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First phase local level planning

CIETeurope

HPSP, Bangladesh
First Phase Local Level Planning

Review of process

Survey Report

May 2001
CIETeurope

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report of a survey to evaluate the quality of the first phase LLP process as a part of the overall first phase LLP process review. All five first phase districts and ten selected upazilas – two upazilas each from the five districts, one considered good and another not so good – were visited. Interviews were conducted with 57 upazila LLP team members, 33 district team members, 24 community representatives, five senior managers at the central level, and nine Central LLP team members. A review of the plans of the districts and the ten selected upazilas was also conducted. An estimation of time spent by different levels on the preparation and implementation of the first phase LLP process was made. Based on the survey findings, recommendations were made for the roll out of LLP to other districts across the country.

Information Base

The people interviewed were:

Senior managers

The Joint Chief (Planning) and four line directors (ESP Health, ESP FP, Planning Health, and Planning FP).

The Central LLP team

The Team Leader for PCC, Deputy Team Leader for PCC, one person from MCU, two technical assistants for LLP, two persons from the Planning Unit (the focal point of LLP, and one CPFT member), and two other persons involved in the process as a CPFT members (PM (Nutrition Health Services) ESP, DGHS, and PM (Clinical Services) ESP – RH, DGFP).

District team

33 people in the five LLP pilot districts.

Upazila LLP team

57 people in 10 upazilas. (29/57) of them were in the categories of UHFPO, UFPO, RMO, MO(MCH), and had been invited to the district orientation workshop (in this report, they are called the upazila senior managers).

Community representatives

24 community representatives: a third (8) of them were union parishad members, a third (8) were opinion formers (such as teachers or imams), and a third (8) were sector representatives (such as agriculture or NGOs).

Knowledge about LLP

District team members

- All but four mentioned the toolkit as one source of information for LLP, and nearly all got information from the district orientation meeting.
- Half thought the toolkit was a useful source of information and half thought the district orientation workshop was useful.
- Over half were fully satisfied that they had enough information and guidance about LLP.
- Two thirds had read all the toolkit, and a third had read some of it.

- All but two found the toolkit very useful.
- A third of those who knew about the toolkit said that there were no problems with it. A quarter (6) thought it was too complicated and lengthy.

Upazila team members

- All but four had heard about LLP at an upazila meeting.
- Over a third were fully satisfied that they had enough information and guidance about LLP.
- Less than two thirds knew of the toolkit. Among those who knew of it, over half had read all of it.
- Most of those who read all of the toolkit thought it was useful.
- Of those who knew of the toolkit, a quarter identified no problems with it. The most commonly cited problem with the toolkit was that it was too complicated.
- Among the 29 upazila senior managers all but three knew of the toolkit and two thirds said they had read it all.
- Two thirds of upazila senior managers thought that the toolkit was useful.

Community representatives

- A third did not know the purpose of the process, and a third said that it was to improve service delivery.
- Most commonly cited issues discussed during the community consultation meeting were the local health problems and diseases.

Participation in the LLP process

Senior managers

- The two Planning LDs and the Joint Chief have been closely involved with the first phase LLP, whereas the two ESP LDs have been much less involved.

The Central LLP team members

- All but one CPFT member interviewed was involved in the process of drafting the toolkit, guidelines, and the formats.

District team members

- About two thirds thought the number of meetings concerned with LLP was about right.

Upazila team members

- Half thought the number of meetings concerned with LLP was too few, and over a third thought the number of meetings was about right.

Perceptions and problems identified with the LLP process

Senior managers

- The most common problem cited was that the toolkit was lengthy, complicated and needed time and training for people to understand and use it.
- All thought the district plans will be incorporated into the NOP for next year, in some way.

- Difficulties anticipated with incorporating district plans into the national plan were the timing and incompatibility of format between district plans and the NOP.

The Central LLP team members

- Six of nine people thought the upazila teams had difficulties identifying and prioritising their problems.
- They thought upazila teams had difficulties because there were too many indicators to consider and the forms were in English.
- They thought the performance of district teams in supervising and supporting upazila teams varied from district to district.
- They were concerned about the inexperience of district teams, and felt they needed more time and training for the process.
- The central team had little experience of the community consultations.
- Generally they thought the toolkit was 'somewhat useful'.
- Most common criticisms of the toolkit were that it was long and complicated.
- The most common suggestions were to simplify the toolkit and provide it in Bangla as well as English.
- They suggested simpler guidelines, with fewer indicators, in Bangla, and including more examples to follow.
- They felt there were too many formats and they were too complicated.

District team members

- A third thought the LLP process was easy.
- A third thought the information collection was the main difficulty; over half had problems with collecting the data required.
- A third thought that there were problems with community consultations.
- A fifth mentioned difficulties identifying and prioritising upazila key service problems.
- Over a third had problems formulating the upazila logistics and procurement action plans.
- A third of those who participated in the budget planning thought there were problems.
- Most (82%) thought the facilitators from Dhaka were helpful.
- Among Civil Surgeons and DDFPs, half said the financial support was not good at all.
- A third or less thought the formats were not clear.
- Nearly all thought the LLP process was useful in their district
- Over half identified capacity building as the main benefit of the process, while over a third said information collection was the main benefit.

Upazila team members

- About two thirds thought the LLP process was somewhat difficult.
- Among the senior managers, over a quarter said the LLP process was easy.
- One in five indicated that information collection was their main difficulty
- One in five had problems conducting community consultations.
- One in five had difficulties identifying and prioritising key service problems.

- About one in five had problems formulating summary plans and detailed activities, formulating upazila logistics and procurement action plans, and budget planning.
- Over three quarters thought the facilitators from Dhaka were helpful, and nearly as many thought the facilitators from the DPFT were helpful
- Of the 14 UHFPOs and UFPOs interviewed, 4 thought the financial support was only somewhat good, and 5 thought that it was not at all good.
- Many could not recall individual guidelines and formats. Of those who could, 35% to 50% thought individual guidelines and formats were very clear.
- Most thought the LLP process was useful overall.
- Most useful aspects were identification and prioritisation of problems and the information collection.
- About a third said that the information collection was the main benefit, and a quarter mentioned upazila team building.

Community representatives

- Nearly all those interviewed thought the service providers listened to what they said in the community consultation meeting.
- A third did not know how the views from the community consultation meeting would be used. Most commonly they thought the views would be used for discussions with higher authorities.

Recommendations for the national roll out

Senior managers

- None thought the roll out could be done in the same way as the first phase, mentioning unsustainable financial and human resource requirements.

The Central LLP team

- None thought the roll out could be done in the same way as the first phase, and they are concerned about the sustainability of the process with limited resources.

District Team

- Most (79%) thought the LLP process could be done in all districts in the same way as in their district.
- A third thought there is no need to change the LLP process for the roll out.
- Half saw no need to make changes to the toolkit, guidelines and formats. The most common suggestions were for Bangla language and more clarity and simplicity.

Upazila team

- Two thirds thought the LLP process could be done in all upazilas in the same way as in their upazila.
- A third had no suggestions to improve the toolkit, guidelines and formats. The most common suggestions were for use of Bangla and for simple clear guidelines.

Expected effects of the first phase LLP

The senior managers

- Three out of five said there will be an increase in budget allocation, but to a limited extent.
- All think there will be an improvement in performance management.
- Nearly all think there will be an increase in logistic support.
- Most think the main benefit of the LLP process is that it is the first step towards decentralisation.

The Central LLP team

- Almost all said the district plans will be incorporated in to the NOP for next year.
- They noted incompatibility of district plans with the formats for NOP.
- About half think there will be an increase in the budget allocation, to a limited extent.
- Almost all think there will be improvement in performance management.
- Over half think there will be an increase in logistic support to the LLP districts.

District team members

- Most (85%) expect improved service delivery and work performance.
- Most (70%) expect an increased budget allocation as per their submitted plans.
- Nearly half expect *all* of the additional activities indicated in their plans will be accepted
- Nearly all expect performance management will improve.

Upazila team members

- Half expect improved service delivery next year.
- Three quarters of upazila senior managers expect their budget to increase.
- A third expect all the additional activities indicated in their plans will be accepted, and almost half expect most of them will be accepted.
- Nearly all expect performance management will improve.

Community representatives

- Most expect improvements in health and family planning services delivery and management.
- Nearly all felt that community views had not been taken into account previously by the health and family planning services in the upazila.

Review of the district and upazila plans

Upazila plans

Some common occurring problems were identified in the plans. Some were related to the design of the formats, while others related to the limitations of the process undertaken by the upazila and district teams. One of the main weaknesses was problem identification. Many teams apparently had not gone through the thought process of identifying specific problems and then identifying possible solutions.

District plans

A major problem was standardisation. The district plans reviewed were not compiled in a standardised manner.

Time spent on first phase LLP by different levels

Time spent was estimated in three ways: from the TAs workshop feedback reports, from the TAs own estimation of their time spent, and through questionnaire responses.

Senior managers

- Senior managers' time was spent mainly on workshops and meetings
- An estimated total of 45 senior manager person-days went into LLP.

CPFT members

- CPFT members spent an average of 11 person-days on district orientation and compilation workshops in every district.
- An average of 2 person days were spent on information collection and LLP finalisation workshops per upazila.
- Members of the CPFT spent an estimated total of about 133 person days in district and upazila workshops.
- An estimated total of 135 CPFT person days were spent on LLP meetings and workshops at the central level.

TAs

- TAs spent an average of 6 person days in district orientation and compilation workshops in every district, and 2 person days were spent on upazila level information collection and LLP finalisation workshops in every upazila.
- The TAs spent an estimated total of 286 person days including preparing the toolkit, attending district and upazila workshops, attending workshops and meetings at the central level, preparing for workshops, and documenting after workshops.

DPFT members

- On average, DPFTs spent 34-person days on district orientation and compilation workshops per district. At the upazila level, an average of 4 DPFT-person-days went into upazila workshops.
- DPFTs spent an estimated total of 326 person days on district and upazila workshops in all five districts and 39 upazilas.
- The average number of DPFT person days spent on LLP work other than for attending the workshops was 2 person days.

Upazila team members

- On average, upazila team members interviewed in the survey spent a total of 8 days in LLP meetings and workshops.
- Upazila team members spent an average of 1 day on LLP related tasks other than attending meetings and workshops.

Discussion

The process at the central level

- The involvement of both ESP LDs was not as effective as it could have been. As LLP is one component of ESP, this lack of full involvement of ESP LDs could present an obstacle to achieving the full potential benefits of the LLP process.
- Although there is room for improvement, the central team (including the TA's and the CPFT) was able to provide support for the levels below, at least in this first phase.
- The senior managers and central team have limited and realistic expectations of the outcomes of the first phase LLP process.

The process at the district level

- Although there were variations among districts, overall, the support provided by the district teams to upazila teams was perceived by the upazilas as good.
- The DPFT members mainly coped with the process, but the district plans reviewed were not standardised.

The process at the upazila level

- Upazila teams managed to put together plans but experienced difficulties with data collection and with identification and prioritisation of problems, by their own account and as apparent from review of their plans.
- Some of the problems relate to the present version of the toolkit, guidelines and formats, and some to the capacities and experience of the upazila teams.
- The information collected (or rather drawn together from existing sources) for the first phase LLP at the upazila level is limited in its use for rational decision making and planning because it is mainly service based.

Recommendations

The toolkit

- The toolkit should be made simpler, shorter, and translated into Bangla.
- A wider distribution of the toolkit at upazila level should be considered.

The guidelines and formats

- The guidelines and formats should also be simpler, shorter, and translated into Bangla.
- The guidelines should give examples that the upazila team may refer to.
- The design of the formats needs to allow easier linkages among formats.
- As part of the re-design stage of the guidelines and formats, they should go through a series of field-tests.
- The formats used in the district plans should be compatible with the Operation Plans at the national level.
- Some information about overall policy and direction should be included in the plans.

Information collection for LLP

- In the roll-out process for LLP, the opportunity could be taken to include a process of collecting local actionable information, which allows service providers and planners to make rational decisions about service interventions.

Community consultation

- It is necessary to include a methodology for community consultation that will allow a better representation of all community members, including the most vulnerable.

Structure for the national roll out

- The LLP roll out must opt for an implementation structure that would allow smooth incorporation of LLP as part of the ordinary work for all levels concerned.
- The organisation at the central level for the national roll out should also eventually merge itself into a part of the existing structure as the implementation process proceeds.
- The lessons that were learnt during the first phase LLP should be applied, rather than starting an entirely new structure that was not tested during the first phase.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADFP	Assistant Director, Family Planning
AOP	Annual Operation Plans
AUFPO	Assistant Upazila Family Planning Officer
BCC	Behavioural Change Communication
CPFT	Central Planning Facilitation Team
CS	Civil Surgeon
DCS	Deputy Civil Surgeon
DDFP	Deputy Director, Family Planning
EPI Sup	Supervisor, EPI
DGFP	Director General of Family Planning
DGHS	Director General of Health Services
DHS	District Health Superintendent
DSI	District Sanitary Inspector
DPFT	District Planning Facilitation Team
DTL	Deputy Team Leader
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunisation
EPI tech	Technician, EPI
ESP	Essential Service Package
FP	Family Planning
HI	Health Inspector
HPSP	Health and Population Sector Programme
Jr HEO	Junior Health Education Officer
LD	Line director
LLP	Local Level Planning
MCU	Management Change Unit
MOCC	Medical Officer, Clinical Contraceptive
MOCS	Medical Officer, Civil Surgeon Officer
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MO(MCH)	Medical Officer (Maternal and Child Health)
MOSS	Medical Officer, Support Service
OP	Operation Plans
PCC	Programme Coordination Cell
PM	Programme Manager
RH	Reproductive Health
RMO	Resident Medical Officer
SDS	Service Delivery Survey
SI	Sanitary Inspector
Sn FWV	Senior Family Welfare Visitor
SnHEO	Senior Health Education Officer
SWM	Sector Wide Management
TA	Technical Assistant
TFIPP	Thana Functional Improvement Pilot Project
TL	Team Leader
UFPO	Upazila Family Planning Officer
UHC	Upazila Health Complex
UHFPO	Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer
UHFWC	Union Health and Family Welfare Centre

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad
WHO	World Health Organisation

INTRODUCTION

Background

Local Level Planning (LLP) is an element of Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP). This programme is intended to achieve a more client-centred provision of health services and increased utilisation of an Essential Services Package, particularly by women, children and the very poor. The HPSP explicitly includes stakeholder involvement and community participation as important elements.

LLP aims to increase local ownership and development of services through implementation of an evidence-based planning process that empowers the local communities and results in an increased use of health and family planning services.

The original plan was to develop local level planning in 12 first phase districts. This was reduced to 5 districts due to time constraints to meet the deadline for inclusion of the district plans in the Operational Plans for 2001/02. In October 2000, implementation of the first phase LLP process started in Dhaka district, and subsequently covered five districts and 39 upazilas.

The first phase LLP is aimed at creating a strong central team and developing district teams to lead the process at the upazila level. The lessons learnt from the first phase will be incorporated into the roll out of the process across the country.

In the past, there have been several initiatives intended to promote local level decision-making such as the Thana Functional Improvement Pilot Project (TFIPP), the Integrated Primary Health Care, the Accelerated District Approach by UNICEF, and the District Health System initiated by WHO. Local level planning takes into account lessons learnt from these past local level planning initiatives implemented in the health and family planning sector in Bangladesh.

Purpose of the overall review

Before the roll out of the local level planning process to the rest of the country, a review has been initiated to examine the experiences in the five first phase districts. The aim of the review is to identify lessons from the first phase and recommend a way forward for the roll out of local level planning.

Purpose of the specific survey part of the review

The survey part of the review is aimed at assessing the quality of the LLP *process* by conducting a series of interviews with key players: community representatives in the upazilas, LLP teams in the upazilas and districts, the central LLP team and senior service managers. It is clearly premature to attempt to assess the outcomes of the LLP process at this stage. But it should be possible to form a view, based on the questionnaire responses at different levels, of what constitute the key elements of the LLP process that will be important in roll out to include more districts.

METHODS

The instruments

The instruments for the survey were designed in collaboration with a team of the LLP CPFT and the TA's for the process. The instruments include questionnaires to be administered by interview with: relevant personnel from MOHFW; other members of the LLP CPFT, including Technical Assistants; members of the five District LLP teams; members of the upazila teams from 10 selected upazilas (two from each district); and community representatives in the LLP process in the 10 upazila s.

The instruments covered both experience of the current LLP process and suggestions for the process in the future.

Separate questionnaires were designed for the senior managers, the central LLP team, the district LLP teams, the upazila LLP teams, and the community representatives. The instruments are shown in Annex #.

Review of the district and upazila plans

Two programmes, EPI and ANC were chosen to follow through the plans, starting from information collection, problem identification and prioritisation, action plans, and then onto district plans. This exercise was conducted to assess the understanding of the planning process as well as the internal coherence of the plans. All available plans (both district and upazilas) within the five districts and 10 sample upazilas were reviewed in this way.

Training

A one-day training was conducted with four field coordinators and the local coordinator for the project. The training covered the sample and interviewees, a discussion on each instrument, and logistic arrangements for the survey.

Data collection

The questionnaires were administered by a group of five people, each covering a district and the associated upazilas. Field coordinators from the SDS, all of whom are senior and experienced enough to hold discussions with relatively senior service providers, conducted the interviews.

Analysis

The responses to the questionnaires were coded and entered onto computer – using the software Epi Info – to allow numerical analysis as well as qualitative analysis of responses. SPSS was also used to analyse questions with multiple responses.

Analysis describes the experience of the LLP process from different viewpoints: the MOHFW, the CPFT, the districts, the upazila teams and the community representatives. It also compares upazilas where the process was thought to work well with those where it was thought to work less well, and looks a views from the district and upazila teams in comparison with those of the central team.

SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Upazila teams and district teams

All five first phase districts and ten upazilas – two upazilas from each district – were visited and interviews were conducted with selected LLP team members.

Information base: upazila teams

Some 57 people were interviewed in 10 upazilas as LLP upazila team members. Of those, eight were UHFPOs and six were UFPO (see box 1). Half (29/57) of them were in the categories UHFPO, UFPO, RMO, and MO(MCH) – these post-holders were invited to the district orientation workshop (in this report, they are called the upazila senior managers). About a quarter (13/57) of the interviewees were female.

The mean number of years upazila health and family welfare services of those interviewed was 17 years. It ranged from 1 year to 37 years.

Box 1 Job titles of upazila team members interviewed	
UHFPO	8
UFPO	6
MO(MCH)	6
RMO	9
MOSS	1
HI	3
SI	1
EPI tech	6
Statistical Assist	2
AUFPO	1
Sn FWV	7
MODC	1
Storekeeper	6

Of those 57 interviewed, 20 of them had an MBBS degree, and 14 of them had postgraduate degrees. Some six had bachelor's degrees other than in medicine, eleven had finished HSC, and six of them studied up to SSC.

Information base: district teams

Some 33 people were interviewed in the five LLP pilot districts. Of those, interviewed, five were Civil Surgeons and four were Deputy Director, Family Planning (see box 2). Four those who were interviewed at the district level were not official DPFT members. Only three of the 33 people interviewed at the district level were female.

The mean number of years worked in the upazila and district health and family planning services was 18 years, ranging from 3 years to 37 years.

Of the 31 people who responded to the question on educational qualification, 12 of them had an MBBS degree, 9 of them had postgraduate degrees, 7 had bachelor's degrees other than in medicine, 1 person had HSC, and 2 people had finished up to SSC level.

Box 2 Job titles of district team members interviewed	
CS	5
DDFP	4
DCS	2
ADCC	1
MOCS	5
MOCC	2
Sn HEO	1
Jr HEO	1
DHS	2
DSI	2
EPI Sup	4
Statistical Assist	1
RMO	1
CS Assist	2

Previous experience in planning

The upazila team members

Of the 57 people interviewed, 27 said that they had no prior

experience in planning. One fifth (11/56) said that they have planned for specific projects or programmes (such as PHC, MCH, LIP, personal tour programme, eye care project, and target orientated local level planning) and another fifth (10) said they have planned for EPI and NID. Some four said that they have planned for upazila service delivery (see table1). Among the senior upazila team members, a third (10/29) had no previous experience in planning.

Previous experience in planning:

- 47% of upazila team members had none
- 30% of district team members had none

Table 1 Upazila team members' previous experience in planning

Previously experienced planning	No. (%) of respondents
Planning for projects	11 (20)
Planning for EPI and NID	10 (18)
Upazila service delivery plan	4 (7)
Planning for MSR/Logistic requirements	4 (7)
Planning for satellite clinics and sterilization camps	3 (5)
Planning for the duty roster	2 (4)
Planning for meetings and trainings	2 (4)

The district team members

Among the 33 district team members interviewed, a third (10) do not have any experience in planning prior to LLP. As previous experience in planning, over a third (12/32) said planning for district service delivery, and 7 people mentioned planning for EPI and NID (see table 2).

Table 2 District team members' previous experience in planning

Previously experienced planning	No. (%) of respondents
District service delivery plan	12 (38)
Planning for EPI and NID	7 (22)
Planning for projects	4 (13)
Planning for meetings and trainings	3 (9)
Planning for disaster management	2 (6)
Planning for clinical service	2 (6)

Knowledge about LLP

Purpose of upazila LLP process

Knowledge of the upazila teams

Of the upazila team members interviewed, two people did not know the purpose of the LLP process. Two thirds (33/52) thought that the purpose of the process was to formulate needs based plans, a half (26) thought that the process was to make upazila plans or better plans, about a fifth (9) said that the purpose was to incorporate community participation. Of those who knew the purpose of the process, all of the answers given were pertinent to the objectives of the LLP process. The distribution of the purpose of the LLP process mentioned by upazila senior managers was almost the same. (Table 3).

Table 3 Upazila team members' knowledge about the purpose of LLP process

Perceived purpose of LLP process	No. (%) respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
To formulate needs based plans/services	33 (64)	19 (68)
To make upazila plans/better plans	26 (50)	14(50)
To incorporate community participation	9 (17)	6(21)
To improve service delivery	7 (14)	4 (14)
To start decentralisation	6 (12)	6 (21)
To increase accountability and ownership of plans	4 (8)	2 (7)
To prepare the national plan	3 (6)	--
Maximise use of local resources	3 (6)	1 (4)
To implement HPSP at the local level	2 (4)	1 (4)
Prepare district plans	1 (3)	--

Knowledge of the district teams

Asked what the purpose for the LLP process was, everyone could give at least one purpose of the process. Most common answers were to make upazila plans (22/31) and to formulate needs based plans (13). Some four people each said that the purpose of LLP process was to start decentralisation, and to implement HPSP at the local level (Table 4).

Table 4 District team members' knowledge about the purpose of LLP process

Perceived purpose of LLP process	No. (%) of respondents
To make upazila plans	22 (71)
To formulate needs based plans/services	13 (42)
To start decentralisation	4 (13)
To implement HPSP at the local level	4 (13)
To improve service delivery	3 (10)
To incorporate community participation	2 (7)
To increase accountability	1 (3)
To build capacities	1 (3)

Information source for the LLP process

Upazila teams

All those interviewed had some source of information for LLP. All but four of those interviewed gave LLP upazila meeting as a source of information. Over a half named the toolkit and another half gave the district orientation meeting as a source of information. Other sources included the central LLP workshop, facilitators from Dhaka, and district monthly meetings. Among the upazila senior managers, all but two sited the toolkit and the district orientation workshop as the source of information (Table 5).

The commonly sited useful source of information for the upazila teams was the LLP meeting at the upazilas. A quarter thought that the toolkit was the most useful source of information. Among the upazila senior managers, over a third (11/29) thought that the toolkit was useful and a third (9/29) thought that the district orientation workshop was useful.

Table 5 Upazila team members' source of information for LLP

Source of information	No. (%) who got information		No. (%) who thought was useful	
	All interviewees	DoW attendees*	All interviewees	DoW attendees*
LLP toolkit	33 (58)	27 (93)	14 (25)	11 (38)
District orientation meeting	27 (47)	27 (93)	9 (16)	9 (31)
LLP meeting in upazila	53 (93)	25 (86)	29 (51)	5 (17)
From colleges in the district (not in an LLP meeting)	14 (25)	10 (35)	1 (2)	1 (3)
From colleges in the district (not in an LLP meeting)	19 (33)	9 (31)	2 (4)	1 (3)
Other sources	9 (16)	7 (29)	6 (11)	6 (21)

* includes only four people in the upazila team that were invited to the district orientation workshops.

Over a third (22/57) of the upazila team members were fully satisfied that they had enough information and guidance about LLP, in order to take the process in the upazila. Of the remaining, 33 said that they were partially satisfied and one person said that he/she was not at all satisfied. Among the upazila senior managers, a third (10/29) said that they were fully satisfied and the remaining said they were somewhat satisfied.

District teams

All of those 33 district team members interviewed had at least one source of information for LLP. All but four district team members gave the toolkit as one source of information for LLP, and the same number of people gave the district orientation meeting (see table 6). About third (10) gave other sources such as; the facilitators from Dhaka, the district monthly meeting, upazila meetings, and upazila plans.

Half (16) of the district team members thought that the toolkit was a useful source of information and about the same number (15) thought that the district orientation workshop was useful (Table 6).

Table 6 District team members' source of information for LLP

Source of information	No. (%) who got information	No. (%) who thought was useful
LLP toolkit	29 (88)	16 (50)
National LLP launch workshop (in Dhaka district)	11 (33)	4 (13)
District orientation meeting	29 (88)	15 (47)
From colleges in the district (not in an LLP meeting)	9 (27)	2 (6)
Other sources	10 (30)	1 (3)

Over half (16/31) of the district team members were fully satisfied that they had enough information and guidance about LLP, in order to undertake the process in the district, while another half (14) were somewhat satisfied and one person was not at all satisfied.

Knowledge and views about the toolkit

Upazila teams

Less than two thirds (33/57) of the upazila team members knew about the toolkit. (Figure 1)

- Knowledge about the toolkit:
- 58% of upazila team members knew about the toolkit
 - 88% of district team members knew about the toolkit

Among just those 24 upazila team members who knew of the toolkit, well over half (20/33) read all of it, a third (11/33) read some of it, and 2 of them had not read it at all.

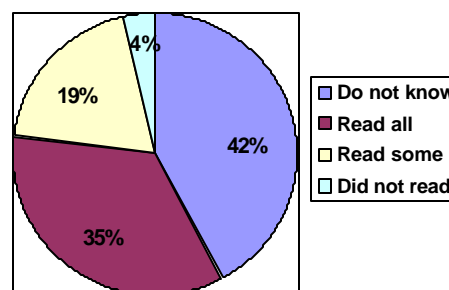


Figure 1 Upazila team members' knowledge and use of the toolkit

Among the 29 upazila senior managers who were invited to the district orientation workshop where they officially received the toolkit, all but three said they knew of the toolkit, and about two thirds (19/26) of them said they read it all, while 7 upazila senior managers only read some of it.

About the same number of those upazila team members who read all of the toolkit (19/31) thought that the toolkit was useful, and the remaining (12) thought that it was somewhat useful. Among the upazila senior managers who knew of the toolkit, two thirds (16/26) said that they thought that the toolkit was useful and the rest thought it was somewhat useful.

Of those upazila team members who knew of the toolkit, a quarter (8/31) said that they had no problems with the toolkit. The remaining upazila team members found the toolkit to be: too complicated (10/31), not consistent with the present system (4), and was not in Bangla (3). A third (7) could not specify the problems with the toolkit (table 7).

Table 7 UPT members' perceived problems with the toolkit (among those who knew of it)

Perceived problems	No. (%) of respondents
Too complicated and not user friendly	10 (32)
Toolkit not consistent with the present system	4 (13)
It was in English	3 (10)
Too long	2 (7)
Some points were missed	2 (7)

District teams

All but four district team members knew of the toolkit. Among those who knew, two thirds (18/29) had read it all, and a third (10) had read some of it. All but two of them found the toolkit very useful, while the two persons thought that it was somewhat useful.

A third (8/25) of those who knew about the

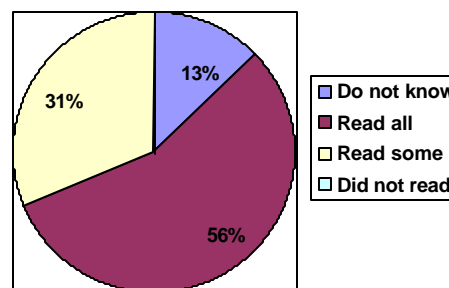


Figure 2 District team members' knowledge and use of the toolkit

toolkit said that there were no problems with the toolkit. A quarter (6) pointed out that it was too complicated and lengthy; five people said it was not in Bangla (Table 8).

Table 8 DPFT members' perceived problems with the toolkit (among those who knew of it)

Perceived problems	No. (%) of respondents
Too complicated, too lengthy	6 (24)
It was in English	5 (20)
Some points were missed	2 (8)
Appearance need to be more attractive	1 (4)
Compilation of upazila plans too difficult	1 (4)

Participation in LLP process

Participation of the upazila teams

All but one person interviewed had attended at least one of the LLP meetings and workshops, either at the district level or at the upazila level. The most commonly attended meetings and workshops were: internal upazila team meetings to share information, the information collection workshops, and the internal upazila team meetings to draft the LLP. Community consultation meetings were also attended by over three quarters of the upazila team members interviewed..

Of the upazila senior managers who were invited to the district orientation workshop, all but four attended the district orientation workshop, all but 2 attended the internal upazila meeting to share information, and all but one attended the community consultation meeting (Table 9).

According to their responses, all of the upazilas visited held an internal upazila team meeting to share information after the district orientation workshop.

Table 9 Upazila team members' attendance in LLP meetings and workshops

Meeting or workshop	No. (%) who attended	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
District Orientation Workshop	26 (46)	25 (86)
Internal upazila team meeting to share information	47 (82)	27 (93)
Community consultation meeting	45 (79)	28 (97)
Internal upazila meeting to identify & prioritise problems	39 (68)	22 (76)
Upazila information meeting with Dhaka and District teams	46 (81)	26 (90)
Internal upazila team meetings to draft LLP	46 (81)	26 (90)
Upazila workshop with Dhaka and District teams to produce final draft of LLP	38 (67)	24 (83)
District LLP compilation workshop to produce district LLP	10 (17)	10 (34)

Some 20 of the 57 upazila team members interviewed said they undertook work concerned with LLP other than the above listed meetings and workshops. Of those who worked on other LLP concerned tasks, nine said they spent time discussing LLP with other upazila staff, five said they worked on information collection, and two gave drafting of LLP as the work they undertook.

Half (28/56) of the upazila team members thought that the number of meetings concerned with LLP was too few, given what they needed to do for LLP in their upazilas. Over a third (22) thought that the number of meetings was about right, and six people thought that it was too many.

Participation of the district teams

All but one interviewed at the district level said that they have attended at least one of the LLP meetings or workshops listed in table 10. All but three had attended the district orientation workshop. As with the upazila team members interviewed, a high proportion (67%, 22/33) of the district team members said they attended at least one community consultation meeting (Table 10).

Table 10 District team members' attendance in LLP meetings and workshops

Meeting or workshop	No. (%) who attended
National LLP launching workshop in Dhaka	7 (21)
District Orientation Workshop	30 (91)
Community consultation meeting in upazilas	22 (67)
Upazila information meeting with Dhaka and District teams	25 (76)
Upazila workshop with Dhaka and District teams to produce final draft of LLP	25 (76)
District LLP compilation workshop to produce district LLP	22 (67)

A quarter (8/32) of the district team spent time working on tasks concerned with LLP other than attending the meetings and workshops. Some three people worked on information collection, two people each worked on drafting the plans and helping with the finalisation of the toolkit. Only one person mentioned that he/she spent time orienting other district staff on LLP.

About two thirds (20/33) of the district level respondents think that given what they needed to do at their district, the number of meetings concerned with LLP was about right. A third (11/33) of the respondents thought that the number of meetings concerned with LLP was too few. None of them said that there were too many.

Difficulties in the LLP process

With the overall process

Upazila teams

About two thirds of the upazila teams (36/57) felt that the LLP process was somewhat difficult. A third (17/57) of the respondents said that the process was easy and four said it was difficult. Among the upazila senior managers, over a quarter (8/29) said the LLP process was easy, less than two thirds (17/29) thought it was somewhat difficult, and four of them said it was difficult.

Difficulties of the process:

- 70% of upazila team members felt it was difficult or somewhat difficult
- 64% of district team members felt it was difficult or somewhat difficult

Asked what were their main difficulties with the process, over a quarter (20/55) said that there were no difficulties. About a fifth (12/55) indicated that information collection was their main difficulty, while eight said some components of planning – such as problem identification, target setting, and picturing a macro view of the upazila – was difficult. Of the 28 upazila senior managers, a third (9) said that they

did not face problems during the process. A quarter (7/28) of the upazila senior managers said information collection was a problem while a fifth (6) said some of the components of planning was a difficulty (see table 11).

Table 11 Main difficulties faced by upazila team members with the process

Perceived problems	No. (%) of respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
Information collection	12 (22)	7 (25)
Some components of planning was difficult	8 (15)	6 (21)
Too busy, time constraint	7 (13)	5 (18)
Complicated and confusing	6 (11)	3 (11)
Filling in formats	4 (7)	3 (11)
Coordination and monitoring	4 (7)	--
Budget planning	3 (6)	3 (11)
Too lengthy	3 (6)	--
Community consultation	1 (2)	--
Toolkit was in English	1 (2)	--

District teams

At the district level, a third (12/33) thought that the process was easy, about two thirds of them (19) thought that it was somewhat difficult, and two people thought that it was difficult.

Asked what were the main difficulties faced during the process, a quarter (8/32) said that there were no difficulties faced. A third (10/32) of the respondents thought that the information collection was the main difficulty, and four people each mentioned the time constraints and community consultation as their main difficulties (Table 12).

Table 12 Main difficulties faced by district team members with the process

Perceived problems	No. (%) of respondents
Information collection	10 (31)
Too busy, time constraint	4 (13)
Community consultation	4 (13)
Some components of planning was difficult	3 (9)
Complicated and confusing	3 (9)
Budget planning	3 (9)

Difficulties in collecting upazila data required

Upazila teams

A quarter (14/57) of those who took part in information collection faced problems

Difficulties in information collection:

- 25% of upazila team members faced difficulties
- 55% of district team members faced difficulties

collecting the upazila data required. Among the upazila senior managers, over a quarter (8/29) said they had problems during data collection.

Of those who faced problems, over a half (7/11) said that the difficulties were due to unavailability of data and the fact that the information was disorganised and scattered. Some four people mentioned that they faced difficulties in collecting information from other departments such as education.

District teams

Over half (18/33) of the district team members faced problems with collecting the upazila data required.

Of those who faced problems during information collection, almost half (8/18) of them had difficulties because the information was not available, and a fifth (5) said because there information was scattered in different documents and was not organised (Table 13).

Table 13 Main difficulties faced by district team members with information collection

Perceived problems	No. (%) of respondents
Information not available	8 (44)
Information scattered, not organised	5 (28)
Collecting information from other departments	4 (22)
Staff were not prepared	3 (17)
Filling in formats	1 (6)
Takes too long	1 (6)

Difficulties with community consultation

Upazila teams

Of the 52 upazila team members who took part in the community consultation, a fifth (11/52) of

them faced problems conducting the community consultation. About the same proportion (5/29) of the upazila senior managers, said they had problems during community consultation.

Difficulties in community consultation

- 21% of upazila team members faced difficulties
- 33% of district team members faced difficulties

Among the upazila team members who faced problems during community consultation, three people each mentioned that they had to face complaints from community representatives about the services, and that the participants were not informed. Some two people each mentioned that; community representatives had misconceptions about the services they provide, the participants were reluctant to speak, and difficulties in ensuring participation by community representatives.

District teams

A third (11/33) of the district team members thought that there were problems with community consultations.

Among the 11 district team members who faced difficulties during community consultation, 6 people mentioned that the difficulties were due to poor representation of the community members at the meeting, 4 said that the participants were not informed about the meeting and didn't understand the purpose, 2 people said that the community representatives were critical about the services they provide.

Difficulties in identifying and prioritising upazila key service problems

Upazila teams

The majority (87%, 48/55) of those who took part in identifying and prioritising

Difficulties in identifying and prioritising problems

- 13% of upazila team members faced difficulties
- 20% of district team members faced difficulties

key service problems said they did not face problems during this process. Among the upazila senior managers, about a fifth (5/29) said they faced problems during this process, and the remaining (24/49) said there were no problems faced.

Among those who faced problems in identifying and prioritising upazila key service problems, three mentioned that all problems identified were important and could not be prioritised, two said that staff were not prepared for such activity, and one person said that staff were not interested.

District teams

A fifth (6/30) of the district team members who took part in the process faced problems during identifying and prioritising upazila key service problems.

Of the six people who faced problems during this process, two people mentioned difficulties in prioritising because there were many important problems, and two explained that the participants in the community meeting were not aware of the services they provide. One person also mentioned that they needed more people to work on the process.

Difficulties in formulating upazila summary plans and detailed activities

Upazila teams

A fifth (12/55) of those who participated in drawing the summary plans and detailed

- | |
|---|
| Difficulties in summary plans & detailed activities |
| • 22% of upazila team members faced difficulties |
| • 36% of district team members faced difficulties |

activities said they faced problems during this process. A third of the upazila senior managers (9/29) said they had problems during formulating upazila summary plans and detailed activities.

Among the commonly expressed problems faced by upazila team members during this process, five said that based on the information collected, it was not possible to plan, four people mentioned the process itself was difficult to understand, and three people expressed difficulties in the process due to inexperience of staff.

District teams

Over a third (10/28) of those who took part thought that there were problems formulating the upazila logistics and procurement action plans.

Among the 10 who faced problems during formulation of upazila summary plans and detailed activities, 3 people said that their problems were due to the inexperience of the staff with this process and 2 explained that the process was complicated and difficult to understand. Another two people said that they had problems with the information collected because they were unavailable or because they were not in standardised format (such as some in absolute numbers and some in percentages). Another person said he/she needed more time for this exercise.

Difficulties in formulating the upazila logistics and procurement action plans

Upazila teams

A fifth (11/53) of the upazila team members said they faced problems in formulating upazila

- | |
|---|
| Difficulties in logistics & procurement plans |
| • 21% of upazila team members faced difficulties |
| • 10% of district team members faced difficulties |

logistics and procurement action plans. The same proportion of the upazila senior managers (6/29) said they had problems during this process.

Of those who faced problems, 7 said that the difficulties were due to separate systems applied to health and family planning, three of them said that the process was too complicated, two people each mentioned the cost of the items were not known, and service wise assessment was difficult to do based on the information they had collected.

District teams

The majority (79%, 26/29) of the district team members said they did not face problems during formulation of upazila logistics and procurement action plans, and only three thought that they had faced problems.

The three people who had problems during logistic and procurement planning, each person identified a cause of the problem as; not having enough time, costs of items not known, and the process being too complicated.

Difficulties with upazila budget planning

Upazila teams

Of those 57 upazila team members interviewed, only 46 of them took part in the budget planning. Among those who participated in the process one fifth (9/46) said they faced problems. All but three of the 29 upazila senior managers interviewed took part in the budget planning. Among the upazila senior managers who participated in budget planning, four of them said they faced problems during this process.

Difficulties in budget planning

- 20% of upazila team members faced difficulties
- 33% of district team members faced difficulties

Of those who had difficulties during budget planning, three people expressed their inexperience in budgeting, and another three said that they did not know the cost of items nor how much should be allocated for certain activities.

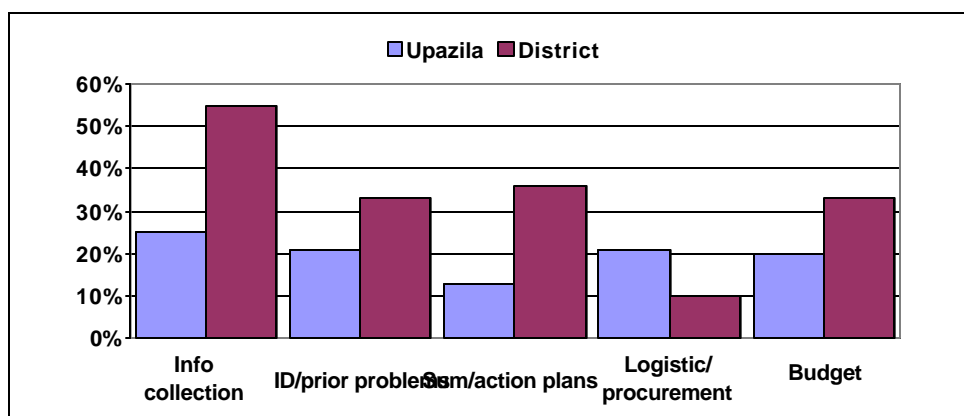
District teams

A third (10/30) of those at the district level who participated in the budget planning thought there were problems during budget planning.

Main problems identified by district team members during budget planning was the fact that the cost of items and activities were not known (3), and that no one had experience in budget planning (3).

Figure 3 below gives a summary of the proportion of people who faced difficulties during each stage of the process. It is clear that the district teams faced more problems in most of the processes except for the logistics and procurement plans.

Figure 3 Proportion of people who faced difficulties in each process



Helpfulness of facilitators

Facilitators from Dhaka

Upazila teams

Over three quarters (44/57)

of the upazila respondents thought that the facilitators from Dhaka were helpful, while a fifth (12) of them thought that they were somewhat helpful and one person said that they were not helpful at all. The upazila senior managers were more negative, with 20 of the 29 saying that the facilitators were helpful, while other 9 said they were somewhat helpful.

Helpfulness of facilitators from Dhaka

- 77% of upazila team members felt they were helpful
- 82% of district team members felt they were helpful

District teams

The vast majority (82%, 27/31) thought that the facilitators from Dhaka were helpful and three people thought that they were somewhat helpful. None of them thought that the facilitators from Dhaka were not helpful at all.

Facilitators from district LLP team

Upazila teams

The majority (72%, 41/57)

of the upazila team

members thought that the facilitators from the district LLP team were helpful, nine people thought they were somewhat helpful and six said that they were not helpful at all.

Helpfulness of facilitators from the district

- 72% of upazila team members felt they were helpful

Logistic support

Financial support

Upazila teams

About half (22/46) of the upazila

respondents considered the financial support in the process

was very good, a third (19) thought it was somewhat good and ten people thought that it was not good at all.

Financial support

- 4 out of 14 UHFPOs and UFPOs felt it was good
- 2 out of 8 CSs and DDFPs felt it was good

When only UHFPOs and UFPOs are considered – since they are the managers concerned with financial matters – the picture becomes different. Of the 14 UHFPOs and UFPOs interviewed, 4 thought that financial support was good and four thought that it was somewhat good, and 5 thought that it was not at all good. When considered in terms of districts;

- In Dhaka district, 2 thought it was good and 2 thought it was somewhat good,
- In Mymensingh district, 2 thought it was somewhat good,
- In Rajshahi district, all 4 thought it was not at all good,
- In Gopalganj district, 2 thought it was good and 1 thought it was somewhat good, and
- In Chandpur district, 1 person thought that it was not at all good.

District teams

Less than a third (9/32) of the district team members thought that financial support was good, over a third (12) thought that it was somewhat good, and another third thought that financial support was not good at all.

When considering only the responses from Civil Surgeons and DDFPs, of the 8 people interviewed, 2 said it was good, 2 said it was somewhat good, and 4 said it was not good at all. In terms of districts break down;

- In Dhaka district, 1 said it was not good at all,
- In Mymensingh district, 1 thought it was not good at all,
- In Rajshahi district, two said it was not good at all,
- In Gopalganj district, 2 thought it was good, and
- In Chandpur district, 2 thought that it was somewhat good.

Financial support to districts was divided by the DGHS and DGFP. Financial support to Dhaka, Gopalganj and Chandpur districts were covered by DGHS, and to Rajshahi and Mymensingh districts were covered by DGFP. Financial disbursements were delayed in all districts and upazilas due to complicated systems and bureaucratic obstacles. None of the upazilas received their advances for the expenses to cover LLP meetings and workshops, which meant the managers to spend some money out of their pockets to meet the expenses until the disbursement was made. The district workshops were paid directly by the directorates at the time of the workshops and there were no delays in disbursements.

Toolkit supply

Upazila teams

Over two thirds (29/44) thought that the supply of toolkits was good, eight people thought it was somewhat good, and seven people thought it was not all at good.

Toolkit supply

- 66% of upazila team members felt it was good
- 78% of district team members felt it was good

Considering only the responses from the UHFPOs and UFPOs, the picture becomes very positive. Of the 12 managers, 11 thought that toolkit supply was good and only one thought that it was not at all good.

District teams

About three quarters (25/32) considered the supply of toolkit to be good, five people thought that it was somewhat good, and two people thought that the supply of toolkit was not at all good.

Considering the responses from Civil Surgeons and UFPOs only, of the 8 managers, all of them thought that the supplies were good.

Supply of additional sheets

Upazila teams

The majority (71%, 36/51) said that the logistic support in terms of supplying additional sheets was very good. Some eight respondents said that it was somewhat good and seven people thought that it was not at all good.

Supply of additional sheets

- 71% of upazila team members felt it was good
- 94% of district team members felt it was good

Of the 12 UHFPOs and UFPOs, 9 said that the supply of additional sheets were good, two said it was somewhat good, and one said it was not good at all.

District teams

All but two district team members thought that supply of additional sheets were very good, while two people thought that it was somewhat good.

Of the 8 Civil Surgeons and DDFPs, all of them said that the supply of additional sheets were good.

Opinions about the guidelines and formats

The time lapse between conducting LLP and the review seems to have been long enough for many people to forget about each format, therefore not being able to provide useful comments. This detailed feedback about the guidelines and formats could have been conducted at the end of every upazila LLP finalisation workshops and district compilation workshops, and this might have ensured a more detailed and accurate feedback.

Upazila teams

For all the guidelines and formats, between 35% and 50% of the upazila team respondents (who could identify the formats) thought that they were very clear. The guidelines and the formats that scored the least were for the community views, indicating that upazila team members faced problems fulfilling this part of the process (Table 14).

Table 14 Upazila team members' opinions on the clarity of guidelines and formats

Form code and description	No. (%) who thought very clear	
	Guidelines	Format
A1: General profile of upazila	29 (57)	28 (54)
A2: Staffing situation	26 (51)	25 (50)
A3: Hard to reach areas	25 (50)	25 (50)
B: Service performance	22 (49)	23 (44)
C1: Drugs, MSR, Commodities situation	23 (47)	24 (46)
C2: Equipment situation	21 (43)	22 (43)
D: Community views	19 (38)	19 (37)
E: Prioritising problems & proposed activities	19 (38)	19 (38)
F1: ESP service delivery summary plan	20 (40)	20 (40)
F2: Detailed action/monitoring plan: ESP activities	21 (42)	20 (40)
F3: Action plan: capacity building	21 (42)	21 (42)
F4: Action plan: BCC	20 (40)	20 (40)
F5: Action plan: logistics/procurement: drugs/CP	24 (49)	24 (48)
F6: Action plan: logistics/procurement: commod/MSR	24 (49)	23 (46)
F7: Action plan: logistics/procurement: equipment	23 (47)	24 (48)
F8: Budget plan	20 (40)	20 (39)

District teams

The district team members had clear ideas about the use of each format, with a higher proportion of people saying that the formats were very clear. The proportion of those who said that the formats were very clear ranged from 69% to 79%, about double of that of the upazila team members (Table 15).

Table 15 District team members' opinions on the clarity of upazila guidelines and formats

Form code and description	No. (%) thought very clear	
	Guidelines	Formats
A1: General profile of upazila	21 (78)	20 (77)
A2: Staffing situation	20 (74)	19 (70)
A3: Hard to reach areas	20 (77)	19 (73)
B: Service performance	19 (73)	18 (69)
C1: Drugs, MSR, Commodities situation	19 (76)	19 (73)
C2: Equipment situation	18 (72)	20 (74)
D: Community views	18 (72)	19 (70)
E: Prioritising problems & proposed activities	18 (72)	20 (74)
F1: ESP service delivery summary plan	18 (67)	17 (63)
F2: Detailed action/monitoring plan: ESP activities	18 (75)	21 (78)
F3: Action plan: capacity building	18 (75)	21 (78)
F4: Action plan: BCC	18 (75)	20 (74)
F5: Action plan: logistics/procurement: drugs/CP	18 (78)	21 (78)
F6: Action plan: logistics/procurement: commod/MSR	18 (78)	21 (78)
F7: Action plan: logistics/procurement: equipment	18 (78)	21 (78)
F8: Budget plan	19 (79)	21 (78)

Since there were no separate guidelines for the district plan formats, a lower proportion of people thought that the guidelines were very clear (Table 16).

Table 16 District team members' opinions on the clarity of district guidelines and formats

Form code and description	No. (%) thought very clear	
	Guidelines	Formats
DCF1: General profile upazilas	17 (65)	21 (78)
DCF2: Officer & staff position for upazilas	15 (46)	19 (58)
DCF3: Officer & staff position for district	15 (60)	20 (77)
DCF4: Format for prioritising upazila problems	16 (64)	19 (73)
DCF5: ESP delivery targets & assistance required	16 (64)	20 (77)
DCF6: Plan for capacity building for upazilas	16 (64)	19 (73)
DCF7: Plan for capacity building district level	16 (64)	19 (73)
DCF8: Plan for BCC activities for upazilas	16 (64)	19 (73)
DCF9: Plan for BCC activities for district HQ	16 (64)	20 (77)
DCF10: Logistics req: drugs, MSR, commod, CP	15 (60)	19 (73)
DCF11: Logistics requirement for the district	15 (60)	20 (77)
DCF12: Equipment for repair requirement	15 (60)	20 (77)
DCF13: Purchase of equipment requirement	15 (60)	20 (77)
DCF14: Budget planning for upazilas	16 (64)	20 (77)
DCF15: Budget planning for district	16 (64)	20 (77)
DCF16: Yearly supervisory plan of the district	16 (64)	20 (77)
DCF 17: Coordin & monitoring activities of district	17 (65)	20 (74)

Perceived usefulness of the LLP process

Upazila teams

The majority (71%, 40/56) of the upazila respondents think that the LLP process had been useful, overall. A fifth (12) thought it was somewhat useful and three people said it was not useful at all. About the same proportion of the upazila senior managers (20/29) thought that the LLP process was useful, while the remaining 9 said that it was somewhat useful.

Usefulness of the LLP process

- 71% of upazila team members felt the LLP process had been useful
- 91% of district team members felt the LLP process had been useful

Asked what parts of the process were most useful, one fifth (10/54) said that identification and prioritisation of problems were most useful, and another fifth thought the information collection was the most useful part. However, one person said that nothing was useful, 9 people did not know, and 5 people thought that everything was useful. As for the upazila senior managers, a third each mentioned identification and prioritisation of problems (6/27), information collection (6), and community participation being the most useful parts of the process (Table 17).

Table 17 Upazila team members' views of the most useful parts of the LLP process

Most useful parts	No. (%) respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
Identification and prioritisation of problems	10 (19)	6 (22)
Information collection	10 (19)	6 (22)
Community participation	7 (14)	6 (22)
To make own plans	5 (10)	1 (4)
Form action plans	5 (10)	4 (15)
Fix target	4 (8)	2 (7)
Discussion on budget	2 (4)	--
Logistic planning	1 (2)	1 (4)

Three quarters of the respondents at the upazila level either said that there was nothing that was least useful or could not specify the least useful parts of the LLP process. Of those who commented on the least useful parts, three said budget and logistic planning, two each said community participation and some of the formats, and one person gave planning on staffing.

District teams

All but three district team members thought that the LLP process was useful in their district, while two people thought it was somewhat useful, and one person thought that it was not useful at all.

Asked what were the most useful parts, a third (11/33) said that formulating action plans and fixing targets were the most useful parts, while over a quarter (9) mentioned that community participation was most useful (Table 18).

Table 18 District team members' views of the most useful parts of the LLP process

Most useful parts	No. (%) of respondents
Formulating action plans and fixing targets	11 (33)
Community participation	9 (27)
Information collection	6 (18)
Problem identification and prioritisation	4 (12)
Increased ownership of the plans and improvement of service delivery	3 (9)
Workshops and coordination between upazilas and district	2 (6)
Discussion on budget	1 (2)
Easier to monitor	1 (2)

Asked what was the least useful part of the LLP process, over three quarters (24) of the district team members said that there was nothing not useful about the process, and three people did not know what was least useful. There was no consensus on what was least useful among those who thought there was something not useful. Each person identified; community participation, plans were too ambitious, some formats were not useful, the format on staffing was not useful, and budget planning was not useful.

Perceived benefits from participation in the LLP process

Upazila teams

Asked about the main benefits for the upazila team for participation in the LLP process, all but two people mentioned some benefits. About a third (16/55) of the respondents said that the information collection was the main benefit, and a quarter (13) mentioned upazila team building (see table 19). Of the 29 upazila senior managers, one of them said that there was nothing beneficial. The benefit of the LLP process most commonly mentioned by upazila senior managers was capacity building (12/29). The proportion of upazila senior managers who thought capacity building was the largest benefit of the process was much higher than the rest of the team, implying that the perceptions of capacities built were stronger among the upazila senior managers (Table 19)

Table 19 Upazila team members' opinions on the main benefits of LLP process

Main benefits of LLP process	No. (%) respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
Information collection	16 (29)	8 (29)
Upazila team building	13 (24)	8 (29)
Capacity building	11 (13)	12 (43)
Shared views with other Upazila team members	9 (16)	4 (14)
Learnt about other services provided by H & FP	7 (13)	2 (7)
Learnt about local health problems and community participation	5 (9)	3 (11)
Set local targets	4 (7)	--
Formed local plans	3 (5)	1 (4)
Easier to monitor	2 (4)	--
Increased management and supervisory capacities	1 (2)	--

District teams

All but one person at the district level could name at least one benefit as a result of undertaking the LLP process. Over half (17/32) identified capacity building as the main benefit of the process, while over a third (12) said information collection was the main benefit (Table 20).

Table 20 District team members' opinions on the main benefits of LLP process

Main benefits of LLP process	No. (%) of respondents
Capacity building in planning process	17 (53)
Information collection	12 (38)
Community participation	6 (19)
Local plans and targets	4 (13)
Upazila team building	3 (9)
Better follow-up and easier monitoring	3 (9)
Learnt about other H&FP services	1 (3)

Expectations from undertaking the LLP process

Changes in the coming year

Upazila teams

Some five upazila team members do not expect any change next year as a result of undertaking the LLP process, and further 11 people did not give a response to this question. The most commonly expressed change in the next year was improved service delivery mentioned by about half of the respondents (21). Of the 27 upazila senior managers, four of them said that they expect no difference in the next year. The expected difference for the next year as a result of the process expressed by upazila senior managers were about the same as the rest of team (Table 21).

Table 21 Upazila team members' expectations of changes as a result of undertaking LLP

Expected difference	No. (%) respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
Improved service delivery	21(46)	13 (48)
Achieve target	5 (11)	4 (15)
Improve logistic supply	5 (11)	1 (4)
Local needs will be addressed	6 (13)	4 (15)
Improved registering system and monitoring	3 (7)	3 (11)
LLP will be conducted routinely in the future	3 (4)	2 (7)
Vacant posts will be filled	2 (4)	1 (4)
Community clinics established and increased service areas	2 (4)	--

District teams

At the district level, only one person does not expect any change next year as a result of the LLP process, and 7 people did not answer to this question. The majority (85%, 22/26) expect improved service delivery and work performance. Some three people expect that targets will be achieved, and two each said increased budget allocation, and implementation of HPSP.

Expectations of increased budget allocation

Upazila teams

The majority (79%, 45/57) of the upazila teams expect that the budget allocation to the

Expectation of increased budget allocation

- 79% of upazila team members expect an increase
- 70% of district team members expect an increase

upazila will be increased as per the plans submitted, while 10 people thought that the budget allocation would not increase. Among the upazila senior managers, three quarters (22/29) said they expect the budget to increase.

District teams

Some 70% (23/33) of the district team members expect an increased budget allocation as per their submitted plans.

Expected proportion of additional activities accepted in the plan

Upazila teams

A third (18/57) of the upazila team members expect that all of the additional activities indicated in their plans

Expected proportion of additional activities accepted

- 77% of upazila team members expect that all or most of the additional activities will be accepted
- 67% of district team members expect that all or most of the additional activities will be accepted

will be accepted, while almost half (26) expect that most of them will be accepted, 10 people expect some of them will be accepted and 3 people expect a few of them to be accepted. No one thought that none of his/her planned additional activities would be accepted. Among 29 the upazila senior managers, 12 (42%) expect that all the additional activities will be accepted, 11 (38%) expect most of them to be accepted, 4 said some of them, and 2 said few of the will be accepted.

District teams

Some 42% (14/33) of the district team members expect that all of the additional activities indicated in their plans will be accepted. A quarter (8) think that most of the

additional activities will be accepted, and another third (10) think that some of them will be accepted. One person thought that few of the additional activities will be accepted, but no one thought that none of it would be accepted.

Increased performance management

Upazila teams

Over 90% (52/57) of the upazila respondents expect that performance management

will improve as a result of the LLP process. The same proportion (90%, 26/29) of upazila senior managers said they expect that performance management will improve.

Increase in performance management

- 91% of upazila team members expect an increase
- 91% of district team members expect an increase

District teams

All but three district team members interviewed expect that performance management will improve as a result of the LLP process.

Recommendations for the national roll out

Can the LLP process be done in the same way?

Upazila teams

Two thirds (38/57) of upazila team members think that the LLP process can be done in all upazilas in the same way as has been done in their upazila,

while the remaining third (19) think that it cannot be done in the same way. About the same proportion (55%, 19/29) upazila senior managers said they think that the national roll out of the LLP process can be done in the same way.

National roll out of the LLP process

- 67% of upazila team members think it can be done in the same way
- 79% of district team members think it can be done in the same way

Those who thought that the LLP process should not be done in the same way for the roll out gave their reasons. Some five of them said the process takes too much time and effort, four of them said that the process need simplification, more information provided and increased capacity to ensure the success of the national roll out. One person expressed his disapproval with the process and said that LLP is not needed.

District teams

The majority (79%, 26/33) of those interviewed at the district level think that the LLP process can be done in all districts in the same way it has been done in their district. Only seven district team members thought that it should not be done in the same way.

Of those who said that the roll out should not be done in the same way, three people explained that the process is too complicated and should be reviewed; two people said that there is a need to do more training and orientation of LLP for the roll out. Also, one person each explained that the process demands too much work and LLP should cover all activities not just ESP.

Changes recommended for the national roll out of the LLP process

Upazila teams

Of the upazila respondents, half (27/53) said that there was no need for change in the process, or did not know what to recommend. Among those who made recommendations, 7 suggested a concise and simplified process, 6 recommended that the personnel involved in the upazila team should be flexible, and 5 suggested a longer time period for the process (Table 22). Among the 28 upazila senior managers, a third (10) of them said there was no need for change in the process and three of them did not know what to suggest. The proportions of changes to the process recommended by upazila senior managers were about the same as the rest of the upazila team members.

Table 22 Upazila team members' changes recommended to the LLP process

Recommended change to the process	No. (%) respondents	
	All interviewees	Upazila senior managers
More concise and simplified	7 (13)	5 (18)
More involvement and flexibility in choice of UPT	6 (11)	3 (11)
More time for the process	5 (9)	2 (7)
More training	4 (8)	2 (7)
More coordination and district support	4 (8)	3 (11)
Need consultants	3 (6)	3 (11)
Cover all activities and base the structure according to HPSP	2 (4)	1 (4)
All materials should be in Bangla	2 (4)	1 (4)
Increase local authority	2 (4)	1 (4)
More community involvement	1 (2)	1 (4)
Discontinue LLP	1 (2)	1 (4)

District teams

Asked what changes should be made for the LLP process to be undertaken in all districts, 12 people said that there is no need to change, and four people did not respond to this question. Of those who made suggestions, four said that the process should be concise and simplified, and another four said that there should be more involvement in terms of personnel (Table 23).

Table 23 District team members' changes recommended to the LLP process

Recommended change to the process	No. (%) of respondents
More concise and simplified	4 (14)
More involvement of personnel	4 (14)
More coordination	2 (7)
Cover all activities	2 (7)
More community involvement	2 (7)
All materials should be in Bangla	2 (7)
Need more time	1 (3)

Changes recommended for the toolkit

Upazila teams

A third (21/55) did not have any recommendations to make for the toolkit and another third (16) did not know what to recommend. Among those who made recommendations 12 people suggested that the language should be in Bangla, 9

suggested simplification and more clarifications, two people said the toolkit should not use technical terms and one person recommended that there should be more information.

District teams

Half (16/32) of those at the district level said no changes were necessary and four said that they did not know what to recommend. Among those who made suggestions, 10 suggested that the language should be in Bangla, three said that it should be more simple and clear, and one person suggested that the appearance should be improved.

Changes recommended for the guidelines

Upazila teams

A third (20/56) saw no need for improvement, and a quarter (13) did not know what to recommend. Of those who made suggestions for improvement, 13 of them said that they should be simpler and clearer, 12 said they should be in Bangla, and 4 suggested that technical terms should be avoided.

District teams

Half (15/30) saw no need to change the guidelines, and four people did not know what to suggest. Seven suggested that the language should be changed; four said they should be simpler and clearer, and one person suggested that the appearance should be improved.

Changes recommended for the formats

Upazila teams

Some 40% of respondents saw no need for improvements of the formats, while a quarter (14/56), said that they did not know what to recommend. Among those who made suggestions for improvements, 10 people each mentioned the language issue and the need for simplification and clarification. Some five people suggested less formats and one person each recommended to avoiding technical terms and providing more information for the formats (Table 24).

Table 24 Upazila team members' changes recommended to the formats

Recommended change	No. (%) of respondents
Language	10 (18)
Simplification and clarification	10 (18)
Less formats	5 (9)
Avoid technical terms	1 (2)
Provide more information	1 (2)

District teams

About half (14/31) saw no need to change the formats four people did not know what to suggest. Of those who made recommendations, 8 people suggested that the formats be more simple and clear, and five people suggested that they be in Bangla (Table 25).

Table 25 District team members' changes recommended to the formats

Recommended change	No. (%) of respondents
Simplification and clarification	8 (26)
Language	5 (16)
Less formats	2 (7)
Avoid technical terms	1 (3)
Better appearance	1 (3)

2. Upazila community representatives

In each upazila, three community representatives who participated in the community consultation meeting for the LLP process were interviewed.

Information base

Of the 24 community representatives interviewed, a third (8) of them were union parishad members, a third (8) were opinion formers (such as teachers or imams), and a third (8) were sector representatives (such as agriculture or NGOs). About half (11/24) of the interviewees were female.

Community representatives interviewed	
Union parishad members	8
Opinion formers	8
Sector representatives	8

Among the 24 interviewees, six of them were teachers, six of them were NGO workers, three were government officers, and two each were imams, village doctors, housewives, and tailors. The other remaining person was a pharmacy owner.

Experience in LLP process and views

The purpose of the LLP process

Of those community representatives interviewed, only one person did not know what the purpose of the LLP process was. A third (8/24) of the community representatives said that their understanding of the purpose of the LLP process was to improve service delivery. Also about a third (7) said the purpose was to identify local problems and needs, and a quarter (6) of them said making upazila plans was the purpose of the LLP process (Table 26).

Table 26 Community representatives' understanding of the purpose of the LLP process

Purpose	No. of respondents (%)
To improve service delivery	8 (33)
To identify local problems and needs	7 (29)
To make upazila plans	6 (25)
To ensure community participation	5 (21)
To provide better access to services	2 (8)
To start decentralisation	2 (8)
To prepare the national plans	1 (4)
To discuss about diseases	1 (4)
To discuss about non-use of services	1 (4)
Don't know	1 (4)

Main issues discussed in community consultation

Two thirds (15/24) of the community representatives said that the local health problems and diseases were among the main issues discussed during the community consultation meeting. Less than half (11) said that problems with health and family planning services were the main issues discussed. A fifth (5) thought that specific programme issues, and another fifth (5) said drug availability were discussed mainly at the meeting (Table 27).

Table 27 Main issues reported to be discussed during the community consultation meeting

Issues	No. of respondents (%)
Local health problems and about diseases	15 (63)
Problems with H & FP services	11 (46)
Specific programme issues (MCH, EPI, etc)	5 (21)
About drug availability	5 (21)
About community participation	4 (17)
About quality of services	4 (17)
About improvement of H & FP	4 (17)

Participation in the meetings

Some five community representatives said that there was very little done or nothing done to encourage participants at the community consultation meeting to give their views. All of the rest (14) said that they were encouraged to give their views through discussions, and one female added that the fact that there were other females in the meeting made it easier for her to speak.

All but one of the community representatives said that they participated in the discussion themselves. One person who did not give his/her views at the meeting was because the point he/she wanted to make had already been said. Among those who participated in the discussion, about a third (6/22) made a point about the provision of specific services (such as EPI, MCH, FP, emergency care, and pathology). Also, a third (6) mentioned about the improvement of the UHC facilities at the meeting, and another third (6) discussed about the attitudes of service providers (see table 28).

Table 28 Main points made by interviewees at the community consultation meeting

Issues	No. of respondents (%)
About provision of specific services (EPI, MCH, FP, emergency care, pathology)	6 (27)
About improvement of UHC facilities (improved sanitation, more equipment)	6 (27)
Staff attitude	6 (27)
Quality of services	4 (18)
Improve client satisfaction	4 (18)
About TBAs and unqualified service providers	3 (14)
In-patient services	2 (9)
Need of specialist doctors	2 (9)

Perceived effects of giving views as community representatives

All but one person thought that the service providers listened to what they said in the community consultation meeting.

All but one community representative felt that their views had been heard by the service providers during the community consultation meeting.

A third (8/24) of the people interviewed did not know how the community views listened to at the community consultation meeting were to be used. Only in one upazila (Kotalipara, Gopalganj district) did all three of those interviewed did not know how the discussions were to be used. Of those who knew, eleven said that they would be used for discussions with higher authorities, and five people said their views would be used at the upazila level for planning purposes.

Two thirds of the community representatives felt they knew how their views expressed in the meeting were to be used.

All but one person expected improvements in the health and family planning services as a result of the community consultation meeting. About a half (9/22) of those who expected some change in the health and family planning services, said that there will be improvements in the services and management as a result of the community consultation meeting. A quarter (5) expects that local needs be address because community views had been heard and incorporated. A fifth of them (4) gave increased service areas as an improvement they expected as a result of the discussion (Table 29).

Table 29 Changes expected as a result of the community consultation meeting

Changes	No. of respondents (%)
Improved services and management	9 (45)
Community views incorporated and local needs address	5 (25)
Increased service areas	4 (20)
Better staff attitude	3 (15)
Increased awareness of the people	2 (10)
Cheaper services	1 (5)
Increased local authority	1 (5)

This optimism about the effects of giving their views in the LLP process contrasts with past experience. All but one person felt that community views had not been taken into account by the local authorities of health and family planning services in the upazila. The remaining person felt that their views had been partly taken into account.

Recommendations for future community participation in LLP

Half (11/24) of those who gave suggestions for increased community participation for future LLP suggested that there be more regular community meetings and discussions. A third (8) suggested involvement of more people, and another third (7) suggested that the local authorities give more importance to community views (see table 30).

Table 30 Suggest ions for increased community participation for future LLP

Suggestions	No. of respondents (%)
Community meetings and discussions held more regularly	11 (50)
Involvement of more people	8 (36)
Put importance to community views	7 (32)
Increase awareness of the community members	3 (14)
Improve staff attitude and increase local authority	2 (9)

3. Senior managers and the Central LLP team

The Joint Chief (Planning) and four line directors (ESP Health, ESP FP, Planning Health, and Planning FP) were interviewed about their experience and opinions of the first phase of LLP, as senior managers.

The Central LLP team members interviewed included the Team Leader for PCC, Deputy Team Leader for PCC, one person from MCU, two technical assistants for LLP, two persons from the Planning Unit (the focal point of LLP, and one CPFT member), and two other persons involved in the process as a CPFT member, and helped in finalisation of the toolkit (PM (Nutrition Health Services) ESP, DGHS, and PM (Clinical Services) ESP – RH, DGFP).

Interviewed from the central level

Senior managers

Joint Chief (Planning)
Director ESP, Health
Director ESP, FP
Director Planning, Health
Director Planning, FP

Central LLP team

Team Leader, PCC
Deputy Team Leader, PCC
MCU person
Technical Assistants for LLP (2)
Planning Unit (Focal Point for LLP)
Planning Unit (CPFT member)
PM (NHS) ESP, DGHS (toolkit finalisation)
PM (CS) ESP-RH, DGFP (CPFT member)

The two LDs from FP have both been in post for several years, while the two LDs from Health have both been in post for less than a year. The joint chief has been in this position for 2 years.

Involvement with LLP

Senior managers

Among the senior managers, it was clear from the interviews that the two Planning LDs and the Joint Chief have been closely involved with the

first phase LLP, whereas the two ESP LDs have had much less involvement. Yet they now need to incorporate the plans from the five districts into their Operational Plans (OP) for next year, working to a tight timescale.

The two ESP LDs have had relatively little involvement in the process, yet they now need to incorporate the plans for the five districts into their OPs.

The numbers of LLP related meetings and workshops attended by the two Planning LDs and the Joint Chief were considerably more than for the two ESP LDs. The Planning LDs' attendance in the meetings and workshops has been constant throughout the process of the first phase LLP, while the two ESP LDs attended one or two workshops each during the process.

Reflecting their attendance in LLP related meetings and workshops, the two Planning LDs and the Joint Chief have read almost all the documents related to the LLP process. These documents included the briefing note, draft manual, toolkit, and formats. The two ESP LDs have read parts of the draft manual, toolkit and formats.

Central LLP team

All those interviewed from the central LLP team have been involved in the process since the initial stages of the first phase of LLP. Of the nine interviewed, six have been involved since the Chittagong workshop in August 2000. The others also joined

the process around the same time, except for the focal point of LLP, who has been involved since the inception of the process in August of 1999.

The extent to which each person was involved in the organisation, facilitation and participation in national, district, and upazila workshops varies according to their role in the process. The two Planning Unit personnel were involved to a large extent, facilitating and organising workshops at all levels. Of the two ESP persons interviewed, one person attended at least one workshop at all levels, while the other person only facilitated upazila workshops.

All but one CPFT member interviewed had been involved in the process of drafting the toolkit, guidelines, and the formats. One CPFT member from ESP – RH, DGFP did not take part in any of the design process of these documents. Of those involved, their involvement varies from writing some sections to participating in workshop.

Experience of the Central LLP team at district and upazila levels

Perceived problems experienced by the upazila teams

Information collection

All but one person expressed that the upazila teams experienced some problems in information collection. Most commonly expressed difficulty was the collection of updated information from different functional areas. Some upazila teams were disorganised and the importance of information collection was not understood. Questions were raised about the efficiency of workshops because attendants of district orientation workshops did not brief the rest of the upazila team, and some upazila teams did not have the information collected for discussion at upazila information workshops.

Community consultation

Most commonly expressed perceived problems experienced by upazila teams in community consultation were the fact that service providers don't like to listen to the criticisms by community representatives. One TA observed that upazila teams are inexperienced in facilitating such meetings with a large, heterogeneous group of people, needing guidelines and structure for the meeting. Other concerns were that participants did not truly represent the communities, and that uninformed participants failed to understand the purpose of the meeting. Only one of those interviewed thought that there were no problems experienced in community consultations.

Problems faced with community consultations

Service providers don't like to listen to criticisms by community representatives, and their inexperience in facilitating such meetings.

Identifying and prioritising problems

Of the nine interviewed, three thought that there were no problems experienced by the upazila teams in identifying and prioritising problems. Most commonly mentioned problems were to do with the inexperience of the upazila teams, resulting in plans often not thought through, unrealistic, and not prioritised.

Identifying and prioritising problems

Inexperience leads to plans often not thought through, unrealistic and not prioritised.

Producing upazila plans

In terms of the process of producing upazila plans, upazila teams experienced problems because; there were too many

indicators to consider, the forms were in English, and some upazila teams were sceptical about the outcome of this process. Plans formed as an output had unrealistic targets – often encouraged by DPFT/CPFT to set to 100% -- and emphasis tended to be on capacity building of service providers rather than improvements in the services they provide. Of those interviewed, two thought that there were no problems during producing upazila plans.

Problems producing upazila plans

Too many indicators to consider, the forms were in English and some teams were sceptical about the outcome of the process

Problems faced by district teams

Supervising and supporting upazila teams

The experience with district teams' performance in supervising and supporting upazila teams varied from district to district. There were district teams that understood the process well, were prepared and committed, and there were teams that did not do so well. It was pointed out that in some cases, district orientation workshops failed to develop district capacities because they were conducted in a rushed manner.

Collating upazila information

Of the nine interviewed, only one thought there were problems faced by district teams in collating upazila information. One issue raised was that the district teams collated the upazila information without giving much thought to the source and utility of the information collected by upazila teams.

Collating district plans

Central LLP team members raised concerns about the inexperience of district teams, needing more time and training to collate district plans

effectively. District plans produced often had no fixed order, no prioritisation and were just compilations of upazila plans. Due to lack of district capacities, TAs often had to do their work in compiling the district plans. Nevertheless, of those TAs interviewed, three thought that there were no problems faced by district teams in collating upazila plans.

Problems in collating district plans

District teams needed more time and training. Due to their incapacities, district plans were often just a straight compilation of upazila plans

Support of the upazila team by the district team

Of those interviewed, one thought that the support of the upazila team by the district team was not done at all well, and five thought that it was done fairly well. However, they added that the performance of the district teams varied from district to district.

Effectiveness of community consultation

Only three persons gave comments on community consultations, all of which thought that they were "somewhat" effective. Concerns were raised that in some upazilas the community consultation went very well but in others it hardly happened.

Views about the toolkit, guidelines, and formats

The toolkit

Of those Central LLP team members interviewed, three thought that the toolkit was very useful and six of them thought that it was somewhat useful.

Senior managers

The most commonly mentioned problems of the toolkit by senior managers and the Central LLP team alike was that the toolkit was lengthy, complicated and needed time and training for people to understand and use it.

Central LLP team

In using the toolkit, it was identified that; there were no guidance notes on roles and responsibilities, on orienting remaining upazila team members after the district workshop, and too little guidance on filling in formats, planning and prioritising issues.

Recommendations for improvements to toolkit

Reflecting the problems faced at upazila and district levels, it was recommended to simplify and to provide the document in both English and Bangla. Recommendations were made also to add sections on: steps to follow, roles and responsibilities and delegation of work, work schedule, and an explanation of the process by which the district plans are incorporated into NOP. One person suggested that in the future, the toolkit be a part of the ordinary documentation at district level rather than an 'external' document.

The guidelines

Most Central LLP team members suggested that the guidelines be simplified with fewer indicators, translated into Bangla, and should give more examples for upazila/district teams to follow. On the other hand, some people commented on the need for more detail in the guidelines.

The formats

For upazilas

All those familiar with the formats consistently said that there were too many formats – some were repetitive – and that they were very complicated.

For districts

Similarly, the formats were too lengthy and complicated, reflecting the upazila formats. It was also mentioned that there was a need for a format to set overall targets for the district.

Recommendations for improvements to formats

Main suggestions made by the Central LLP team were to simplify, and to cut down and combine some of the formats, so that only essential information is collected for planning. Recommendations were made that formats should be compatible with the NOP formats to make incorporation of district plans easier. The design of the present format does not ensure internal coherence in the planning process, thus, linkages among formats should be made.

Effects of the LLP first phase

Incorporation of district plan into national operational plans

Opinions of the senior managers

All five of the senior managers think the district plans will be incorporated in to the NOP for next year, in some way. A decision has been taken by the ministry that the district plans have to be incorporated, although this will be as an annex to the main plan, which is already in draft form.

Difficulties raised by senior managers included timing: district plans need to be received in good time prior to drafting the national

plan. Other issues mentioned were the incompatibility of district plan formats with the format of the national plan, and the fact that district plans do not separate health and family planning (as is still the case at the national level). One LD suggested that PCC should reorganise the district plans into a format compatible with the NOP.

District plans should be received in good time prior to drafting the operation plans, and their format should be compatible

Opinions of the Central LLP team

All except one Central LLP team members said the district plans will be incorporated into the NOP for next year.

The Central LLP team also raised concerns of compatibility of district plans with the formats for OPs. The Team leader, PPC agrees that reformatting district plans in to a compatible format with the national plan would be the role of PCC role along with MCU.

Despite these difficulties, both senior managers and the Central LLP team members think that it would be unfair for LLP to make no difference after all the time and effort that went into this process, and that it would be harmful if nothing is changed based on the upazila and district plans.

Changes as a result of LLP in the five districts and their upazilas

Opinions of the senior managers

Budget allocation. Among the senior managers, three out of five said there will be an increase in budget allocation, but to a limited extent. The joint chief (Planning) pointed out that although the overall budget may not increase, the allocation of the budget will be rationalised based on needs.

Performance management.

All senior managers think that there will be an improvement in performance management. A reason given was the increased ownership of implementation plans by service providers.

Changes as a result of LLP in the pilot district (senior managers)

Increased budget allocation? Some yes, some no.
Increased performance management? Yes.
Increased logistic support? Yes.
Other changes? Yes.

Logistic support. All but one senior manager thinks that there will be an increase in logistic support. However, the joint chief (Planning) thinks that there will be no increase in logistic support because it is so closely linked to the budget.

Other changes. Ownership of the plans was the most commonly mentioned change that senior managers expect in the coming year.

Opinions of the Central LLP team

Budget allocation. Of the Central LLP team members interviewed, five out of nine think that there will be an increase in the budget allocation, to a limited extent.

Changes as a result of LLP in the pilot district (Central LLP team) Increased budget allocation? Some yes, some no. Increased performance management? Yes. Increased logistic support? Some yes, some no. Other changes? Yes

Performance management. All but one said there will be increase in performance management in the next year. This is because the districts now can supervise the upazilas based on their plans.

Logistic support. Three of the Central LLP team members interviewed think that there will be no increase in logistic support. The team leader for PCC points out that although in the short term there will be no increase, in the long term resources will be allocated more rationally and efficiently based on needs, increasing logistic support in some areas.

Other changes. All but one Central LLP team think that there will be other changes in the LLP districts and upazilas in the coming year. Most commonly mentioned changes were increased capacities in planning, stronger upazila teams, improved managerial skills, and increased commitment in service delivery. Some also thought the unified database created during the process will make a difference in the coming year.

Perceptions of the LLP process

Main purpose of the first phase LLP

Opinions of the senior managers

Most senior managers consider the purpose of the first phase LLP was to learn for the roll-out, and to orient the upazila and district teams about the process.

Opinions of the Central LLP team

As with the senior managers, the Central LLP team consider the purpose of the first phase LLP to learn for the roll-out, and to orient upazila and district teams with the process. Others think that it was to make a first step towards decentralisation, or to build linkages among LDs.

Benefits of LLP process

Senior managers and the Central LLP team members think that the main benefit of LLP process was that the first step towards decentralisation has been made. Increased ownership of plans by upazilas, districts, and the LDs were also commonly mentioned. Team building, increased accountability, and local targets and milestones are considered to be benefits produced through the implementation of LLP.

Recommendations for the future LLP process

National roll-out

Senior managers

Asked whether the roll-out be done in the same way as in the first phase, all senior managers said no. Most gave unsustainable financial and human resource requirements for implementation as a major reason. It was recommended that the roll-out be implemented with more time for upazila and district teams to be trained and understand the process fully. The need to demonstrate a strong national level support in the roll out of the LLP process was expressed.

Opinions of the Central LLP team

All Central LLP team members interviewed think that the roll-out cannot be done in the same way as the first phase LLP. As with senior managers, Central LLP team members are concerned about the sustainability due to limited resources. The centrally driven nature of the process is not replicable for the roll out, thus the responsibilities of DPFTs should be increased.

All Central LLP team members interviewed think that not all the elements of the present process are required from the first phase LLP. Some concerns were raised such as too many upazila events spread out in time, creating difficulties in continuation. The need for simplification of the process was stressed. It was noted that in some cases the TAs covered many of the responsibilities that should lie with CPFTs. The involvement of TAs should be reduced in future to allow CPFTs to take over these responsibilities.

Other recommendations

Senior managers

Cost recovery and local retention of funds should be allowed – as did not happen for TFIPP until just recently. In order to implement their own plans, upazila and district levels need to have financial authority and autonomy in decision making.

Creation of a central focal point in DGHS was recommended.

One LD recommended that community participation should be dropped since it is nothing to do with LLP. Complaints from people could be collected from other sources such as the CIET survey; LLP is a process for managers only.

Central LLP team

The Central LLP team suggested to increase the involvement of LDs – especially both ESP LDs. To this end, one suggestion is to assign one LD to implement the process while other LDs support this. Another suggestion is that ESP, IST, and BCC directorates all should have their own LLP along with SWM.

To facilitate the liaison between districts and the central teams, it was suggested that a regional contact point to support and monitor the districts be created.

To improve the planning process at upazila level, it was recommended that the whole LLP process take place in three consecutive days.

4. Review of the district plans and the upazila plans

A review of the upazila plans of the ten sample upazilas and the five district plans was conducted as part of the survey process. ANC and EPI – one programme each from health and family planning – were the two areas selected to assess internal coherence of the plans. These two areas were followed through the upazila plans from information collection, problem identification, action plans, and then onto the district plans. The objective of this exercise was to identify common issues about the planning process in this first phase of LLP, rather than to assess the planned activities themselves. The main issues and themes identified are described here.

During the review of the plans, it was sometimes difficult to decide whether the problems observed in the plans were due to limitations in the design of the formats, or whether they were due to faults in the planning *process* itself. The main emphasis of the review was to examine the process of planning but inevitably the issue of design of the formats and guidelines sometimes also arose.

Evidence-based planning starts with collection of data. Ideally, a step-by-step logic should be followed from information collection, interpretation/analysis of the information, problem identification, identification of the cause of the problem, identification of possible solutions, decisions on which possible solution(s) to act on, and then action planning. The formats for the first phase LLP did not cover all these steps, and this made it difficult to follow through how the situation analyses based on the information collected were reflected in the action plans.

The upazila plans

Problem identification

Many of the upazila UPT members who were interviewed mentioned problem identification as a major difficulty with the LLP process. Not surprisingly, therefore, problem identification was noted to be an area of weakness in many of the upazila plans reviewed. There was often confusion between the problems identified and the perceived cause(s) of the problems. In many cases, in the service/ performance format (B-1) and in other formats, upazila teams recorded the perceived causes of the problems rather than the problems identified. For example, low coverage of ANC. The problem is that not enough pregnant women are receiving antenatal care. However, as a problem identified, many of the upazila teams listed “low awareness of ANC”, which is a *cause* of the problem, not the problem itself. Because of this confusion, the steps of problem identification and identification of possible solutions are omitted in the planning process. In the case of this example with ANC, there may be many other causes of low ANC coverage that could be acted upon. However, since the upazila team understood the problem as “low awareness of ANC” the main activity to be taken to increase ANC coverage automatically becomes “increase awareness of ANC”, a BCC activity.

In relation to problem identification, there was no indication – either in the formats or in the guidelines – how the problem identification was related to the indicators. Again, in the service/ performance format (B-1), the upazila teams had to identify problems based on the indicator status for the past two years and the average across the two years. . For example, in one upazila the total ANC visits for year 1998 was

3000, and in year 1999 it was 7000. The average – considered as the present indicator status – was therefore 5000. The problem identified based on these figures by the upazila team was “low supervision and monitoring”. It is impossible, as a third person, to understand whether this problem was somehow identified based on data (evidence) or was based on the service provider perceptions.

Proposed activities

Another common feature observed in the upazila plans was that most proposed activities were concentrated around BCC and capacity building of staff. For example, for low coverage of immunization, the common activities proposed in the plans are: increase population awareness of the importance of EPI and provide refresher training for staff about EPI. The format used for action planning (form F-1) was designed in such a way that it did not encourage creative thinking, but specifically led the UPTs to think in terms of capacity building, BCC, procurements of drugs, and procurement of equipment. However, this limited vision for planning cannot simply be attributed to the design of the format. It could also be because the possible causes of the problem were not identified (as described above), to allow identification of possible solutions. Other factors such as limited time allowed for the entire planning exercise, or limited experience and capacities of staff may have limited their scope for thinking in terms of tackling the causes of problems.

Nonetheless, once problems are identified and prioritised (form E), the summary plan (F-1) forces the upazila teams to look at each and every component of ESP. From F-1 onwards, there is really no indication of how the prioritisation of problems was reflected in the plans – according to the guidelines the UPTs were supposed to put “*” marks on prioritised issues but in practice this was not done in the plans reviewed. The rest of the planning process is mostly concerned with planning for their routine activities.

Assessment of logistics

The assessments of logistics (forms C-1, C-2) at the upazila level were not standardised. Some upazilas listed for both health and family planning, some only listed either health or family planning, and some omitted programme related logistics such as EPI. It was not clear in the format or in the guidelines what information should be listed and how they would use this information in the later stages of planning. This and other issues may have been clarified verbally by the Dhaka team members supporting the process, but there was no uniformity of approach between upazilas.

Requested resources and budget limitations

Another concern about the logistic planning, and the plans overall, is that they pay little attention to the existing limitations of resources. Equipment, MSR, and contraceptive requirements mentioned far exceed the allocated budget for the upazilas. It would not be feasible to meet such ambitious demands, at least in the short term. This could create a vicious circle whereby the plans submitted by upazilas and districts are not realistic, the requirements cannot be met and the upazila and district teams become disillusioned about the process, hence not making a full commitment for the next cycle of planning. The upazila teams need to be trained and oriented in how to plan within their budget constraints and how to ensure efficient allocation of resources, keeping their limited resources in mind. One central team

member commented that it would be better to frame the plans as covering three or five years, so that the upazila and district teams would not feel they had to reach all targets in one year, and they could adopt a more realistic, phased approach.

Other common problems with the written upazila plans

Other specific problems were noted concerning standardisation, absolute number versus percentages, prioritisation of programme components or the programme itself. Providing clearer guidelines and more training for the upazila teams could help solve such problems.

District plans

Standardisation of format

A major problem noted on review of the district plans was standardisation. Because there was no specific toolkit or guidelines for the district formats the district plans reviewed were not compiled in a standardised manner. This problem was aggravated because the district plans were compiling upazila plans that were not presented in a standardised way. For example, some upazilas had set their targets in absolute numbers, and some in percentages. It is very difficult to compile meaningfully such non-standardised plans. The non-standardisation of district plans will make it difficult to use them at the central level.

Accuracy confirmation

The district plans are a compilation of upazila plans, rather than starting from scratch themselves. As identified by the TAs in their internal review, the districts were not in a position to review the accuracy of the upazila plans. Therefore, any accuracy problems in the upazila plans are inherited by the district plans. At the central level, there is very little scope to verify the accuracy of the information in district and upazila plans.

Strategies for implementation

There are no action plans in the district plans. Actions to be taken as a district do not emerge on reviewing the district plans. The district plans in general are only numbers with no information included on the overall policy of the district or the direction the district is taking. It may be that the district plans are deliberately seen as nothing more than vehicles to combine the individual upazila plans; this is certainly the impression on reviewing the plans from the five first phase districts.

5. Time spent on implementation of first phase LLP process

An attempt was made to estimate the number of person days spent on the implementation of the LLP process in the five pilot districts. This was estimated in three ways; through the TAs workshop feedback report, TAs own estimation of their time spent, and through the responses to the questionnaires administered for this survey.

CPFT and DPFT's time spent in workshops were estimated based on the TA's feedback reports from workshops. Since feedback reports from all the workshops were not available, an average was calculated before estimating the total amount of time spent by CPFTs and DPFTs.

TA's time spent on the implementation was estimated from their calculation of their time spent in each activity.

The time spent by upazila team members and DPFT's time spent on compiling upazila plans and drafting district plans were estimated based on the responses to respective questionnaires. Since the survey sample did not cover all the DPFT and upazila team members, only an average time spent by those interviewed was calculated. This average provides an indication of how much time was spent by the team members at upazila and district levels for this first phase LLP process.

All estimates below do *not* include travel time, which would add to the estimates of the total time spent for the process.

Time spent by senior managers

Senior managers' time was spent mainly on workshops and meetings such as the Chittagong workshop (3

days), National launch workshop (1 day), LD orientation workshop (1 days), LD workshops (1 day), and nine CPFT meetings that on average took 2.5 hours (which accumulates to be about 3 working days). By adding these up, it would be a minimum of 9 working days spent by each senior manager. Since there were 5 senior managers involved as the Core Group, therefore a total of 45 senior manager person-days went into LLP.

Estimated time spent by senior managers
Senior managers spent a total of 45 person-days on LLP.

Time spent by CPFT members

Workshops

CPFT members spent an average of

11 person-days on district orientation and compilation workshops in every district¹.

An average of 2 person days were spent on information collection and LLP

Estimated time spent by CPFT
CPFT spent a total of 258 person days on LLP.

¹ This estimate was drawn from averaging the attendance of CPFTs in Mymensingh orientation workshop (8 people for two days), Rajshahi orientation workshop (3 people for three days) and compilation workshop (1 person for two days), and Gopalganj orientation workshop (1 person for three days) and compilation workshop (1 person for two days). Dhaka workshops were not included in the calculation since orientation workshop for Dhaka was attached to the National Launch, which would inflate the calculation of the average attendance of CPFTs. Chandpur district workshops were still ongoing at the time of the survey.

finalisation workshops per upazila. These figures were drawn from TAs' feedback from the workshops. As the process proceeded, CPFT team members spent less time in the districts and upazilas. There were several reasons for this, including accessibility of the districts concerned, the involvement in the first districts of district team members who actively attracted CPFTs' attention, loss of interest of some CPFT members over time, and problems with reimbursement of travel allowance which made some CPFT members reluctant to travel.

By using these averages of time spent by the CPFT in district and upazila workshops, it can be roughly estimated that the members of the CPFT spent a total of about 133 person days in workshops for implementing the first phase LLP.

Other activities

Other activities taking time of CPFT members for the implementation of the first phase LLP include: national workshops, CPFT meetings and other meetings. CPFT members interviewed spent the same amount of time as the senior managers in these events, a minimum of 9 days. Since there were 15 CPFT members, a total of 135 CPFT person days were spent on LLP meetings and workshops at the central level.

Table 31 Estimated time spent by CPFTs on the first phase LLP implementation

	Average person days per district and upazila	Estimated person days in all 5 districts and 39 upazilas
LLP related meetings and workshops at the central level.	--	135 person days
District orientation and compilation workshops *	11 person days	55 person days
Upazila information collection and LLP finalisation workshops	2 person days	78 person days
Total		268 person days

* The average for attendance of district workshops were calculated based on the numbers attended at Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Gopalganj.

** The figures for the workshops only include time for being at the workshop, and does not include preparation and travel time.

Time spent by TAs

Workshops

According to their calculation, TAs spent an average of 6 person days in district orientation and compilation workshops in every district, and 2 person days were spent on upazila level information collection and LLP finalisation workshops in every upazila.

Other work

There were four TAs involved in the first phase of LLP. The involvements of three TAs started after the Chittagong workshop in August 2000, and one TA worked on the implementation since the district orientation workshop in Mymensingh in November 2000.

Four TAs were involved in the preparation and finalisation of the toolkit, guidelines, and formats for a period of one and a half months. This included the finalisation of the toolkit finalisation and approval through workshops and other administrative process. TAs spent three to four person days on preparation of each district

workshop. These preparations involved contacting the districts and upazilas for organisation, and preparing all the documents and materials needed for the workshops, and arranging transportation and lodging for the CPFT members. Once the workshops were over, the decisions made at each workshop were documented. For each district compilation workshop, four to five person days were spent for this purpose.

A simple calculation allows one to estimate the total number of person days spent by TAs on the implementation of the first phase of LLP using the average. The TAs spent a total of 286 person days.

Estimated time spent by TAs
TAs spent a total of 286 person days on LLP.

Table 31 Estimated time spent by TAs on the first phase LLP implementation

	Average person days per district and upazila	Estimated person days in all 5 districts and 39 upazilas
District orientation and compilation Workshops	6 person days	30 person days
Upazila information collection and finalisation Workshops	2 person days	78 person days
Preparation of the toolkit, guidelines, and formats	--	120 person days
Preparation of district orientation and compilation workshops	7 person days	35 person days
Documentation of decisions made at district compilation workshops	4 to 5 person days	23 person days*
Total		286 person days

* Calculated by 4.5 person days x 5 and rounded up

** The figures for the workshops only include time for being at the workshop, and does not include preparation and travel time.

Time spent by DPFT members

Workshops

In average, DPFTs spent 34-person days on district orientation and compilation workshops

Estimated time spent by DPFT members in district and upazila workshops
DPFT members spent a total of 326 person days in LLP district and upazila workshops. This is excluding the time spent on working on the plans outside of workshops.

per district². At the upazila level, an average of 4 DPFT-person-days went into upazila information collection and finalisation workshops per upazila. These figures were drawn from the TA's feedback from workshops. A rough estimation indicates that DPFTs spent a total of 326 person days on district and upazila workshops in all five districts and 39 upazilas (Table 32).

² As with the estimate for CPFTs, DPFT's time spent for district workshops were calculated based on the TAs feedback report from Mymensingh orientation workshop (11 people for two days), Rajshahi orientation workshop (9 people for three days) and compilation workshop (8 people for two days), and Gopalganj orientation workshop (6 people for three days) and compilation workshop (9 people for two days). Dhaka workshops were not included in the calculation since orientation workshop for Dhaka was attached to the National Launch, and also representatives from eight other districts originally in the pilot districts were invited, which would inflate the calculation of the average attendance of DPFTs. Chandpur district workshops were still ongoing at the time of the survey.

Table 32 Estimated time spent by DPFTs on the first phase LLP workshops

	Average person days per district and upazila	Estimated person days in all 5 districts and 39 upazilas
District orientation and compilation Workshops*	34 person days	170 person days
Upazila information collection and finalisation workshops	4 person days	156 person days
Total		326 person days

* The average for attendance of district workshops were calculated based on the numbers attended at Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Gopalganj.

** The figures for the workshops only include time for being at the workshop, and does not include preparation and travel time.

Information collection and drafting and compilation of plans

According to the survey data, the average number of person days spent on LLP work other than attending the workshops was 2 person days. However, the time spent by DPFTs varied considerably. Two thirds (24/32) of the DPFTs did not spend any time working on LLP concerned tasks other than attending the meetings and workshops. Among those who spent time working on other LLP concerned tasks, the number of days spent ranged from 1 day to 40 days.

Time spent by upazila team members

The upazila team members' time spent on implementation of LLP process was calculated based on the responses of those who were interviewed. Not all the team members in all the upazilas were interviewed. Therefore, only an average number of days spent by those interviewed was calculated. This figure provides an indication of how much of UPT members' time went into the LLP process at the upazila level.

Workshops

In average, upazila team members interviewed in the survey spent a total of 8 days in LLP meetings and workshops (Table 33).

Table 33 Average time spent in meetings and workshops by UPT members interviewed

Meetings and workshops	Average person days per UPT interviewed
District orientation and compilation Workshops	1
Internal upazila team meeting to share information	2
Community Consultation Meeting	1
Internal upazila team meeting to identify & prioritise problems	1
Upazila information meeting with Dhaka and District teams	1
Internal upazila meetings to draft LLP	1
Upazila LLP finalisation workshop	1
District LLP compilation workshop	0

Other LLP related work undertaken by upazila team members

Upazila team members spent an average of 1 day on LLP related tasks other than attending meetings and workshops. As with the DPFTs' time spent on other work, the time spent by upazila team members on activities other than meetings varied very much. Two thirds (38/57) of the upazila team members interviewed did not spend any time on other LLP related tasks, while among those who spent time on other tasks, the number of days spent ranged from 1 day to 17 days.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion of the findings

Perceptions of the toolkit, the guidelines, and the formats

The toolkit

Commonly expressed problems identified with the toolkit were that it was too complicated, too lengthy, not user-friendly, it was in English, and some important points were not explained. These concerns were expressed commonly by all levels.

The guidelines and formats

The survey findings suggest that the district teams had more clarity than the upazila teams about the guidelines and formats. Among the guidelines and formats that many upazila team members thought were not very clear were; community views (D), prioritising problems and proposed activities (E), summary plan (F1), action plan for BCC (F4), and budget plan (F-8).

Common concerns about the guidelines and formats were that they were too complicated, there were too many indicators, they were in English, and there were no examples cited. These concerns were cited by all levels.

How well did the process work, as per the intended programme?

At the central level

The involvement of both ESP LDs was not as effective as it could have been. As LLP is one component of ESP, this lack of full involvement of ESP LDs could present an obstacle to achieving the full potential benefits of the LLP process.

As expressed by some senior managers and Central LLP team members during their interviews, there were concerns about the commitment and capacities of some CPFT members in the process. Concerns that TAs were covering for the roles and responsibilities of the CPFT members were raised. Some CPFT members were indeed not able to fulfil their responsibilities for various reasons, including: commitments to other official work, lack of permission from their superiors, financial management problems that meant officials had to spend out of pocket for their official trips to districts and upazilas. These factors particularly affected the involvement of CPFT members in the later stages of the first phase implementation. Less CPFT members attended upazila and district workshops as the process proceeded. This may suggest that the time required by CPFT members for the process was unsustainable.

The involvement of CPFT members varied from person to person. Therefore, it is difficult to generalise. However, since the CPFT is the official implementing body of the process, ensuring a full commitment of all CPFT members would be very important in a roll-out of the process to more districts and upazilas.

It is encouraging that the survey found that at the district level, 82% of the people interviewed thought that the facilitators from Dhaka (CPFT and TAs) were helpful, and at the upazila level, 77% of those interviewed thought they were helpful. This may indicate that although there is room for improvement, the central team (including the TA's and the CPFT) was able to provide support for the levels below, at least in this first phase.

At the district level

The involvement, commitment, and capacities of district teams varied from district to district. District teams that had strong leadership and good teamwork produced better results in terms of active participation and better understanding of the process.

The Central LLP team members raised concerns that some district orientation workshops were conducted in a rushed manner, which resulted in failing to prepare the district teams fully for their role in the LLP process. Developing the capacities of the district teams is essential since the district teams are expected to play a pivotal role in supporting implementation of the process at the upazila level.

Nevertheless, the survey found that a third of the district team members thought that the process was easy and about two thirds thought that it was somewhat difficult, and only two people thought it was difficult. Those who thought the process easy are not necessarily the best prepared; some of them may think it easy because they do not have a full understanding of what is required.

In terms of district teams' support to the upazila teams, the survey findings from the upazila team interviews indicate that 72% of them thought that the facilitators from the district were helpful. Although there were variations among districts, overall, the support provided by the district teams to upazila teams was perceived by the upazilas as good.

At the upazila level

The LLP process provided an opportunity for the upazila teams to sit together and discuss about their present situation as a team. This was reflected in the responses from the upazila team members about the main benefits of the LLP process. A quarter of the respondents thought that team building was one of the main benefits, and another 16% thought that sharing views with other team members was the main benefit. These comments from the upazila team members suggest that in some upazilas there is little communication of staff as a team during their routine work. As with the district teams, strong leadership and good teamwork had an effect on the performance of the upazila team in forming the upazila plans.

Commitment of upazila team members seems to have varied from upazila to upazila, and as one of the Central LLP team member observed, some upazila team members were sceptical about the outcome of the process, which lead them to do their tasks half-heartedly. The survey findings show that only 58% of the upazila team members even knew about the toolkit and just 35% claimed to have read it all. The low proportion of those who knew about the toolkit and the low proportion of those who have read it all may be an indicator of their commitment to the process. Nonetheless, 71% of the upazila team members thought that the process was useful for them, and above all, all the upazilas produced their upazila plans in time for district compilation.

Although 70% of the upazila team members found the process to be difficult or somewhat difficult (higher than the proportion at district level), the most difficult part of the process was identified to be the information collection. Only 15% reported finding some components of planning difficult and only 7% thought the process was complicated and confusing. This could in part reflect the wider involvement of members of the upazila team members in the information collection, while most of

them played a much less active role in the other processes involved in formulating the upazila plan.

According to the findings from the review of upazila plans, there were certain capacities that upazila teams may be lacking; the ability to follow through the logical steps in planning starting from information collection to action planning. There was apparent confusion in many upazilas about identifying problems and identifying possible causes of the problems. The need to plan within their limited resource availability was also not demonstrated in the upazila plans, even though this was clearly stated in the toolkit. This could be a misunderstanding or simply a feeling at upazila level that additional resources are essential and the LLP process offers a way of getting some increased resources.

Capacities of upazila teams to plan need to be developed further. Some orientation and practice may help. But most crucial is sound technical support from the district and the central levels, together with an improved set of toolkit, guidelines and formats in Bangla.

How good were the outputs from the upazilas and districts?

This survey process has included a limited assessment of outputs from the first phase upazilas and districts, by means of a structured review of upazila plans from the sample upazilas and district plans.

Some common problems were identified through the review of plans. Some of the problems were due to the design of the formats, and others were due to the limitations of the planning process taken by the upazila teams and the district teams. One of the main difficulties found was problem identification. In many cases, it seemed that the teams had not gone through the thought process of identifying specific problems and then identifying possible solutions to the problem.

The plans as they are now, are very difficult to read through and understand the total picture. This is true for both the upazila and the district plans.

As mentioned by many of the senior managers and the Central LLP team members, the format of the district plans is not compatible with the Operation Plans, creating problems with the incorporation of these district plans into the operational plans.

Expectations for the future

Expectations for change as a result of undertaking LLP varied markedly between different levels. The majority of the upazila and district teams interviewed were positive about an increased budget allocation as per the plans submitted. However, at the central level, senior managers and Central LLP team members had mixed opinions: some said there will be an increase but to a limited extent, and some said definitely not. One expectation positively held by all levels was an improvement in performance management as a result of the LLP process.

Other changes commonly expected by upazila and district teams as a result of LLP were improvements in service delivery and service performance. Some also expect that the targets they have set for themselves will be achieved. At the central level, people are more cautious about the changes they predict as a result of LLP. Senior

managers thought that the ownership of the plans will be improved, and Central LLP team members mentioned increased capacities, stronger upazila teams, and increased commitment in service delivery.

Recommendations for roll-out

1. The toolkit, guidelines, and formats

The toolkit

The toolkit should be made simpler, shorter, and translated into Bangla. A step-by-step guide to the planning process should be included, with examples, which the upazila teams could follow for each action plan they form.

A wider distribution of the toolkit is also important. A high proportion (42%) of upazila team members interviewed did not know about the toolkit, and some upazila team members commented that they could not obtain their own copy.

Since the main readers and users of the toolkit are upazila team members, it is essential that the primary focus of the design should be to make it easy for the upazila teams to understand and apply. It may be useful to have the involvement of an upazila team member in the redesign of the toolkit.

The guidelines and formats

General recommendations

The guidelines and formats should also be simpler, shorter, and translated into Bangla. Some parts of the formats are repetitive and redundant and combination of many formats could be made – such as combining information collection formats and formats for action plans.

The guidelines should give examples that the upazila team may refer to. This may help standardise some of the information collected. There is also a need of guidelines for the district formats.

The design of the formats needs to allow easier linkages among formats. As it is now, the planner as well as the reader of the plans has to go back and forth between formats to understand the plans (for example, information for Logistics (form C-1) and action plans for logistics (form F-5). Also due to lack of linkages among formats, internal coherence of the plans is difficult to achieve and to check.

It is strongly recommended that as part of the re-design stage of the guidelines and formats, they should go through a series of field-tests in order to verify that the problems identified have been ironed-out.

Recommendations to facilitate implementation of upazila and district plans

For both upazila and district plans, there is an apparent need to elaborate the plans into an implementable form. The activity plans as they stand now are mainly lists of activity headings such as “increase awareness of importance about TT shots”. Further elaboration which addresses who does what, when, how, with what cost, would be the components of the next step of planning. This lack of detailed strategies for implementation in the plans is probably inevitable, given the time constraints and the

fact that they were supposed to cover the full range of all ESP activities. One way round this difficulty in the future might be to have a plan in two parts: one general and not detailed, reflecting ongoing activities where little change in level of activities is expected; and one covering a small area of activities where changes are intended and detailed plans for this change, from data collection, through analysis of what actions might improve the situation, to details for implementation of interventions, are made. The area for detailed detailed planning could be chosen by upazilas themselves, by districts, from the centre, or by a combination of all three levels.

Recommendations to facilitate incorporation into Operation Plans

As pointed out by many senior managers and Central LLP team members, it is very important that the formats used in the district plans are compatible with the Operation Plans at the national level. Without compatibility, there will be limitations in how far the plans can be incorporated in the Operation Plans. If the format used for the Operation Plans is too complicated for the planning process at the upazila level, upazilas could use a format that could readily be translated at the district level into the format compatible with the National Operation Plans.

Recommendations to facilitate the use of plans as a monitoring tool

The use of the present formats for monitoring purposes would not be easy. It is difficult to understand which plans need follow-up from the district level and above, and which plans can be implemented by upazila level initiatives. Action plans could be separated for local initiatives and plans that need support from higher levels. This would also make it easier for the higher levels to see what needs follow-up from them.

It may also be of help if some information about overall policy and direction were included in the plans. At it is now – especially the district plans – are a compilation of numbers, which makes it very difficult to understand the overall policy and direction intended by the plan.

2. Methodology of information collection

Much of the difficulty faced by the upazila teams in problem identification relates to the information they relied on. The information collected (or rather drawn together from existing sources) for the first phase LLP at the upazila level is limited in its use for rational decision making and planning because it is mainly service based. Those who are currently not receiving the services may be the most vulnerable, needing specific interventions in the plans. Information on these people is not available from service-based information. Also, data collected through routine information systems may not be suitable for decision-making because they can usually only provide simple frequencies. Frequencies do not tell the planner what he/she most needs to know: what is likely to happen (impact), to how many (coverage), and at what expense (cost), as a result of a planning decision³.

It is recognised that at present it is difficult for most upazilas to go beyond their data available from routine sources. However, in the roll-out process for LLP, the opportunity could be taken to include a process of collecting local actionable information, which allows service providers and planners to make rational decisions

³ R. Ledogar and N. Andersson, *Impact Estimation Through Sentinel Community Surveillance: An Affordable Epidemiological Approach*, TWPR 15(3), 1993

about service interventions. Suitable methods for collecting such data need to be explored. They could include community-based surveys (such as the national service delivery surveys but at the local level). Such surveys can collect information about issues such health status, health behaviours and facilities usage, as well as perceptions and priorities of community members. These may be implemented by field level staff or through co-operation with NGOs and other organisations. This sort of process would not only provide evidence supporting true evidence-based planning, it could also offer an effective method of community involvement, going well beyond the current limited process of consulting community representatives. It would make sense for such a process to be undertaken in some upazilas only, and covering priority issues, with suitable support for local teams and evaluation of the benefits of this approach.

3. Community consultation

It is necessary to search for a methodology that will allow a better representation of all community members, including the most vulnerable, and a strategy to ensure collection of answers to questions such as “what is happening?”, “why?”, “what should be done?”, and “how?”. As undertaken in the LLP first phase, community consultation meetings will not ensure real community-involvement nor will they ensure community ownership of the plans as envisioned by LLP. Nevertheless, the dialogue initiated through these community consultation meetings must continue. The community representatives identified by the first phase LLP may not be truly representative of the community in the real sense, but they are key players who could work together with the health and family planning service providers to facilitate a real community involvement and community ownership of the plans. Community involvement could be combined with collection of data relevant for planning, using some form of local service delivery survey process, as mentioned above. This has the advantage that the dialogue between communities and service providers would be based on relevant local evidence.

The process and structure for the roll out of LLP

The process and the system applied for the first phase pilot was very expensive. As expressed by several senior managers and Central LLP team members, it is too expensive to sustain or to expand to other upazilas and districts. LLP is intended to be “doable now, effective and sustainable”. It is important that these concepts are retained and re-emphasized for the national roll out. Sustainability that needs consideration is not only financial, but also sustainability in terms of manpower – the officials’ time at the central level as well as the field level – devoted to the process. Implementation of a new process as ambitious as local level planning will inevitably require considerable resources in its initial stages. However, as the process becomes a part of the system, a part of the ordinary planning process, the additional resources required should diminish. Therefore, the LLP roll out must opt for an implementation structure that would allow smooth incorporation of LLP as part of the ordinary work for all levels concerned. The organisation at the central level for the national roll out should also eventually merge itself into a part of the existing structure as the implementation process proceeds. At the same time, the lessons that were learnt during the first phase LLP should be applied, rather than starting an entirely new structure that was not tested during the first phase.

A possible structure that would ensure sustainability and in accordance with the existing system of implementation is to retain the current arrangement with the Core group functioning as the policy making body for the LLP process and the CPFT as the implementing body at the central level. However, learning from the experiences during the first phase, it is essential to ensure full involvement of ESP so that their ownership of plans is built into the process. At least one representative from each LD should be included in the CPFT.

To support the CPFT and to take lead in the process, an official at one of the LDs may be appointed as a focal point – possibly at Deputy Programme Manager level – and a support team of some short term TAs to assist the initial start up of the process. The amount of work that will be required in the initial stages of the roll out is recognised to be unmanageable without a team working full time on LLP.

Assigning one or two districts for the implementation of LLP to each CPFT member may solve the issue of commitment held by CPFT members. Since the main role of a CPFT member is to facilitate the district teams, he/she will mainly work with the district teams. The district teams on the other hand will be responsible for implementation of LLP at the upazila level. By clarifying the responsibilities of CPFT and DPFTs, time required and trips to be made by the CPFT members could be reduced, hence making it more feasible for a CPFT to fulfil his/her responsibilities. DPFTs will implement LLP at the upazila level as part of their routine monitoring and supervisory routine, avoiding ‘workshops’ that increase the financial burden. Finalisation of upazila LLPs and compilation of district plans could be conducted at the districts with technical assistance from the CPFT. This would permit the CPFT member to travel to the district just twice (once for an orientation and once for compilation) throughout the implementation of LLP in the district. However, the responsibility of providing the district plan to the central level should lie solely with the one CPFT member who is assigned to that district.

To further ensure ownership – of the process as well as the district plans formulated as an output – by the ESP, consolidation of all district plans could be tasked to ESP. The district plans would be distributed to applicable LDs and would be incorporated into the AOPs. Incorporation of district plans into the routine decision making process will be the best and probably the only way to ensure quality work from the upazilas and the district management. Once they see that decisions on disbursement of funds and policies at the central level are based on their plans, they will be forced to produce plans that are thought through and consistent. They would also make sure that they meet the deadline for submission of their plans.

Resources that are required for this scenario would be a well-committed, well-oriented team of officials for CPFT and a strong support from the Ministry. Since there will only be a limited number of CPFT members who could make themselves available for this work, the roll out will have to be done in phases, with gradual implementation of LLP, not compromising on the quality.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

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Gopalganj district
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Upazila plans: Dhamrai
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