

BRIEF REPORT ON

HORIZONTAL LEARNING CLINIC IN BANGLADESH

LOGIN's First Learning Offer on Horizontal
Learning Program in Bangladesh

BACKGROUND

It was decided at the Local Governance Initiative and Network (LOGIN) Constituent Assembly held from 2-4 July 2013, that 'Innovative ways of capacity building of elected representatives' need to be learnt through methods beyond the conventional ones.

To do so LOGIN requested The Horizontal Learning Program of Bangladesh to offer its members an opportunity to visit, experience and learn from this widely implemented, multi-stakeholder initiative which enables capacity building of local elected bodies through peer learning.

ABOUT HORIZONTAL LEARNING PROGRAM (HLP)

The Horizontal Learning Program (HLP) is an outcome based peer-to-peer learning platform for elected bodies at the rural level. It was initiated in 2007 by the Local Government Division of the Ministry of Local Government, Development and Cooperatives; Government of Bangladesh with support from the Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank (WSP), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and other development partners. Since then HLP has been engaged in by more than 500 locally elected bodies in more than 25 districts to benefit more than 7 million people. The initiative is presently supported by 32 development partners and is being extended to cover a total of 2000 local government institutions (LGIs).

HLP has a well-organized, systematic, step by step process to facilitate structured peer learning across local governments through appreciation-connection-adaptation and replication that is extremely adaptable and lends itself well to up-scaling. So far more than 100 good practices on water supply and sanitation, governance, primary health, livelihood, primary education etc. have been identified and learnt and replicated through this horizontal learning process. It is now included within the National Framework on Capacity Building for Union Parishads, the lowest tier of the local government institution in Bangladesh, which has been signed by eight donor agencies. A subset of these good practices have been included in the national basic training curricula for local governments and have contributed to the revision of government orders and adoption of central government strategies.

Adult learning methods vis-à-vis HLP	
Adult learning methods	Horizontal Learning Process
Instructional Training	✘
Participatory Learning	✓
Experiential Learning	✓
Peer Learning	✓
Self-directed Learning	✓

LOGIN Learning Offer

In response to the learning offer — HLP Clinic in Bangladesh — that LOGIN made, 8 LOGIN members accepted and traveled to Bangladesh: one each from i) Hunger Project Bangladesh ii) CIRDAP in Bangladesh; iii) Royal Institute of Management, Bhutan; iv) Zilla Parishad of Bihar, India; v) Abhiyan an NGO from Gujarat, India; vi) RSCD and vii) MRA of Maharashtra, India and viii) 2 from the HLP Team Bangladesh also joined the HLP Clinic.

Design of Learning Offer — the HLP Clinic

The HLP Clinic was organized to enable participants to analyze the situations of their respective local governance and to explore how a methodology like HLP could be used by them to identify good practices, and replicate and upscale them. In this clinic, all participants and all practitioners met as “learner” as well as “teacher/expert”.

The main objective of the above clinic was to discuss, learn, analyze and come up with realistic solutions for application or replications.

The specific objectives were:-

- Introduction to HLP.
- To understand how HLP fits into the bigger picture of capacity building in Bangladesh.
- Visit villages, Union Parishads, Pourshavas, and District Administration Offices to discuss HLP and its good practices.
- Analyze learning to come up with solutions for respective local governance scenarios.
- Prepare realistic work plan and follow-up mechanisms to achieve better outcomes at field level.

HLP Clinic

The HLP Clinic started with a brief Opening Session on 21st September at 6.30 p.m. at Hotel Paradise Garden. Mr. Mark Ellery, Regional Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist from Water and Sanitation Program of the World Bank welcomed the participants. Mr. Santanu Lahiri from LOGIN Resource Team shared the concept of HLP Clinic and Dr. Cherian Joseph (LoGin Learning Facilitator) moderated the entire session. After self-introductions, Mr. Hossein Shahbaz, Director, Pilot Project Department (PPD) of CIRDAP spoke on the importance of LOGIN mission and potential possibilities for closer collaboration between LOGIN and CIRDAP.

The 2nd day — 22nd September began with a presentation on the implementation process of HLP and its results to give the members of LOGIN Group a clear understanding about HLP. Presentations were made by Director

General of the National Institute of Local Government, Mr. Md. Kabir M Ashraf Alam, NDC; Regional Water and Sanitation Specialist of WSP, Mr. Mark Ellery and Senior Decentralization Specialist of WSP, Mr. Santanu Lahiri. Understanding the context, need for HLP, stakeholders, roles, participants, processes, present status and challenges were highlighted in their presentations. Dr. Cherian Joseph facilitated the workshop.

To clarify the learning framework and to integrate participant expectations into the learning process, the moderator drew out participants' expectations of the HLP Clinic. The participants also shared some of their good practices in the meeting. Ideas on identification and replication of good practices as well as bringing them within current activity were shared and discussed.

The group pondered on what should be the governmental role in such a process, in the coordination committees needed at ward and village level and in the tasks of Union Parishad to develop and plan UP budgets. Group members stressed the importance of the connection between sharing of knowledge and experiences. The participants displayed interest in learning the process of identifying good practices, the crafting of work procedure, collecting best practices and adapting methods to the local context etc.

Mr. Md. Kabir M. Ashraf Alam, NDC, made a presentation on the overall activities of NILG and how the learning of HLP is being utilized in their training activities. He specially mentioned the National Framework on Capacity Building.

In the evening, the LOGIN Group visited the UP Help Line and saw how it is connected to all UPs across the country to respond to queries related to functioning of UPs.

Expectations from the HLP Clinic of participants at the beginning of the event

- What is HLP?
- How we can deepen HLP in one's own country?
- Want to know more about HLP and how it works.
- How does HLP create a win-win situation?
- How does HLP communicate?
- How do UPs lead the HLP?
- What is a "clinic" and how does it "work"?

Things which required clarification were:-

- Some terminologies.
- How to scale-up good practices?



Director General of NILG was presenting CapDev at LOGIN HLP Clinic

The next day, the LOGIN Group visited Falda Union Parishad under Bhaiyanpur Upazila in Tangail district, and attended a Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC) meeting. The Deputy Director Local Government (DDLG), Tangail, Mr. Gautam Chandra Paul; Chairman of Falda UP Mr. Md. Saidul Islam Talukder; UP members, representatives of village committees and line departments of the government participated in the meeting. Representatives of the departments of education, agriculture, and livestock presented their status reports as part of ensuring transparency and accountability of their tasks.

The LOGIN Group displayed keen interest in the process of UDCC and took part in the discussion to learn more about the process. They wanted to know how UDCC could be replicated in their own countries. In reply, one UDCC member pointed out that one of the prime reasons for successful implementation of UDCC is the release of unconditional block grant by the Government directly to the bank account of the Union Parishad, which seems to be a prerequisite for its success. Another UDCC member suggested that the LOGIN Group member should identify 4-5 persons from each of their wards and the benefits of UDCC could be communicated among community people through them. The LOGIN Group members appreciated the suggestions and showed their interest in initiating UDCC in their countries.

In the afternoon the Group members met at the Elega Resort, Tangail, to revisit the concept, purpose and principles of HLP. They agreed that the major methodological components of HLP process are participation, experiential processes, peer learning and self-direction. They appreciated that the purpose of HLP is to enhance capacity, up-scale in a sustainable manner and enable the movement from practice to policy. The participants identified the major principles of HLP as: identification of good practice in an appreciative manner, sharing in community, learning from peers, discussion with larger community, prioritizing replication and peer review.

The LOGIN Group members summarized their learning on the concluding day of the mission on 25 September 2013 through intensive small group discussions and individual reflection. Through these interactions they consolidated their learning, identified core elements of HLP, expressed a vision of HLP and crafted a tentative definition of HLP based on their experience from the field.

Learning of participants

In the Concluding session where select invitees associated with LOGIN and D&LG participated in a wrap up dialogue with the participants, group members shared their individual learning. This learning was varied and reflected differing emphasis and appreciation. Some of the major learning articulated is listed below:

Now I know what LOGIN means:

- See how learning can be shared.
- Understand how replication can be done.
- Reinforces my "perspective/commitments."

Now I know what HLP means:

- I have also learned how to use demonstrated (HLP to practice) achievements of community and saw the role of local governance in national/state policy making.
- Recognized how both government and people need to respond as well as the relationship between UP and HLP Team.
- The learning culture needs more openness and less negativism.
- Internalization at UP level has led to a better understanding of HLP Clinic.
- Language is not a barrier — passion and mutual interests help to connect each other.
- People are prepared to pay for services, but women are not as involved as they should be.
- People can use HLP to improve their socio-economic condition as HLP is not a pilot or a project but a process.
- Have grasped how to become a horizontal learner.
- Now I know how to incorporate/integrate learning of local community/ grass root learning.



YOUTH EXCITEMENT

Ranjitbhai caught a boy who was ready to sing a song. Then it was a “Musical Event” after the Union Development and Coordination Committee Meeting. One teacher also contributed a beautiful song. It was an amalgam of youth energy with excitement.

Core Elements of HLP

The LOGIN group recognized that the core elements of HLP are demonstrated achievements of a practice with a collective process for replication and policy influence. This peer-to-peer learning comes from within as it values local knowledge and demonstrated achievement. It is a continuous process since it is a tool for appreciation. Its flexibility comes from it being non-hierarchical, experiential and participatory as it is rooted in collective learning.

As mentioned earlier, participants tried to define HLP on the basis of their experience during the Clinic. Eight definitions emerged, including a vision statement on HLP. The vision statement and definitions that the group prepared are highlighted below.

Vision of HLP: HLP is a peer-to-peer collective learning and appreciation process to discover innate talents to initiate social upliftment and influence policies to ensure fulfillment of people’s well-being.

Definition of HLP

The group members individually made delimitations of HLP and some of the definitions are listed below:

- HLP is a peer-to-peer, experiential, participatory, flexible, collective and also self-directed learning process with a view to demonstrate and replicate good practices and to influence policy.
- HLP is a continuous process of social upliftment through collective processes of replication and policy influence with mutual appreciation as its main ingredient.
- HLP is a process to discover innate talents in an appreciative manner; connect the learning among peers and instill confidence to move forward by utilizing untapped available resources.
- HLP is a collective and continuous process of learning from demonstrated achievements of practices that are replicated and appreciated to fulfill national development needs.

Work Plan and its progress status

The LOGIN Group members developed six month work plans as part of their commitment to implement their learning and to take it forward (October 2013 – March 2014). The work plans primarily covered how the individual/ organization/ institution (they come from) would use HLP. As members developed their plans they responded to observations/questions from colleagues, and also sought to spell out the support required (from LOGIN, HLP Team, WSP, CIRDAP and others) to enable them to implement HLP. As a follow-up, to provide the participant members an opportunity to share their experiences post event and to review their progress in implementations of the work plans, an audio conference was organized on 12 November. A matrix has been prepared and highlighted in Table-1 on the basis of the feedback.

Learning summary from HLP Clinic

The learning summary of the HLP Clinic is highlighted in Table-1.

TABLE-1: SUMMARY OF LEARNING FROM HLP CLINIC IN BANGLADESH				
Sl. No.	HLP Clinic contributed in understanding on	Observations on success	Observations on challenges	Potential solutions to overcome the challenges
1.	The Clinic	HLP clinic was a tri-country, small group, intensive exercise for a week. Follow up is strong.	Need to share time and find resources for some of the work planned.	Require self and institutional motivation with some measure of hand-holding.
2.	The Concept of HLP	There are many replicable practices in my own workplace, which need to be promoted and propagated.	It is a challenge to make it more engaging.	Things must start somewhere.
3.	The Process of HLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HLP is a free flowing non-imposing process. ▪ HLP has been found to be a quite effective process for enhancing capacities. 	This innovative process will be first applied within the Royal Institute of Management, Bhutan. On the basis of results noted, it will be rolled out to local government institutions. However, the Institute has not yet agreed to start this initiative in Bhutan.	The Institute of Bhutan is now exploring the possibility of starting this HLP initiative in conjunction with LGIs.
4.	The Instruments of HLP	Noteworthy to see that internet, social media, robo calls etc. are being used as instruments of HLP in Bangladesh.	The resources (technical and financial) required to replicate the same is a big challenge.	Need for innovation and creativity to connect and appreciate others will allow them to understand HLP and allocate their own resources for replication.
5.	The Bigger Picture	HLP fits well with LOGIN's focus on non-classroom learning methodologies as it is being used in Bangladesh for the strengthening of D&LG at the grass root level.	The structure of defining a best practice at the community level needs more clarification.	More focus needed on methodological aspects of putting HLP in practice.
6.	Good Practices	The Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC) meeting, which links local government institutions (LGIs) with line departments, ward committees and grass root community based organizations needs to plan and follow-up implementation of any activities within LGIs. The spirit of unity was palpable.	Replicating these good practices requires a group of people and professionals from citizen groups, line departments and LGIs to work together.	Need dialogue within own areas to pilot this concept.

Next Steps

LOGIN participants prepared their individual and institutional work plan, of which the institutional work plans were highlighted in the previous section.

In response to the above work plan, it was agreed that on behalf of LOGIN the following activities will be carried out:-

- i. Prepare a Report for LOGIN Secretariat on the HLP Clinic: Beyond of October 2013. Person responsible: Dr. Cherian Joseph.
- ii. Carry out a “survey monkey” to evaluate the impact of HLP Clinic in early November 2013. Person responsible: Santanu Lahiri.
- iii. Organize audio conference by middle of November 2013 to discuss the progress of work plans. Person responsible: Santanu Lahiri.
- iv. Prepare a before LOGIN Council Meeting in December 2013. Persons responsible: Dr. Cherian Joseph and Santanu Lahiri.

All the above planned activities are fully accomplished.



NO LANGUAGE BARRIER

Archanatai and an elected woman leader of Falda village became friends without knowing each other's language. They promised to help each other in preparing Inter Country Panchayat Placement Program. There was no language barrier.

Review of work plans

The work plans (attached below) too were reviewed in the audio conference. It was found that out of a total 35 activities, 13 activities are fully accomplished, whereas, 6 activities are on-going and remaining 16 activities are yet to start.

Sl. No.	Key activities	Timeframe	Progress Status
Mr. Bhimrao Nivruti Raskar and Ms. Archana Shyam Jatkar, Resource & Support Centre–Mahila Rajsatta Andolon			
1.	HLP – Module Design (Based on MRA Experiences): Documentation, Design and Publication.	Oct-Nov '13	Done (Marathi module is ready).
2.	Fact Sheets on Web: New Web Design, Dialogue and Launching HLP page	Nov '13	Done. First web site has been launched and disseminated on solution exchange.
3.	HLP on Samyak (Social media): Dialogue, Request, Launching and Feedback	Nov '13	Done. Already disseminated
4.	Distance Education program on Budget, Orders, Schemes and services (BOSS) course: Sharing, Designing Draft, Need matching and Pilot	Nov '13–Jan '14	On-going (waiting for need assessment workshop invitation by the National Institute of Local Government, Bangladesh).
Ms. Archana Shyam Jatkar, Resource & Support Centre–Mahila Rajsatta Andolon			
5.	Inter Country Panchayat Placement Program (ICPPP): Pilot at Pokhari, Design by committee, Proposal to WSP and Re-designed	Nov '13–Jan '14	On-going (first draft note is ready).
6.	Mahila Sabha: Women's meeting prior to Ward Sabha:- Preparing Draft, Advocacy and Policy formation	Nov '13–Feb '14	On-going (sent Government Resolution to JICA).
7.	Union Development Coordination Committee (UDCC): Sharing, pilot and redraft	Dec '13–Mar '14	Not yet started.

Mr. Dhula Jesa Chad (Dhaval), Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, Gujarat			
8.	Sharing HLP with partner NGOs & Government Departments	Oct-Nov '13	Done
9.	Fact sheet shared with partners	Nov '13 onwards	Done
10.	Use media platform for good practice	Nov '13 onwards	Not yet started
11.	Make HLP Facebook page	Nov '13 onwards	Not yet started
Mr. Mani Tshering, Royal Institute of Management, Simtokha, Thimphu			
12.	Submit detailed study tour report to the Institute on return.	October 1 st Week	Done
13.	Make presentation to Institute's faculty and staff to share HLP experiences and good practices, learning from LOGIN Team.	October 1 st Week	Not yet started
14.	Identification of existing good practices at the Institute: Replicate the good practices using HLP, and write fact sheets about best practices for publication.	October 2 nd week October 3 rd week October 4 th week	Not yet started
15.	Replicate HLP to Local Government elected representatives.	Nov 2 nd week	Not yet started
Mr. Ranjeet Nirguni, Zilla Parishad (District Council), Samastipur, Bihar			
16.	Go back and organize one meeting of LGI at all levels. Share with them the concept of HLP and own experiences.	By Nov '13	Done
17.	Identify one potential Good Practice, pick up one or two specific activities, start working with the objective of making it a Good Practice, and conduct a weekly follow-up meeting to maintain the pace.	By Nov '13	Done
18.	Create a network of Good Practice members at the block level; conduct fortnightly meetings; fix small targets, meet again and discuss what everyone did in 15 days, share the problems faced and look out for solutions, link LGIs to NGOs.	By Nov '13	On-going
19.	On a small scale (may be village), depending on the resources, try to create a database of mobile users and look for the possibility of using robocall etc.	By Dec '13	Not yet started
Mr. Saif Uddin Ahmed, The Hunger Project			
20.	Workshop on HLP for the Hunger project, BD Staff.	By Nov '13	Not yet started
21.	Identification of demonstrated achievements of Hunger project.	By Nov '13	Not yet started
22.	Identify and prepare Trainer Team on HLP & writer team of demonstrated achievements (Staff, Journalist & Researcher).	By Nov '13	Not yet started
23.	Form communication team (social media sites can prepare 2/3 minutes video films on Good Practices and collect photographs).	By Dec '13	Not yet started



UNBELIEVABLE

We visited Sanitation Program. One young lady explained the whole process in an illustrative manner. Her knowledge and confidence was unbelievable!

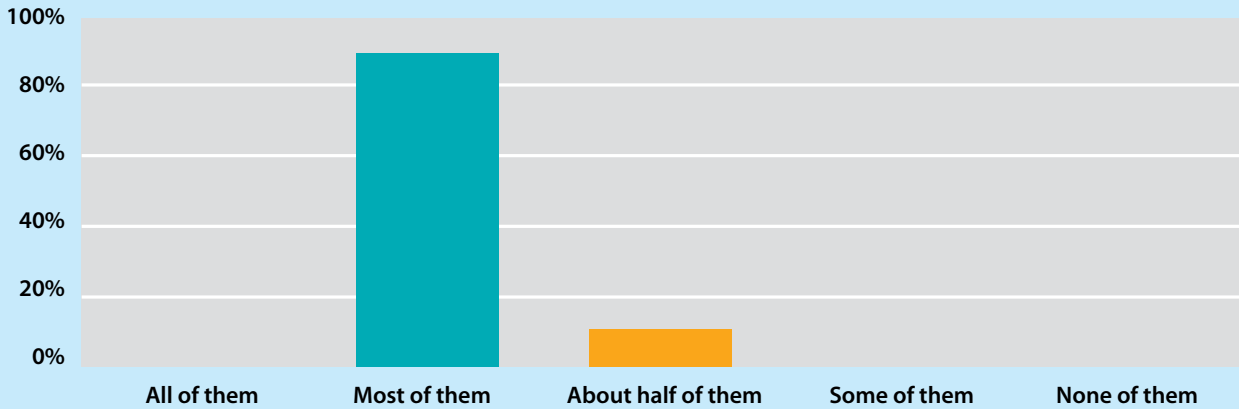
Mr. Naushad Alam, CIRDAP			
24.	Identify potential UPs.	By Dec '13	Not yet started
25.	Identify good practices.	By Dec '13	Not yet started
26.	Arrange dissemination workshop to share good practices.	By Dec '13	Not yet started
27.	Adopt good practices.	By Dec '13	Not yet started
Salim Hossian Bhuiyan, HLP			
Under HLP			
28.	Sharing of LOGIN Mission Report in upcoming HLP Working Team Meeting	6 Nov '13	Done
29.	Organize a Round Table on LOGIN Mission to share learning initiative with HLP Partners	13 Nov '13	Not yet started
30.	Share reports, photos, slide show etc. on HLP website, Facebook and other Media	Nov-Dec '13	On-going
Under Non-HLP			
31.	Organize an orientation for school children/students through UPs	Nov-Dec '13	On-going
Mr. Santanu Lahiri and Dr. Cherian Joseph, LOGIN			
32.	Prepare a brief Report on HLP Clinics.	October '13	Done
33.	Organize audio conference by middle of November 2013 to discuss about the progress of work plans.	Nov '13	Done
34.	Carry out a "Survey Monkey" to evaluate the impact of HLP Clinics in early November 2013.	End Nov '13	Done
35.	Prepare a Brief Report on HLP Clinic before LOGIN Council Meeting in December 2013.	Dec '13	Done

Evaluation of HLP Clinic

Evaluation made by eight participants is reflected below.

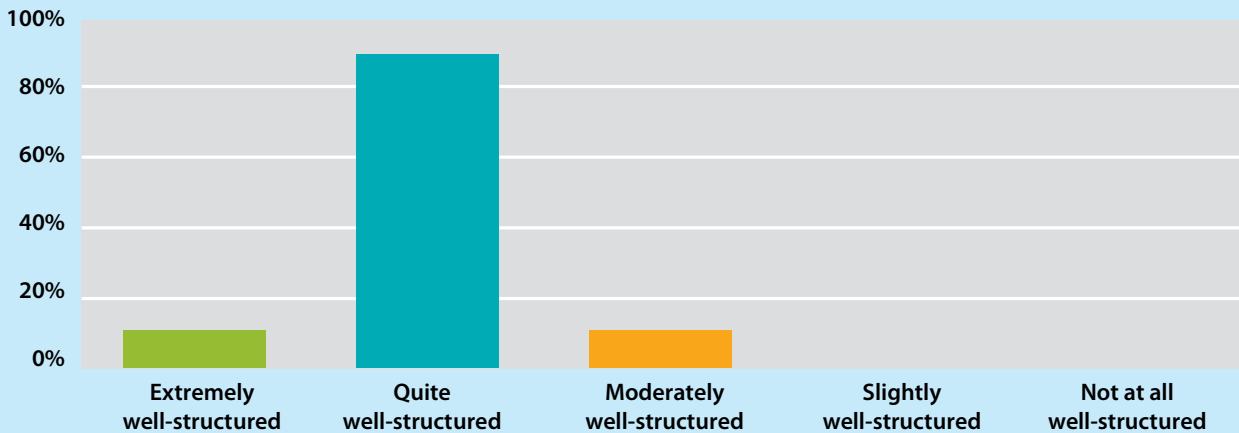
How many of the objectives of the event were met?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



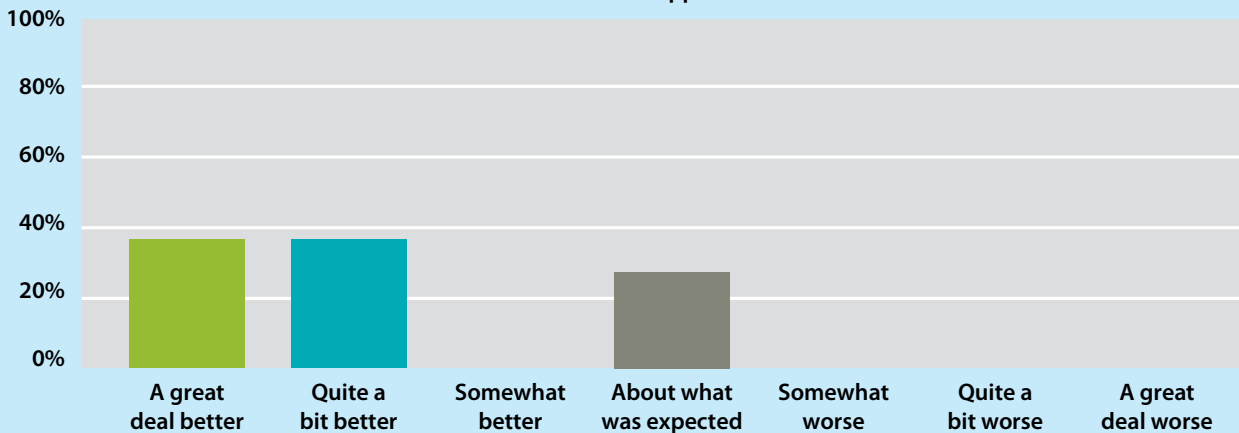
How well-structured was this event?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



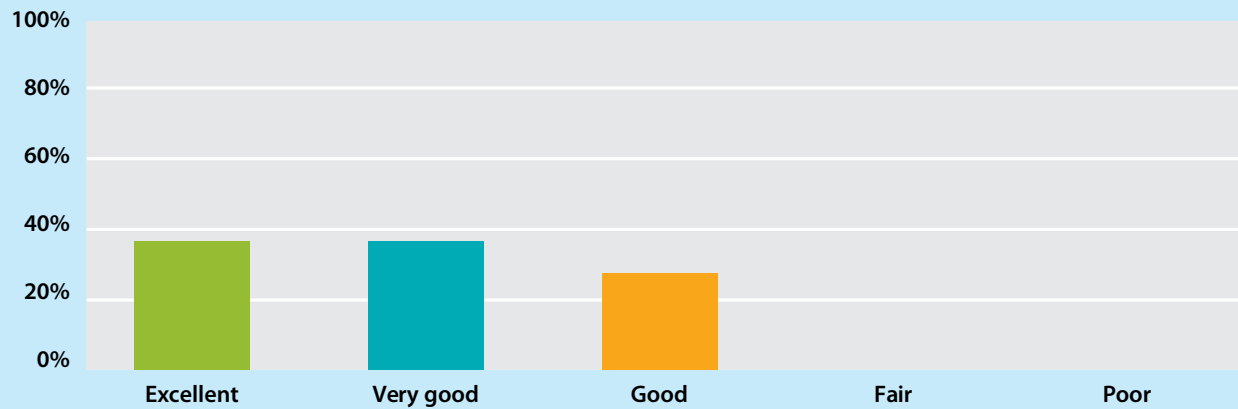
Was this event better than what you expected, worse than what you expected, or about what you expected?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



How would you rate the course?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



Concluding thoughts

The HLP Clinic as the first Learning Offer of LOGIN to explore non-classroom learning methodologies has stirred interest and serious debate on the potential for community learning, scaling-up of good practices and inspiring reform. During debriefing to SDC, it was suggested that a similar approach might be considered by SDC Bangladesh Office on other occasions. The dialogue in the group helped throw up issues from an external perspective which highlighted areas for reflection and clarification for the HLP team in Bangladesh.



The main concerns that emerged were the following:

- What are the conditions in which HLP cannot be practiced?
- Clarity required on how a community and related stakeholders can recognize a demonstrated practice as a good practice. Would the methodology for this be consistently the same?
- Greater insight needed on how NILG and other institutions have contributed to the mainstreaming of HLP in Bangladesh.
- How to use local folk art and culture for the propagation of HLP in the community? The Gambhira (a local folk art stage expression) did not create as much impact as was expected as this was not done in the presence of the community.
- Finally, some participants expressed a desire that LOGIN should issue certificates at the completion of such learning offers.

A deeper outcome

Through this network LOGIN is enabling members to embark on a remarkable journey, a journey truly characterized by interface and mutual learning. Each of the member countries brings to the dialogue their experience in local government and the quest for improved ways to enhance knowledge, build skills and deepen capacities. This trans-Asian experience opens new frontiers for learning and integration.



For Further information please contacts:

<http://loginasia.org> www.horizontallearning.net

Ms. Preeta Lall
Team Leader, LOGIN,
Climate Change & Development
Division, SDC – New Delhi.
E-mail: preeta.lall@sdc.net

Ms. Sabina Yasmein Lubna
Senior Program Officer,
SDC, Embassy of Switzerland, Dhaka
E-mail: sabina.yasmein@eda.admin.ch

Mr. Santanu Lahiri
Senior Decentralization Specialist
LOGIN Facilitator in Bangladesh
E-mail: slahiri@worldbank.org

Report prepared by: Mr. Santanu Lahiri and Dr. Cherian Joseph

With support from: Mr. Bhimrao Nivruti Raskar, Ms. Archana Shyam Jatkar (Resource & Support Centre for Development); Mr. Ranjeet Nirguni (Zilla Parishad Member, Bihar); Mr. Dhula Jesa Chad (Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, Gujarat); Mr. Mani Tshering (Royal Institute of Management, Simtokha, Thimphu); Mr. Salim Hossain Bhuiyan, Mr. AKM Rahmat Ali (Water and Sanitation Program, World Bank); Mr. Saif Uddin Ahmed (Hunger Project Bangladesh); and Mr. Naushad Alam (Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific — CIRDAP).

Peer Reviewed By: Shams Uddin Ahmed (Local Government Division); Mr. Mohammad Mukhlesur Rahman Sarker (Policy Support Unit — Local Government Division); Derek Muller, Sabina Yasmein Lubna, Sohel Ibn Ali (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation — Bangladesh); Preeta Lall, RV Jayapadma, T N Anuradha (LOGIN-SDC India), Mark Ellery (Water and Sanitation Program — World Bank), Hossein Shahbaz (CIRDAP), Azizur Rahman Siddique and Akira Munakata (JICA); Badiul Alam Majumdar (Hunger Project) and Aroma Dutta (PRIP TRUST).

Designed by: Progressive Printers Pvt. Ltd

Edited By: Kalpona Moitra

Published: December 2013.