# Report on

## An Orientation Session on BMET process for the Stakeholders of Healthy Village in Urban Program

**Conducted By: HLP Foundation**

**Organized By: Max Foundation & ESDO**

**Venue: Training Room of SKS Inn, Gaibandha.**

**Date:** 24 & 25 June 2025.

**Preface :**

This report presents a consolidated summary of the two-day orientation sessions conducted under the same objective. Given that the purpose, content, and intended outcomes of both days were aligned, we have compiled a single comprehensive report that captures the key discussions, activities, and learnings from both sessions. We hope this document will serve as a useful reference for future planning, implementation, and capacity-building efforts.

**Objective of the orientation sessions**: The orientation sessions organized to build the capacity of Union Parishad representatives, Pourashava representatives, and partner organization staff in using the BMET app for better budget planning, monitoring, and expenditure tracking to Healthy Village in Urban Program in Lalmonirhat.

## 1. Introduction

Effective local governance is the foundation of sustainable development in both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. Although there are robust legal frameworks in place—such as the *Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009* and the *Union Parishad Budget Rules 2016*—most Union Parishads (UPs) and Pourashavas continue to rely on outdated, paper-based systems for service delivery, budgeting, and performance monitoring.



**Photo-1: Full Session**

These manual systems often lead to inefficiencies, delays, limited transparency, and weak citizen participation—especially affecting women, marginalized communities, and people living in hard-to-reach areas.

To address these challenges, the HLP Foundation, with support from the Right2Grow project, has developed a digital tool called **BMET** (Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking). The BMET app aims to streamline budgeting processes, improve service delivery, and enhance performance monitoring at the local government level. Its application in 40 Union Parishads within the Right2Grow project areas has demonstrated promising results.

Building on this success, Max Foundation has decided to replicate the BMET process through the **Healthy Village in Urban Program (HVUP)** in Lalmonirhat. This initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of local government institutions and partner organizations in urban settings, contributing to more accountable, inclusive, and effective governance.

## 2. Orientation Proceedings

The session began at 9:30 AM with an introductory speech by Dr. Azad, where he outlined the objectives of the workshop and presented the today's training schedule. He then invited all participants to briefly introduce themselves. Following the introductions, Dr. Azad handed over the session to the HLP Foundation team to conduct the training.

Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam, President of HLP Foundation, began the training by sharing two short stories. He then presented an overview of the HLPF:

- **What does stand for HLP Foundation?**
  HLP means Horizontal Learning Program.
- **What is Horizontal?**
  A **horizontal** approach enables peers to connect and collaborate directly with each other.
- **What is Learning?**
  **learning** is gaining new knowledge, skills, or understanding from experiences.
- **What is Program?**
  A **program** is a set of planned activities or actions designed to achieve a specific goal.



Photo-2: Shafiqul Islam Sir was presenting HLP Foundation

After that, he formed peer groups among all participants, with each group consisting of two members. Each pair was asked to discuss and identify one good practice from their partner's experience. Following the discussions, all participants shared the good practices they had

identified. While many of the practices were common, some stood out as particularly interesting. These included: establishing a school, distributing tree saplings to students for planting at school and home, and a participant who had supported a student from primary level who is now studying abroad.

Then, Shafiqul Islam gave a detailed explanation of the concept of peer-to-peer learning. Peer-to-peer learning is when people learn from each other by sharing knowledge, skills, or experiences. It's collaborative, with everyone acting as both learner and teacher. After that he explained HLPF Principles and works.

HLP Foundation's work is built upon four core principles: **Appreciation, Connection, Adaptation**, and **Replication**.



**Photo-3: Woman member was sharing her good work**

**Appreciation:** We begin by identifying and valuing existing good practices, recognizing the strengths, efforts, and successes within communities.

**Connection:** We then link individuals, groups, and organizations to facilitate the sharing of experiences, knowledge, and support, fostering mutual learning and collaboration.

**Adaptation:** Good practices are then adjusted to suit new contexts or communities, ensuring their core value remains relevant and effective.

**Replication:** Finally, these adapted practices are scaled and implemented in other areas, spreading positive change broadly and sustainably.

**Health Break: A 20-minute health break was provided at 11:05am.**

After the health break, Mr. Shafiqul Islam handed over the session to Mr. Abdul Mannan, Project-in-Charge, HLP Foundation (Right2Grow). He began by engaging the participants with a few questions:



**Photo-4: Abdul Mannan was conducting session**

- **When was the first Union Parishad election held in Bangladesh?**
  Participants said many answers but correct was 1973.
- **When was the first Union Parishad rules introduced?**
  Some of the participants gave the correct answer. The first Union Parishad Rules in

independent Bangladesh were introduced in 1983 under the **Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance, 1983**.

- **When was the Union Parishad Act enacted?**
  Many of them gave correct answer. The Union Parishad Act was enacted in 2009, officially titled the: **Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009**

- **What is a budget?**
  A budget was a plan or statement of income and expenditure.

- **How many types of budgets are there?**
  Budgets were generally of two types – balanced budget and unbalanced budget.



  ✓ **Balanced Budget**: A budget where income and expenditure are equal.

  ✓ **Unbalanced Budget**: A budget where expenditure exceeds or succeeds income.

**Photo-5: One part of session's participants**

Each of these can further be classified into two sub-types:

  ✓ **Surplus Budget**
  ✓ **Deficit Budget**

Union Parishads generally prepare surplus budgets, while the Government of Bangladesh usually prepares deficit budgets. Participants were very much attentive and responsive about pre concept of budget.

**What is BMET?**

BMET is a digital application, which stands for Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET). BMET is also a tool/process through which we can understand:

  ✓ How much of the approved or adopted budget
  ✓ Was spent on what activities
  ✓ When it will spend
  ✓ And how it was spent.

**Benefits of Using the BMET Apps:**

  ✓ Budget can be prepared easily and in less time.
  ✓ Mistakes can be identified and corrected during budget preparation.
  ✓ Budgets can be viewed anytime and from anywhere.
  ✓ Union Parishads and relevant stakeholders can easily review the budget.
  ✓ It helps to identify where money has been spent and which projects have been implemented.
  ✓ It also shows which activities are still pending and what needs to be started.

**Why does we (HLP Foundation) work with BMET apps?**

We work with the BMET app to promote transparent, accountable, and participatory local governance. The app supports Union Parishads in effectively planning, monitoring, and tracking their budgets and expenditures in a digital, user-friendly way. We have been implementing the

BMET app in 40 Union Parishads over the last 4 years. As a result, there has been a noticeable improvement in budget accountability, citizen participation, and awareness around budget preparation, particularly in the areas of WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and Nutrition. After his presentation, Mr. Abdul Mannan handed over the session to the technical team Mr. Saiful Islam Tuhin and Mr. Jobaed Sagar for a demonstration on the BMET application.

Mr. Md. Jobaed Hossain Sagar, Project Assistant, has created BMET user accounts for the newly added Union Parishads in Lalmonirhat district. These accounts will enable the respective Union Parishads to access and use the BMET application for budget monitoring and expenditure tracking. The details are as follows:

| Division | District | Upazila | Union/ Pourashava | Union IDs | Password |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rangpur | Lalmonirhat | Lalmonirhat Sadar | Harati | harati@gamil.com | ****** |
| | | | Mogolhat | mogolhat@gmail.com | ****** |
| | | | Kulaghat | kulaghat@gmail.com | ****** |
| | | | Mohendranagar | mohendranagar@gmail.com | ****** |
| | | Aditmari | Saptibari | saptibari@gmail.com | ****** |
| | | | Sarpukur | sarpukur@gmail.com | ****** |
| | | Lal monirhat Sadar | Lalmonirhat Paurashava | Present BMET Tool usable for UP so Poaurashava's ID was not opened. | |

Following that, Mr. Saiful Islam Tuhin conducted a live demonstration covering key features of



the application, including **Opened BMET IDs for each Unions**

✓ How to log in
✓ How to enter a new budget
✓ How to view and edit existing entries
✓ And other essential functions.
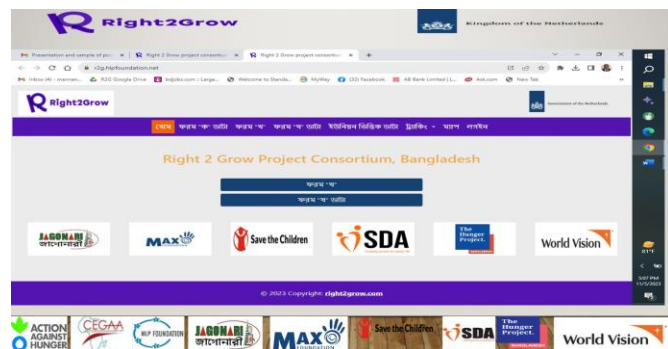
**Photo-6: Saiful Islam was presenting BMET apps**



**Photo-7: Participants opening ID of BMET**



**Photo-8: Participants opening ID of BMET**

## 3. Question & Answer Session

**Q1: Will the BMET app remain functional after the Right2Grow project concludes?**

**Ans:** Yes, the BMET app will keep running even after the Right2Grow project ends. Online support will still be free, but for things like trainings and workshops, we'll need support from the Union Parishads.

**Q2: Does the BMET app have adequate data protection protocols to ensure the security.**

**Ans:** Yes, the BMET app uses SSL encryption to protect data in transit, and we are implementing Cloudflare security measures to further enhance data protection and confidentiality.



**Photo-9: Question and answer session**

**Q3: Is the BMET app specifically designed to support Union Parishad budgeting, and not for other functions like birth registration or tax collection?**

**Ans:** Currently, the BMET app handles only budgetary matters, we are committed to expanding its functionality. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive platform for all Union Parishad services within the app.

**Q4: Does the BMET app support to input the Paurashava budgets?**

**Ans:** The budget forms for Paurashava and Union Parishad are different. The BMET budget form is currently designed specifically for Union Parishad budgets. However, we plan to add a Paurashava budget form in the future.

## 4. Learnings:

The participants have limited knowledge about local governance. They are not well-informed about the budgeting process and relevant laws and regulations.

The issues of Pourashava and Union Parishad are different, so next time separate sessions should be organized for each group.

## 5. Recommendations

- ✓ Add option for importing budget data into an Excel sheet.
- ✓ Add a detailed form for the costing items. For example, if there is an expense for "Deep Tube Well Installation," there should be a separate sheet showing how many tube wells have been installed, how many are still required, and other relevant details.

- ✓ There was a joint initiative by the Government and the World Bank called LGSP-3, which enabled Union Parishads to input their budgets and access various facilities. However, the project ended in 2022. It is important to ensure that BMET doesn't fall into the same pitfalls and remains sustainable and operational beyond project cycles.
- ✓ There are many sections for the "অন্যান্য" (Others) category in the budget form. It would be helpful to review and reduce some of these sections to make the form more concise and user-friendly.

## 6. Reflections of participants:

**Mr. Md Azaharul Islam, Administrative Officer, Mogolhat Union Parishad:**

This software lists all budget heads separately, allowing us to clearly see how much has been allocated and spent in each category. If the system remains active and functional, it will be highly effective for Union Parishads. It will help us prepare budgets more accurately and on time. I have a request, please continue to develop and improve the software for even better performance and usability.


**Photo-10: Azaharul Islam was reflecting**

**Mr. Md Eddris Ali, Chairman, Kulaghat Union Parishad:**


**Photo-11: Eddris Ali reflecting**

Assalamualaikum, Distinguished audience, First, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the local government representatives, the Paurashava representatives and Workshop organizers. We are grateful for being invited to this important workshop and for the insights provided on budget and health. You are absolutely right; the Union Parishad budget is an extremely crucial matter. In this current digital age, where everything is managed through mobile phones, computers, and laptops, the proper use of these technologies in the budget process is indispensable. I particularly and humbly request all administrative officers of Union Parishads and Paurashavas to consider this matter with utmost importance. If we can prepare the budget efficiently and effectively, and succeed in implementing 80% to 90% of it, only then

7

will a Union Parishad truly be successful. This is not just about financial discipline but is also the key to ensuring public welfare.

Finally, I extend my sincere congratulations and thanks to the organizers of this workshop and all the trainers. Your initiative will play a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness of local governance.

**Lastly, Shafiqul Islam,** President of HLP Foundation said we usually spend most of our budget on road construction, but alongside that, we need to invest significantly in awareness-building, as well as in the WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) and nutrition sectors. As you know, the highest return on investment comes from investing in children. Every amount you spend on a child can yield up to 23 times in return. Therefore, instead of preparing a conventional budget, plan one that will have a long-term, meaningful impact on the future. Thank you all for staying with us attentively throughout orientation. With this, we hereby declare the conclusion of today's session.

## 7. Conclusion

The Budget Monitoring and Expenditure Tracking (BMET) orientation successfully equipped participants with valuable knowledge and practical skills in financial planning and oversight. The comprehensive sessions, led by experienced facilitators from HLP Foundation, Max Foundation, and ESDO, provided a deep dive into budgetary concepts and the functionalities of the BMET application. The interactive approach, including peer-to-peer learning and Q&A sessions, ensured active engagement and a thorough understanding of the material. The hands-on demonstration of the BMET app, coupled with the creation of new user IDs, empowered participants to immediately apply their learning. This session represents a significant step towards enhancing transparency, accountability, and efficiency in local government financial management, ultimately contributing to better resource utilization and improved public service delivery.

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**Number of Participants attended:** 1st Batch on 24 June 2025: 49 (Male-39 and Female-10), and 2nd Batch 53 (Male 47 and Female-6). Total 102 (Male- 86, Female-16)

**Participants by designation**: Union Parishad Functionaries (Chairmen, Members, Administrative Officers, Office Assistance cum Computer Operator) & Pourashava (Government Officials) Representatives of Lalmonirhat Sadar and Project Staffs of Healthy Village in Urban Program.

**Attachment:**

1. Schedule of the sessions
2. Introduction on HLP Foundation
3. BMET Presentation
4. BMET User Manual