

LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT OF URBAN POOR COMMUNITIES PROJECT

NEWSLETTER

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**DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR OF BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION DHAKA MATT CANNELL
VISITS LIUPC PROJECT IN KHULNA**



Khulna, 14 June: Matt Cannell, Development Director of the British High Commission in Dhaka visited the LIUPC Project in Khulna City Corporation (KCC) with UNDP to see how our partnership is helping climate-displaced, urban poor communities who continue to be climate-vulnerable, build both social as well as technical infrastructures as a solution to achieving systemic resilience. Cannell also travelled to meet communities living in char lands in the climate hot-spot areas surrounding the Sundarbans, and learn about the vulnerabilities. The FCDO-UNDP delegation was warmly welcomed by the Mayor of KCC Hon. Talukdar Abdul Khaleque. *Visit Video Link for detailed coverage:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUltYqM9FkY>



BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER ROBERT CHATTERTON DICKSON VISITS CHANDPUR & LAYS FOUNDATION OF CLIMATE-RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEME

Chandpur, 25 August, 2022: The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Robert Chatterton Dickson visited Chandpur to jointly lay the foundation of LIUPCP's climate-resilient community infrastructure scheme with the Mayor of Chandpur Md. Jillur Rahman, National Project Director and Joint Secretary (LGD) Masum Patawary and UNDP DRR Van Nguyen.



The High Commissioner said: "I have had a wonderful introduction to Chandpur with the LIUPCP team. Though the urban poor communities here are badly affected by climate change, I am very impressed by the power of community-led development processes facilitated by the project. It is also very good to see women and girls empowered to lead local development planning and implementation in urban poor communities. There are also many great examples of locally-led adaptation, which has the potential to be replicated elsewhere in Bangladesh and beyond in communities affected by climate change. The UK Government is proud to be partnering with UNDP and the Government of Bangladesh in this project."

Robert C Di... @RCDick... · 26 Sep
Excellent programme, making a real difference to the lives of climate refugees. Delighted to be working in partnership with the Government of and @UNDP_BD

UNDP Banglad... @UNDP... · 26 Sep
@UNDP is working w/ climate vulnerable urban community thru @liupcp funded by @UKinBangladesh & building climate resilient infrastructures. Recently @RCDicksonUK along w/ DRR @van_ntn visited the proj & laid foundation for a medium scale infrastructure on the bank of Meghna



The delegation also visited the construction site of a Low-Cost Housing initiative financed by the Government of Bangladesh, and met with historically marginalised waste-picker community selected to become future residents of the affordable housing scheme (see photo of building design on left).

UNDP DRR Van Nguyen remarked: "The urban poor communities we met were mostly climate-displaced from nearby districts and unfortunately, continue to be affected by the effects of climate crisis in poor urban areas. Therefore, we are pleased to be working to build community resilience through a multifaceted approach with LIUPCP, to mitigate further shocks and stresses. LIUPCP has demonstrated excellent models that is helping us achieve this, and offers significant potential for scale-up. I want to thank the Governments of the UK and Bangladesh for their invaluable support in helping us ensure that no one is left behind."

BBC journalists invited by LIUPCP provided excellent coverage of the programme and partnership that is helping Bangladesh combat challenges of urban poverty, exacerbated by the climate crisis.

Visit Video Coverage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWWSOJNzG&t=17s>

BBC: News Coverage: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gYrlv8HsT0>

FCDO DIRECTOR FOR INDO-PACIFIC REGION BEN MELLOR VISITS KORAIL SETTLEMENT

Dhaka North, 23 May: FCDO Director for the Indo-Pacific Region Ben Mellor visited the slum community at Korail settlement to observe LIUPCP activities. During his visit, he spoke with community members about their struggles and dreams, who presented their strategies and plans to improve their lives and living condition. He heard from some of the courageous women and girls, including those who were supported to escape Early & Forced marriage.

Visit Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/w8CqbO-tFOE>



GLOBAL CENTRE ON ADAPTATION (GCA) VISITS LIUPC COX'S BAZAR AND CHATTOGRAM

Cox's Bazar and Chattogram, 17-19 May: Ms Anju Sharma – Lead, Locally Led Adaption, GCA, and Abul Kalam Azad, the special envoy of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) from Bangladesh and distinguished fellow at the Global Centre on Adaptation (GCA), visited LIUPCP's urban poor communities in Cox's Bazar and Chittagong. The UNDP team was led by Deputy Resident Representative Van Nguyen. The delegation observed the project's locally-led adaptation work and resilience building, including climate resilient infrastructures.

GCA were also impressed by the community organisations, especially women leaders, who were using the community level citizens platform to mainstream their ideas and demands to both Project and local government officials. The delegation also met Chittagong City Corporation officials including the panel Mayor. He emphasised the city's climate vulnerability aspects and acknowledged LIUPCP's effective working relationship with the city corporation in implementing meaningful climate-action work that required scale-up.

UNDP and GCA are currently undergoing talks to explore opportunities for collaboration to expand work with the urban poor communities in Chattogram.



UNDP EXECUTIVE BOARD VISITS LIUPCP COX'S BAZAR AND DHAKA NORTH

Cox's Bazar and Dhaka North, 28-29 June: A high-level 9 member UNDP Executive Board from New York, comprising of various UN Permanent Representatives visited LIUPCP sites at Cox's Bazar and Dhaka North. The UN Delegation admired the empowerment of urban poor community women and were impressed by their leadership skills. In addition to observing sustainable livelihoods initiatives, they also saw how small-scale infrastructure development work was helping increase resilience in the communities. The UN Delegation expressed its commitment to support the vulnerable urban poor people and convey their message to the wider international community for enhanced cooperation.



SIDA HQ OFFICIALS VISITS LIUPC PROJECT IN NARAYANGANJ

As part of their visit to UNDP Bangladesh, Senior Officials from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Headquarters Jorgen Eriksson and Katarina Zinn visited the LIUPC Project in Narayanganj, to observe best practices on sustainable urban development. The Swedish guests were briefed about the programme by LIUPCP officials, following which they conducted community household visits and interactions. They learned about the social changes achieved through skills development for income generation, nutrition support and counselling and education support for young girls. They also observed multiple small-scale infrastructure work which complemented the social infrastructure development, that is helping achieve systemic resilience and improved wellbeing of the urban poor communities.



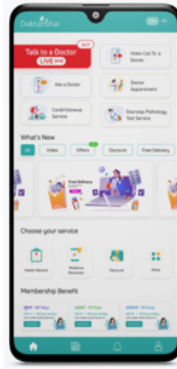
DIGITAL HEALTH CARE AND MICRO HEALTH INSURANCE SERVICES PILOTING IN NARAYANGANJ

With the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inadequate healthcare facilities and guidance available at urban poor settlements, LIUPCP identified an urgent need to ensure basic primary health care services for these vulnerable communities. To this end, the project embarked on a pilot initiative of a digital health care service and micro-insurance services for the urban poor communities in Narayanganj City Corporation, utilising the existing project platform.

In June, LIUPCP facilitated an MoU signing between Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) and Chartered Life Insurance Company Limited to pilot the Digital Health Care and Micro Health Insurance targeting 15,700 urban poor people of Narayanganj. The pilot includes a comprehensive digital healthcare platform, health insurance and a mobile-consultation digital application enabling users to remotely access professional medical advice.

The digital service includes e-prescriptions and medical follow-ups, referrals to hospitals, diagnostic centers and NGOs. Based on the lessons learnt, LIUPCP is hoping to scale-up the initiative across more cities through the financial support of the Government of Bangladesh.

Click on the link to find out more: <https://liupcp-health.com/>



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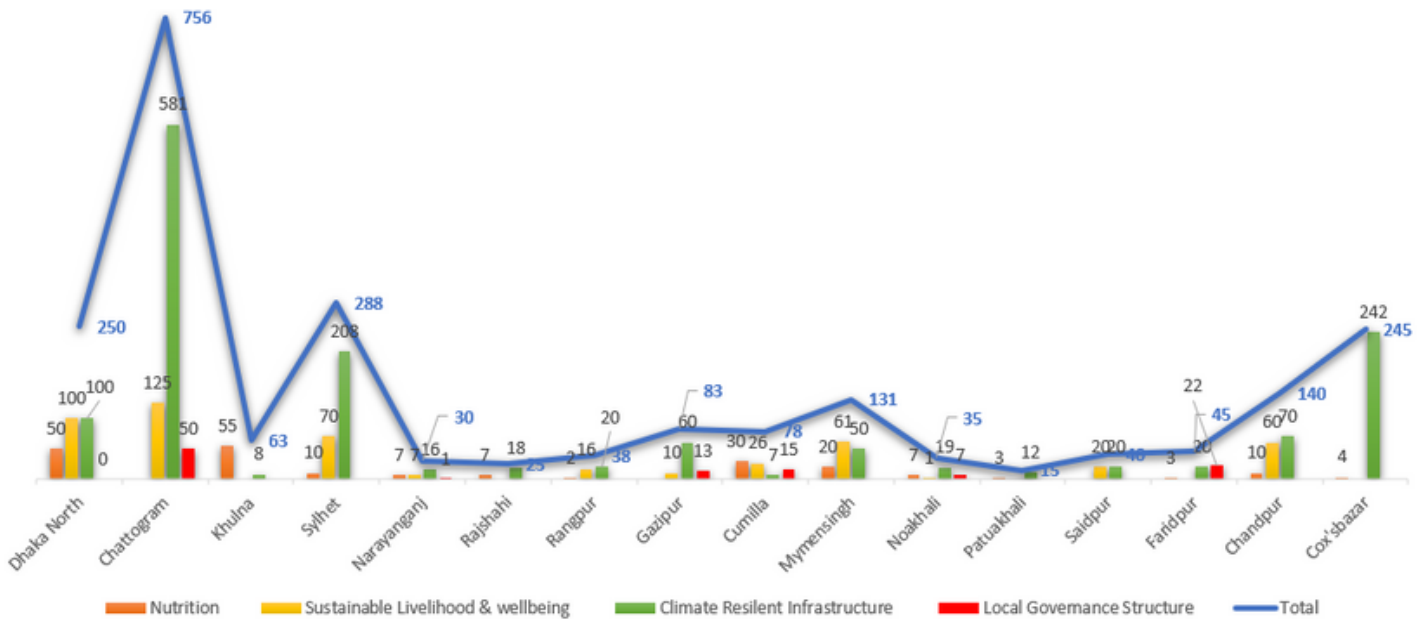
WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2022: LIUPCP COLLABORATES WITH BANGLADESH SCOUTS AND COLLECTS 3 TONNES OF PLASTIC DURING MASS AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGN

On World Environment Day on June 5, the LIUPC Project in partnership with Bangladesh Scouts and 19 City Corporations and Municipalities across Bangladesh, conducted a high-impact plastic waste awareness-raising campaign. Plastic pollution causes significant problems to the community health & well-being in low-income settlements. It blocks drainage networks that cause waterlogging and flooding, damaging poor households in climate-vulnerable locations, and giving rise to water-borne diseases

The collaboration resulted in the collection of over 3 tonnes of plastic waste from urban poor settlements across Bangladesh!



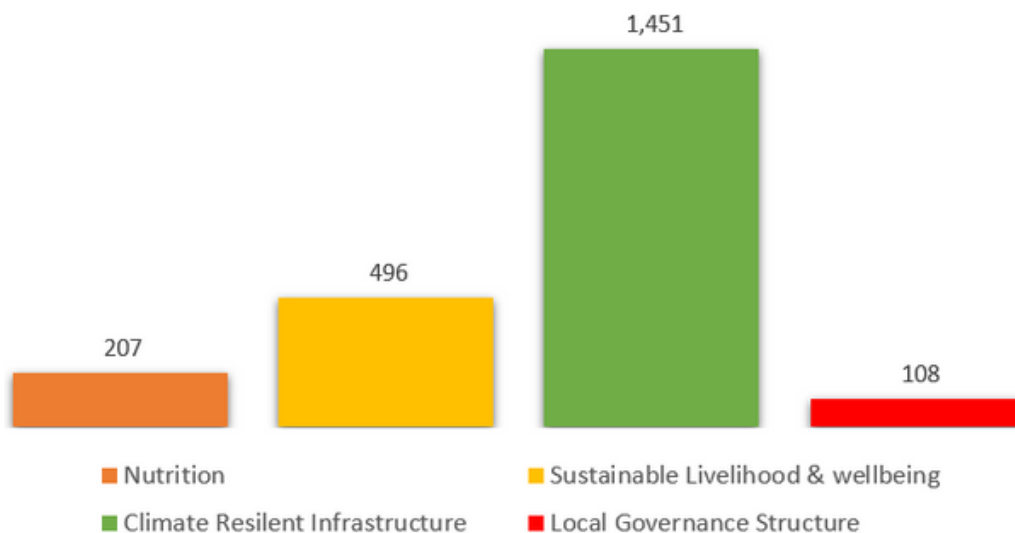
INDEPENDENT CITY-BUDGET ALLOCATED THROUGH LIUPC PROJECT (BDT LAKHS) 2022 FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY



In line with LIUPCP's goals of ensuring sustainability of efforts post project period, City Corporations and Municipalities in their budgets for the FY 2022-23 have approved independent budgets for basic service delivery and climate resilience efforts at urban slum and low income settlements.

The project platform have enabled the urban poor communities to voice their demands to the local government through the development of community action plans (CAPs) which have been taken into consideration by the government. As illustrated in the graph, budget support from the government included for small-scale climate resilient infrastructures at critical Wards, Nutrition grants and counselling services for lactating and pregnant mothers.

This is an outcome of the LIUPCP's ongoing work around advocacy and capacity development to enable the local government to lead and take responsibility of pro-urban poor development works in the respective municipalities.



PARLIAMENTARIANS BRIEFED ABOUT LIUPCP BY THE MINISTER OF LGRD&C

Dhaka, 06 June: Md Tazul Islam, Honorable Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives addressed a parliamentary session and highlighted the work of LIUPCP at Dhaka North City Corporation in the Questions and Answer Session.



VALIDATION WORKSHOP FOR VACANT LAND MAPPING HELD IN NOAKHALI

Mayor Shohid Ullah Khan of Noakhali Paurashava inaugurated the Vacant Land Mapping (VLM) final validation workshop at Noakhali, supported by the Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project.



CONSTRUCTION OF LOW-COST HOUSING FOR URBAN POOR PEOPLE IN GOPALGANJ, NOAKHALI, KUSHTIA AND CHANDPUR

Low-Cost-Housing is a key component of NUPRP that will secure permanent affordable housing solutions for over 2,300 urban poor and their families. This component is financed by the Government. Despite the pandemic, the programme has made significant progress in securing design approvals, permanent land allocations through inter-ministerial coordination, completing technical suitability tests, procurement formalities etc., at all four targeted cities (Gopalganj, Noakhali, Chandpur and Khustia). Currently, construction at Gopalaganj is on-track for completion by June 2023, and works are simultaneously being carried out at full pace at the remaining three cities.



Architectural design of proposed low-cost housing at Noakhali (left), Kushtia (middle) and Chandpur (right)

WATER TREATMENT PLANT INSTALLED IN NOAKHALI

The community people of the coastal region in Noakhali have been suffering from contaminated groundwater, surface water salinity, and other minerals contamination including irons and inadequate water supply network of the municipality. As a result, a small reverse osmosis (RO) water treatment plant has been installed as a pilot at Purbo Mohodoripur of Ward 5 in Noakhali. Through this RO plant, a pipe network totaling 49 water distribution points has been established for the use of the surrounding communities. This water treatment plant is also expected to reduce other health risks including water-borne diseases in the community. Capacity development training will also be provided to manage the safe disposal of any waste/by-products involved.



NATIONAL NUTRITION WEEK 2022 OBSERVED ACROSS LIUPCP CITIES AND TOWNS

Bangladesh observed the National Nutrition week from 23-28 April nationwide. LIUPC cities and towns marked the occasion in the urban poor communities through several events that engaged the City Level Multi-sectoral Nutrition Coordination Committee (CLMNCC) members as well as the community. Mass awareness campaigns were organised, with educational demonstrations of nutritious food preparation, including court-yard sessions engaging male family members to highlight the importance of nutritious food intake, especially by pregnant and lactating mothers.



EDUCATION SUPPORT TO REDUCE EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE: GRANT STATUS UPDATE

LIUPC distributed 1,648 grants targeted at young school-going girls from urban poor families in classes 8-10, to help prevent school drop outs and early and forced marriage. This intervention has proven to be especially useful during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as during the going economic downturn, that has increased financial constraints on the poorest households. Therefore, the grants are reducing risks and ensuring continued access to education with each girl child receiving BDT 9,450 in two tranches.



CITY-CITY LEARNINGS: COX'S BAZAR TEAM VISITS LIUPCP CHATTOGRAM



Chattogram, 13 June: The LIUPC project team from Cox's Bazar visited Bijoy Nagar CDC in Chattogram City Corporation to learn about the best practices of the community-led initiatives in their development approach. Such knowledge management activities are being organised with a view of promoting horizontal learnings, to help build sustainability post project period.

Through LIUPCP's technical assistance, similar learning sessions will be conducted across more cities in future, also involving the local government representatives.

RANGPUR DISTRIBUTES PROFIT AMONG THE SAVINGS AND CREDIT MEMBERS

The Jumma Para-CDC in Rangpur City Corporation currently has 320 members and cumulative savings of BDT 8,520,696. With a monthly recovery rate of 99%, the portfolio outstanding loan is BDT 124,300. With proper financial management, the CDC has earned BDT 1,100,000 as service charge from their outstanding loan portfolio. Every year they distribute the profit among the members during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and in May 2022, the profit from 2021 totaling BDT 119,124 was distributed. The AGM was attended by Councilors, Town Federation leaders and members of PG, CDC, Cluster and Federations.



CO-ORDINATION MEETING OF THE SAFE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD IN DNCC



In June 2022, the Quarterly Coordination Meeting of the Safe Community Committee was held at Ward 19 with support from the LIUPCP. Ward Councilor Haji Mohammad Mofizur Rahman inaugurated the meeting that was attended by a representative of Banani Police Station, amongst others including LIUPCP's Safe Community Committee members, Community Organizers, Socio-Economic & Nutrition Facilitators and Community Facilitators. Discussion points including:

- Awareness on prevention of Early and Forced Marriage (EFM).
- Role of SCC members in preventing harassments and ensuring safe mobility of women and girls in the community.
- Role and responsibility of the police department and other law enforcement agencies.
- Reporting processes, including process of accessing support from local Police Station by the victim or the community.
- Representative from the local government representatives e.g. Councillors who committed to provide full support to help prevent VAWG.

LIUPCP PROJECT DASHBOARD



LIUPCP SUPPORTING GOB TO REVIEW & FINALISE THE DRAFT NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

LIUPCP is working with the Ministry of the Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) and supporting the Local Government Division (LGD) to review and finalise the National Urban Policy (NUP), considered key to ensure sustainable urban development in Bangladesh. LIUPCP reached a breakthrough after the draft National Urban Policy, which had been idle at the Ministry since 2015, was brought back on the agenda of the Ministry, with fresh instructions to LIUPCP to initiate the process of final review so the NUP can be finalised. Two high-level meetings at the Ministry have taken place to sensitise the key officials of the Ministry and to discuss the next actions required to finalise the policy. The meetings were held under the leadership of the Additional Secretary and Head of Urban Development Wing of LGD and the Secretary of the Ministry of LGRD&C.



LIUPCP presenting the updated status of the draft National Urban Policy to key officials of the LGD, with the presence of the Head of Urban Development Wing Mr. Mustakim Billah Faruqi, Additional Secretary) on June 21



Briefing being given to the Secretary of the Ministry of the LGRD&C (Mr. Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury) along with other key LGD officials, on the new status of the draft National Urban Policy on August 28

COLLABORATION BETWEEN GED/PLANNING COMMISSION AND LIUPC PROJECT TO PREPARE SECTOR ACTION PLAN ON URBAN (HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES):



Photo: Roundtable discussion on the preparation of the Sector Action Plan on Urban was organised by General Economics Division (GED) with support from LIUPC Project on 31 August at the Planning Commission.

Recently, LIUPCP held a dialogue with the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission of the Ministry of Planning on the preparation of the Sector Action Plan for Urban Development, in light of the 8th Five Year Plan (8th FYP). During the preparation of the 8th FYP by GED, LIUPCP provided input and feedback on Chapter 9 (Housing and Community Facilities: Urban Development Strategy).

In order to smoothly implement the five-year plans, the government has made provision to prepare detailed sector action plans for each sector of the five-year plans.

In this context, the General Economics Division (GED), with the support of the LIUPC Project, recently organized a roundtable meeting at the Planning Commission to discuss the preparation of the Sector Action Plan on Urban. All concerned officials from different Sector Divisions of the Planning Commission agreed to prepare the sector action plan for urban affairs. The immediate next steps were also discussed at the roundtable meeting.

NASIMA BEGUM: A SUCCESSFUL MICRO-ENTREPRENEUR LEADING GREEN BUSINESS

Nasima Begum has been a resident of Moddho Sriramdi, Ward 1 in Chandpur Municipality for 15 years. Until recently, she led a challenging life working two informal jobs at a small shop and a local business, whilst also taking care of her two daughters, aged fifteen and five. Nasima had a monthly earning of around BDT 5,000, and despite combining finances with her husband, who was daily wage worker, it was challenging to feed five mouths no matter how hard they worked. The family of course did not have any savings.

However, things took a turn for the better when the LIUPCP initiated its programme interventions in Nasima's community in 2018, following which she became a member of a community development committee (CDC) group, mobilised by the Project. Nasima was informed about LIUPCP's varying livelihoods improvement activities, such as education grants for young girls, nutrition support, micro-business grant and skills development, amongst others. She was determined to improve her live and that of her family's, and thus approached the CDC to receive a training on the basics of becoming a micro-entrepreneur and running a small business.



Nasima was visited by the British High Commissioner, UNDP DRR and the NPD during their visit to Chandpur in August 2022, She spoke of her paper-bag business and expressed her gratitude for their support.

LIUPCP experts offered her knowledge of the varying economic opportunities, taking into consideration the context of the city/area, upon which Nasima was advised on a business model of making paper-bags. In April 2019, Nasima qualified to receive a grant of BDT 7,000 to help her initiate the business model. She used this to buy scrap paper from the surrounding localities, and used homemade adhesive solution to produce paper bags referred to as 'thonga'. Currently, the sale of this environmentally-friendly bag to local shop vendors generates Nasima a healthy monthly income of around BDT 15,000 and she has also engaged her husband by giving him the responsibility of sourcing the scrap paper from the city. He finds his new job to be much better and less physically intensive than his previous job, and feels proud of the decision his wife Nasima took to initiate the business. The pair are now able to financially cater for all their basic household needs, including the requirements of their two daughters, and they even generate a small saving each month.

Nasima Begum is one of many empowered women in the community who have been supported by LIUPCP. They have not only gained financial stability and independence, but the holistic efforts have also facilitated a natural change in gender norms and dynamics in the wider communities.

She expressed her gratitude, stating: "LIUPCP has helped change our lives, and we could not have done it without the guidance and business grant support which it provided us".