CROSS-CUTTING

Policy and Advocacy

Nobo Jatra aims to improve and influence the policy and practices for good governance and social accountability by working in partnership with relevant ministries, government departments such as Local Government Division, academia, community-based non-governmental organizations, service providers and others.

Since the Khona Khatail community clinic has been a part of Nobo Jatra’s Citizen Voice and Action work, Prodipto Sarker, a community Health Care Provider, sees fifty patients a day provides nutrition counselling and gives out iron faltat and vitamin A supplements. Nobo Jatra strives to improve quality primary health care services in south west Bangladesh.
Our Impact

- 622 VDCs formed with 47% female participation
- 11,818 VDC members trained
- 622 VDCs developed Community Development Plans (CDP)
- 3 Policy briefs
- 2 Thematic Government study tours

- 619 VDCs shared their CDP with Union Parishad
- 39 Union Parishad have incorporated the development activities of CDP in their annual budget
- 494 UPSCs activated and 2,011 members trained
- 57% of UPSC publicly post their action plan
- Motivated 29 UPs incorporated budget for water tanks & sanitary latrine

- CVA completed with 27 Union Agricultural Service Units
- 40 Union WATSAN committees
- 119 Community Clinics

- Infrastructure improvement in 25% of health clinics
- Community contribution to improve the water and sanitation facilities in 30 Community Clinics

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