

# FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Piloting Initiative on  
Grievance Redress System (GRS)

Implemented by  
**Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)**





# FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Piloting Initiative on  
Grievance Redress System (GRS)

Implemented by  
**Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)**

**Final Assessment Report**

Piloting Initiative on Grievance Redress System (GRS)

Implemented by: Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)

**Report Prepared by**

Shadhan Kumar Das

Freelance Consultant

**Editorial team**

Shoma Datta

Deputy Program Manager, MJF

Mohammad Mohashin Kabir

Deputy Program Manager, MJF

Md. Ziaul Karim

Coordinator – Program, MJF

Dhaka, 2018

© Manusher Jonno Foundation

House: 22, Road: 4, Block: F

Banani, Dhaka 1213, Bangladesh

# Foreword

---

Social security is considered a right of poor and disadvantaged people in society. According to Article 15 (4) of the Constitution of Bangladesh, “Social security shall be considered as a fundamental principle of the state policy to alleviate the sufferings of disadvantaged people like unemployed, disabled, widow, orphans, old-age.” In line with this guidance, the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) was developed with provision for a Grievance Redress System (GRS) to improve transparency and accountability in the services of social safety-net programs. The NSSS has outlined the importance of Non Government Organization (NGO) in identifying beneficiaries in a transparent manner and resolving grievances and disputes.

Several studies have found that the real beneficiaries of social security schemes are often deprived of their rights and entitlements due to exclusion and corruption. On the other hand, a single system GRS (that includes services of all sectors) and built-in grievance mechanism is rarely effective to ensure that beneficiaries are getting their rightful share of the social protection meant for them. Keeping this in mind, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) designed an innovative multi-mode GRS and implemented it in 60 unions of 12 upazilas of 12 districts. The objective was also to strengthen and complement government GRS system. The program has engaged the government, local government and civil society at local levels and used multiple channels to resolve grievances.

The piloting experience of GRS in 60 unions can be instrumental in bringing transparency and accountability in similar programs in all unions in the country. In one year period, 9145 grievances were collected of which over 80% were resolved. The program has earned praise from the community people, the government officials as reflected in high satisfaction of the beneficiaries.

As the pilot program was phased out in July 2017, it is feared that the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Committees and Forum for Social Protection (FSP) facilitated by partner NGOs at union, upazila and district levels, might become less functional. However, demand for GRS still prevails. One Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) expressed his opinion that “MJF sponsored GRS has created an enabling environment for the online GRS. People have to be aware of their rights and come forward to raise their voices on their grievances. It will take time. Until it happens, NGOs should be engaged to make people aware.” Our experience has shown that both GRS should be run parallel to bring optimum outcomes from grievance management in the social security services.

Throughout the planning, designing and implementation of this piloting initiative on GRS, MJF received tremendous support from various stakeholders. The high officials of the Cabinet Division, Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs were so much supportive and generous to the project. We are indebted to them for their whole-hearted supports. At field level, cooperation from the local administration especially from UNOs, Social Services Officers, Women Affairs Officers, and all other public officials and employees and local

government representatives especially the Chairmen and Members of Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad were precious for us. Otherwise, the project could not bring such results. Voluntarism and activism of the FSPs and GRM Committees at union and Upazila levels were praiseworthy. We sincerely express our gratitude to them.

Finally, our 12 partner NGOs played a great role to facilitate varied group activities and accommodate changes in the coverage and focus of the project in line with the learning. We appreciate their effort and commitment. The project team of MJF successfully carried out their tasks both at field and central level often working under pressure to meet deadlines. The credit of the successful completion of the project goes to them. Last but not the least, the consultant of the final review was able to pull out key findings from the field and relevant literature. I thank him and his team for their contribution to the project.

The findings of the review provide us with success stories as well as key challenges of the GRS. However, MJF will count success when the challenges and learning from GRS are implemented in replicating similar model across the country.

Any suggestions or advice for the improvement of the report will be highly appreciated.

**Shaheen Anam**

Executive Director

Manusher Jonno Foundation

# Acknowledgements

---

It has been a great pleasure to conduct the final review of Piloting Initiative on Grievance Redress System (GRS) commissioned by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF). As part of this review, the research team met with the members of the Forums for Social Protection and Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Committee who supported the poor and vulnerable people to realize their rights and entitlements. During field visits of the research team, they extended their valuable time and shared their experiences and learning. Thus they have demonstrated unflinching activism, commitment, and responsiveness which are the key strength of the program for promoting transparency and accountability in social protection programs of the government. Therefore, we are extending our heartfelt gratitude to them.

MJF had implemented the program since 2014 in partnership with some PNGOs. Moreover, it had conducted baseline survey, issue-specific policy research and end line evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the program. Finally, they commissioned this final review of the piloting initiatives on GRS. It was a big challenge for us to assess such a 1.5-year pilot project in which 12 PNGOs were engaged in 12 districts of Bangladesh. But MJF staff members especially Md. Ziaul Karim, Shoma Datta, and Mohammad Mohashin Kabir gave overall guidance and extended all-out support to make all relevant documents available, provide compiled statistics on the performances of PNGOs, arrange several meetings, and connect us with PNGOs. All of these efforts have helped us in the entire process to research and prepare the report. Our sincerest appreciation is rested upon them.

Although the program was phased out, project staff members of PNGOs especially Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS), National Development Program (NDP), SKS Foundation and Puspo Bangladesh extended valuable support to arrange field visits and connect the research team with key stakeholders within a short notice. Without their assistance, the field work and interviews with key stakeholders would not be possible. So we are thankful to them.

The last not the least our deepest gratitude towards the respondents, mostly the beneficiaries of various social security programs who participated in the interviews or focus group discussions sparing their valuable time and spontaneously shared their experiences and learning on the program.

**Shadhan Kumar Das**  
Freelance Consultant





# Table of Contents

---

Executive Summary	XI
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Context of the Study	1
1.2 International Experience of GRS	3
1.3 Overview of Piloting Initiatives on GRS by MJF	4
1.4 Purpose of the Final Assessment	6
1.5 Methodology of the Review	6
1.6 Limitations	9
<b>Chapter 2: Institutional Arrangements of GRS</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Involvement of NGOs	11
2.2 Implementation Period	12
2.3 Existence of Forum for Social Protection (FSP)	12
2.4 Formation of GRM Committees	13
2.5 Coordination	13
2.6 Logistics and Finances	15
2.7 Multiple Modes of Generating Grievances	15
2.8 Milestones of the Project	17
<b>Chapter 3: Grievance Redress Procedure</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Key Grievance Trends</b>	<b>23</b>
4.1 Volume of Grievances	23
4.2 Modes of Grievance Collection	24
4.3 Category of Grievances	26
4.4 Redress of Grievances	26
<b>Chapter 5: An Analysis on GRS</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1 GRS as A New Learning	29
5.2 Key Strengths of GRS	29
5.3 Effectiveness, Gaps and Challenges of the Channels for Grievance Collection	34
5.4 Effectiveness and Gaps of GRS Processes at Union and Upazila Levels	38
5.5 Comparison between GRS and Non-GRS Areas	39
<b>Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Reference</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Annexure</b>	<b>45</b>

# List of Tables

---

<b>Table 1:</b>	GRS and Non-GRS Locations in the Surveyed Areas	7
<b>Table 2:</b>	Number of Respondents	7
<b>Table 3:</b>	PNGO Intervention in the Piloted Scheme	12
<b>Table 4:</b>	Number of Grievances Collected by 12 PNGOs	24
<b>Table 5:</b>	Name and Number of Tools Used to Receive Grievance	25
<b>Table 6:</b>	Grievance Resolved from January 2016 to June 2017	27
<b>Table 7:</b>	Scheme-wise Complaint Resolution at Different Levels	28
<b>Table 8:</b>	Assessment of the Tools Used for Grievance Collection	35
<b>Table 9:</b>	Comparison Between GRS and Non-GRS Areas	39

# List of Figures

---

<b>Figure 1:</b> Steps of GRS Proposed by the Pilot Study	5
<b>Figure 2:</b> Milestones/ Key Achievements of the Project	17
<b>Figure 3:</b> General Process of the GRS	20
<b>Figure 4:</b> Work Flow of the GRM	20
<b>Figure 5:</b> Percentage of Grievances on Pilot and Other Schemes	24
<b>Figure 6:</b> Percentage of Different Channels of Collating Grievance	25
<b>Figure 7:</b> SP Scheme-wise Grievance Redress Status	27
<b>Figure 8:</b> Complaints Resolved at Different Levels	28
<b>Figure 9:</b> GRS as an Important Component to the New Theory of Change	30

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

---

AFID	Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled
AS	Agrogoti Sangstha
AWDDW	Allowance for Widows and Destitute and Deserted Women
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
CAO	The Office of the Compliance Adviser/Ombudsman
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFSP	District Forum for Social Protection
EGPP	Employment Generation Program for the Poorest
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FSP	Forum for Social Protection
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redress System
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
LG	Local Government
LGD	Local Government Department
MA	Maternity Allowance Program for the Poor Lactating Mothers
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NDP	National Development Program
NFSP	National Forum for Social Protection
NRDS	Noakhali Rural Development Society
OAA	Old Age Allowance
PNGO	Partner Non-Government Organisation
PESP	Primary Education Stipend Program
PIO	Project Implementation Officer
RTI	Right to Information
SGSP	Strengthening Government Social Protection System for the Poor
SSP	Social Security Program
SSO	Social Service Officer
SSSP	Secondary School Stipend Program
SMC	School Management Committee
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad (Council)
UzFSP	Upazila Forum for Social Protection
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WAO	Women Affairs Officer

# Executive Summary

---

## 1. Introduction

A Grievance Redress System (GRS) has been used by all line ministries of Bangladesh while implementing different development activities or programs, for instance, social safety net programs. As part of it, an online GRS platform was introduced in 2015 to bring substantive changes against manual grievance management system. The National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) has created an opportunity of partnership scope between the government and NGOs on scaling up grievance and disputes resolution. In the wake of people's low response to the single mode online GRS, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) piloted an innovative multi-mode GRS in the social security programs under the Strengthening Government Social Protection System for the Poor (SGSP)-Civil Society Component.

Through GRS, MJF has tested a local mechanism to accept, assess, and resolve community feedback or complaints on the social security programs. The project has promoted low cost interventions to improve accountability in social security programs. For doing so, the project has taken directives and lessons from government's interventions, study findings on piloting a Grievance Mechanism (MJF 2015) and good practices promoted in Employment Guarantee Scheme of India etc.

The pilot project was implemented during January 2016 – June 2017 in 60 unions under 12 upazilas (five unions from each upazila) of 12 districts by 12 partner NGOs. After phasing out, this study was commissioned to review the output, outcomes, and impact of the GRS pilot initiatives, and to provide recommendations and justifications for scaling up of the project. A qualitative approach of data collection and analysis was followed in the assessment. Sixty-two key informants were interviewed in four implementing Upazilas, i.e. Kazipur of Sirajganj, Mithapukur of Rangpur, Saghata of Gaibandha, and Ramgati of Lakshmipur. Besides, four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted. The participants were beneficiaries and community people, members of the Union and Upazila Forums for Social Protection, Union and Upazila Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Committees, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNOs), Social Services Officers, project staff of the PNGOs and so on.

**Coverage:** The pilot study (2015) proposed to implement GRS on three schemes i.e. Old Age Allowance (OAA), Vulnerable Group Development Program (VGD), Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP). During implementation of the GRS, only OAA and VGD were selected for pilot initiative. However, beneficiaries also voiced their grievances on other schemes such as Allowance for Widows and Destitute and Deserted Women (AWDDW), Primary Education Stipend Program (PESP), Secondary School Stipend Program (SSSP), Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled (AFID), Maternity Allowance Program for the Poor Lactating Mothers (MA), and EGPP to the PNGOs at the beginning of the project. Thus, other schemes were also included in the GRS, though each PNGO set one scheme as pilot intervention.

**Implementation Period:** Although it was a 18-month project, three to four months were taken to get momentum after settling initial formalities, setting-up of office, and forming GRM at union and upazila levels. On the other hand, the PNGOs and the project staff were too busy to wind up the project in the last quarter. In fact, the GRS related activities were implemented for 8-12 months if initial take-off and closing reporting periods are deducted.

## 2. Institutional Arrangements of GRS

**Existence of Forum for Social Protection (FSP):** Under the SGSP project, PNGOs altogether formed FSPs in 103 unions, 8 municipalities, 12 upazilas and 12 districts. The number of members in each FSP varied from 20 to 23. The volunteers were comprised of retired college principal, retired school teachers, retired government officials, businessmen, model farmers, social workers, housewives, former local government representatives, and beneficiaries of Social Security Programs.

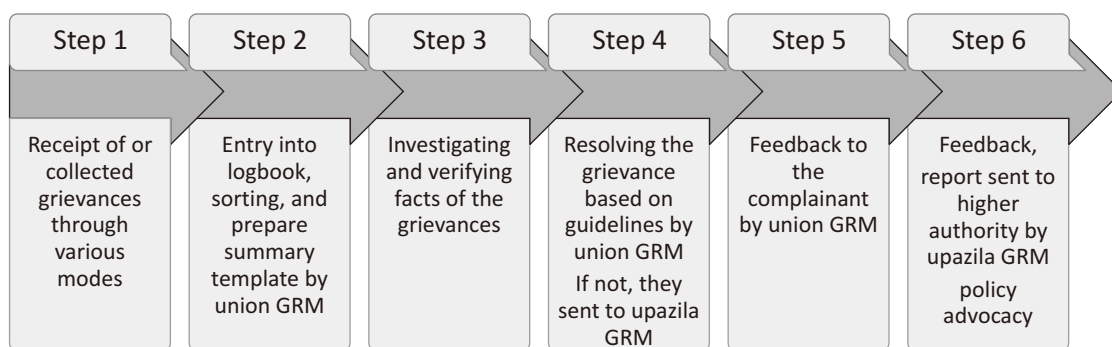
**Formation of GRM Committees:** Under the SGSP Project, Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Committees were formed in 60 unions and 12 upazilas with four to six members from relevant government offices and representatives from union forums. The upazila GRM committee consisted of the UNO, the Social Service Officer/Tag Officer and three members of Upazila FSP. The Union GRS committee consisted of union level government official for the respective social security service, UP Secretary and two members of Union FSP.

**Multiple Modes of Generating Grievances:** The pilot used multiple approaches for generating complaints from both recipient and non-recipient community members. However, the PNGOs selected the modes they would prefer to use for better responses from the beneficiaries on their own. These were a) Verbal Complaints, b) Complaint Card, c) Complaint Box, d) Service Booth, e) Hotline Mobile Phone Number, f) Different Social Accountability Tools, such as Community Score Card (CSC), Public Hearing, Social Audit (SA), and g) Complaints collected by PNGO Staff.

## 3. GRS Process

The GRS in the SGSP-civil society component project was designed to follow six steps starting from collecting grievances and ending at the final feedback to the complainants (see the Figure below).

**Figure: General Process of the GRS**



## 4. Key Grievance Trend

**Volume of Grievances:** Twelve PNGOs following the GRS process collected 9,145 grievances over the project period. In the beginning, the response from the community was not large, because the 9 different tools of grievance collection such as complaint box, complaint card, hotline, service booth, etc. were not initiated at the same time, rather they were introduced by the PNGOs gradually. In some instances of intervention, only two tools were used. Most of the NGOs collected a large number of grievances in one pilot scheme and the remaining numbers of grievances were collected from other eight schemes. For instance, Puspo Bangladesh received 77.2% grievances on VGD program, and the remaining 22.3% grievances on other eight schemes.

**Channels for Grievance Collection:** Nine channels were used to collect grievances, but all of them were not used by all PNGOs. There were a number of reasons for lower number of channels adoption. They include time constraints, lack of capacity, shortage of resources, management issue, and higher response to certain channels. For instance, Coast Trust used maximum number of channels— eight out of nine, and NDP used minimum number – two. On an average 5 channels were used by each PNGO. All PNGOs used Social Accountability tools. Among other tools- service booth, telephone hotline, complaint box, verbal, and complaint collected by staff were quite popular. Written complaints and complaint cards were used by only a few.

It is found that almost 50% of grievances were collected through the social accountability tools. The second highest percentage of complaints (15.7%) were collected verbally. However, other channels such as complaint box, complaint card, telephone hotline, service booth were used by only a few aggrieved people.

**Nature of Grievances:** Grievances were mostly centered on selection of beneficiaries. Beneficiary lists were manipulated or wrongly prepared through indulgence in nepotism, bribe, private gain and partisan considerations. Some grievances were relating to transfer of benefits –cumbersome collection process, incurring costs during collection of allowances, long waiting time, hidden cost, and disbursement of fewer amounts of benefits than the allotment. Few were relating to quality of product/transfer –distribution of low quality food grain, fewer amounts of benefits compared to the needs of family members, lower rate of benefits compared to the market price, etc. One common demand was widely voiced which is that the average target was three times less than the real need.

**Redress of Grievances:** Above 90% of the grievances were resolved in two SP schemes, i.e. PESP and MA. Most of the complaints (3,327) were on the VGD Allowance, of which only 87.6% were resolved. The lowest percentage of grievances (40.8%) resolved on AFID. It is evident that in all schemes, most of the grievances were resolved. Thus, on an average 80.1% of complaints were resolved. Grievances were resolved at different levels of the GRS. About 84% of the AFID related grievances were resolved at union level and 5.9% of grievances were resolved at upazila level. The second and third highest percentages of resolution at UP level (79.6% and 77.9% respectively) were achieved in EGPP and PESP. On an average, 66.2% of grievances were resolved at union level, 16.3% at upazila level, 0.2% was referred for policy advocacy, and the remaining (17.3%) were dropped for inadequate merits.

## 5. Analysis of GRS

Now this section analyzes the output and outcome of the GRS on whether they addressed real challenges and brought positive changes in the lives of the beneficiaries.

**GRS as A New Learning:** The introduction and implementation of GRS in SP program was a new experience to MJF and the PNGOs.

**Key Strengths of GRS:** The study found following strengths:

- Innovativeness and Value Addition
- GRS as an Important Component to the New Theory of Change
- Sufficient Preparation to Take Off
- Involvement of Civil Society (Voluntarism and Ownership)
- Cooperation from Local Administration and Local Government
- Pro-community
- Specific Portfolio at Upazila Parishad
- Visibility of the Program
- Sustainability, Accountability, Transparency and Confidentiality

**Effectiveness, Gaps and Challenges of the Channels for Grievance Collection:** Written complaints, service booth, telephone complaints, complaint box, complaint card were used as new channels of getting authentic feedback from the community. They were introduced to change traditional practices. But the PNGOs and beneficiaries did not have sufficient time to be oriented and accustomed. Another thing is that, the beneficiaries learned to lodge grievances in a proper manner. That was a substantive change in the community. Sometimes they encountered lack of clarity about the tools. SA tools were widely used. The reason was that PNGOs invested a considerable time and resources and built a rapport with the community people. Overall challenges were fear of being exposed and victimized by the other (alleged) party, illiteracy, lack of orientation of writing grievances, weak governance and support system in favor of complainant, acceptability of verbal grievances which were encountered by the GRS implementing actors.

**Effectiveness and Gaps of GRS Processes at Union and Upazila Levels:** The findings show that 66% and 17% grievances were resolved at union and upazila levels respectively. Major reasons behind union level successes include, among others, the activism of GRM Committees and other supporting actors such as UFSP and PNGOs, and introduction of different channels of grievance collection.

The Union GRM was established as an effective GRS, indeed. Still it had the following gaps:

- Regular participation of all GRM members could not be ensured.
- They had over dependency on the PNGO project staff and their guidance.
- Sometimes qualification of the GRM Committee members was not properly assessed during selection.
- Lack of skills to form an institutionalized platform for grievance mechanism.
- The Upazila GRS Committee led by UNO was mainly responsible for all kinds of grievances.



In reality, they had limited time and focus to look into grievances. Nevertheless, the key issues and unresolved grievances were only discussed for quick responses of UNO. It is evident that without the involvement of UNOs, intervention on GRS would not bring success at upazila level.

## 6. Recommendations

### Recommendations for MJF

1. Good Planning: With the experience of GRS implementation, focus, objectives, coverage, log frame, baseline data and result matrix should be developed before implementation of a new project.
2. Capacity building on GRS: All project staff and GRM Committee members should be imparted a rigorous training by using ready training manuals and guidelines before or immediately after the project implementation.
3. Development of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System: A well-structured M&E, Documentation and reporting system should be developed and project staff would get orientation on them at the very beginning of the project implementation.
4. Clarity of Grievance Generating Channels: All kind of tools or channels for generating grievances should be well defined, self-explanatory and simple to use.
5. Combining Awareness Program with GRS: Without massive awareness program by the FSP members at different tiers, the GRS implementation would not bring success in the communities. Therefore, the platform of FSP should be created as part of the GRS.
6. Replication on other Service Delivery Institution: Piloting initiatives on GRS made an example of good practice in public service delivery. This experience can be replicated in other service delivery institutions as the nature and magnitude of governance challenges are almost same in other SP Programs.
7. Use of RTI and Citizens Charter: The governance in the service delivery can be improved by popular use of RTI. The community has to be made aware of RTI, so that they will start demanding information.

### Recommendations for the Government

8. Partnership between the government and civil society organizations: The government officials including upazila nirbahi officer, upazila social service officer, upazila women affairs officer should be engaged in the GRS through a government circular. Then, they would own the project and would be more accessible. They would engage themselves more as well.
9. The government has to take necessary efforts to popularize (raising mass awareness) and to make the currently implementing Online GRS functional ('Separate Button' for 'social security grievance redress' in the online GRS Dashboard, mobile Apps for lodging complaints). In addition, offline/multimodal manual approaches of GRS should be introduced to receive maximum complaints.
10. In order for reducing time elapse, grievances receiving and redressing points should be closure to the community.

11. The review of grievances should be made by a committee, instead of one person for establishing an organized, accountable and transparent grievance redress system.
12. A common guideline for all of the social security programs should be developed to assess the grievances properly.
13. Local Government Division is the crosscutting agency for grievance redress, so specific direction should be given to them.
14. A GRS implementation plan of NGOs is required for its effectiveness.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Context of the Study

Bangladesh Government's social security programs have been playing a remarkable role in supporting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups – either by cash transfers, or by food transfers, or by skill development training. However, in reality, during implementation of these safety net programs, the real target people are sometimes deprived off due to weak governance both at national and local levels, and malpractices of all concerned stakeholders (MJF 2016). At this backdrop, the Strengthening Government Social Protection System for the Poor (SGSP) Project was initiated in response to the request of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to provide technical assistance to the MoF. This project was expected to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the expenditure on the social security programs. The SGSP is about bringing more entitled poor under the social protection to reduce overall poverty. This involves a systemic reform of the Government's current provisions for social protection. The SGSP Project was designed to support the reform of social protection leading to a greater efficiency and impact of government social security programs.

*“A grievance redress mechanism is a locally based, formalized way to accept, assess, and resolve community feedback or complaints”. (CAO Advisory Note – A Guide to Designing and implementing Grievance Mechanisms for Development Projects-2008)*



*Courtyard meeting at Shaghata, Gaibandha*

The recognition of the need for an effective GRS is not new in the context of social security programs in Bangladesh. GRS is a crucial component of the social assistance programs, providing a formal mechanism or process for receiving, evaluating and redressing program-related grievances from affected communities and citizens. In many government papers, although there is ample evidence of grievance mechanisms for social security



programs<sup>1</sup>, there is no evidence that any of them is properly functioning. The main challenges around generating adequate number of complaints are: lack of people's awareness and knowledge about lodging complaints; fear to be exposed; reluctance of Local Government representatives in addressing local-level Grievances Mechanism (GM); and a lack of government monitoring to collate and resolve complaints.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) recognizes that an effective grievance mechanism is an essential

addition to social protection schemes. Through past reviews, the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh has identified a number of areas that need to be reformed, and one of the key priorities is establishing a GRS so that all citizens have recourse to appeal decisions on selection and can notify competent authorities about instances of misconduct and failures in the delivery of the promised benefit. The GoB encourages NGOs to continue and deepen the partnership and become helpful in the piloting of innovative ideas for possible scale up that includes helping redress grievances and disputes relating to the implementation of the NSSS (NSSS 2015).

The grievance redress system was established in all line ministries in 2008 and the GoB carried out an evaluation in relevant line ministries in 2011,<sup>2</sup> where it mentions:

"An active GRS provides a chance of transforming government institutions to be more dynamic and effective by ensuring mutually meaningful and credible interface between government institutions and people, resulting in outcomes that are seen as fair, effective and lasting." To improve the GRS, the Cabinet Division has given a number of directives to the ministries and departments to practise GRS. They have future plans to improve the system by using modern technology. They have formulated the "Grievance Redress System Guidelines, 2015" for bringing discipline in the grievance management in the public services and introduced online GRS ([http://www.grs.gov.bd/home/index\\_english](http://www.grs.gov.bd/home/index_english)). However, the online GRS is still not very functional due to the lack of complaint generation and absence of a systematic enforcement from the supply side. However, the Report on GRS in Line Ministries (GoB 2011) concluded that:

- 1 For instances, in OAA, Union Committee has the authority to redress of grievances on primary selection of beneficiaries and Upazila Committee will take action on provision of allowance, monitoring and resolution of appeal. In VGD, Upazila Committee has the authority to investigate at the field level on the irregularities of primary listing, resolution of appeal, etc.
- 2 GSDRC, Help desk Research, Grievance Redress Mechanisms in Bangladesh, page 12, para 1. Brigitte Rohwerder with Sumedh Rao 23.01.2015.

*It is expected that there could be a fundamental change in grievance redress system once e-filing of complaints and electronic response system is introduced with proper monitoring, application of technology, right reporting, decentralization of power and further delegation, change of typical work flow and change of attitudes of public officials.*

Against this backdrop, in view of the government's one mode strategy to introduce effective GRS by itself and their inspiration to the NGOs to meet the overall objective of GRS, the NGOs with the support of the development partners have introduced multiple modes of GRS to engage and aware community people, guide them to report their grievances in right way, and engage the public officials, Local Government institutions and other key stakeholders to change their working patterns and attitudes. All these efforts were devised to create an enabling environment for the best use of online GRS.

Literature from the office of the Compliance Adviser/Ombudsman highlighted: "Well-functioning Grievance Mechanisms provide a predictable, transparent, and credible process to all parties, resulting in outcomes that are seen as fair, effective, and lasting; build trust ... ; enable more systematic identification of emerging issues and trends, facilitating corrective action and pre-emptive engagement" (CAO, 2009).

Global Review of GRM in World Bank Projects<sup>3</sup> highlighted several operational benefits of a well-designed GRM:

- **Improving project outcomes at a lower cost:** GRMs focus on corrective actions that can be implemented quickly and at a relatively low cost to resolve identified implementation concerns before they escalate to the point of harm or conflict.
- **Helping to prioritize supervision:** Using citizen feedback, GRMs are a channel for early warning, helping to target supervision to where it is most needed.
- **Identifying systemic issues:** As a part of a management system, GRMs can be used to identify some systemic implementation issues and trends that need to be addressed.
- **Promoting accountability:** As most GRMs rely, to some degree, on local people and institutions, an effective GRM can help improve local ownership of development or social security programs.

## 1.2 International Experience of GRS

There are a number of international examples that manifest different approaches to design, implement and operate an effective grievance redress, allowing beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike to register complaints, and receive satisfactory resolution to any problems.

In India, the employment guarantee scheme (MGNREGA) has been underpinned by social audit mechanisms that have helped streamline the implementation processes, made people aware of their rights, improved accountability for program delivery, and strengthened the social contract between the state and the rural poor. The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (Pantawid

<sup>3</sup> Global Review of Grievance Redress Mechanism in World Bank Project, 2014, Page1;<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2014/01/20182297/global-review-grievance-redress-mechanismworld-bank-projects>



*Exposure visit in India to Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) Program*

Pamilya) is the Government of Philippine's flagship social assistance program. It is a conditional cash transfer program that targets poor households with children and/or pregnant women. The GRS of Pantawid Pamilya has made great strides and has resolved nearly 500,000 grievances since its launch in 2007. Different kinds of GRS have been introduced in some African countries to cater to people's feedback on the social safety net service delivery, for instance, 'Rights Committees' to monitor norms for delivering cash transfers in Kenya, 'Appeals and Complaints Process' on the

Beneficiary Charter of rights and responsibilities in Rwanda, and community case management and grievance procedures to strengthen the social security programs in Mozambique.

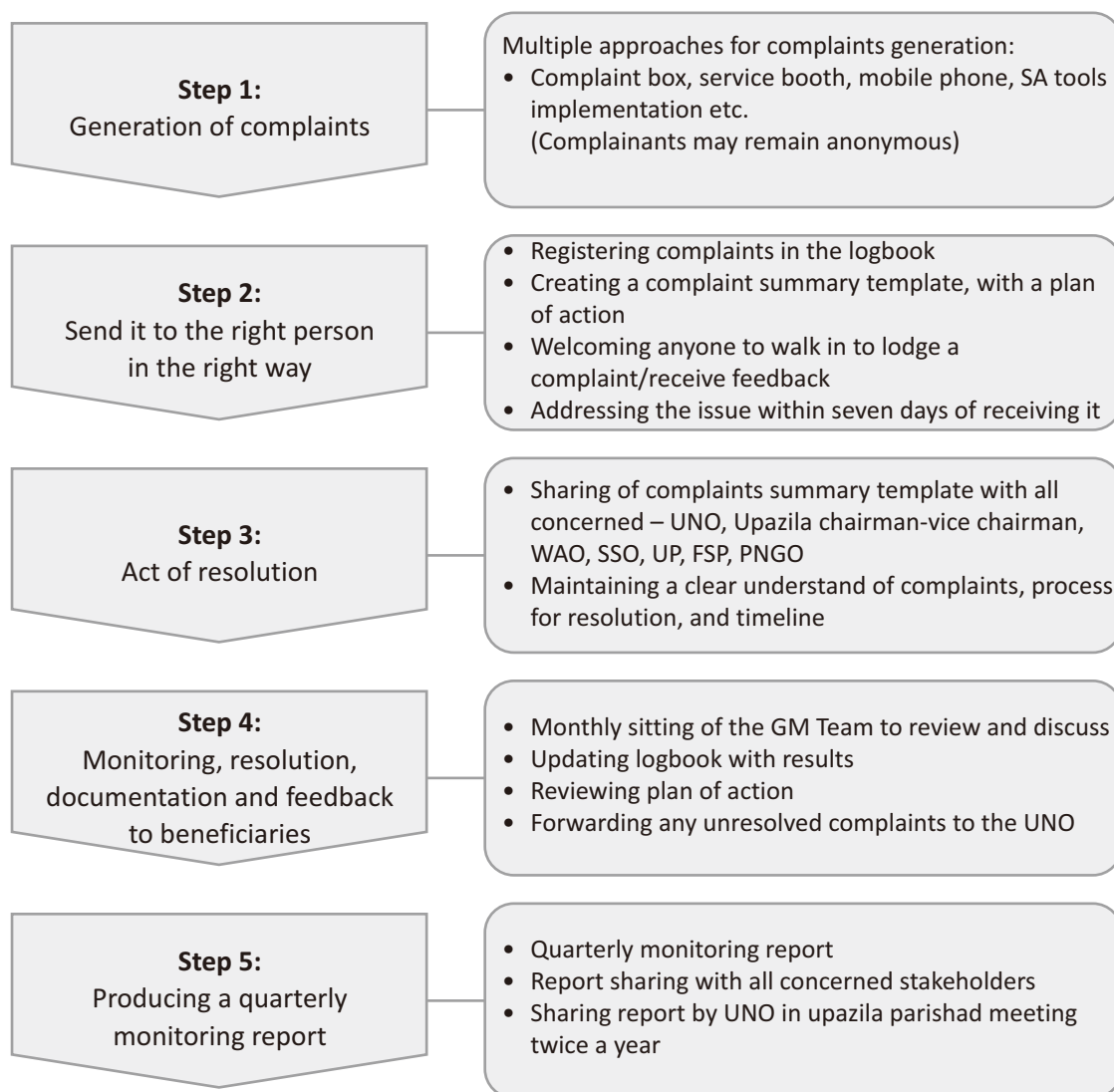
### **1.3 Overview of Piloting Initiatives on GRS by MJF**

While implementing the SGSP-Civil Society Component, MJF felt the importance of GRS to achieve the best outcome in social protection service delivery, and commissioned a study in 2015 to provide a plan for setting up a pilot Grievance Mechanism for at least two government social protection programs (within a given geographic area)<sup>4</sup>. The study found different types of complaints in three social security programs (OAA, VGD and EGPP). They include size of target (more demand than allocation), selection of beneficiaries (political influence, nepotism), transfer (corruption, system loss, delay), quality of product/transfer (low quality), replacement (slow in maintaining guidelines) and who to complain (lack of information).

<sup>4</sup> The Study was conducted by Selina Shelley, July 2015



**Figure 1** Steps of GRS proposed by the Pilot Study



The study presents a good opportunity to test out a grievance mechanism and to generate lessons that can be applied when the government has the appetite or the need for scaling up grievance mechanisms nationally. The study proposes a grievance mechanism pilot to consider three programs, namely OAA, VGD and EGPP, at least in three upazilas for a period of 12 months. The proposed pilot focuses on mobilizing and lodging grievances at UP level, with strong linkages to the upazila administrative structure to address grievances that can be resolved at that level. The study has designed five steps of GRS (see Figure 1).

The study also delineates a GRM layout, ways to connect with upazila-level structure, monitoring and reviewing GM, deliverables at preparatory phase, selection criteria of pilot site, and capacity issues of the PNGOs, and expenses of the piloting. Based on the study, the project was developed and implemented by MJF.

## 1.4 Purpose of the Final Assessment

The purpose of the final review and lesson learning is to get an overall assessment of the piloting initiatives on GRS initiated by MJF within the timeframe based on its framework.

*The assessment has a wide scope of work:*

- i. Review the output, outcomes and impact of the GRS pilot initiative in comparison to the roadmap of the GRS scoping study and mentioning key challenges and limitations faced during implementation of the project following the roadmap;
- ii. Identify the changes taken place after piloting the project at both national and local levels and depict the gaps between the pilot and non-pilot areas;
- iii. Provide recommendations and justifications for future scaling up of the pilot project.

## 1.5 Methodology of the Review

A field based research methodology was designed to collect data from the service providers and service recipients of the GRS initiatives. Sources of data, respondents, survey locations, tools and process of data collection, challenges encountered discussed in this chapter.

### 1.5.1 Approach

A combination of desk and field research has been applied to deliver the expected outputs of this consultancy service. Data presented in the end of the project evaluation report on GRS and internal reports of MJF have been reviewed and cross-checked, validated and justified through the field research. Only qualitative data have been analyzed and presented in the report.

### 1.5.2 Sources of Data

Both secondary and primary sources of information have been used to produce the deliverables. The secondary sources of information include baseline report, end of project evaluation report, quarterly and six monthly reports, case studies, and other available published and/or unpublished reports. Primary sources of information are interviews of key stakeholders including focal points of the partner NGOs, tag officers, representatives of local governments, local level government officials, service recipients and eligible people but excluded from social safety net programs, and service recipients of non-intervention areas.

### 1.5.3 Selection of Fields and Respondents

This is a qualitative study and followed purposive sampling to select respondents. The following steps were followed to collect information from the respondents:

**Step One:** Out of 12 Implementing districts (Rangpur, Satkhira, Gaibandha, Cox's Bazar, Sirajganj, Sunamganj, Faridpur, Chittagong, Lakshmipur, Pabna, Barisal, and Rangamati), four districts i.e. Rangpur, Gaibandha, Sirajganj and Lakshmipur were chosen for field work in GRS and Non-GRS locations.



**Step Two:** In each district, one PNGO was assigned to implement the project. The second step was to select upazila, union and municipality from which the respondent were selected for data collection. In consultation with focal points of MJF, 6 GRS Unions were chosen. Also, 2 non-GRS Municipalities and two non-GRS Unions were selected randomly for comparison.

**Table 1** GRS and Non-GRS locations in the Surveyed Areas

SI	PNGOs	District	Upazila	GRS Union	Non-GRS Union	Non-GRS Municipality
1	Puspo Bangladesh	Rangpur	Mithapukur	1) Ranipukur 2) Chengmari	Bara Bala	
2	SKS Foundation	Gaibandha	Saghata	3) Saghata 4) Muktinagar	Chalitadanga	
3	NDP	Sirajganj	Kazipur	5) Maizbari		Kazipur
4	NRDS	Lakshmipur	Ramgati	6) Char Badam		Ramgati

**Step Three:** Respondent-specific checklists were developed based on the key indicators of the pilot study and end of the project evaluation reports to conduct one-to-one in-depth interviews and FGDs.

**Step Four:** One-to-one interviews were carried out at the local level for understanding the field level realities, implementation challenges and problems, positive changes in the lives of the service recipients, gaps in the project intervention, experience of the key implementers (of the PNGOs) at the field levels, opinions and suggestion of the other strong stakeholders such as representatives of the local government, officials of the local administration, and other civil society members and community people.

The key categories and total number of the respondents in four districts are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2** Number of Respondents

SI	Person interviewed	Number
1.	PC/Concerned Person of PNGO	4
2.	Upazila Chairman or Vice Chairman	2
3.	UP Chairman (1 GRS + 1 Non-GRS)	5
4.	Municipality Chairman	1
5.	Women Affairs Officer (WAO)	3
6.	UP Member	4
7.	Upazila Social Service Officer	3
8.	FSP Member (UP level)	4
9.	UNO	4
10.	Tag Officer	4
11.	Service Recipient (GRS UP level)	20
12.	Service Recipient (Non-GRS UP level)	4
13.	Service Recipient (Municipality level)	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>

# প্রতিবন্ধী ব্যক্তির বিকাশে প্রয়োজন সঠিক পরিচর্যা ও সহায়ক পরিবেশ



তথ্য জানতে বা অভিযোগ জানাতে ইউনিয়ন  
পরিষদ বা ইউএনও অফিসে যোগাযোগ করুন

মানুষের জীবন  
manusher jonno  
promoting human rights and good governance



KHAN  
FOUNDATION



Though 70 respondents were planned to conduct key informant interviews, 62 were found during data collection. All of them were not found due to several reasons such as heavy rain, flash flood, busyness of the partisan Upazila Chairman and Union Chairman, absence of government officials. Four FGDs were held with beneficiaries, union and upazila level FSPs.

## 1.5.4 Comparison

A comparison between the beneficiaries of GRS and Non-GRS areas is required to see the changes and impact of the GRS piloting project intervention in the communities. Key components of the comparison will be 'who to complain', existence of systematic ways of grievance mechanism, filing written complaints, frequency of receiving and resolving complaints, community satisfaction, etc. Along with the service beneficiaries of GRS in six Unions and two Municipalities, two non-GRS Unions were selected to take interviews of service recipients of social protection for this comparison.

## 1.5.5 Quality Control of Data

Data is the base of all research. It is also considered as lifeline. All efforts were made to ensure the highest quality of data collection at field level. The consultants reviewed secondary



literature and collected data from the fields by themselves. Moreover, the active involvement of focal points of PNGOs and MJF was highly encouraged during the field based data collection which helped to understand the project, its implementation and achievements as well as to increase the accessibility to the respondents that ultimately ensured the quality of data.

### 1.5.6 Data Analysis

The desk research is a combination of review and secondary analysis of available relevant literature. In addition, the field based data were analyzed in a qualitative approach that highlights the key lessons learnt, listing and compilation of key observation and findings, and graphical representation of quantitative data if available in the secondary literature.

### 1.6 Limitations

- As the project phased out in June 2017, most of the Project Staff-members of the PNGOs were already out of their jobs. Some had already left the working places and shifted elsewhere, albeit some local staff members were available during field data collection. Unavailability of key persons of the project was a challenge for the field researchers to identify respondents, to arrange interviews with government and Local Government stakeholders, and to gather data on the project implementation by the PNGOs in a short time of data collection.





# Chapter 2

## Institutional Arrangements of GRS

The piloting initiative on GRS was initiated in January 2016 and ended in June 2017. Following the design document of GRS, the original pilot was planned for ten Unions from two Upazilas (five Unions from each Upazila) and to advise the government on GRS for two Social Protection schemes. However, MJF changed the earlier plan and decided to roll out the pilot in 60 unions, five from each of the 12 SGSP project districts, as it assumed that this wider pilot would be more representative and increase the opportunity to demonstrate a functional GRS. The pilot study (2015) proposed a design of GRS on three schemes i.e. OAA, VGD and EGPP. While implementing the GRS, only OAA and VGD were selected as pilot. However, the beneficiaries communicated their grievances on other schemes (VGF, AWDDW, PESP, SSSP, AFID, MA and EGPP) to the PNGOs at the beginning of the project. Thus other schemes were also included in the GRS, though each PNGO set one scheme as pilot intervention.

### 2.1 Involvement of NGOs

MJF implemented the GRS as part of SGSP-Civil Society Component through partnership with NGOs. They were invited to apply for the project and after maintaining through scrutiny and competitive process, 12 NGOs received funding and technical support. Among them, details of four PNGOs in the surveyed areas are given in Table 3.

The PNGOs were in the center between MJF and the beneficiaries. They were the key implementers of the Project and also performed as local agents. Being local organizations and serving to the community since long, they are well known to the beneficiaries and other key stakeholders such as Local Government representatives and local administration. They understand the people, know the socio-political and cultural context of these areas, and have commitment to do something for their own people. Thus the PNGOs owned the project while implementing at the field level.

According to the approved project proposal – logical framework and budgetary plan –PNGOs followed and maintained both software and hardware of the Project. On one hand they established the office, appointed staff members, capacitated them, procured logistics and office materials, while on the other hand they designed, planned, and implemented activities to achieve the objective of the Project. They planned quarterly following the logical framework, and result matrix and coordinated the whole tasks of GRS.



**Table 3** PNGO Intervention in the Piloted scheme

Name of the NGOs	Name of the Upazila and District	Piloted Scheme	Number of Staff involved	Name of the GRS Unions
<b>Puspo Bangladesh</b>	Mithapukur, Rangpur	VGD	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ranipukur</li> <li>• Payrabandha</li> <li>• Kafrikhal</li> <li>• Bara Hazratpur</li> <li>• Chengmari</li> </ul>
<b>NDP</b>	Kazipur, Sirajganj	OAA	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maizbari</li> <li>• Gandhail</li> <li>• Sonamukhi</li> <li>• Natuarpara</li> <li>• Nishchantapur</li> </ul>
<b>SKS Foundation</b>	Saghata, Gaibandha	VGD	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bharatkhal</li> <li>• Haldia</li> <li>• Kachua</li> <li>• Saghata</li> </ul>
<b>NRDS</b>	Ramgati, Lakshmipur	VGD	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muktinagar</li> <li>• Char Badam</li> <li>• Char Alexandar</li> <li>• Char Algi</li> <li>• Char Ramij</li> <li>• Char Gazi</li> </ul>

Source: Author's Compilation

## 2.2 Implementation Period

The pilot initiative was designed in the pilot study for 12 months, but the individual project of the PNGOs was officially implemented during January 2016 – June 2017. Although it is a 18-month project, three to four months were taken to get momentum after initial formalities, setting-up of office, and forming GRM at union and upazila levels. On the other hand, the PNGOs and the project staff were busy to close the project during the last quarter. In fact, the GRS related activities were implemented for 8-12 months, deducting initial take-off and closing reporting periods.

## 2.3 Existence of Forum for Social Protection (FSP)

Under the SGSP Project, all PNGOs formed FSPs at 103 Unions, 8 Municipalities, 12 Upazilas and 12 Districts. The number of members in each FSP varies from 20 to 23. Altogether the total numbers of volunteers were 2700-3105, and comprised of retired college principals, retired school teachers, retired government officials, businessmen, model farmers, social workers, housewives, former Local Government representatives, and social security program's beneficiaries. They were people's platform created by the communities through open discussion and facilitated by PNGOs. They extended their support on voluntary basis keeping the spirit to do something for the community.



*Mr. Harun-ur-Rashid, UNO, Mithapukur and Chairperson Upazila GRM committee; Ms. Mollika Pervin, Upazila Women Affairs Officer speaking at a meeting with the leaders of NFSP*

## 2.4 Formation of GRM Committees

Under the SGSP Project, GRM Committees were formed at 60 unions and 12 upazila levels with four to six members from relevant government offices and representatives from union forums. The total number of members ranged from 288 to 432. The structure of the committees was as follows:

The Upazila GRM Committee:

- UNO – Chair
- Social Service Officer/Women Affairs Officer
- Three members of Upazila Forum for Social Protection (Civil Society - Volunteers).

The Union GRM Committee:

- UP Secretary (Local Government) – Chair
- Union level government official for the respective social security program
- Two members of Union Forum for Social Protection (Civil Society - Volunteers).

The membership from Government offices varied a little depending on the prevailing context. At both union and Upazila levels, the GRM committees met usually every month.

## 2.5 Coordination

Many stakeholders such as community people, UP, Upazila Parishad, district and Upazila Administration and different service delivery government institutions, PNGOs and MJF were engaged in the Project. Strong coordination was needed to manage multiple stakeholders and to





*Public hearing meeting at Mithapukur, Rangpur*

facilitate their activities, and the PNGO played a key role in this regard. Despite having political pressure, and lack of time of the local administration such as UNO and Local Government representatives, project staff members averted these challenges with their sincerity, diligence and alternative planning.

According to a quarterly plan, coordination meetings of GRM were held at union and upazila levels. The monthly Staff Coordination Meeting was held on a regular basis in all four areas. Different issues on the progress of works, planning according to the action plan, quality ensuring, steps to overcome the challenges in the field level regarding project implementation, and accounts management were discussed and reviewed in these meetings with all project staff. The project coordinator distributed the workload among the project officials and gave necessary instructions to move forward.

The meeting at the district level was held for another kind of coordination among the government offices and Local Government. In this meeting, the Deputy Commissioner, the Deputy Directors of Social Services Department and Women and Children Affairs Department, district level government officers, journalists of the press club, members of the District Forum for Social Protection (DFSP) and Upazila Forum for Social Protection (UzFSP), local elites, academics, PNGO, etc. attended. They discussed the field findings on GRS, and advocated to change the service delivery of social security scheme.





Billboard on social security schemes

## 2.6 Logistics and Finances

PNGOs provided all kinds of logistics and financial support for implementing the Project. They arranged regular GRM meetings at specific places and communicated with GRM members to attend. Besides, all logistics and finances for arranging awareness meeting, dialogues, provision of SA tools, development of IEC materials, etc. were provided by PNGOs. Besides, PNGO financed for a small set-up in the Upazila Office, equipped by computer, table-chair, file cabinet, etc.

## 2.7 Multiple Modes of Generating Grievances

The pilot used multiple approaches for generating complaints from both recipient and non-recipient community members. But the PNGOs decided on their own which modes they would prefer to use for better responses from the beneficiaries. Thus, all the following modes were not equally used in all implementing unions by the PNGOs.

**a) Verbal Complaints:** The opportunity of verbal complaints was created through increasing the accessibility of the service recipients to the grievance mechanism at the local level. Besides, community people feel safe and comfortable to raise their concern and complain verbally, as this is a common practice. However, the verbal complaints were registered if they had merit by complying the guidelines of related social protection schemes.

**b) Complaint Card:** Other than common approaches to take verbal complaints, a new strategy of written complaints was introduced. The complainants wrote a complaint and went to the specific location to drop. The idea was to develop a popular tool – a complaint

card with common complaints written on it to be marked (ticked) as they apply. The card was made easily accessible to the community/individuals through many channels. The complainants were assisted to fill in the card. They remained anonymous, if they wished to, but persons collecting/delivering the card must place their own names on it.

**c) Complaint Box:** A wooden complaint box was placed in the UP premises. Complaint boxes were also placed at additional places depending on the local context, such as at the school premises. These boxes were opened in a particular day of each month. The complaints were sorted on their merits and registered for next steps of investigation and resolution.

**d) Service Booth:** A service booth was set up during the day of selection and distribution of SP beneficiaries. A project staff member or a volunteer attended the booth to respond to the questions of the beneficiaries and support them to write grievances. The complaint card was distributed to from the booth, and was also collected from the complainants.

**e) Hotline Mobile Phone:** One mobile phone number was set as the 'hotline' for receiving complaints of the beneficiaries in each implementing upazila. The number was circulated by leaflet and billboard so that a good number of beneficiaries could know about the service. The mobile phone was kept with one project staff of PNGO who received complaints from the callers and registered on their merits. A separate register was maintained for documenting these grievances.

**f) Use of Social Accountability Tools:** The UFSP used the following social accountability tools to collect complaints from the participants of the tools.

*Community Score Card (CSC):* To evaluate the existing service provision situation and improve it for effective distribution under the SP programs in union and municipalities of the project areas, CSC application processes were conducted. In this regard, input tracking, community scoring to service provider, self-evaluation by the service provider and interface meeting in addition to printing and fixing of the score card took place.

*Public Hearing:* A large number of people, both males and females, participated in the Public Hearing meetings. Direct question and answer sessions were held between the beneficiary groups and service providing organizations, where beneficiaries got the opportunity to ask the question to service providers about services (policy, mismanagement, difference between planning and implementation, demands of the community, quality and quantity etc.), and service providers explained their position regarding the service to community people. It also ensured the accountability of the service providers. Public Hearing meetings helped to reduce the distance between service providers and beneficiaries group.

*Social Audit:* Social audit event was conducted on different social protection schemes such as OAA, Education Stipend, VGD, etc. in the implementing unions. Both males and females participated in these events. The monitoring team found out gaps in the services, verified the complaints and endeavor field findings to develop strategies of communication, outreach and reforms through the events.

**g) Complaints collected by PNGO Staff:** While implementing project activities and staying in the community, PNGO staff members received various kinds of allegations and grievances. Not all of them had merit to be documented, but some were considered as valid grievances which were forwarded for redress. These complaints were not registered because the complainants wanted to keep themselves anonymous out of fear to be victimized, had they been exposed.

**h) Complaints collected by Register:** The project staff of PNGOs received grievances from the service beneficiaries and asked them whether they were willing to register their names with the complaints. In response, the complainants agreed to sign along with their identity on their complaints.

## 2.8. Milestones of the Key Achievements

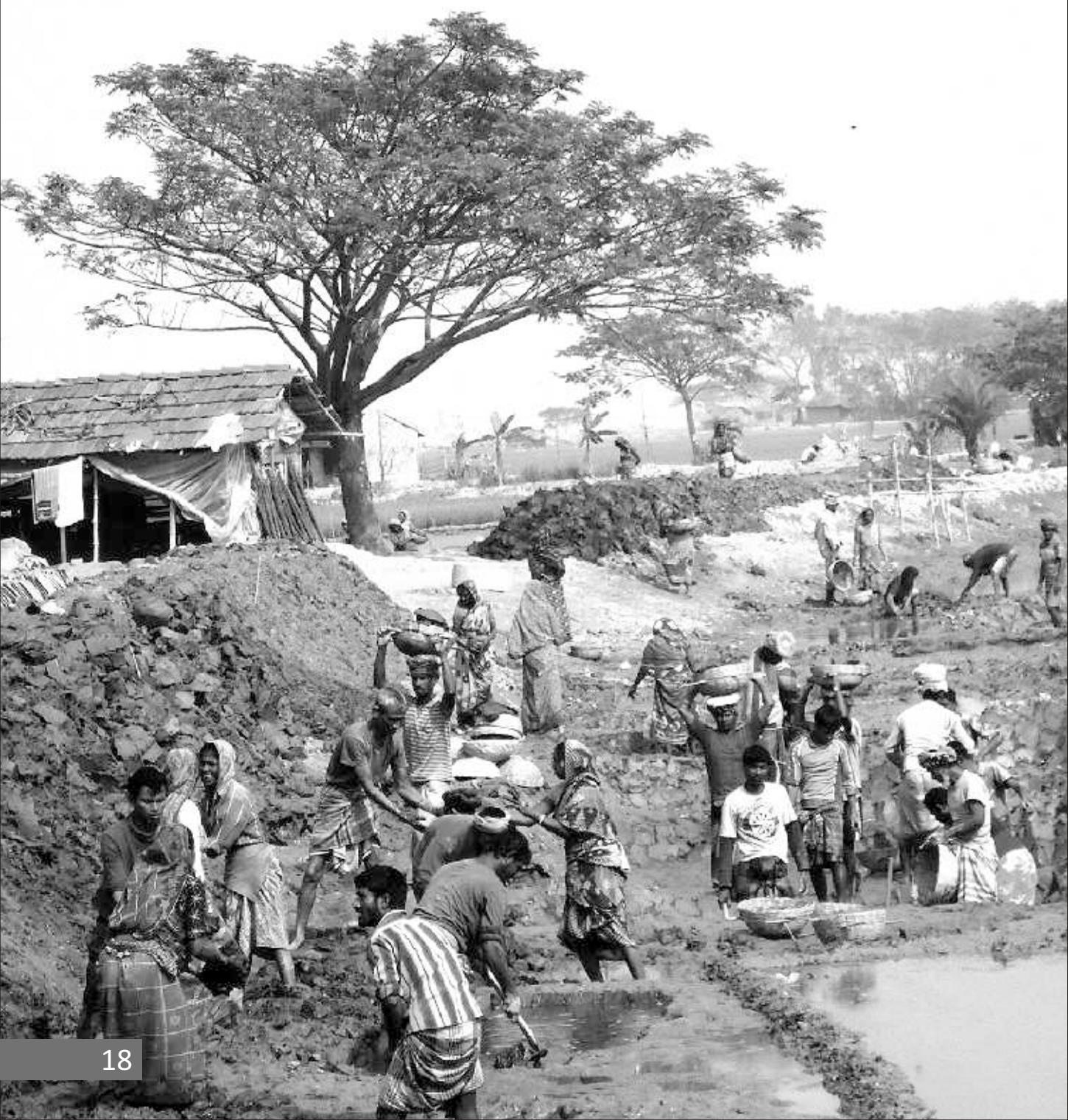
The GRS piloting was a new endeavour of MJF, despite it has achieved many milestones. Among them, some are mentioned in Figure 2.

**Figure 2** Milestones/Key Achievements of the projects

Apr 2015	MoSW issued a circular to UNOs and SSOs to help MJF on GRS implementation of OAA and AWD in 2 Upazilas
Jul 2015	MJF Study to pilot a Grievance Mechanism
Dec 2015	Inclusion of MJF in the Technical committee on GRS formed by the cabinet
Jan 2016	Launch of Piloting Initiatives on GRS by MJF
Jan-Apr 2016	UNOs allocated spaces at upazila premises for GRS implementation
Jun-Dec 2016	1904 participants including UNOs, local government members, FSP members, project staff etc. attended in 59 training courses on GRS held at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) premises
Mar 2016	Implementation of GRS expanded to 12 upazilas, from 2 upazilas
Mar 2016	A visit to New Delhi and Rochi on GRS was organized for public officials and PNGOs
Jun 2017	End of contracts of PNGOs - phase out of the project
Oct 2017	Final review of GRS initiative

*Source: Author's compilation*





# Chapter 3

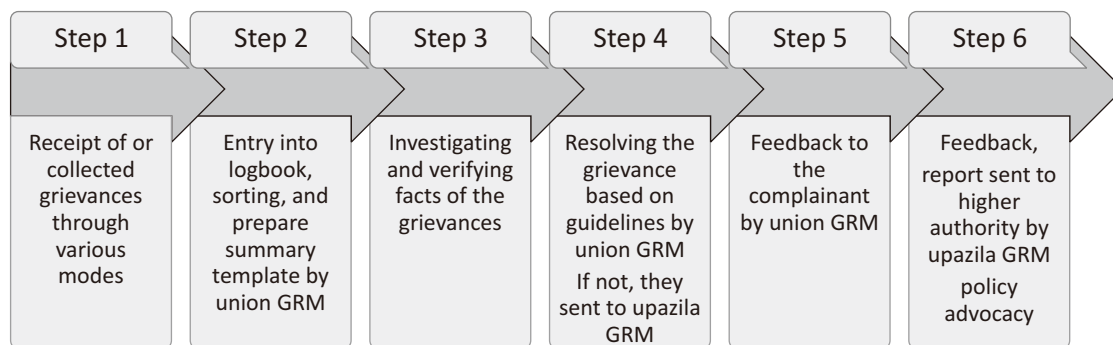
## Grievance Redress Procedure

The GRS in the SGSP-civil society component project was designed to follow six steps starting from collecting grievances and ending at the final feedback to the complainants (see Figure 3). The GRS devised nine specific channels to collect grievances. Other than the most conventional way of verbal complaints, some new tools such as complaint box, service booth, hotline mobile phone, complaint card, SA tools, etc. were introduced to get a response from the wider community. Multiple modes were also opened for encouraging community people to raise their voices either verbally or in writing. People started to speak about their deprivation and grievances, but not all their complaints were accepted due to non-complying to the guidelines of relevant SP schemes. The complaints having merits were entered into the logbook and sorted. Finally, a summary template was prepared by the union GRM with the support of the project staff.

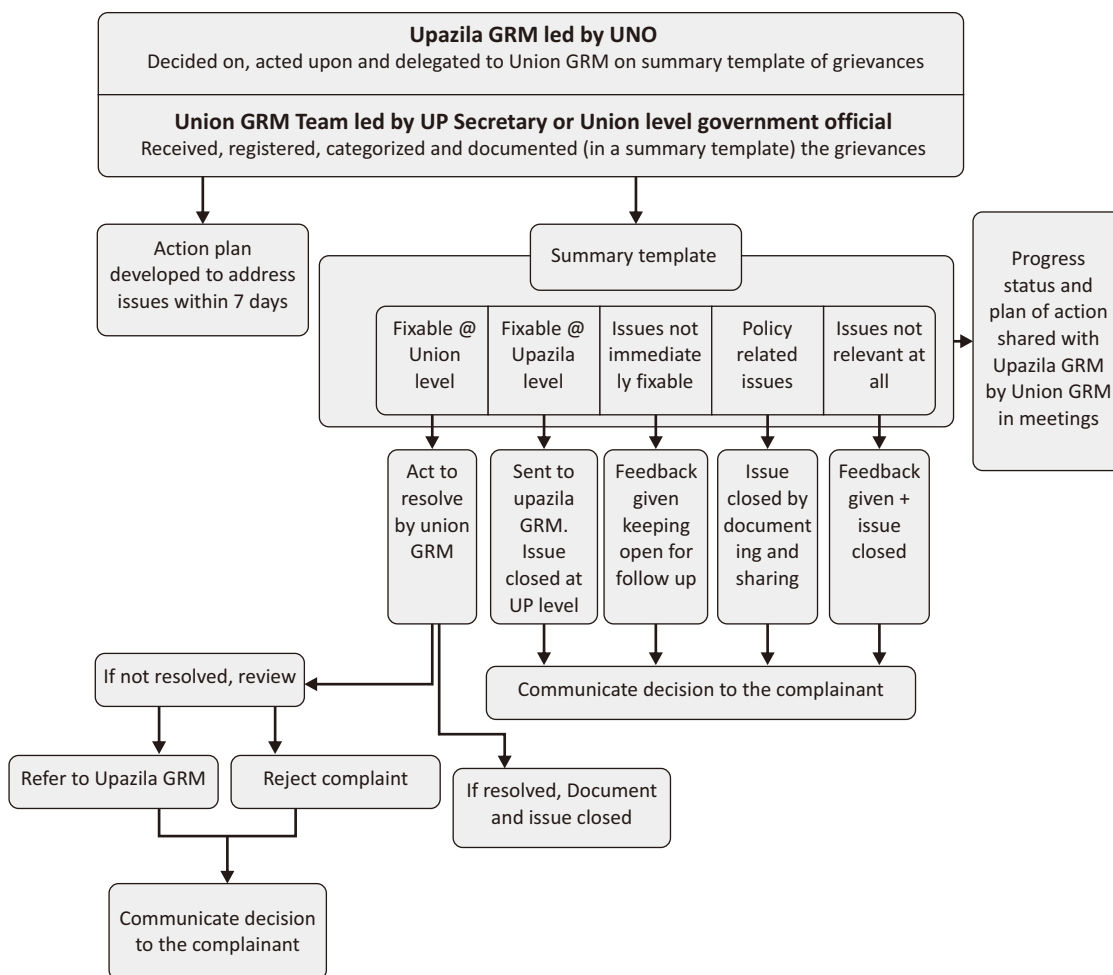
The GRM Committee assigned someone to verify the primarily registered grievances through investigation over phone or meeting the complainant and alleged person on the spot. The main yardstick for verification was the guidelines of the relevant scheme. The probe committee or



**Figure 3** General Process of the GRS



**Figure 4** Work Flow of the GRM



Source: Adopted from the Pilot Study with some revision on reality



assigned person collected all evidences or facts and submitted to the GRM. Based on the facts and opinion of the both parties, a decision was taken by the GRM Committee. The meeting proceedings included all decisions and directions to all concerned stakeholders (such as Social Service Officers, Women Affairs Officers, Upazila Chairman, and so on) who had responsibility to look into the grievances to resolve. The initial feedback and the decision was conveyed to the complainant by the union GRM Committee because most of the grievances were resolvable at the union level. Only the grievances that were not solvable at the union level were forwarded to the upazila GRM committee that finally looked into the matter and took necessary action. Thus, this Committee had the authority to provide final feedback to the complainants.

The GRS process is simple in nature. However, the work flow illustrated in figure 4, can be found complicated. There were many stakeholders from the local administration, local government, civil society, community involved in the work flow to achieve the same objective of effective grievance redress for social security programs.

Each upazila GRM Committee led by UNO was responsible to look after all grievances in the implementing unions of the upazila. Upazila GRM meeting was held monthly to see all enlisted grievances (in summary templates), and to communicate the concerned people or offices to resolve or issue letters to concerned offices for necessary action. On the other hand, they assigned union GRM team to fix grievances at village levels. Other than this involvement of investigation and fixation of grievances at grassroots level, the union GRM team had more responsibilities to receive, register, categorize and document grievances in a summary template. They found the project team members and UFSP members beside them.

The summary template included six steps of grievance redress system – fixable at union level, fixable at upazila level, issues not immediately fixable, policy related issues and issues not relevant at all. Based on the template, a monthly action plan was developed to resolve issues within seven days. They worked on all grievances which were fixable at union level and tried to fix within the time limit. If these grievances were not resolved at the Union level, they sent them to the upazila level. upazila GRM team got information of all grievances, but they only acted on those that were fixable at upazila level.

Some issues could not be fixed immediately because of the nature and duration of allocation. For example, one ineligible student got stipend for a certain period, and this irregularity was found later when it was approved centrally. For this, the issue was not resolved immediately, but feedback was provided to follow up. Weaknesses of policy were found in some grievances from the beneficiaries. For instance, the number of VGD cards was not sufficient to cover the need of the beneficiaries, as a result of which many extremely poor and vulnerable people were out of the safety net coverage.

Before each upazila GRM meeting, each union GRM team along with project staff prepared a progress report after compiling the status of previous grievances and the new grievances. They had also submitted the action plan for the upcoming days.





# Chapter 4

## Key Grievance Trends

The government's formal mechanism including online GRS, built-in grievance mechanism of the schemes, and informal system of collecting complaints on the SP programs have not been widely used by the beneficiaries. However, the GRS of MJF created awareness among them to participate in the grievance mechanism. Several channels (such as complaint box, hotline, SA tools, etc.) of complaint collection was developed by the PNGOs to increase accessibility of the community people to the formal grievance mechanism. Thus, GRS captured a good number of complaints on a regular basis. This section presents some key grievance trends in the SP programs based on the data managed by the MJF.

### 4.1 Volume of Grievances

Twelve PNGOs following the GRS process collected 9,145 grievances over the project period of 1.5 years. However, it was found from the concerned project team that the effective period of collecting grievances was not more than 8-10 months. At the beginning, the response from the community was not much, because the different tools of grievance collection such as complaint box, complaint card, hotline, service booth, etc. were not initiated at the same time, rather gradually one after another they were introduced by the PNGOs. Thus all channels took time to be effective in full swing. At the same time, the number of submission of grievances increased when various kinds of awareness programs such as courtyard meeting, SP Fair, circulation of leaflets, etc. took place in the communities. All these grievances were compiled in reports and summary templates by the respective PNGOs.

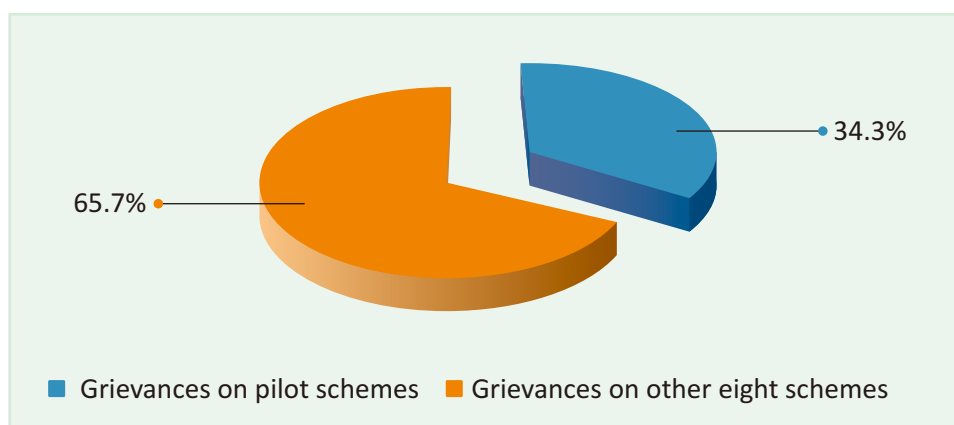
Each NGO had one pilot scheme on which they had key focus, engagement, resolution and reporting mechanism. Moreover, they received grievances on other schemes as spillover effect of their GRS activities. People found them and other platforms at their doorsteps, and thus, they shared with them whatever bad experience they had while getting services of social security programs. Table 4 shows that most of the NGOs had collected a big number of grievances in one pilot scheme and the rest numbers of grievances were collected from other eight schemes. For instance, Puspo Bangladesh received 77.2% grievances on VGD Allowance, and the rest 22.3% grievances on other eight schemes.

The same trend was found in the total number of grievances. Figure 5 illustrates that only one pilot scheme of the NGOs received 35% grievances, and the other eight schemes altogether got 65% grievances. This finding exposes vividly the focus of the individual NGOs. It assumed that if equal emphasis gave to all individual schemes, more number of grievances raised.

**Table 4** Number of Grievances Collected by 12 PNGOs

PNGOs	Key SP scheme for pilot	Number of grievances on pilot scheme		Number of grievances on other schemes		Total number of grievances on all schemes
		Number	%	Number	%	
KF	SSSP	139	16.4	711	83.6	850
DAM	MA	59	10.8	488	89.2	547
Puspo Bangladesh	VG D Allowance	544	77.2	161	22.8	705
COAST Trust	VG D Allowance	251	40.1	375	59.9	626
NRDS	VG D Allowance	282	42.2	387	57.8	669
SKS Foundation	VG D Allowance	610	55.4	491	44.6	1101
INDAB Bangladesh	PESP	87	24.4	269	75.6	356
ASEAB	PESP	275	33.1	557	66.9	832
NDP	OAA	419	42.5	568	57.5	987
AS	AWDDW	231	19.8	933	80.2	1164
Taungya	AWDDW	15	50.0	15	50.0	30
UDDIPAN	AWDDW	225	17.6	1053	82.4	1278
<b>Total</b>		<b>3137</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>6008</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>9145</b>

Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017

**Figure 5** Percentage of Grievances on Pilot and Other Schemes

Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017

## 4.2 Modes of Grievance Collection

Nine modes or tools were used to collect grievances, but all of these were not used by all PNGOs. A variety of reasons were behind this including time constraints, lack of capacity, shortage of resources, management issue, and good responses to few tools used as mentioned by the respondents during field visits.

Table 5 describes the tools or modes used by the PNGOs to gather grievances from the beneficiaries in the implementation areas. Coast Trust used maximum number of tools—eight out of nine, and NDP used the lowest number—two. On an average 5 tools were used by the PNGOs.

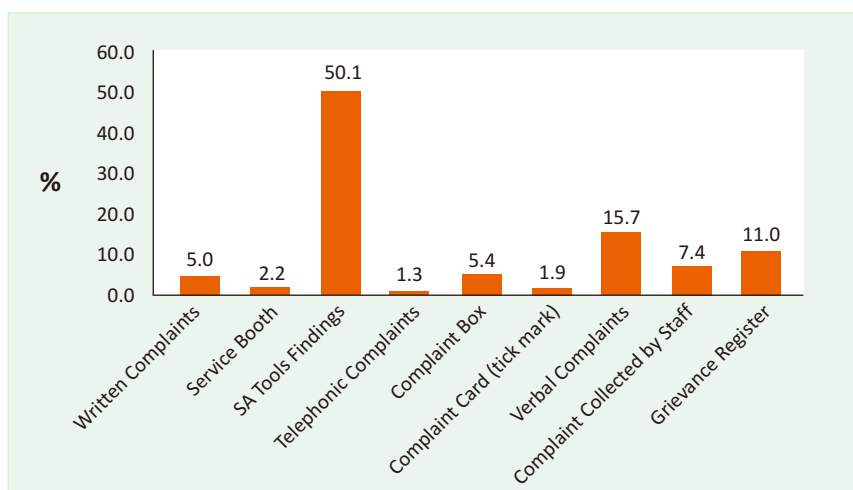
**Table 5** Name and Number of Tools Used by PNGOs

PNGOs	Written complaints	Service Booth	SA Tools Findings	Telephone complaints	Complaint Box	Complaint Card (tick mark)	Verbal	Complaint collected by staff	Complaint collected by Register	No. of tools
KF		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		6
DAM	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		5
Puspo Bangladesh			✓		✓		✓			3
COAST Trust	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	8
NRDS			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	6
SKS Foundation		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	6
INDAB Bangladesh		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		6
ASEAB	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		7
NDP			✓				✓			2
AS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Taungya			✓		✓		✓			4
UDDIPAN		✓	✓						✓	3

Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017

All PNGOs used SA tools findings, as they carried out community score card, social audit and public hearing by engaging community people. These tools encourage and engage massive number of people and they can remain anonymous. Otherwise, a good rapport between the community people and the FSPs and PNGOs was built. As a consequence, the victims or aggrieved people opened up and shared their experiences or grievances with the FSPs and/or

**Figure 6** Percentage of Different Channels of Collating Grievance



\*Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017

PNGOs. Among other tools, service booth, telephone complaints, complaint box, verbal complaints, and complaint collected by staff were quite commonly used. Written complaints and complaint cards were used by only a few.

Even if many tools were used by the PNGOs, only a few were commonly used to collect grievances. Figure 6 tells us that almost 50% of grievances were collected through the SA tools. The second highest percentage of complaints (15.7%) was collected verbally. This is quite a high difference between first and second highest percentages. The third highest percentages, 11.0%, of grievances were collected by the register. However, other channels such as complaint box, complaint card, telephone hotline, service booth were used by only a few aggrieved people.

### **4.3 Category of Grievances**

The piloting initiative on GRS covered nine SP schemes, which are different to a certain extent from each other on type of scheme, type of transfer, mode of transfer, key challenges, opportunities, ministry partner, approval beneficiary list, leadership role at the upazila committee, and type of beneficiaries. Each scheme has its own guidelines and regulatory authority. Accordingly, different types of grievances were found during data collection from the beneficiaries (see Annex I).

The types of beneficiaries of the nine SP Schemes were diverse in terms of age, sex, economic and social condition, physical condition, etc. For instance, beneficiaries of PESP and SSSP are the school-going students, and on the other hand the beneficiaries of OAA are elderly people. Both male and female were receiving some benefits and sometimes one group received one very specific kind of benefit. For example, MA is provided to only pregnant women. This study found different grievances based on the types of beneficiaries.

Grievances were mostly centered at the selection of beneficiaries. The lists of beneficiaries were manipulated out of nepotism, bribe, private gain and partisan consideration. Some grievances were transfer-related: tedious collection process, costs during collecting allowances, long waiting time, hidden cost, and provision of less amount than the allocation. Some were quality of product/transfer related: low quality of food grain, fewer amounts which was not enough to cater to the demand of all family members, lower rate than the market price, etc.

Overall, there was one common grievance –the average target was three times less than the actual need. During field data collection, many poor and vulnerable eligible people were found for different SP schemes who were out of the SP coverage. Reversely, some well off family members were getting SP schemes, who were not eligible for the schemes.

### **4.4 Redress of Grievances**

More than 140 SP Schemes have been implemented in the communities by different ministries/departments in Bangladesh. Among them, complaints of the beneficiaries regarding the following nine SP Schemes were collected through piloting intervention of the PNGOs and usually acted upon through the GRS process. Table 6 demonstrates number of SP Scheme specific grievances and their disposal.

Under the SP Scheme a wide number of complaints were received from beginning of the project to the end. Table 6 also shows the percentage of complaints resolved at which level and what percentage of complaints were carried forward unresolved.

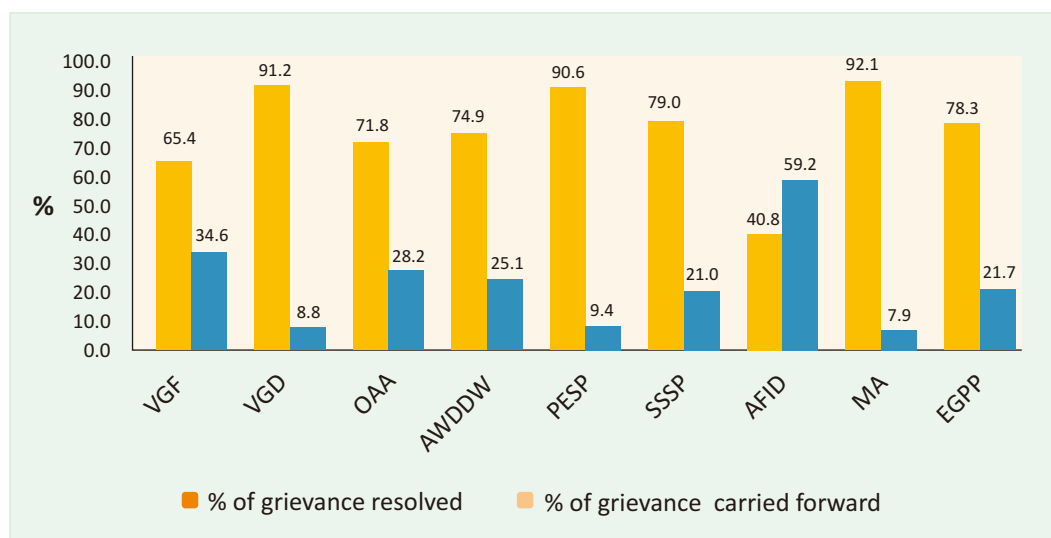
**Table 6** Grievance Resolved from January 2016 to June 2017

SP Scheme	No. of complaints received up to June 2017	Complaints resolved		Carry forwarded complaints (unresolved)	
		No.	%	No.	%
VGF	234	153	65.4	81	34.6
VGD	3327	2915	87.6	412	12.4
OAA	1432	1028	71.8	404	28.2
AWDDW	1281	959	74.9	322	25.1
PESP	524	475	90.6	49	9.4
SSSP	372	294	79.0	78	21.0
AFID	417	170	40.8	247	59.2
MA	813	749	92.1	64	7.9
EGPP	745	583	78.3	162	21.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>9145</b>	<b>7326</b>	<b>80.1</b>	<b>1819</b>	<b>19.9</b>

*\*Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017*

Above 90% of the grievances were resolved in two SP schemes, i.e. PESP and MA. Most of the complaints (3,327) were on the VGD Allowance, of which only 87.6% were resolved. The lowest number of percentages of grievances (40.8%) resolved in AFID. It is evident that in all schemes, most of the grievances were resolved. Thus, on an average 80.1% of complaints were resolved.

**Figure 7** SP Scheme-wise Grievance Redress Status



*Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017*

Grievances were resolved at different levels of the GRS. The reporting format included four levels: UP level, upazila level, referred for policy advocacy and grievances cancelled or not relevant. Table 7 shows that about 84% of the AFID related grievances were resolved at UP level and 5.9% of grievances were resolved at Upazila level. The second and third highest percentages of resolution at UP level (79.6% and 77.9% respectively) were achieved in EGPP and PESP.

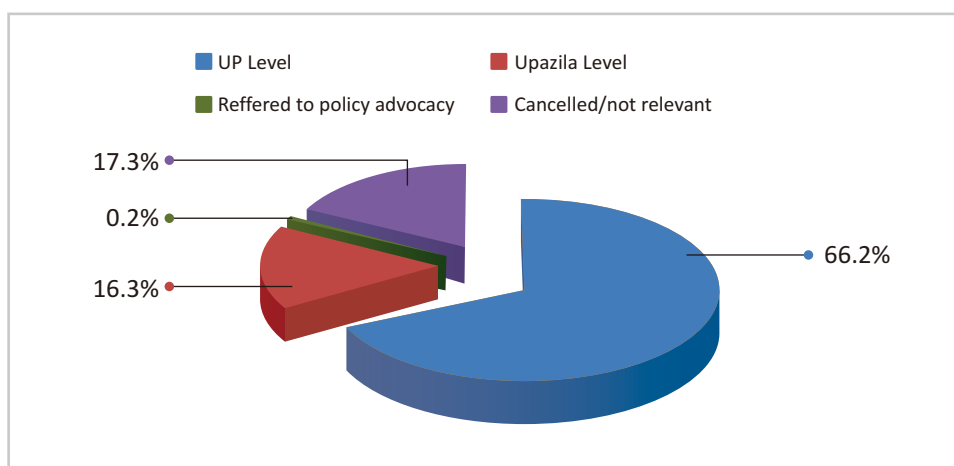
**Table 7** Scheme-wise Complaint Resolution at Different Levels

SP Schemes	No. of complaints resolved	No. of complaint resolved at different levels							
		UP level		Upazila		Referred for policy advocacy		Cancelled/not relevant	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
VGF	153	98	64.0	28	18.3	1	0.7	26	17.0
VGD	3033	2051	70.4	606	20.5	5	0.2	253	8.7
OAA	1028	735	71.5	148	14.4	1	0.1	144	14.0
AWDDW	959	567	59.1	115	12.0	1	0.1	276	28.8
PESP	475	370	77.9	47	9.8	6	1.3	52	11.0
SSSP	294	205	69.7	35	12.0	3	1.0	51	17.3
AFID	170	143	84.1	10	5.9	0	0	17	10.0
MA	749	217	29.0	155	20.7	0	0	377	50.3
EGPP	583	464	79.6	50	8.6	1	0.2	68	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>7326</b>	<b>4850</b>	<b>66.2</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1264</b>	<b>17.3</b>

Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017

On an average 66.2% of grievances was resolved at UP level, 16.3% at upazila level, 0.2% was referred to policy advocacy, and the rest (17.3%) were cancelled due to not having adequate merit (see Figure 8).

**Figure 8** Complaints Resolved at Different Levels



Source: Compilation by MJF Project Team, August 2017



# Chapter 5

## An Analysis on GRS

The previous chapters have mainly described the institutional arrangements, GRS structure, milestones or key achievements, grievance redress procedure and key grievance trends. A good combination of secondary literature and primary data was used to get an overview and statistical output of the GRS implementation by MJF. However, this chapter is designed to analyze the output and outcome of the GRS on whether they addressed real challenges, and brought in positive changes in the lives of the beneficiaries.

### 5.1 GRS as A New Learning

The introduction and implementation of GRS in SP program was a new experience to MJF and the PNGOs. There are sufficient literature on international good practices of GRS in SP programs. Some components and processes of GRS can be found in the programs of some NGOs (such as BRAC, Christian Aid, Help Age International). In the MJF pilot study the literature was reviewed and the piloting initiative on GRS for the SP program was designed. However, the focus, coverage, reporting tools, M&E system, and log frame of the design were revised on the field level realities. In one sense, it was a vivid example of learning by doing. For instance, three SP schemes (VGD, OAA, and EGPP) in three upazilas (Mithapukur, Kazipur and Saghata) were recommended for the GRS pilot, but it was extended widely by covering 9 schemes in 12 Upazilas.

### 5.2 Key Strengths of GRS

The GRS not only resolved grievances but also allowed program management to learn from field grievances in order to further refine program policies of SGSP-civil society component and improve implementation. The study found the following strengths:

#### 5.2.1 Innovativeness and Value Addition

The Cabinet Division of the GoB published the ‘Grievance Redress System Guidelines, 2015’ for bringing discipline in the grievance management in the public services and introduced online GRS. To address public, staff and official grievances, posts of Grievance Redress Officer and Appeal Officer have been created by involving existing human resource of respective departments. One UNO said on its effectiveness:

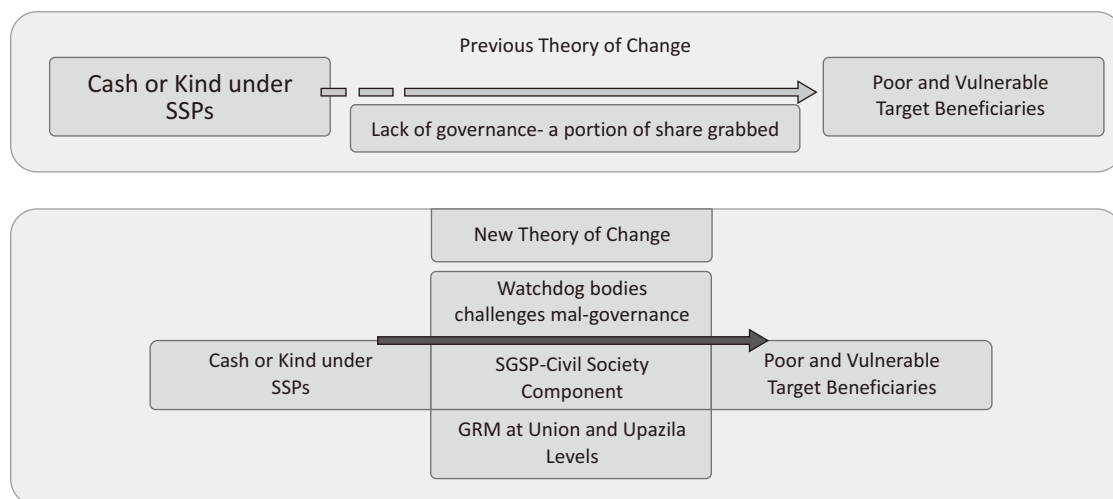
“The online GRS is yet to be implemented. Therefore, the MJF initiative played a catalytic role to support government’s policy and guidelines.”

It is not a new innovation, rather a manual process to habituate beneficiaries to file written grievances before the start of online grievance redress. From the experience of piloting, it can be said that recipients and non-recipients became aware of their rights and were poised to speak out against any malpractices. Earlier they were timid, quiet, shy and unconscious to voice their rights. The program has broken the silence and made them united under the umbrella of GRM.

### 5.2.2 GRS as an Important Component to the New Theory of Change

The poor and the vulnerable in the society need supports in the form of either cash or kind. Therefore, the government allocated Tk. 307.5 billion or 2.3 percent of GDP in the financial year of 2014-15. This huge amount are delivered to beneficiaries through around 145 social security programme managed by 23 line ministries. Thus, it is believed that these supports would protect people's lives. However, in reality, it might not happen because of deficits in governance. In this context, SGSP-Civil Society Component was introduced to enhance transparency and accountability of government social protection programs, where GRS became an important component in the new theory of change. Then the SP program became more effective and efficient.

**Figure 9** GRS as an Important Component to the New Theory of Change



### 5.2.3 Sufficient Preparation to Take Off

MJF in support of development partners took a big challenge to implement it in 60 unions of 12 Upazilas of 12 districts although the pilot suggested to implement GRS on three schemes in three Upazilas. The coverage of services was also widely expanded. As a result, the volume of works for the PNGOs and MJF was incredibly increased. However, MJF was ready for that; they had very nice take off planning along with sufficient financial strength. MJF demonstrated a strong commitment to invest and continuously strengthen the GRS. Consequently, 1,604 public

officials, local government representatives, PNGO staff were trained at BARD, an exposure visit to India took place, and 60 union level and 12 Upazila level GRM Committees were formed.

On the other hand, the PNGOs responded to the revision of the project very positively and took associated challenges at field levels. These were possible due to good planning, huge investment, assessment of the value for money, efficient management and effective communication and coordination. It was possible for the PNGOs because they found a highly motivated GRS staff.

#### **5.2.4 Involvement of Civil Society (Voluntarism and Ownership)**

The unquestionable ownership and spirit of voluntarism were found when the local government bodies, and FSPs were approached for the formation of GRM Committees at union and upazila levels. Without their commitment and timely response, a large number of grievances could not be collected and resolved (Please see annex III: Stakeholder-specific performance and assessment.) Moreover, they want to remain with the FSPs and GRMs in future, as the project was phased out. They said,

*“Due to the activism of FSPs and GRM Committees, people became aware of their rights and started to raise their voices against different anomalies of service providers. Thus, phasing out of the project would miss out the achievements to flourish.”*

Some of them said that they would try their level best to support the community people in this cause.

#### **5.2.5 Cooperation from Local Administration and Local Government**

At the beginning of GRS, PNGO project staff were not welcomed by the local administration and the local government. They were at first indifferent, and treated them as competitors. Accordingly they along with official records were not accessible for the PNGO staff. However, the scenario changed abruptly when many of them took part in the training at BARD and some of them went to India for an exposure visit on GRS. Moreover, the presence of ministers, parliamentarians and bureaucrats in the national level seminar and roundtables, and their commitment towards effective implementation of the GRS as a supplementary initiative to support government's online GRS brought changes in their attitude and behavior.

At local level, parliamentarians and DC and high level government officials attended seminars and roundtable discussions. Their commitment and positive messages convinced local level administrators to take part in the GRS. In spite of the fact that they asked for the government order or directive from their parent ministries, continuous efforts for rapport building and showing examples of good practices by the project staff persuaded them to be cooperative. After all, their continuous support had tremendous positive impact on the redress of grievances. In another way, beneficiaries observed that earlier regulators became to some extent facilitators for protecting their rights (Please see annex III: Stakeholder-specific performance and assessment.)



*Dr. Tofail Ahmed, Director, MJF; Mr. Salahuddin Mahmud, Former DG, BARD Mr. N M Ziaul Alam, Secretary - Coordination and reforms, Cabinet Division; Mr. Hasanuzzaman Kollol, DC of Comilla.*

### 5.2.6 Pro-Community

The bottom-up approach and research-based advocacy were installed in the GRS implementation by MJF. Different awareness tools such as courtyard meeting, ward meeting, SP fair, video projection, community radio broadcasting, distribution of leaflet, etc. were used for building awareness and SA tools used for gathering authentic data. These tools of community engagement played an effective role to gather grievances.

### 5.2.7 Specific Portfolio at Upazila Parishad

Before piloting the GRS, there was no specific portfolio for collecting, filing and resolving grievances. The Union and Upazila FSP resolved grievances on personal capacity and networks. The piloting initiative of GRS created an institutionalized platform when some UNOs allocated a space at Upazila Parishad premise. MJF provided furniture, computers, mobile phone to equip the office.

### 5.2.8 Visibility of the Program

The project output was quite visible in four upazilas surveyed. Posters, billboards, complaint boxes, key messages, citizen's charters, and other IEC materials on GRS were made available. A good number of GRM Committee members were contacted and made available for the FGD and in-depth interviews. UNOs, Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members of Upazila and Union Parishads commended the program for its impact on the community. After all, the rate of grievance collection and resolution reflects the visibility of the program.



*A women affairs officer receiving certificate from DG, BARD, Comilla after parting training on GRS*

### 5.2.9 Sustainability

The End of Project Evaluation mentioned that:

*“The project had had a strong impact on raising voice, accountability and local capacity in 111 unions and municipalities where the project was implemented. This impact may be sustained after the end of the project because activities relied on volunteers and was integrated into the structure local administration.”*

However, the FSPs and GRM Committees are not discharging their earlier duties anymore. Some FSP members are still involved in grievance management in an isolated manner only for their personal networks and capacity. On the other hand, the structure of the FSPs and GRM Committees at the union and upazila levels no more exists. Besides, the GRS project duration was not long. So the platforms were not matured and time-tested.

### 5.2.10 Accountability

The union GRM was accountable to the upazila GRM. Thus the compiled grievances in summary template were placed to the upazila GRM for their information as well as decision. Though local service delivery departments and local government representatives were together in the upazila GRM, and they had different line ministries to report, they set a functional accountability mechanism and worked under the leadership of UNOs.



### 5.2.11 Transparency

The GRS was popularly circulated to a wider audience – beneficiaries, citizens, civil society members, government officials, local government representatives, and the media – starting from the local level to the national level. The GRS was effective at the union level through union GRM Committees as well as at the national level through involvement of technical committee of government's online GRS.

### 5.2.12 Confidentiality

In the grievance collection procedures, there were some effective channels used to hide the identity of the complainants. Some complainants wanted to hide their names and identity because of fear to be victimized. Thus, strict confidentiality was maintained throughout the process.

## 5.3 Effectiveness, Gaps and Challenges of the Channels for Grievance Collection

The process and procedure of different channels of grievance collection have been described in earlier sections. The effectiveness and gaps of them are analyzed in Table 8.

*A participant asking questions in a public hearing meeting*





**Table 8** Assessment of the Tools Used for Grievance Collection

Sl. No.	Tools of Collecting Grievance	Effectiveness	Gaps	Challenges
1	Written Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A tool to collect grievances in a proper manner</li> <li>Used to get more authentic feedback from the community</li> <li>Initiation to change the common informal practice</li> <li>Grievances started to be lodged in this way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only a few PNGOs used this tool</li> <li>Lack of clarity about this tool among the PNGOs</li> <li>Less orientation to the citizens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People were less interested to write their grievances because of fear</li> <li>Fear of being exposed and victimized by the other (alleged) party</li> <li>Many of the beneficiaries were not literate</li> <li>People are not habituated to write</li> <li>Weak governance and support system in favor of complainant</li> <li>Acceptability of verbal grievances was deterrent to written complaints</li> </ul>
2	Service Booth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A channel close to the beneficiaries</li> <li>Grievances started to be lodged in this way</li> <li>Almost half of the PNGOs used this tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of circulation of information</li> <li>Lack of manpower to cater queries of the beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only for raising issues before the service booth beneficiaries were not interested</li> <li>People want to get instant service or redress to their grievances</li> </ul>
3	SA Tools Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face interaction</li> <li>Rapport building helped to open us</li> <li>Popularly used</li> <li>A big number of grievances collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of understanding and capacity of the PNGOs</li> <li>Long duration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tendency of sweeping comments on the available service</li> </ul>
4	Telephone Complaints/hotline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People started to use this new tool</li> <li>Simple and accessible</li> <li>All PNGOs used this tool</li> <li>Grievances started to be raised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of orientation</li> <li>Lack of circulation of information</li> <li>Lack of research to increase the number of callers</li> <li>Lack of registering skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costly for the beneficiaries</li> <li>Difficult to articulate and bring coherence of facts while having conversation over phone</li> <li>Availability and response of the Call Receiver</li> </ul>

Sl. No.	Tools of Collecting Grievance	Effectiveness	Gaps	Challenges
5	Complaint Box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boxes placed at common and visible places</li> <li>It was opened on regular basis</li> <li>Initiation to change the common informal practice</li> <li>Grievances started to be raised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of circulation of information</li> <li>Necessary steps to encourage people to write and their grievances into the box were not taken widely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People were less interested to write their grievances because of fear</li> <li>Fear of exposed and victimization by the other (alleged) party</li> <li>Many of the beneficiaries were not literate</li> <li>People are not habituated to write</li> <li>Acceptability of verbal grievances was deterrent to written complaints</li> </ul>
6	Complaint Card (Tick mark)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People started to use this new and innovative tool</li> <li>Simple and easy to use</li> <li>Cards were distributed by the PNGOs and FSPs and encouraged people to tick mark</li> <li>Major grievances were written on the nature of SP schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A specific design of the card was not given to PNGOs</li> <li>More flexibility of the PNGOs to use tools</li> <li>Problems of preparing contents of the cards</li> <li>Only two PNGOs used this</li> <li>Less number of grievances collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People were less interested to write their grievances because of fear</li> <li>Acceptability of verbal grievances was deterrent to written complaints</li> </ul>
7	Verbal Complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very simple and conventional way</li> <li>Quick feedback from the beneficiaries</li> <li>Huge response from beneficiaries irrespective of age, sex and education</li> <li>People were comfortable</li> <li>A good number of grievances collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absent of any specific format to register verbal complaints</li> <li>Many verbal complaints were not proceeded further for lack of merits</li> <li>Lack of equal understanding by the PNGOs</li> <li>Lack of any specific M&amp;E tool to assess the quality of the tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sweeping comments</li> <li>Acceptability of verbal grievances was deterrent to institutionalize formal system of written grievances</li> </ul>
8	Complaint collected by Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal and official interaction with the community people</li> <li>People were comfortable to talk and describe the details of grievances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absent of any specific format to register verbal complaints</li> <li>Absent of any specific instruction and orientation to the PNGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement of the PNGO staff increased to the project works of grievance collection</li> <li>Deterrent to make the formal channels popular</li> </ul>

Sl. No.	Tools of Collecting Grievance	Effectiveness	Gaps	Challenges
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy and simple way</li> <li>• A good number of grievances collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of equal understanding by the PNGOs</li> <li>• Lack of any specific M&amp;E tool to assess the quality of the tool</li> <li>• Overlapping between verbal complaints and this</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling of insecurity of the beneficiaries</li> </ul>
9	Complaint collected by Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the formal grievance mechanisms</li> <li>• People willing to disclose their identities while filing grievances</li> <li>• A good number of grievances collected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of any specific format for all PNGO</li> <li>• Absence of any specific instruction and orientation to the PNGOs</li> <li>• Lack of equal understanding by the PNGOs</li> <li>• Lack of any specific M&amp;E tool to assess the quality of the tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People not willing to register and sign</li> <li>• Fear to be victimized</li> <li>• Doubt in positive results discourages them to file grievance</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Effectiveness and Gaps of GRS Processes at Union and Upazila Levels

The findings show that 66% and 17% grievances were resolved at Union and Upazila levels. Major reasons behind the Union level successes include, among others, the activism of GRM Committees and other supporting actors such as UFSP and PNGOs, and introduction of different channels of grievance collection.

The GRS processes started at union level through the GRM Committees. They received full cooperation of the UFSP members and PNGO project staff. The union GRM Committees and UFSP were very close to the target people. They became also well known to them for their voluntarism and ownership of the program. In addition, they actively participated in different types of awareness campaign such as SP Fair, ward meeting as well as different tools of grievance collection such as conduction of community score card, social audit, etc. For this reason, people started to accept them as their well-wishers and to share their grievances. Being part of the community, they contributed to keep the demand side vocal. On the other side, many of them were well reputed and had a very good connection with the service providers of SP schemes. The public official (Tag Officer or representative from MoSW) at the GRM Committee at Union level had regulatory authority to intervene in the grievance resolution. Thus, the grievances whenever raised at the Ward or Union levels were recorded but necessary actions first came from the Union GRM Committees. They sent the grievance to the upazila level for immediate action when they failed to resolve it.

The Union GRM was established as an effective GRS, indeed. Still it has some gaps:

- Regular participation of the members could not be ensured.
- They had over dependence on the PNGO project staff and their guidance.
- Sometimes qualification of the GRM Committee members was not properly assessed during selection.
- Lack of skills to form an institutionalized platform for grievance mechanism.

The upazila GRS Committee led by the UNO was the main responsible for all kinds of grievances. In reality, they had limited time and focus to look into all grievances. All union GRM Committees submitted summary templates of the grievances in the upazila GRM Committee meetings. Nevertheless, the key issues and unresolved grievances were only discussed for quick responses of the UNO. The UNO played a coordinating role among all government and non-government bodies, and as a result the presence of UNOs in the GRM Committee had a tremendous impact on the GRS both at upazila and union levels. On the other hand, it became a UNO-centric body. Other members received less priority to give opinions on the grievance issues. Getting time of UNOs was a big challenge. After several times of communication, meetings were settled and conducted. The meetings were mostly short although they were held at a regular interval. Some of the UNOs were quite friendly and generous to the GRS while some were not. UNOs at the beginning of the GRS were not supportive at all. They became accessible for the PNGOs after some of them had received training at BARD and gone to India for an exposure visit.

It is evident that without the involvement of UNOs, intervention on GRS would not bring success at the upazila level. Thus the GRS would be more thriving, if the UNOs could have been engaged

at the very beginning. For this, they should have been involved in the GRS by a Government Order from their own ministry.

## 5.5 Comparison between GRS and Non-GRS Areas

A brief comparison between the context of the Beneficiaries of GRS and Non-GRS areas has been derived from the interview responses of the field survey.

**Table 9** Comparison Between GRS and Non-GRS Areas

	GRS Areas	Non-GRS Areas
Types of Survey Areas	Union	Union and Municipality
Types of Respondents	Recipient of SSPs	Recipients of SSPs
Types of Beneficiaries	VGF, VGD, OAA, AWDDW, PESP, SSSP, AFID, MA, EGPP	VGD, AWDDW, VGF, OAA, MA
Types of Complaints	Target/allocation, selection of beneficiaries, transfer, quality of product, replacement	Target/allocation, selection of beneficiaries, transfer, quality of product, replacement, who to complain
SP related Awareness Program	Yes	Yes
Existence of GRM	Yes	No
Direct involvement of Local Government and Public Officials in GM	Yes	No
Who to complain	FSP and GRM	No
Systematic way of grievance redress	Yes	No
Filing written complaints	Yes	No
Frequency of receiving complaints	High	Low
Frequency of resolving complaints	High	Low
Satisfaction over the engagement of communities	High	Low
Reasons of community satisfaction	High visibility of the changes in their lives	Low visibility of the changes in their lives

The above comparison exhibits clear differences of the GRS and non-GRS areas in delivering social security schemes. Overall the introduction of the SP related projects had tremendous impact on the lives of the poor and the disadvantaged. However, piloting GRS in few locations brought new momentum in filing complaints and their resolution. Thus, this was an effective addition to promoting transparency and accountability of the service providers and to ensure rights of the target people. From the responses, it is evident that frequencies of collecting and resolving grievances in the non-GRS areas were low, so the satisfaction over the engagement of communities (only presence of FSP, not GRM) in the grievance management was moderate. After assessing the difference between the services in the GRS and Non-GRS areas, the Beneficiary Respondents have appealed to introduce the GRM in their areas, so that they can get more organized and systematic grievance redress system.





# Chapter 6



*Cabinet Secretary (Coordination & Reforms); Additional Secretary, Social Welfare Ministry and relevantdesk officials of the Cabinet Division, MOWCA, MoSW, a2i, DC's Comilla and Habiganj and NFSP members were present in a policy discussion on inclusion of social security program's complaints into online GRS*

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The piloting initiative of GRS was successfully implemented in the project areas. This brought dynamism in the functions of the government offices. A well-coordinated relationship among different government organizations, Local Government, civil society and community people broadened the scope and excellence of pro-people service delivery. They also upheld people's confidence and trust on public officials, and established an effective internal system of preventing corruption and other irregularities. In addition, they established a platform for better service delivery for the poor and the vulnerable and initiated a speedy, time-bound and easy system of grievance redress. Above all, a process of institutional integrity and social justice was initiated and level of satisfaction to the public service was elevated.

Though it was a short-lived project, it had substantive impact on the community and other concerned stakeholders. Moreover, it challenged a traditional system where poor and vulnerable people kept themselves silent on claiming their rights, and established a manual system of grievance management that started to persuade them speaking out when deprived of rights. It was a beginning of behavioral and mindset change of the community people and the service providers who attended several types of awareness programs. The formation of GRM Committees by involving all concerned stakeholders of the service delivery of SP programs was an innovation to build a platform where the service receivers and the service providers

interacted openly on the mutual interest for enhancing transparency and accountability of the government SP system.

Deducting the take-off time and closing time, the real implementation time was 8-10 months although it was 18-month project. Some of the respondents (FSP members and project staff) opined that: When the project made an enabling environment for the service providers and service receivers to work together for achieving the objective of the project, at that time it was closed.

So sustainability of the project cannot be ensured. The spirit of voluntarism and ownership of the community people showing up for a short period could not keep the project live after phasing out the project. Thus, all the stakeholders demanded for an extension of the project in a wider scale and volume throughout the country.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations for MJF

The earlier chapters depict impressive results as well as outcome of the GRS on the lives of SP beneficiaries, mostly at the rural areas. In the spirit of continuous improvements and lesson learnt, several areas have been identified that could further improve the GRS, if again replicated.

1. Good Planning: With the experience of GRS implementation, focus, objectives, coverage, log frame, and result matrix should be developed before implementation of a new project.
2. Capacity building on GRS: All project staff and GRM Committee members should be imparted a rigorous training by using ready training manuals and guidelines before or immediately after the project implementation.
3. Development of M&E System: A well-structured M&E, documentation and reporting system should be developed and project staff would get orientation on them at the very beginning of the project implementation. In addition, all the forms, formats and tools of M&E should be encouraged to follow.
4. Clarity of Grievance Generating Channels: All kind of tools or channels for generating grievances should be well defined, self-explanatory and simple to use. To support them, specific guidelines for all tools should be formulated. Along with the development of the tools, orientation of the tools to the PNGO project staff and FSP members should be considered as key priority of GRS implementation. All the PNGOs have to take decision at the beginning of the project implementation on which tools they will use for generating grievance and how they will develop the tools.
5. Combining Awareness Program with GRS: Without massive awareness program by the FSP members at different tiers, the GRS implementation could not bring success in the communities. Therefore, the platform of FSP should be created as part of the GRS.
6. Replication on other Service Delivery Institution: Piloting initiatives on GRS made an example of good practice in public service delivery. This experience can be replicable to other service delivery institution, as the nature and magnitude of governance challenges are almost same to those of SP Programs.

7. Use of RTI and Citizens Charter: There were many grievances of the beneficiaries related to the unavailability of information, or manipulation of information on entitlements of SP schemes. On the other hand, people are not used to practising RTI. Therefore, the governance in the service delivery can be improved by popular use of RTI. The community has to be made aware of RTI, so that they will start demanding for information. In addition, citizens' charters should be brief and readable, and the community should be encouraged to follow citizens' charters for their rights and entitlements.

### **Recommendations for the Government**

The policy makers of the government especially the Cabinet Division participated in the workshops of MJF actively and provided their insightful recommendations, and in some aspects, committed to implement some of the recommendations. In light of the recommendations, the study proposed the following for the concerned government ministries:

8. Partnership between the government and civil society organizations: The government officials including upazila nirbahi officer, upazila social service officer, upazila women affairs officer, etc. should be engaged in the GRS on the government order. Then they will own the project and will be more accessible. They will engage themselves more as well.
9. The government has to take necessary efforts to popularize and to make the currently implementing Online GRS functional. In addition, offline/multimodal manual approaches of GRS should be introduced to receive maximum complaints.
  - 9.1 Considering the beneficiary of SP programs, need to create a 'Separate Button' for 'Social Security Grievance Redress' in the online GRS dashboard and establish system to make it more user-friendly. At present without help of a literate person a beneficiary cannot submit her grievance. So the manual approach of GRS will be useful for them also.
  - 9.2 Need to develop user friendly Mobile Apps for lodging complaints.
  - 9.3 Need to raise mass awareness on the use of online GRS.
10. In order for reducing time elapse, grievances receiving and redressing points should be closure to the community, as the study revealed the union and upazila level grievance redressing points were effective.
  - 10.1 Establish grassroots level administrative tier/link for redressing social security grievance.
11. The study revealed that the GRM committee comprised jointly of public officers and civil society members was effective. So the review of grievances should be made by a committee, instead of one person, for establishing an organized, accountable and transparent grievance redress system.
12. A common guideline for all of the social security programs should be developed to assess the grievances properly.
13. According to the NSSS, LGD is the crosscutting agency for grievance redress but no mechanism is proposed on how it will be done and the process will be updated. For this, specific direction should be given to the relevant ministry and the department and administration.
14. Role of NGOs is mentioned in the beneficiary selection, helping grievance redress and disputes relating to the implementation of NSSS. An Implementation Plan is required for its effectiveness.



## Reference

1. Auay Asia Ltd (2017) “End of Project Evaluation – Enhancing Accountability and Transparency of Government Social Protection Systems for Manusher Jonno Foundation,” Manusher Jonno Foundation.
2. BARD and Manusher Jonno Foundation (2017), “*Ovijog Nispottir Maddhomay Samajik Surokkha Karjokromay Sushashoner Protistha Bishoyok Proshikkhon Sohayika*” (Training Manual on Establishing Governance in the Social Protection Programs through GRS).
3. GoB (2011), “Report on Grievance Redress System in Line Ministries”
4. GoB (2015), “*Grievance Redress System Guidelines, 2015*”.
5. GoB (2015) “*National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh*”
6. Manusher Jonno Foundation (2016) “*Six Monthly Progress Report January-June 2016 – Enhancing Accountability and Transparency of Government Social Protection System-SGSP- Civil Society Component*”.
7. Manusher Jonno Foundation (2017) “*Six Monthly Progress Report July-December 2016 – Enhancing Accountability and Transparency of Government Social Protection System-SGSP- Civil Society Component*”.
8. Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir (2014), *Social Protection Interventions in Bangladesh: Key Challenges and Way Forward for Enhancing Food Security*, Dhaka: Unnayan Onneshan.
9. MJF (2016) Baseline Survey of the Project on ‘*Enhancing Accountability and Transparency of Government Social Protection System in Bangladesh (SGSP-Civil Society Component)*’, Conducted by Research Evaluation Associates for Development Ltd. (READ).
10. Selina Shelley (2015) ‘*Piloting a Grievance Mechanism for Government of Bangladesh’s social Protection Programs*,’ Manusher Jonno Foundation.
11. The World Bank (2014), *Case Study Grievance Redress System of the Conditional Cash Transfer Program in the Philippines*.



# ANNEXURE





# ANNEX I: TYPES OF GRIEVANCES RAISED ON SP PROGRAMS

SP Schemes	Brief description of complaints
VGF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection criteria of beneficiary were not followed. Out of total complaints, 25% was erroneous, such as service holders, small businessmen were enlisted.</li> <li>• 95% respondent said that there was no announcement / miking for beneficiary selection during the selection period.</li> <li>• 89% claimed that they have received 3-6 KG less than the allocated VGF food grains</li> <li>• All of complaints claimed that the quality of VGF rice was not good</li> <li>• The VGD selection process used to prioritize the political beneficiaries</li> </ul>
VGD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double or multiple dipping to other SSPs.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries lived in one place but received allowance from another place.</li> <li>• Around 40% of the beneficiaries came to know the selection criteria after their entitlements;</li> <li>• 90% complaints about political nepotism in beneficiary selection, 13% VGD card distributed among family member of UP representatives.</li> <li>• 62.5% recipients said selection information was not disclosed in the UP notice board;</li> <li>• 18.75 % recipients told they paid bribe Tk. 2500-3000 taka to the local political leaders to avail the VGD benefit;</li> <li>• 20% of recipients told that, they are receiving benefit in a sewed sack but they get less amount of rice. They said some people of the local food office use 'Bonga' to reduce the rice;</li> <li>• 2% beneficiaries received training.</li> <li>• Most of the beneficiaries reported that usually they receive 3- 5 KG less than the allocated rice showing a contribution transportation cost;</li> <li>• In some cases food grains of VGD distributed among two or more recipients.</li> <li>• There was no meeting conducted at ward level during beneficiary selection and selection processes were not done by proper way.</li> <li>• Final list of beneficiaries were not found on the UP notice board.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries had to pay Tk. 10 to Tk. 20 for each bag in some unions.</li> <li>• Allocated budget for rice transport is poor.</li> <li>• The UP elected representative opined that they did not get the transportation cost in time. They have to pay unauthorized payment in various stages of the collection of food grains. Earlier they collected this money by selling sacks. Apart, sometimes they received sacks with less weight rice from local LSD office.</li> </ul>
OAA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% of beneficiaries found who were from well-off Beneficiaries. For example, one beneficiary has a son living in foreign country for a long time, has a well condition of brick-built house, land property, also has other family members in service.</li> <li>• A good number of complaints found on multiple receive of SSPs.</li> <li>• In many cases, beneficiaries had to give money on an average paid Tk. 1136 (roughly Tk. 2000 – Tk. 3000) to include their names in the list to the male ward member and in some cases to the female ward members too for their enlistment.</li> <li>• 86% of the complaints that they did not informed any open announcement before selection of OAA.</li> </ul>

SP Schemes	Brief description of complaints
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On average each complaint mentioned about 3 persons whom they consider as eligible, but did not get the allowance.</li> <li>• There were selection errors in terms of applying age bar; 18% of the males beneficiaries were selected below 65 years of age and 12% of the female beneficiaries were selected below the age of 62 years. 3% of the beneficiaries were selected from among those having land more than 50 decimals. However, 69% of the non recipients applied for the allowance.</li> <li>• Lots of problems were faced by the beneficiaries in some unions during withdrawing allowances. For instance, distribution place was far from the UP office, long waiting time in queue during distribution, unavailability of seating places, etc.</li> <li>• Beneficiary selection was dominated by political identity of the beneficiaries, 50% of cards have been allocated on political consideration.</li> <li>• After death of the beneficiary, grandchild of the beneficiary was receiving the allowance.</li> <li>• Deceptive receipt of allowance by fake OAA beneficiaries.</li> <li>• Nominee's photo of 20 % beneficiaries was not included in the cards.</li> <li>• There was a huge number of old age allowance seekers in the community, but many of them did not have proper date of birth in their national identity cards.</li> <li>• The beneficiaries travel 5.2 kilometers (km) on average to withdraw money from the bank. 91.3 % percent beneficiaries expend an average of Tk. 48 for travelling and Tk. 41 for food.</li> <li>• Bank deducted BDT 20-50 from the beneficiaries for including new page on 'vata boi' and during disbursement.</li> </ul>
AWDDW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were 1281 number of complaints received, out of them 959 were resolved.</li> <li>• 82 % complaints that there was no open publicity before selection process.</li> <li>• 95 complaints they received less amount of Tk. 1800 instead of Tk. 3000. The rest amount was embezzled by one UP member.</li> <li>• 100 % complaints they had to wait around 3-4 hours in front of bank to withdraw the allowance.</li> <li>• Nepotisms and political influences were common scenario for beneficiary selection.</li> <li>• 2% complaints received that beneficiaries are none eligible considering their marital status.</li> <li>• 1.5% had been receiving allowance for 5 years after re-marriage and living in another place with family.</li> <li>• 4% complaints that they paid on average Tk. 1352 (minimum Tk. 200 and maximum Tk. 3000) as bribes to the Local elected representatives mostly to the male ward members for their enlistment.</li> <li>• One complaint that she gave Tk. 3000 for getting an allowance card to a respective up representative, but she did not get a card.</li> <li>• Some unknown/fake names found in the list of AWDDW.</li> <li>• Bank officials collected Tk. 20 – Tk. 50 from each beneficiary during allowance disbursement.</li> <li>• Bank Officials took Tk. 100 from each beneficiary for adding/attaching new page at the end of closing the pass book.</li> </ul>
PESP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15% -20% targeting error found. Students of some well-off family receiving stipend whereas the some students of destitute family do not get the stipend.</li> <li>• At Sujanagar Upazila, a total of 13 social audits conducted to observe the situation of</li> </ul>

SP Schemes	Brief description of complaints
	<p>the primary education school stipend program (PESP). Out of total 412 beneficiaries, 51 reported that they did not know the selection criteria, and 54 respondents said the school authority deducted money amount 10-20 taka from their per month stipend amount.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Jamalgonj sadar UP, there are huge discrepancies found while disbursing PESP money. None of the interviewed guardian (n=119) asked to the authority about the money deduction. Despite of having good result in the annual exam a total of 115 guardians did not inform about cancelling their children's stipend. 58 respondents reported that the students used to give their signature prior to 7 days of stipend disbursement. Relevant government officials are reluctant to staying during disbursement.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries used to wait around 4 to 5 hours during stipend withdrawal.</li> <li>• Few school distributed new books among the students, after getting Tk. 40 from every student for annual sports. But they did not provide any receipt for the amount.</li> <li>• Less amount received as education stipend</li> <li>• Nepotism in beneficiary selection.</li> </ul>
SSSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15% -20% targeting error found.</li> <li>• Many students of poor family were excluded due to existing selection process. Selection was held during studies in class five at the end of the year. Primary school teachers did not cooperate with their outgoing students during the selection period.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries had to spend TK. 20 – 50 for receiving stipend.</li> <li>• In case if any students were not attending school on the day of distribution, then she had no opportunity to receive the stipend for that period.</li> <li>• A good number (17%) of complaints, married students received benefit.</li> <li>• Nepotism in selection process. SMC and teachers misused their authority to list the beneficiary students for the stipend.</li> <li>• Due to mobile banking problem (where it has been introduced), some students did not receive stipend amount. There was no problem solving mechanism.</li> <li>• After circulation of SSSP distribution through mobile banking system, there was no coordination among the DBBL, school, Upazila Education Office and beneficiaries.</li> <li>• School authority set up the pin code of mobile account and was rigid to give it to the guardians.</li> <li>• School authority deducted class wise ranging Tk. 50-100 from each stipend receiving student on distribution time for Bank Officers and Upazila Education Officers related to stipend distribution process.</li> </ul>
AFID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enlisted beneficiaries were not receiving money on due time.</li> <li>• Bank officials deducted money Tk. 800 – Tk. 1000 from the beneficiaries whom relatives were defaulters of the bank.</li> <li>• In some LGUs, beneficiaries had to pay around Tk. 1000 – 4000 as bribe to the elected representatives and political leaders for their enlistment.</li> <li>• Beneficiary selection was dominated by the political identity of the beneficiaries.</li> <li>• By violating selection criteria, disabled persons from rich families were receiving allowance, instead of poor and ultra-poor disabled.</li> <li>• Union Social Worker/Bank Officer took Tk. 100 from each beneficiary for adding/attaching new page at the end of closing the pass book.</li> </ul>

SP Schemes	Brief description of complaints
MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 749 complaints resolved on Maternity Allowance</li> <li>• About 94 (12.5%) complaints that beneficiaries were selected from well-off families.</li> <li>• 10-13% beneficiaries are non-eligible considering marital status and having children as well. Some beneficiaries having more than 2 children and economically sound were getting the benefit.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries are subjected to force payment of money to be enlisted.</li> <li>• Kind inputs like cows, houses etc (Swapna package) were not delivered timely.</li> </ul>
EGPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% listed beneficiaries never worked, but they received money by political consideration. Ghost beneficiaries were found on papers and these wages grasped by the respective service providers.</li> <li>• 10% beneficiaries found who are receiving wages without doing any work through political quota (Barisal).</li> <li>• UP body excavated for their own interest, but they made payment from this EGPP support.</li> <li>• Nepotism in beneficiary selection, UP members listed their family members' names who never worked but received EGEP allowance.</li> <li>• Double or multiple dipping</li> <li>• Beneficiaries had to pay kickback to UP representatives and Project Implementation Office</li> <li>• Beneficiaries worked for 38 days and got payment for those days, but attendance sheets shown 40 days of their work.</li> <li>• Bank officials deducted money amount of taka 800-1000 from beneficiaries</li> <li>• Beneficiaries received Tk. 150- 160 instead of Tk. 175 of daily wage.</li> <li>• Laborers were not remunerated on time after finishing their work.</li> <li>• At least 25% labors did not get Job cards</li> <li>• Non-wage cost fund not utilized for proper way.</li> <li>• Sometimes wages distribution by hand cash not by bank account</li> <li>• Irregular monitoring of authority</li> </ul>

## ANNEX II: AN OVERVIEW OF SELECTED SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS

No.	Name of the Program	Year of Starting	Selection Criteria	Coverage & benefit
<b>Cash Transfers</b>				
1	Old Age Allowance	In 1998 under the Ministry of Social Welfare, The Department of Social Services	<p>i. Age limit:  - Male: 65 or more years of age  - Female: 62 or more years of age  ii. Average annual income of beneficiaries must below Tk. 10,000  iii. Holding agriculture land less than 0.5 acre  iv. Priority must be given to the widow, divorced women, husband deserted women</p>	<p>Coverage: 3,500,000 beneficiaries  Benefit: Monthly allowance of Tk. 600 for whole lifetime</p>
2	Allowances for the Widowed, Destitute and Deserted Women	In 1999-2000 under the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Department of Social Services	<p>i. Allowance recipient must be the citizen of Bangladesh.  ii. Priority must be given to the widow, divorced women, husband deserted women.  iii. Priority must be given to the wealth less, homeless and landless, respectively.  iv. Allowance recipient must have annual income not over Tk. 12000.00.  v. Allowance recipient must have the National Identity Card/ Birth Registration Certificate.  vi. Recipient must be the resident of the concerned local area.  vii. Recipient must be selected by the concerned committee.  viii. agriculture land less than .5 acre</p> <p><b>Non- Eligibility:</b>  i. Pension holder of the Government Service will not be eligible to get the said allowance.</p>	<p>Coverage: 1,270,000 beneficiaries  Benefit: Monthly allowance of Tk. 600 for whole lifetime</p>



No.	Name of the Program	Year of Starting	Selection Criteria	Coverage & benefit
<b>Cash Transfers</b>				
3	Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled (AFID)	In 2005-06 under the Ministry of Social Welfare, The Department of Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. VGD Card holders will not be eligible to get the said allowance.</li> <li>iii. Those who get regular grant or Allowance from the government will not be eligible to get the said allowance.</li> <li>iv. Those who get regular grant or Allowance from the Non-government agencies will not be eligible to get the said allowance.</li> </ul> <p>Allowance recipient must be the citizen of Bangladesh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Allowance recipient must be the registered from District Social Welfare Office according to Disability Welfare Act 2001</li> <li>iii. Allowance recipient must have annual income not over Tk. 36000.00</li> <li>iv. Priority must be given to the disadvantaged disabled</li> <li>v. Must have the age of 6 years and above</li> <li>vi. Recipient must be selected by the concerned committee</li> </ul>	<p>Coverage: 825,000 beneficiaries</p> <p>Benefit: Monthly allowance of Tk. 700 for whole lifetime</p>
<b>Conditional Cash Transfers</b>				
4	Primary Education Stipend Program (PESP)	January 2003 Implemented by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Belong to a landless or near landless household (one that owns less than half an acre of land)</li> <li>ii. Have parents who work as day labourers</li> <li>iii. Belong to a female-headed household (one where the head is widowed, separated, or divorced or where the husband is disabled)</li> <li>iv. Belong to a household that derives its living from fishing, pottery, weaving, blacksmithing, or cobbling)</li> <li>v. Belong to a household that derives its living from - Sharecropping</li> </ul> <p>Households with supporting more than 5 million pupils, qualifying pupils must attend school 85 percent of the time</p>	Tk. 100 per month for one child (about US\$ 1.76) and Tk. 125 per month for more than one child

No.	Name of the Program	Year of Starting	Selection Criteria	Coverage & benefit
5	Secondary School Stipend Program (SSSP)	Began as an experiment in 1982 by a local NGO in a single Upazila with USAID financial assistance under the supervision of the Asia Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Attend school for at least 75 percent of the days of the school year</li> <li>ii. Occupied land less than 50 decimal</li> <li>iii. Guardian's annual income less than Tk. 30,000</li> <li>iv. Priority should be given to orphan, freedom fighters' children, disabled, river eroded, day labour</li> <li>v. Secure marks in annual exam</li> </ul>	<p>Provides free tuition, yearly book allowance, and public examination fees and stipends to all eligible female secondary school students enrolled in recognized institutions outside the metropolitan areas.</p> <p>The rate of the stipend varies from Tk. 150/month – Tk. 360/month based on the class of study</p>
6	Maternity Allowance Program for the Poor Lactating Mothers (MA)	In 2007-08 under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	<p>To be an eligible recipient, a rural mother is required to meet at least four of the following criteria, including the first two mandatory requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Pregnant with her first or second child</li> <li>ii. At least 20 years of age</li> <li>iii. Total household income of less than Tk. 1500 (less than \$20)</li> <li>iv. Poor mother of a female headed household</li> <li>v. Poor mother with a disability</li> <li>vi. Not occupying agricultural land</li> <li>vii. Not occupying productive assets, such as agricultural land, livestock, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Coverage: 600,000 beneficiaries</p> <p>Benefit: Monthly allowance of Tk. 500</p>
Public works or training based cash or in kind transfer (employment generation and community development through cash/in kind transfer)				
7	Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) i. Income generating VGD (IGVD), and	The starting year of VGD is 1975, implemented by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Less than 15 decimals of land</li> <li>ii. VGD aims to reach ultra-poor rural women with complementary inputs that will improve their nutrition and enhance their livelihoods and self-reliance</li> </ul>	7.5 lac distressed and ultra poor women have been receiving food assistance and training.

No.	Name of the Program	Year of Starting	Selection Criteria	Coverage & benefit
<b>Cash Transfers</b>				
	ii. Food security VGD (FSVGD)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. Poor sanitation an housing is poor</li> <li>iv. Irregular income/day laborer</li> <li>v. Female headed family</li> <li>vi. Absence of male income source or other income source</li> <li>vii. Age must be between 18 to 40</li> <li>viii. Not selected as beneficiary in the last VGD cycle</li> </ul>	<p>30 kg of Atta/ rice (flour) per month.</p> <p>Over 24 months, the VGD assistance package includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fortified wheat flour or rice to offset the opportunity costs of participating in training programs and to improve nutrition</li> <li>- training in health and nutrition, civil and legal rights, literacy and numeracy, HIV awareness and prevention measures, child trafficking, budget management, and income-generating</li> </ul>
8	Employment Generation Program for the Extreme Poor Program (EGP P)	September 2008, implemented by Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The poorest and jobless poor</li> <li>ii. Age between 18 to 60 years</li> <li>iii. Less than 0.10 acre agricultural land</li> <li>iv. Monthly average income less than Tk. 4,000</li> <li>v. Unemployed and unskilled (one male/ female from each family)</li> <li>vi. 33% female beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<p>To increase the purchasing power of extreme poor rural people, create wealth both for the people and the nation and to develop and maintain small scale rural infrastructure and communication system by providing employment to extreme poor rural unemployed people.</p>

No.	Name of the Program	Year of Starting	Selection Criteria	Coverage & benefit
<b>Cash Transfers</b>				
				Benefit: employment generation for 2 seasons (80 days employment) (per day Tk. 175 and Tk. 25 savings)
<b>Emergency or Seasonal Relief</b>				
9	Vulnerable Group Feeding		i. Daily labour, irregular income source ii. Less than 0.15 acre agricultural land iii. Spouse of disabled person iv. Male/female of climate affected areas	Coverage: 85 lac person-month Benefit: It varies

\* Source: Source: Collected from Baseline Survey of the Project on Enhancing Accountability and Transparency of Government Social Protection System in Bangladesh (MJF 2016), updated on 2017

## ANNEX III: STAKEHOLDER-SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE AND ASSESSMENT

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
Roles and Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They involved in raising awareness, facilitating SA tools, conducting courtyard meeting, ward meeting, dialogues with LGU and different types of campaigns at the local level</li> <li>They encouraged to submit written complaints, guided to use the complaint cards, collected complaints in writing or verbally, and attended advocacy meeting at Union and Upazila level stakeholders</li> <li>In consultation with Union GRM members, many grievances they resolved on their personal capacity for having good networks and linkages with the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though there was no specific government order to UNOs to become GRM Chair, but having importance, they owned the project</li> <li>UNOs, being Chair of Upazila GRM, convened Upazila GRM members in monthly (or as per quarterly plan of the PNGOs) coordination meeting</li> <li>Compiled and collated grievances were discussed in the meeting and then given specific decision to resolve the grievances.</li> <li>On the grievance management, they met with concerned departments and LEBs and discussed on how to resolve the issues.</li> <li>On specific complaints, they sent representatives such as, social service officers or WDOs, etc. to verify the complaints</li> <li>Attended workshops, roundtables and awareness programs under the GRM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended monthly meeting of FSP, Social Gathering, Dialogues, Awareness meeting, Day observation, Public hearing, and cultural program, arranged by PNGOs</li> <li>Engaged in the grievances management</li> <li>Attended Upazila coordination meeting</li> <li>Presided over Union GRM Committee</li> <li>Coordinated with government and other stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They participated in the monthly (or as per quarterly plan of PNGOs) meeting of GRM.</li> <li>Participated in different dialogues, awareness meeting, social protection fair, coordination meeting, SA tools at the Union and Upazila Levels.</li> <li>Worked to resolve grievances of the Beneficiaries related to their respective line ministries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation of GRM at Union and Upazila Levels</li> <li>Development of IEC Materials and Dissemination</li> <li>GRM Information Billboard installation</li> <li>Provision of Logistics to set up GRM Office at Upazila Premise</li> <li>Installation of Complaints Box at UP Office and other key points</li> <li>Communication and logistics support to massive number of trainees at BARD</li> <li>Regular meeting, dialogues and awareness campaign</li> <li>GRM meeting at Union and Upazila levels</li> <li>District roundtable meeting</li> <li>Hotline through mobile Phone and its operation</li> </ul>

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
	<p>service providing agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Union level registered complaints were sent to Upazila level GRM Committee, if these were not solved at the Union level.</li> </ul>				
Number of Grievances addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSP members were involved in all grievances filed and resolved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNOs could not specify how many complaints they addressed and resolved.</li> <li>They discussed all compiled and collated complaints raised in the Union GRMs.</li> <li>Over phone and other communication, some of the complaints were resolved.</li> <li>In some complex cases, they issued letters to the concerned departments and LEBs.</li> <li>Sometimes one decision was equally applicable to same grievance from all Unions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The directly contributed to resolve grievances, but they could not tell the specific numbers.</li> <li>After learning about the grievances from different occasions, whatever they were informed about the grievances from the Beneficiaries, they tried to</li> <li>They mentioned that the total achievement of the PNGOs was possible partly for their contribution and active involvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They could not tell the number of grievances they resolved.</li> <li>Whenever any grievances they learnt from the GRM, they tried to resolve.</li> <li>In some cases, grievances were not resolved for the power structure and procedural complexity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They collected almost 9000 complaints.</li> <li>The rate of resolution is high (almost 90%).</li> </ul>
Interaction and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular coordination meeting</li> <li>Interaction with PNGOs, GRM and government officials and other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement of UNOs in GRM</li> <li>PNGOs had continuous efforts to organize Upazila GRM meeting</li> <li>PNGOs compiled grievances and submitted to the GRM at Upazila level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly coordination meeting, Self-roles</li> <li>Different kinds of activities of the PNGOs brought all stakeholders into one table</li> <li>Upazila GRM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly meeting on Upazila GRM</li> <li>Different kinds of meeting and dialogues organized by PNGOs</li> <li>Whatever complaints filed or raised verbally in their jurisdiction, they</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PNGOs were in the center of all interaction and coordination</li> <li>They facilitated all kinds of interactions of FSP and GRM</li> <li>FSP were the frontrunner but were received all logistics and financial support from PNGOs</li> </ul>



Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
	<p>stakeholders on regular basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of UNOs in GRM</li> <li>• A very good working relation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the guidance of UNOs, all government officers, LEBs, and PNGOs worked together</li> </ul>	<p>Committee meeting helped to sit with UNO and other government offices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through UP Secretary who was the Chair of Union GRM</li> </ul>	<p>maintained official formality and communicated with their concerned seniors for taking action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their senior officials invited in some roundtable meetings of the PNGOs</li> </ul>	
Contribution /Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established rights of the poor and helpless people</li> <li>• Made poor people aware of their rights</li> <li>• Resolved problems and grievances of the beneficiaries</li> <li>• Formed a strong institutional platform for establishing rights of the poor people</li> <li>• People are praising FSP members' works</li> <li>• Voluntary works have been socially recognized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributed to the beneficiaries for making them aware of their rights</li> <li>• Made the UP level public representatives more responsible to their jobs, and to play a strong role on stopping irregularities</li> <li>• Through resolving grievances, rights and entitlements of the poor and old people, helpless women, young students were ensured and corrupt people were forced to stop irregularities, and sometimes brought to justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributed to form an institutionalized platform for establishing rights of the poor and helpless</li> <li>• Beneficiaries have become aware about the social protection schemes and have learnt how to speak out and to file complaints</li> <li>• Corruption of UP members, and government officials has been reduced</li> <li>• Corruption issues were discussed publicly</li> <li>• This project made the LEBs more accountable.</li> <li>• Learnt a wide variety of getting citizens' feedback on the government service delivery.</li> </ul>	<p>Public awareness was developed and rights of beneficiaries were established</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A platform close to the Beneficiaries was formed</li> <li>• It contributed to resolve grievances of the Beneficiaries and to establish their rights</li> <li>• This GO-NGO partnership is ultimately helping them to achieve the objective of the SSNPs</li> <li>• The joint collaboration brought a qualitative change in the service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged local elites and civil society who were helpful to implement the program on voluntary basis</li> <li>• FSPs' involvement in the project helped to implement the project</li> <li>• Contributed to make the community people aware of their rights</li> <li>• Institutional platform was established</li> <li>• Public response on the program was excellent</li> <li>• An enabling environment was created for effective dialogue</li> </ul>

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
Opinion on end of project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have started to face challenges and irregularities for phasing out the project</li> <li>It would be better, if the project can be continued some more time to eradicate social viruses</li> <li>If this project would continue more 3-4 years, transparency of UP would come back and corruption stopped</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was not good to stop the project.</li> <li>It would have much impact, if it were continuing.</li> <li>More campaign to aware people is necessary.</li> <li>GRS is in the policies and guidelines of the government and GRS especially online GRS is applicable to all departments and ministries, but it has not been effectively implemented.</li> <li>Piloting of GRM on the social protection schemes by MJF was a supplementary initiative to the government's GRS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the project would continue, the poor and helpless would be benefited from it</li> <li>Local government representatives could have been under pressure and monitoring of the local community stakeholders including FSP</li> <li>It is a continuous process to correct the system. Within one year, the changes in the system cannot be sustained.</li> <li>The intervention was yet to bring full transparency at the Union level. Long way to go.</li> <li>A good image of the local government would be established, if the program is continued.</li> <li>As the monitoring of FSP is stopped after phasing out the project, incidence of corruption or irregularities may be increased.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local government Representatives were under pressure for that program, because they are in the center of all irregularities and corruption on the social security programs.</li> <li>The program created some sorts of fear among the LEBs that some platforms were observing their misdeeds. So phasing out the program caused harm on the changed status quo in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When all investment was made to create a field of work then the project was ended.</li> <li>The impact of the project could be high, if it were implemented for some more years.</li> <li>On the current context of field arrangement, the project needs to be extended widely.</li> <li>If it runs for some more time, the poor will not be deprived.</li> <li>Reforms in the delivery of social security programs will be a continuous process</li> <li>The platform which was created for the project to demand rights by the beneficiaries may be broken in immediate future</li> </ul>

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
Evaluation of the Initiatives of PNGOs and MJF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The roles of MJF and PNGOs should be highly commended, because their effort brought lights in the lives of darkness of the poor people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was a good initiative of MJF and PNGOs.</li> <li>They did excellent job with utmost cordiality and sincerity.</li> <li>The PNGOs were so much proactive.</li> <li>Sometimes UNO could not get time for GRM meeting, but the NGOs had several efforts to get time of UNO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PNGOs were active, transparent and accountable at the field level.</li> <li>MJF, and PNGOs worked cordially and conscientiously.</li> <li>The initial stage of the PNGO was a bit slow in performance and implementation.</li> <li>FSPs and GRM at Union and Upazila levels were formed, but all the bodies were not functional.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MJF and PNGOs tried the utmost to implement the program at field levels</li> <li>They had very good coordination to bring local government, local administration and civil society together</li> <li>They need to be more dynamic and built ownership while implementing such program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GRM piloting got less time in reality – first few months for taking off (training, procurement, etc.) and last few months for wrapping up (reporting, etc.)</li> <li>First few months, PNGOs faced challenges for operationalizing the GRM</li> <li>Piloting of GRM in all project areas was not early planned – faced challenges</li> <li>PNGOs were committed to deliver their utmost</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partisan and political influence deterred to select right beneficiaries</li> <li>The beneficiaries kept their complaints confidential because of fear of the influential</li> <li>LEBs considered FSP members as their opponents and did not support to their works</li> <li>Less accessibility to the government offices at Upazila level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beneficiaries were not much aware of filing written complaints. So few written complaints came to the UNOs</li> <li>UNO is not sufficiently empowered to ensure governance in the GRM</li> <li>Equality, equity and justice can never be ensured while listing of the beneficiaries</li> <li>Beneficiaries try to manipulate the system for getting additional benefits</li> <li>Lack of awareness of the people</li> <li>Transfer of UNOs</li> <li>Sometimes allegation of corruption and irregularities against senior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political pressure to enlist the beneficiaries</li> <li>Allocation is only 10% against the need</li> <li>A section of the non-eligible people try to get benefits using their maximum means</li> <li>Bribery and other irregularities behind the selection of the beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political pressure or party pressure and Nepotism are determining factors to select beneficiaries</li> <li>Beneficiaries were frightened to speak up against the irregularities of members and Chairman of UP</li> <li>Hiding real information of the Beneficiaries and made false Beneficiaries to embezzle cash or kind</li> <li>Lack of resources for frequent visit to wide jurisdiction including remote places</li> <li>UP Chairman, members, some political leaders,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public offices and LEBs finding the project staff as competitors extended less support to them</li> <li>Working area of FSP was quite large</li> <li>Inconsistent information from the deprived beneficiaries</li> <li>Nepotism and Political influence on the selection of Beneficiaries</li> <li>Written evidence asked by the public officials on the grievances</li> <li>Lack of skill development training of the project staff.</li> <li>Lack of money in the budget of the project</li> </ul>

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders				Project Staff of PNGOs
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threats from partisan people when the works challenged their status quo</li> <li>Fake beneficiaries were enlisted, which was difficult to find out</li> </ul>	<p>government officials, senior political leaders, Upazila Chairman and members were not resolved</p>		<p>and middlemen received money from the beneficiaries for helping them to get cards</p>	
Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five year extension of the project</li> <li>The budget was poor, so when it will be extended to five years, then the budget should be increased more</li> <li>One office at Union level for FSP would be helpful to work more efficiently</li> <li>Skill development training should be given to all the people related to this project</li> <li>Necessary measures should be taken to value the works of FSP</li> <li>FSP at ward level should be formed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project should be continued</li> <li>Upazila administration should be engaged properly</li> <li>Training on Morality and ethics should be given to LEBs</li> <li>More coordination between local administration and PNGOs</li> <li>Transparency of PNGO activities should be ensured</li> <li>Database of the beneficiaries should be established in all Unions by using NID</li> <li>Manpower of the PNGO should be increased</li> <li>Government circular is necessary for the UNOs and government officials to be engaged</li> <li>One set up with a dedicated staff member under the GRM should be formed at all Upazilas</li> <li>One umbrella</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manpower of the project should be increased, if it is extended.</li> <li>Need to increase public hearing, dialogue meeting because these were good system to get people's feedback on social security programs.</li> <li>The project has to be extended widely to all unions of Bangladesh.</li> <li>A strong monitoring should be established in the project.</li> <li>Union Parishad should be involved more closed with this project.</li> <li>Rigorous training should be given to the NGO staff so that they can implement their responsibilities more efficiently.</li> <li>Allocation has to be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program should be extended to 3 more years.</li> <li>The program should be publicized more widely, through media and community campaign.</li> <li>Need to include government officials and employees more closely in this project by official order.</li> <li>Need to strengthen the monitoring system of this activity and make the program staff more dynamic.</li> <li>Local leaders should be aware of good governance and governance of the SSNPs.</li> <li>Mass gathering should be arranged more frequently to inform citizens about their rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every government department should be more supportive to the works on SSNPs.</li> <li>The project needs to be extended for 5 years more along with more working areas.</li> <li>Good governance training to the UP Chairman and members should be arranged.</li> <li>In all unions of the implementing district the project should be implemented.</li> <li>Relation between development partners and implementing agencies (PNGOs) should be continuous.</li> <li>Honorarium and other benefit package of the staff members should be increased to retain qualified staff at the local levels.</li> <li>Government circular should</li> </ul>

Key Indicators of Assessment	Key Stakeholders			
	FSP Members	UNO	Local Government Representative	Public Officials (PIOs, SSOs, WAOs)
		<p>ministry/wing (say, Social Protection Wing) can be formed under which all social security programs will be handled and monitored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerned wing or ministry should be independent. Phone calls or any kind of lobbying should not be honoured.</li> <li>If UNO is considered as Chair of GRM, then s/he should be given power and authority to deliver his/her job properly.</li> <li>Awareness messages on social security programs should be broadcasted in the TV media.</li> </ul>	<p>increased so that left out people can be served.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Database of real beneficiaries at the Union level should be prepared.</li> <li>Budget of the extended program should be increased.</li> <li>Ownership of the project by the PNGOs should be built first before implementing at the field level.</li> <li>Wide campaign to make people informed about the rights of SSNPs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UP Chairman and members should be made accountable through strict monitoring.</li> <li>Monitoring of the NGO activity should be ensured.</li> <li>Institutional reform or policy reform clues for up GRS need to place here. How Government GRS can be supplemented through the pilot initiatives, need to incorporate here.</li> </ul>
				<p>be given to the LEBs and the government officials (including UNO and other officials from different departments) so that they can be supportive to the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement with the civil society on the program implementation should be increased.</li> <li>Coordination and networking among the Government, local government, and NGO should be increased for the better implementation.</li> <li>More IEC materials should be disseminated at the field level as part of mass campaign.</li> </ul>

Source: Data Collection from the Field under the Final Review, 2017

## ANNEX IV: CASE STORIES

### Case 1

#### **Mabia getting a life changing card by the efforts of GRM Committee**

Mabia Beoya (70) lived at Village Chardorta, Nishchintapur Union of Kazipur Upazila, Sirajganj. After the death of her husband in 2008, she had tried several times to get an OAA-card from the UP. But she was not enlisted. At last, one UP Member received her photo and NID card in July 2012. Eventually, an OAA card was issued to her name in October 2012, but the UP Member did not provide her the card.

In June 2016, the President of Nishchintapur UFSP went to her house for conducting a Social Audit on OAA. At that moment, she told him the details of her struggle and subsequently submitted a written complaint to the President. The President presented the fact to the GRM Committee and planned to cross check with the Nishchintapur UP OAA list. After the verification, the Committee found that Mabilia's name had been in the list since October 2012. The UP Member, who took Mabilia's photo and NID, tempered the card to manipulate the entitlements.

As per GRM decision, the UFSP President submitted an application and the OAA list showing Mabilia's name to the UP Chairman and the Upazila Social Service Officer for further investigation and handing over the card to the real beneficiary. After getting the application, the officer investigated the matter and found Mabilia as a real beneficiary. In October 2016, the officer sat with UP member, FSP members and the beneficiary and informed them the decision to handover the OAA card to Mabilia.

After getting the card, Mabilia Beoya became very happy and expressed her gratitude to NDP, FSP President and the GRM Committee.



*Mabilia after getting OAA card*



## GRM Committee contributed to promote **Asful's** rights



*Asful Beoya after getting OAA Card*

Asful Beoya (69) is living at Village Charpanagari of Nishchintapur Union under Kazipur Upazila, Sirajganj. Her husband died in 2012. Then she started living with her daughter's house. After the death of her husband, she tried several times to get an OAA card with the help of the UP-Member. But she was not enlisted. At one moment, the UP Member of her ward received her photo and NID card in October 2014. Accordingly an OAA card was issued against her name in June 2015, but the UP Member did not give her the card.

In the meantime, the Nishchintapur UFSP arranged an awareness raising meeting on OAA in her village. She attended the meeting and became aware of the rules and regulations of social security services. At that moment, she told her deprivation to the UFSP President and submitted a written grievance. The president presented her fact to the GRM Committee and requested to cross check the UP OAA list. After the scrutiny, the committee found that Asful's name had been in the list since June 2015.

After that as per GRM decision, the President wrote a letter to the UP Chairman and Upazila Social Service Officer for an investigation and handover the card to the real beneficiary. After getting the application, the Officer ordered the field supervisor to conduct an investigation. The investigation found that Asful was the real beneficiary.

After investigation, the Upazila Social Service Officer and Field Supervisor met with UP Members, FSP members and handed over the card to Asful in September 2016. After getting the OAA card, Asful Beoya was so happy and expressed her gratitude to the UFSP President and GRM Committee.

### Case 3

## GRM Committee backed to get due benefits of a deceased beneficiary

Md. Abul Kasem lived in the Vetimeokhola Village under Maizbari Union, Kazipur Upazila, Sirajganj. He was an OAA- beneficiary. His card no was 375 and his Sonali Bank Account no. 18994. When he was extremely sick for his old age complication, was unable to go to the bank for withdrawing his OAA benefits. Eventually, he sent his son Md. Chand Miah as a nominee. However, concerned bank officer did not provide him the allowance without the presence of the beneficiary.

Afterwards, Kasem died in July 2016. After his death, Chand went to the Bank again to withdraw the dues of his father. This time he was again refused. In addition, the Bank Officer marked his father's OAA Book with red pen marking that the beneficiary died. Then, Chand tried several times to withdrawn the allowance from the bank but every time he failed. Even he did not get any support from the UP members, when he informed them the matter.

Mst. Reshma Khatun, a member of the UPSF, went to the house of late Md. Abul Kasem for home visit as a daily routine work. At that moment, Ameron Beoya, wife of Kasem, told about her grievance in detail. Reshma presented the fact to the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Committee meeting. The meeting decided that they would issue an application to the UP Chairman and Upazila Social Services Officer, and accordingly communicate with Union Social Worker and Sonali Bank Officer.

After these measures, Sonali Bank Cashier crosschecked the official documents and found that ten months residual money accumulated in the name of Md. Abul Kasem. At last, the Cashier provided Tk. 3,900 to Md. Chand Miah on 22/02/2017. They are very happy after getting the OAA money.

## GRM committee ensured Rahima Khatun's OAA



*Application of Rahima Khatun  
for OAA*

Rahima Khatun was a 75 years old helpless poor widow. She was also physically ill. She lived with her younger son who was also poor. She was an OAA- beneficiary, but she could not withdraw her allowance because she did not have the book with her. She shared this with a neighbor living in the Nilkanthapur Village, 7 no. Joynagar Union under Kalaroa Upazila, Satkhira. The person then verbally submitted her grievance to the union GRM committee that someone was withdrawing her OAA. The committee decided that they would investigate the grievance. Part of investigation two UFSP members went to Rahima's house. They learnt that many days ago former UP Member collected a photocopy of her NID and a photo for her OAA. But after some days, the Member told her that her beneficiary status was cancelled. She did not inquire about her allowance for a long time. After few months, someone informed her that she was in the list

and someone was withdrawing OAA on her behalf.

If she would get the amount from the government, it would help her to survive. So the UFSP discussed the aforesaid grievance with the UP Chairman, the Secretary and the concerned Member. The Chairman expressed his displeasure on the former member. Then the Chairman wrote an application to the Upazila Social Service Officer. On the other hand, a grievance was submitted to the Upazila GRM Committee in June 2016 for solving the problem. The upazila GRM Committee assigned Upazila Social Services Office to redress the grievance. They repeatedly took time to solve the grievance. Due to persistent communication, the Office informed that they would prepare a new book for Rahima and she would get her OAA from the next phase.

Accordingly, they issued a new book for Rahima and gave it to her and advised Kolaroa Sonali Bank to include Rahima Khatun in the beneficiary list.

## Case 5

### Three **Old Women** got AWDDW Card after 4 years



*Morium Khatun*



*Laily Khatun*



*Monowara Khatun*

Four years ago, one Ward Councilor of Sujanagar Municipality took NID cards of three women for awarding them widow allowance. They were Mst. Morium Khatun from Char Sujanagar, Mst. Laily Khatun and Mst. Monowara Khatun from Manikdi. They were later selected as the beneficiaries of widow allowance for 2013-14. However, they were not informed about their enlistment.

The Municipality Forum for Social Protection (FSP) conducted a Social Audit on 17.10.2016 and explored that these beneficiaries were enlisted for AWDDW. The project also arranged a dialogue on 27.10.2016 that was attended by the Upazila Social officials Officer, concerned bank officials and the Mayor of Sujanagar Municipality. At the dialogue, Municipality FSP members arranged a meeting between the Mayor and the deprived beneficiaries. The Mayor asked them some questions to learn about the validity of the matter. Moreover, the Mayor wanted to know who was graving the allowances on their behalf. The FSP members revealed their identity who were also poor and helpless women awarded by the former Ward Councilor. The Mayor promised that he would take initiatives to return the card to the beneficiaries.

After that, Mayor arranged a meeting with the Upazila Social Service Officer and representatives of ASEAB on 10.11.2016 for this purpose and discussed the matter with the officer to persuade him to award three more cards. On 21.12.2016, the officer attended a dialogue where he announced that Morium Khatun, Laily Khatun and Monowara Khatun would get the benefits from the next month. On the other hand, the beneficiaries who had been enjoying benefits in their place would continue getting the benefits as new beneficiaries.

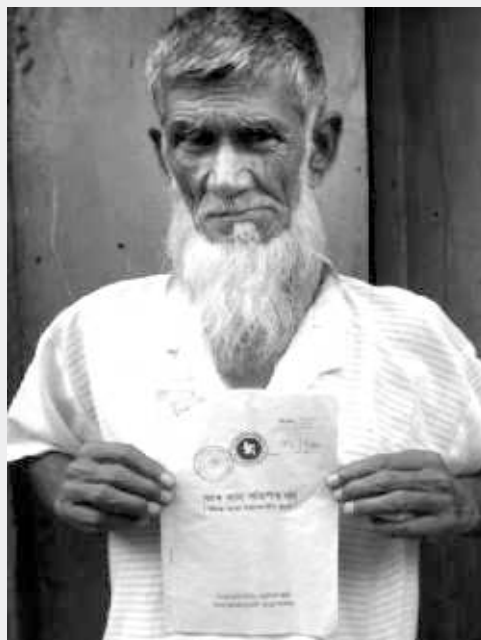
Though the irregularities of the Ward Councilor were not brought under accountability, but three deprived old women received their benefits at last. The Mayor finally praised ASEAB for identifying the anomalies in the distribution of social protection services and bringing them to the fore.

## Bacchu Sheik finally got the card of survival

Bacchu Sheik lived in Jharabarsha Village of Ghuridaha Union under Saghata Upazila, Gaibandha. He was 70 years old. He was a day laborer. He had a son and three daughters. He married off all of his children. He along with his wife were living separately from his son and daughters. He had only two decimal homestead land. He could not work regularly because of his frail body. His wife was working in other's house through which they maintain their meagerly life.

In 2014, OAA beneficiary selection of this union was done through a public assembly in presence of the Upazila Chairman, UNO- and UP- Chairman. During selection process, Bacchu was primarily short listed and the committee took his NID card. Two years had passed since then, but he did not receive the card. For the card, he had knocked the UP Member and Chairman several times. At the end, being highly frustrated he stopped knocking them.

In the meantime, he was informed that UFSP in his union was working for ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation of social security programs. Once he contacted a member of the UFSP and told his miseries. The member raised the matter at the UFSP meeting. As per meeting decision, the President and the Secretary of UFSP requested the Upazila Chairman and Upazila Social Service Officer to issue him a card. Finally, Bacchu Sheik got the card in July 2016. He was elated getting the card.



*Bacchu Sheik holding OAA Card*

## The GRM Committee successfully cancelled a fake OAA card

Anjera Khatun lived in Char Doctor Village under Char Alexander Union of Ramgati Upazila, Lakshmipur. She was a poor woman. She had only five decimal homestead land. Sudden death of her husband left her helpless. Then she lived hand to mouth. Several old age diseases also engulfed her. Eventually, she died in 2010. The OAA had been a panacea to meet basic needs during her lifetime.

As per policy, the nominee of a deceased would be the legal inherit of receiving OAA for three months after the death of the beneficiary. But some fishing act took place afterwards. A relative of Anjera changed her picture furtively with the help of local administration and attached a picture of his aunt. Through this process, the relative received her benefits for 6 years.

By this time, the UFSP and the GRM Committee were formed and made functional at the community. While members of UFSP were conducting a social audit at community level, they learned about the malpractice. The legal nominee of Anjera lodged a complaint to the Union GRM Committee on 19 October 2016. After receiving the complaint, the GRM Committee conducted an investigation to verify the matter further. The union GRM Committee shared the matter with upazila GRM Committee headed by UNO-.

The upazila GRM Committee sent the complaint to the Upazila Social Service Officer to solve the complaint. The officer sent a notice to the relative, but he did not respond. At one stage, the Officer sent a message to him that if he would like to receive the OAA, he would need to receive a new book. Then, he came to receive the new book. The Officer immediately seized his book. The Officer also interrogated him with many questions. Then the relative confessed his wrong doing. The Officer, then, canceled his allowance. Afterwards, a new beneficiary was selected from the waiting list. Thus, the matter was resolved.

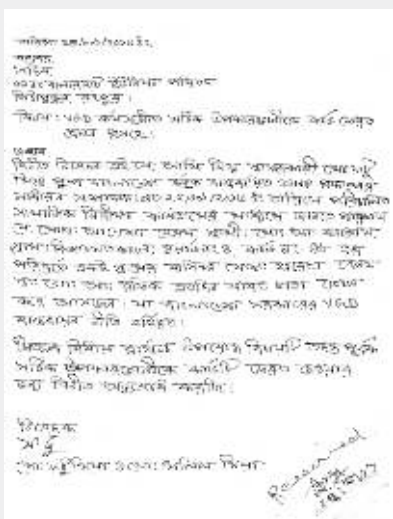


## Case 8

### Ayesha Begum received her VGD card after 21 months



*UFSP member Golam Rabbani handing over the VGD Card to Ayesha Begum*



*Application to UP Chairman by Union Facilitator on Grievance Redress*

The UFSP, established by PUSPO Bangladesh, arranged a Social Audit on VGD program in Koyermari village (04 no Ward) under Balarhat Union, Mithapukur Upazila, Rangpur. They collected a list of beneficiary names and their addresses. During Social Audit, they identified that Ayesha Begum was a beneficiary, but she was not found in the list. Then the Committee knocked former UP- Member responsible for the selection of VGD beneficiaries. The Member replied that real Ayesha Begum w/o: Md. Abul Kashem was living in Kishamotkale, another village beside Koyermari. The Audit Team visited the village and identified Ayesha who was also a vulnerable and marginalized woman.

Due to corruption of the UP Member and biasness of the selection committee, she did not receive the VGD card. The most interesting thing was that another woman named Mst. Harecha Begum w/o: Md. Abdul Rafique was enjoying the allowance for the last 21 months despite being solvent. The former Member allotted the card by taking bribe of Tk. 4500.

In this circumstance, the UFSP discussed the matter with the UP chairman and requested PUSPO Bangladesh to arrange a union dialogue and kept an agenda of illegal possession of VGD card. At the meeting held on 25/09/2016, the UP Chairman committed to return the card to Ayesha effective from 26/09/2016. She was thankful to PUSPO Bangladesh for establishing the Forum for realizing their rights.

## Collusion prevented and VGD Skill Development Training Imparted



*Daily JugerAlo, a local newspaper, published a news on this issue.*

Mithapukur Upazila. On 1 October 2016, a news on the training published in the local Newspaper 'Daily Juger Alo'. Thus the corruption was prevented and beneficiaries were given the skill development training only for effective roles played by the UFSP.

The UFSP established by PUSPO Bangladesh conducted Social Audits and Local Government Unit (LGU) level dialogues in all 8 working unions of Mithapukur Upazila, Rangpur. After the dialogue sessions, they found some grievances relating to VGD program. A local NGO, responsible for imparting training for skill development of VGD beneficiaries, did not organize the scheduled trainings. The NGO and concerned government officials were in collusion to grab the money allocated for the training. The UFSP members noticed the corruption and brought it before the UP- Chairman and discussed in the GRM Committee. They investigated the allegations.

On the advice of GRM, the UFSP facilitated a LGU dialogue with the presence of the UP Chairman, Members and local NGO representatives where the decision of the training was taken. They took the beneficiary list and found that 1,117 VGD beneficiaries were interested to receive the training. After the dialogue, the UFSP members followed up the decision as well. Finally, the local NGO imparted life skill development training to 1,117 VGD beneficiaries of 8 unions of

## Case 10

### Orecha Begum got back her VGD card



*Orecha Begum holding VGD Card is delighted*

In July 2016, PUSPO Bangladesh conducted a Social Audit in Madarpur Village of Ranipukur Union, Mithapukur Upazila, Rangpur. The Social Audit Team noticed that Mst. Mahmuda Begum had been receiving different allowance for last ten years. Over a long period of time, her economic condition had been improved and she was living a solvent life. Her social and economic status did not comply with the VGD beneficiary selection criteria. The Team was informed that she got the card in place of Orecha Begum, Book No. 100/2, Husband's name: Md. Elias Ali. She got the card managing the selection committee and UP representatives. Thus Orecha Begum, a poor woman, was deprived of the VGD card due to the malpractices of the selection committee.

The issue was discussed with the GRM Committee that suggested to take necessary action to return Orecha's rights. After that, the UFSP complained the matter to the Chairman and discussed it at the Upazila Forum for Social Protection (UzFSP) meeting. The UzFSP secretary went to the Social Services Officer and lodged a complaint. He also talked about the injustice Orecha Begum endured for the social security allowance.

The officer investigated the case and found that Mahmuda Begum was receiving the allowance illegally. The authority cancelled the card and issued a card to Orecha Begum.

## Case 11

### No more speed money for receiving allowance

A total of 310 destitute women were enlisted for the VGD program in 2015-16 in Char Ramiz Union under Ramgati Upazila of Lakshmipur. To strengthen this program, NRDS established UFSP in 2014.

As part of this intervention, UFSP members organized different social accountability tools like, ward meeting, courtyard meeting etc. to enhance transparency and accountability in the social security programs. UFSP members organized one such courtyard meeting in the union in March 2016. At the meeting, the beneficiaries complained that each beneficiary was given 25-26 kg rice out of 30 kg under VGD allowance. Tk. 20 was also received from each beneficiary. Later the complaint was raised at the GRM Committee meeting. The GRM meeting discussed the matter and promised to alter the trend.

On 30 October 2016, the matter was raised at the GRM Committee meeting established experimentally under the project intervention. The union GRM sent the matter for a discussion at the upazila GRM that referred the matter to the Chairman on 15 November 2016 to solve the complaint. Upon the changed circumstances by the involvement of upazila level officials, the UP Chairman having discussion with other members decided not to receive additional money from beneficiaries and at least 29 kg rice would be given to each beneficiary.

The FSP members monitored the distribution in November and December 2016. They observed that receiving of Tk. 20 stopped and 29 kg rice was given to each beneficiary. Thus, the beneficiaries were spared from giving additional money for which they were so happy. It was an inspirational intervention to establish the rights of downtrodden people on social security programs.

## Case 12

### For GRM Committee's initiative, Tania got stipend



*Tania, Student of Class IX*

Tania was reading in Class IX at Ronokail High School, Kanaipur Union, Faridpur Sadar Upazila. Her father was a van driver and maintained their family from hand to mouth. Despite being ultra-poor and illiterate, he wanted to continue his daughter's study. However, sometimes he faced difficulties and became hopeless.

Tania was a meritorious student and eligible to get the stipend. However, she did not get the stipend. One day Tania put a complaint into the complaint box that she did not receive the stipend despite her eligibility. The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) meeting held at Ronokail High School discussed the matter.

The meeting decided to learn her current condition to justify her complaint. For this reason, the committee asked a member to inquire her condition and submit a report at the next meeting. The inquiry report said that she was eligible to get stipend.

At that time, the Head Teacher said that there was a possibility to award Tania the stipend in place of Morsheda, a stipend holder, for her ineligibility. Morsheda was receiving stipend despite her marriage. The President of School Management Committee (SMC) was informed about this and was invited to attend their meeting. At the meeting, through discussion the SMC President included Tania's name in the stipend list. Now she is very happy for receiving the stipend.

## Case 13

### GRM Committee prevented anomalies of EGPP at Helatala Union



*Helatala union GRM committee meeting*

The UFSP of Helatala Union, Kalaroa Upazila of Satkhira conducted a Social Audit on Employment Generation Program for the Poorest (EGPP) in the village of Ganopotipur under 9 no. ward of Helatala Union on 29/06/16. They also took interviews of the EGPP beneficiaries and made them aware of relevant policy. Through these exercises, the UFSP identified some field level anomalies. The beneficiaries complained that there were 23 laborers in the register, but 21 of them were working. After the Social Audit, the leader of the EGPP beneficiary's team of 9 no. ward of Helatala Union submitted a written grievance to the UNO of Kalaroa Upazila through GRM Committee about the anomaly.

After getting the grievance, the UNO discussed the matter with the Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) and suspected that same thing was taking place in other unions. Then the UNO ordered all Union Secretaries to investigate the anomaly on EGPP. All Union Secretaries conducted investigations and submitted reports to the UNO. The reports revealed that 234 laborer-days were fabricated on papers and Tk. 92,200 was withdrawn on their behalf. The UNO took necessary measures to recover the amount and deposited them to the concerned bank accounts.

It is evident from the case that a community monitoring mechanism can prevent corruption and anomalies in the implementation of social security programs.

নং	নাম	অর্থ
০১	বাবুজান	২০০০
০২	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৩	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৪	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৫	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৬	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৭	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৮	বাবুজান	২০০০
০৯	বাবুজান	২০০০
১০	বাবুজান	২০০০
১১	বাবুজান	২০০০
১২	বাবুজান	২০০০

*A list of amounts of Tk. 92,200 returned after investigation*



## Case 14

# GRM Committee prevented anomalies of EGPP at Shaplapur Union

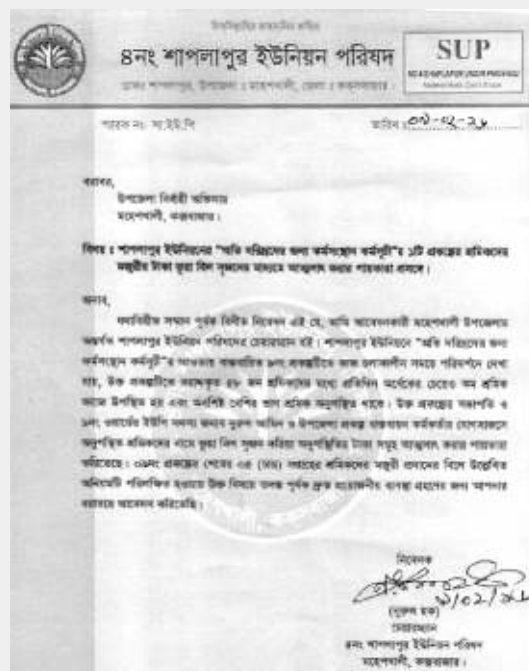
On 5 February 2016, local people informed the President of the UFSP of Shaplapur Union, Moheshkhali Upazila, Cox's Bazar about a corruption in the implementation of EGPP. The allegation was that one Union Parishad (UP) Member was trying to withdraw bill without completing entire project works. The President investigated the complaint himself. He got the validity of the complaint and informed to the UP Chairman. The Chairman also investigated and got the same.

The UP Chairman later verbally informed the matter to the PIO of Moheshkhali Upazila but he did not care about the complaint. Therefore, the Chairman submitted a written statement to Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and DC on 9 February 2016. In the statement, he mentioned:

1. Project was not completed and all laborers were not engaged as per project note.
2. The bill should not be settled before an investigation is done.
3. The bill can be settled after completion of project activities and settlement of wages to laborers.

In the meantime, the Chairman shared the matter with local journalists and they published the news in the local newspapers on 10 February 2016. Based on the statement and the news, the UNO formed an investigation team headed by the PIO. Other members were the Tag Officer and the UP Chairman. They investigated and reported that only 23 laborers out of 58 were engaged in the works. Thereafter, based on the investigation report, the UNO ordered to pay remaining wages to laborers involved in the project.

The UNO said he would prevent such kind of corruption in future. The UP Chairman said that it was an achievement of the UFSP. He expressed gratitude to the President of UFSP and requested them to stay with the UP to implement social protection programs.



*A written complaint by UP Chairman to the UNO on the corruption*

## Case 15

### GRM Committee protected beneficiaries' savings

In 2015-16, 26 unemployed laborers from Ward-3 of Helatola Union of Kalaroa Upazila, Satkhira were recruited for 40 days work. As per the government rules, they deposited Tk. 25 as savings per day. After the completion of the work, every laborer made savings of Tk. 1,000. Thus, 26 laborers deposited Tk. 26,000. One concerned Member withdrew the above amount from the bank on 25 July 2016 and left the place for a time. The laborers were looking for him for recovering their savings. When a week later the Member returned to his house, the laborers tried to collect the amount from him but the Member said that he had lost the amount.



*A few of the Day Laborers*

The laborers talked with the Vice-president of the UFSP. The Vice-president discussed the matter at GRM Committee meeting on 16/08/16 in presence of the concerned Member. By the pressure of the GRM Committee and laborers, the concerned Member agreed to return a portion of the money.

He again denied to return the remaining amount of money. The UFSP members talked with him again and said that if he would not return the remaining amount, they would complain it to the UNO led upazila GRM Committee. The concerned member understood the repercussion and made a commitment to return the full savings to the laborers. Accordingly, he returned the remaining amount on 25/08/16.

It is evident that if local level GRM committee takes initiatives, they can protect the rights of poor and marginalized people.

## Case 16

### Fraudulence averted for the activism of GRM Committee



*Farida Khatun tagged in the MA Card*

Jalalabad UP is situated in the East of Kalaroa Upazila. Almost 20,000 people live in the union. Most of the people are very poor and unaware of their rights. As power structure is so skewed in the union, entitlements of hardcore people sometimes cannot be implemented as per policy and rules.

Sufia Khatun Parul one of the female members (reserved) of the UP verbally raised an issue to the UFSP. She complained that Farida Khatun was getting Maternity Allowance (MA) although she was not pregnant.

Farida, W/O Md. Mominul Mollah lives in Sankarpur Village (4 no. ward). She has three children who are more than 8 years old. At that moment, she was not pregnant at that time. Her enrolment in the MA was totally against the government policy for the scheme.

Giving importance to the matter, the UFSP presented the complaint to the GRM Committee on 26 April 2016. The Committee formed a three-member probe committee to investigate the case. After getting the authenticity of the case, it was sent to the Upazila GRM committee for necessary measure. On 27 April 2016, they discussed it in a meeting and referred it to Upazila Women Affairs Officer who was responsible to oversee maternity allowance. According to the instruction of the UNO, the Officer verified the matter again and found the case of Farida authentic. Afterwards, she issued a cancellation order on 28 June 2016. She was also asked to return allowance to the Government Treasury she had received through a Chalan.

As a consequence, GRM Committee members prevented a beneficiary from misusing maternity allowance.

## Case 17

### Forum efforts prevented denial and helped **Anis Sheikh** to get allowance



*Anis Sheikh: Persons with disability need special care and favorable environment*

Anis Sheikh is a son of Shahid Sheikh. He is a person with disabilities and lives in Shovarampur Village, Ambikapur Union under Faridpur Sadar Upazila. Thus, he fully depends on his family. On the other hand, his family is ultra-poor. His father is a day laborer and only earning member of the family.

He tried to get social security support and knocked every door of local UP members. He appealed to get Allowance for Financially Insolvent Disabled

(AFID) support but he was denied. At that moment, he went to another UP Member and again his demand did not reach to him. He then went to the UP- Chairman and explained his predicaments. The Chairman assured but he could not provide any support. After some days, he communicated with the UP Member whom he first contacted. He demanded Tk. 2500 for allocating an AFID Card. For his ultra-poor condition, he could not manage the amount. At last, he complained to an elite person of Ambikapur but he could not afford any support.

Then, he met with two members of UFSP at Ambikapur Union and told his story. They discussed the issue at the next bi-monthly meeting. The Forum decided to discuss the issue on the next LGU level dialogue. In the dialogue, the representatives of the UFSP discussed the issue and the UP body agreed to give him an AFID support without money. Next, the UP body listed his name to give AFID support. He is thankful to the UFSP for their support.

## Case 18

### Newly elected UP members being committed to follow social security service rules on beneficiaries' selection.

Monwara Begum is a poor and widow woman. Her husband Mohammed Yunos had died twenty years ago. She lives in Sarol Union, 2no. Ward, Mowlana Amin Sharif Bari, under Banskali Upazila, Chittagong. She has one son and one daughter. She has been struggled to get benefit from Union Parishad elected members but she failed because she has no political power and unable to do nepotism. Once upon a time she attended a courtyard meeting and

knew that the government accelerating different SSN Services through the union parishads besides she saw different signboard, festoon on SSN service rules. Last month of April'2017, union forum has been implemented social audit on AWDDW benefit and then audit team identified that Jostna Begum as a divorce woman have been received AWDDW benefit since from 2006. But she got married again when she had



*Dialogue between UP and FSP members*

moved from village to city and took a job in Garment Factory as a worker for changing their lives. Her new husband and she both are employee and maintaining their family well. She has no need to get benefit though she is not agreeing to surrender her benefit book. Nevertheless, the audit team communicated with respective ward member and discussed about Jostna Begum. As a respective member Mohammed Salim are agreed with the audit team and took initiatives to remove her name from AWDDW benefit. Union forum members are selected a new potential beneficiary name of Monwara Begum, (National ID# 1510882366483) Late husband Yunos, 2no. ward, Mohori Para, Soral union. Soral Union member Mohammed Salim and forum members had meet with upazila Social Welfare Officer and discussed on this issue. Upazila Social Welfare Officer received their request and took initiatives for incorporate as a new beneficiary Monwara Begum on AWDDW. Monwara Begum delighted for the great initiatives taken by the new elected member and according to the forum members.

## Case 19

### UzFSP intervention contributed to improve Bank delivery system



*A dialogue at Upazila level on the Bank issues*

It was found that the beneficiaries of OAA and AWDDW had been facing various problems in the Sonali Bank, Kalaroa Branch, Satkhira during withdrawing their allowances. The Bank took too much time to distribute allowances. At rush hours, the floor of the bank became crowded. There was no sitting arrangement for the old and weak people. Sometimes, they had to wait 4/5 hours. As the space was not enough for a

huge numbers of beneficiaries, old people sometimes became sick. However, there was hardly any effort to resolve the problem.

Being informed about the problem, the Upazila Forum for Social Protection (UzFSP) arranged dialogues with concerned service provider and beneficiaries to resolve the problem. The Bank officials primarily had less effort to solve the problem. At the end, the UzFSP and project staff arranged a dialogue with the Bank Manager on 26 June 2016 and raised all difficulties. The Bank Manager listened to the problem and made commitment to ameliorate the plight of service recipients.

Afterwards, a noticeable changes took place in the bank. The bank authority setup two desks for the beneficiaries, earlier there was only one desk. They started distribution of allowances ward by ward. Soon changes became visible and delivery of services became quicker. Afterwards, the Bank distributed OAA on 10 August 2016 and AWDDW on 18 September 2016 smoothly and objections from beneficiaries' end dwindled. Thus, due to the introduction of a new system, beneficiaries could receive their allowances quickly without hassle.



## Case 20

# Why one family gets multiple services?



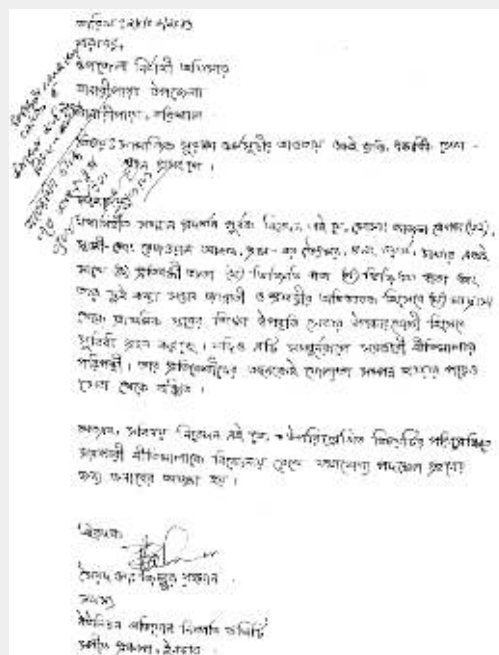
*Kajal with her family*

Kajal Begum (32) lived along with her mother in Boro Voithor Village, Ward: 04 of Chakhar Union under Banaripara Upazila, Barisal. She was a physically disabled woman. She had three school going children. Her husband Rezwan Akon was a support staff of a Madrasa located in a nearby village.

Being a disabled person, she was enlisted as a beneficiary of Allowance for Financially Insolvent Disabled (AFID) Program. Her two daughters got Primary Education Stipend. Not only that she was

also enlisted for VGD and VGF services and was getting those benefits regularly. Her mother was a beneficiary of AWDDW. These were very vivid overlaps of social protection programs. After getting the information, a complaint was filed with the GRM Committee. Then a Union Facilitator (UF) was sent for physical verification along with a UFSP member on 20 June 2016. They found that the case was authentic. However, they observed that financial condition of Kajal's family was not good. They even did not have any house to live.

The UFSP member talked to Kajal and asked how she and her family members got five social security services at a time. Kajal smiled and replied that her husband Rezwan Akon had a good connection with the Chakhar UP. The UFSP member knew that as per government regulation a family is eligible to get only one social protection support. However, explaining her financial insolvency, Kajal argued that they were eligible for all those supports. Project union worker talked with the neighbors of Kajal and observed that many eligible people were in her vicinity to receive social protection supports. They raised their displeasures on Kajal family's multiple enlistments. As Kajal's case was a clear violation of government rules and regulations, the UF informed the matter to



*A written complaint to the UNO*

the GRM Committee on 25 June 2016. After hearing the matter, one member of the GRM Committee gave an application to the UNO Banaripara on 28 June 2016 to take corrective measures and select beneficiaries from other eligible persons in place of Kajal and her family members. The UNO instructed the Women Affairs Officer and the Social Service Officer to conduct an enquiry on the matter and report him within 15 days.

The UNO assured the UFSP members that necessary corrective measures would be taken when he would get the investigation report and eligible beneficiaries would be selected in place of Kajal and her family members.

Some grievances were addressed before formally launched GRS pilot initiatives

## Case 21

### Story of Shahida Beowa Justice delayed for 10 years

Shahida Beowa lived with her poor family at Char Sujanagar village under municipality of Sujanagar Ward no. 4 in Sujanagar upazila under district of Pabna. Shahida Beowa spent her days with food for one time in a day. She does some work in some days and rest of the month she has no job. After some years of her marriage all of her husband's land washed away in the river Padma. She started working in others house as house maid after her husband's death.



*Shahida in her daily life*

10 years ago Shahida Beowa communicated with the member on that time Md. Abdul Baten for a Widow Allowance card. She could not get assurance from member for Card. At last she communicated with the then Mayor of municipality. The Mayor said her to give a photo for a card. Accordingly, she gave a photo and communicated with commissioner on the basis of Mayor's direction. She tried to continue the communication but one day commissioner said that there are no cards issued for her. Then Shahida Beowa stopped communication for the card. Meanwhile, the commissioner allocated a widow card for her which no-1110 but didn't inform it to her. He issued the card using her name and photo to another person named Rahima Beowa. Shahida Beowa did not know it at all. During a Social Audit the forum members came to know about the issue and they communicated with the Upazila Social welfare officer, he assured to solve the problem but he didn't move with it. The forum again arranged a dialogue at upazila date of 17.11.2015 after 9 months and raised the issue but Upazila Welfare Officer again assured to solve this problem. The Municipality Social Protection Forum Audit members discussed to take decision that they will communicate to Municipality and Upazila Social welfare office with Shahida Beowa. They also take decision that after two weeks if no result comes they will go to Upazila Nirbhahi Officer to inform in written. At last as a result the Upazila Social Welfare Officer gave a card to Shahida Beowa on dated 26.11.2015 and destroyed the old card.



*Shahida holding a AWDDW card*

When this issue was presented at NGO Coordination meeting at upazila, the UNO highly praised for this initiative and requested to continue the effort. He assured to cooperate on issues like this.

Shahida Beowa said with emotion “I feel like I have got a land under my feet at the end of my life.” She also said, “lekha para shikber pari nai, baba shei chotobelay biya dese kisu bujbar pari nai.” Shahida Beowa said that she suffered all her life, but nobody helped. She bears all her treatment cost by herself. She expressed her gratitude saying, “May Allah blesses them who helped me.” Her news was published in the newspaper. Paper cutting attached.



## Community stopped rotten rice distribution and rescued rotten rice during displacing

Agrogoti Sangstha has been implemented SGSP (Civil Society Component) since 2004 in 10 Unions and one Municipality of Kalaroa upazilla in Satkhira district. Under this project the Forum for Social Protection (Civil Society Platform) formed to monitor the social security program for collating beneficiary feedback to the grassroots to the policy level.

Once, before Eid-ul- Fitar, the UP representatives of Joynagar UP, Koila UP, Jugikhali UP, Jalalabad UP and Kalaroa Municipality collected rice for VGF from the Kalaroa Upazila food storage. During distribution of rice, it was found that most of the rice is rotten and not suitable to eat. Some of member of Upazila Forum for Social Protection (UzSPF) were present at the distribution place. The beneficiaries of the VGD programs shared the matter to local forum members. After noticed the fact, the local forum members mobilized the VGF beneficiaries to raise their voice and for the first time the beneficiaries denied to receive the bellow quality and rotten rice.

The UP representatives have shown many arguments to continue the distribution. The community people raised voice collectively with UzFSP and refuse their proposal. The forum member discussed with the UPs and created pressure to refund the rice. As a result, the UP stopped the distribution and agreed to refund the rotten rice to food storage. Koila UP refund 5.1 metric tons, Kalaroa municipality refund 30.1 metric tons and Joynagar UP refund 1 metric tons rice to the upazila food storage.



*FSP organized a meeting to mobilize people*

The storage authority identified them in a great trouble. Huge amounts of rotten rice stored and they decided to displace all rotten rice into another nearest upazilla storage. The district food controller ordered to displace the 50 metric tons rotten rice to Tala Upazilla on 24 July 2014 (letter SL no- 13.05.0087.007.50.006.11-1719). The Upazila Food Controller shifted rotten rice during at night without any information of administration on 25 July 2014, even in the holyday by the help of local contractor.

The VGF beneficiary, UzFSP members come to know the issue. They organized campaign again and discussed with Upazilla Parishad representatives and the local administrations also. One case submitted in the local Thana (G.D. NO.- 808, Date- 25.07.2014) where Upazilla Vice

Chairman and core group member of upazila forum are the complaints. Local Thana recorded the case and send to Anti Corruption Department to take next stapes. The Upazilla Food controller Mr. Ali Noor suspended by the Khulna Regional Food Controller and discharged from the working place. The perpetrators were arrested and handed over the materials - 41 packet rice & truck.

The upazila forums decided to follow up the case and the union forum decided to form a monitoring group to monitor the quality of rice before the distribution. They decided to work with the UP if any misplace further identify.

The collective role of local media, civil society forum, and the beneficiary have played significant role to improve the governance of social security programs.



*The local media published the news significantly*



## The AWDDW beneficiaries get back their rights without kickback

Kazipur, Sirajgonj is one of the most poverty-stricken district surrounded by mighty River the Jamuna crosses which making it most vulnerable to flooding and riverbank erosion. The SGSP project area of Kazipur is mainly agriculture based area and flood is a common feature to the lives of the most people in each year. It disrupts normal lives, damages houses, lands, crops and other resources and causes for huge damages in the rural communication (earthen roads) networks. The project title on 'Civic Engagement in Sustainable Management of Social Safety Net Program' under SGSP program has been started to work since March 2014. The main component of this project is to gather community feedback and ensure citizen engagement at different level of local government unit and improve the system of social safety net program. As to aiming this objective the grassroots forum has been formed at started to playing vital role to implement social accountability tools.

March 24th 2015, the safety net beneficiaries were gathered to collect the benefit of Old Age Allowance (OAA) & Allowance for Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women (AWDDW) from Sonali Bank at Kazipur Branch in Maizbari Union. Begum is one the member of Union Forum for Social Protection, who selected from the beneficiary of AWDDW was present there. She received training orientation and aware about the basic rules and policy guidance of the program. She was observing OAA- & AWDDW- distribution system. Suddenly she was found one side in the distribution point to taking money from few (40-50) beneficiary 30-40 tk. for (OAA) and 50tk. for AWDDW-. Laily asked others beneficiaries, why they paid money to the representative of Bank. They have answered that if we provide this money to the bank officer, we will get the money quickly and never back to home without allowance. Beneficiary well known that, often they are back to home without allowance, because maizbari Union all beneficiaries get allowance information in a day, so that usually an incident in the situation. In this connection (AWDDW) beneficiary Laily underhand communicate with



*Grassroots forum member Laily described her experience at the UFSP monthly meeting*

Maizbari Union social worker Md. Saiful Islam and he were attending Sonali Bank with upazila social service officer and police officer.

(AWDDW) beneficiary Laily said that, bi-monthly meeting, social audit, school based gathering and dialogue activities and CSC technique train me how to find out the field level barriers, challenges & field findings and sharing how to overcome the challenges barriers & problems.

Though the SPF aware from opening by social security programs and provide instruction SPF member deferent's technique by CSPF Mst. Beauty Khatun, so that sometimes SPF attend distribution point when disburse allowance or money. When upazila social service officer and police officer came to distribution point the bank officer at first repudiate the incident, but when all document were proved like few pass book stock separately in his pant pocket and beneficiary avow all episode then he agree and promise to all beneficiary further will never receive any money illegally from them. Sonali Bank Manager is also hardly warning to him for that situation. (AWDDW) beneficiary Laily explained the situation in the last bi-monthly meeting. All OAA- & AWDDW- beneficiaries are pleased to NDP-social security programs & SPF member at Maizbaril Union and get back their smile.

## A big chunk of VGD rice identified during distribution

April 2015, VGD commodity was distributed among the VGD beneficiary at Sonamukhi Union Parishad. Out of 195 cards of VGD, there are sixteen cards found as fake card, where the produced fake names, guardian names, permanent address and pictures were provided. Some of the union forums for social protection members were observing VGD distribution. They went to the UP Chairman and requested to verify all information properly. The UP Chairman replied that some of his colleagues might have unknowingly enlisted their relative names.

In that circumstance, Sonamukhi Union forum for social protection members informed to over telephone. The UNO instantly reached at Sonamukhi union. The forum members also shared that they have sought out the information four months before. But they were confused about the reality. Now they confirmed about the fact. They requested to UNO to solve the problem as per policy instructions that real beneficiaries are able to enjoy their rights.

The UNO observed the VGD distribution few moments. He also checked all documents along with the UP representatives. He requested to the legal beneficiaries to carry out the commodity bag on head. He also seized all illegal cards and full rice begs and requested to the UP Chairman for providing to the *madrasha Lillah* boarding.

The upazila administration seized all fake VGD cards. They stated that the list of VGD beneficiaries would be revised with actual beneficiaries in the upcoming circle.



VGD distributions at Sonamukhi UP, Kazipur

## Case 25

### Bribe money was returned to poor **Fatema**

Mst. Fatema Khatun is a landless single woman lived in the village of Charpara ward no- 01 Union of Viana under Sujanagar Upazila, Pabna District. She is a mother of two sons and five daughters. One son has been suffering by lame and hereupon. Other sons are hardly living as tenant peasant. Seven years ago her husband passed away suffering from brain tumor.

Mst. Fatema had been living with regular starvation along with her family members. She had a grandchild, who also an autistic child. There was no one to look after them. In that situation Fatema went several times to the UP Chairman, Member and influential persons of the community for getting a Widow Allowance Card. She did not receive any help from them.

After a long time, one of her neighbor committed her to manage a Widow Allowance Card. For also said, she has to be given near about 2500-3000 taka for that. Mst. Fatema Khatun agreed to pay such amount to her neighbor. But fact was that, Mr. Majid could not able to provide any card even after receiving money. The poor women frequently follow up with her neighbor and waited for the card.

In 2016, Fatema Khatun attended in a courtyard meeting. She came to know that, she is fully eligible for getting the widow allowance. She also informed about the union grievance redress committee system, the union forum for social protection members and how she could complaints if any complaints. One day Fatema Ali's home went to Haji Md.



*Fatema is delighted after getting money back*  
Shahajahan. She said, 'Ki Jeno komiti ache, takar katha koli pare mitting kare nastha dey ar board office jabir koy tumi amare loiya jao'

Haji Md. Shahajahan Ali listened all the words of Mst. Fatema Khatun attentively. He also informed that, he is a member of social protection forum. Hearing the kind words of the union forum member, the 70 years old poor woman has burnt into a cry. Meanwhile, all neighbors gathered at Md. Haji Shahajahan Ali's house.

After that, Mst Fatema communicated with the union GRS committee and formally lodge a complaint against her neighbor Mr. Majid. The union GRS committee arranged a hearing along with both party. After a long discussion Mr. Majid made a commitment to return the amount of 2000 taka.

The members of the social protection forum also shared the issue to the UP Chairman and the upazila GRS committee. They requested to the UP chairman to arrange a widow card for Fatema. After few months later, Mst. Fatema Khatun returned the kickback money. The next selection of widow beneficiary she received a widow allowance card.





## MANUSHER JONNO FOUNDATION

House # 22, Road # 04, Block # F  
Banani, Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh  
Tel : +880-2-55040989-97  
Web: [www.manusherjonno.org](http://www.manusherjonno.org)

## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

