STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNANCE (SDLG) PROGRAM IN BANGLADESH
WORK PLAN 2013

NOVEMBER 2012

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COVER PHOTO: People participate in a USAID/ARD Local Governance Initiative activity. Photo courtesy of USAID/Bangladesh LGI.
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<tr>
<td>BEI</td>
<td>Bangladesh Enterprise Institute</td>
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<td>BUPF</td>
<td>Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum</td>
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<td>CiG</td>
<td>Citizens-in-Governance Forum</td>
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<td>COR</td>
<td>Contract Officer’s Representative</td>
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<td>CTG</td>
<td>Caretaker Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>DANIDA</td>
<td>Danish International Development Agency</td>
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<td>FM</td>
<td>Financial Management and Revenue Generation training</td>
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<td>GiZ</td>
<td>German International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Howard Delafield International</td>
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<td>HLP</td>
<td>Horizontal Learning Program of the World Bank</td>
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<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>LG</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
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<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Association</td>
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<td>LGCI</td>
<td>Local Government Capacity Index</td>
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<td>LGSP</td>
<td>Local Government Support Program</td>
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<td>LGU</td>
<td>Local Government Unit</td>
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<td>LOE</td>
<td>Level of Effort</td>
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<td>MAB</td>
<td>Municipal Association of Bangladesh</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MLGRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives</td>
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<td>MP</td>
<td>Members of Parliament</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<td>NILG</td>
<td>National Institute of Local Government</td>
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<td>OCAG</td>
<td>Office of the Controller and Auditor General</td>
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<td>PHR</td>
<td>Protecting Human Rights</td>
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<td>PRODIP</td>
<td>Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Participatory Strategic Planning and Budgeting training</td>
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<td>SD</td>
<td>Service Delivery and Monitoring training</td>
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<td>SDLG</td>
<td>Strengthening Democratic Local Governance Program</td>
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<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
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<td>UCLG</td>
<td>United Cities and Local Governments</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UzPAB</td>
<td>Upazila Parishad Association of Bangladesh</td>
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<td>UP</td>
<td>Union Parishad</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Strengthening Democratic Local Governance in Bangladesh (SDLG) Project is a 39-month activity (December 2010–March 2014) funded by the United State Agency for International Development’s Bangladesh Mission (USAID/Bangladesh). Building on more than a decade’s worth of local government strengthening programs in Bangladesh, the SDLG Project combines a focus on research and policy advocacy, capacity development for local government associations, and training and technical assistance for local government units at union parishad, upazila parishad, and pourashava levels. Tetra Tech ARD is the implementing partner for the SDLG Project.

Key elements of the SDLG Project strategy for achieving results include:

- Building on USAID/Bangladesh’s more than 10-year history of significant local governance support programs.
- Enhancing the political will of national and local government elected officials as well as citizen groups and NGOs to reform local governance.
- Linking with USAID/Bangladesh’s (and other donor’s) programs, including Presidential Initiatives in the areas of health, agriculture and climate change.
- Identifying and disseminating to local governments innovative practices to achieve performance standards.
- Integrating gender and youth concerns across the SDLG program, while supporting women’s participation in local government leadership.
- Disseminating through multiple media outlets information on local governments in Bangladesh and the role of the USAID-funded SDLG Project.

This strategic approach will help ensure the project achieves core objectives within the 39-month timeframe, given the resources available, and taking into consideration constraints and opportunities posed by the legal and policy framework for local governments.

1.1 LOCAL GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Political Changes Expected in Governance Context in 2013

Many of key characteristics of legal and bureaucratic context for project activities remain the same as in Project Year 2 and are discussed in the paragraphs immediately below. However the political context will change dramatically in 2013 in the months approaching the national election due late in the year. As Year 2 drew to a close, economic and social activity was disrupted by several nationwide hartals or work and traffic stoppages called by the political opposition. As Bangladesh’s two major political parties seek to make their case for re-election in 2013, opportunities will increase for SDLG-supported policy reform advocacy that results in changes to local government law and/or ministerial-level policies and guidelines.

Both minor policy-specific reforms, and major decentralization reforms, including reforms of the key upazila level of local government, are sought by multiple local government stakeholders. Before the election, advocacy can be targeted at the current administration to implement specific policy changes, and
at campaigning political parties to press for public pledges in their party ‘manifestos’ committing to decentralization reforms after the election..

**Continuing Features of Governance Context from Year 2**

SDLG work with UPs and municipalities focused on implementing provisions of the 2009 UP and *Paurashava* Acts detailing revenue generation, participatory planning and budgeting and service delivery monitoring authorities and procedures. Due to the relatively lower profile of UPs and municipalities, interference from national level actors such as MPs and central government bureaucrats is limited mainly to ongoing manipulation of distribution of social welfare benefits intended for the poor and sometimes diverted to politicians’ pockets or supporters. Other decision-making authorities of the local councils can be implemented with relative independence.

The case of the upazilas is different. Interference from local MPs and non-cooperation by central government functionaries posted locally but technically working under the authority of the upazila council are both major obstacles to meaningful exercise of council authority. At the national level, SDLG engagement with representatives of the central ministry, relevant parliamentary standing committee, and political party central committees has produced some understanding of specific reforms that could strengthen weak councils. However, the continued fears by the vast majority of MPs that the upazila chair is potential competitor to be controlled rather than a potential ally in improving conditions for constituents make action on reforms difficult.

In 2013, with the elections approaching, upazila chairs and vice chairs represent a political constituency for both ruling and opposition parties. Leaders of the local government association UzPAB intend to use this status and widespread criticism by media and civil society about the dysfunctional state of upazila councils to press for reforms.
2.0 COMPONENTS AND TASK AREAS

2.1 COMPONENT 1: ROLES AND AUTHORITIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

In its first year, SDLG conducted in-depth primary research needed to assess new local government laws, accompanying policy directives or their absence, and the bureaucratic, political and capacity obstacles to implementing those positive provisions of new laws. To support SDLG field training under Components 3 and 4, research included a review of the state of training content and methodologies used by Bangladeshi NGOs to support decentralization, and by central government training institutes that have traditionally emphasized continued bureaucratic control of local government. In the case of the upazila tier, a scarcity of reliable, current and specific knowledge required primary research at the field level to initiate training curriculum development.

In Year 2, with support from two research organization grantees, SDLG worked closely to involve the newly-elected leaderships of the three local government associations, assisted under Component 2, in a series of advocacy events. LGA involvement included multiple sessions to identify key reforms among the many complaints, link these reforms to improved revenues and services, and coach LGA leaders to effectively present these to politicians and bureaucrats with evidence-based arguments grounded in knowledge of the new laws. In Year 3, SDLG will build on reform advocacy in Year 2 and work with policy makers to move from awareness of the need for specific reforms to action to change policies primarily at the ministerial level. Part of this effort will include coordination with international donors such as SDC and the World Bank, which are also pursuing different levels of local government policy reform in the year before national elections.

2.1.1 TASK A: RESEARCH AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

As noted above, the bulk of SDLG research activities were completed in Years One and Two, and the majority of activities under Component 1 will focus on advocacy through policy dialogue under Task B. Activity 1 under Year 2 continues at a reduced level with limited research objectives and Activity 2 to support regional university research was completed in Year 2.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 1: LOCAL GOVERNANCE POLICY RESEARCH PROGRAM

Approach: While this task is primarily complete, limited research is planned in Year 3 to support policy dialogue activities under Task B below. A research organization grantee will be selected to (1) research major local government policy advocacy initiatives being conducted by local NGOs and international donor community and produce a brief summary of policies targeted for reform and advocacy methods used; and (2) research and prepare case studies documenting best practices in a number of SDLG trained local government units including potential for wider replication.

Timing: Activities are expected to begin after selection and approval of a research organization grantee in Q1 2013.
2.1.2 TASK B: POLICY DIALOGUE

Policy dialogue activities in Year 2 were conducted under two categories: public regional roundtables and national policy conferences open to the media and civil society, and private ‘closed-door’ dialogues with small groups of MPs and political party representatives. LG association leaders participated actively in these events, presenting the case for specific reforms at their LG tier. In Year 3, SDLG through its research grantee will place greater emphasis on ‘closed door’ meetings to pursue action on these same reforms to change policies primarily at the ministerial level. SDLG will use national events to highlight local advances by enterprising elected leaders and highlight policy gaps in 2009 LG Acts and potential reforms for more effective decentralization.

TASK B, ACTIVITY 1: CLOSED-DOOR MEETINGS WITH POLICY MAKERS, BUREAUCRATS

Approach: Drawing on reforms advocated by LG association leaders in Year 2 as well as research into other NGO and international donor reform agendas noted under Task A, SDLG will arrange small meetings for research-based advocacy on reform actions with key policy makers including MPs (such as members of Parliamentary Standing Committees on Local Government, Public Accounts, Finance, Women’s Affairs, and the Chief Whip and Deputy Speaker), Ministry officials (such as officials of LGD, Finance, Public Administration, Women and Children’s Affairs, and the National Committee for upazila councils), and influential political party members. In SDLG districts, small meetings will be held with district and upazila government officials to understand views of local level bureaucrats on specific reforms.

Timing: Small meetings are to begin in March or April 2013 after the award of a grant to a competitively selected research organization.

TASK B, ACTIVITY 2: NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BEST PRACTICES, POLICY REFORMS

Approach: A national conference designed to highlight best practices and policy reforms with high profile media coverage and participation of civil society, government and national and local elected leaders is planned in the months leading up to the national election. In 2012, SDLG continued to engage with representatives from SDC, World Bank, and DANIDA funded initiatives in local governance that include a policy reform component to ensure that its work is complementary. As noted under Activity 1 above, SDLG’s research grantee will review the status of other donor and NGO advocacy and identify the reforms being targeted by each. This research will be used to inform closed-door meetings discussed above and to determine conference timing and content to advance the political momentum toward decentralization. Results of research on LG best practices from among the 600 LGUs being trained under SDLG Components 3 and 4 will be included in this conference.

Timing: This national conference is planned for Q3 or early in Q4 2013 depending on prevailing political conditions and other advocacy initiatives.

2.1.3 TASK C: INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Under this Task, support to build the capacity of women leaders at all three LG tiers and both domestic and international study tours are key activities. As discussed in prior reporting, Year 2 research originally planned on LG best practices and citizens groups was cancelled after both project consultant teams failed to submit satisfactory written products in time for use in SDLG training despite repeated extensions. Instead, SDLG drew on early consultations with two local NGOs, Rupantar and WAVE Foundation, talks with SDC’s active local governance project Sharique, and discussions with SDLG senior staff members experienced in local government to develop its Citizens-in-Governance (CiG) approach.
TASK C, ACTIVITY 1: CONTINUED SUPPORT TO WOMEN’S COMMITTEES IN LG ASSOCIATIONS

**Approach:** In 2013, under the leadership of the DCOP and Local Government Associations Component Team Leader, SDLG will complete its support for the formation of Women’s Committees for all three LG associations at central and divisional levels, and continue training and mentoring of a core group of women elected representatives and association office holders from all three LG tiers.

**Committee Formation** – In 2012, SDLG assisted in the formation of three elected Women’s Committees (WCs) at the central level for LG associations BUPF, MAB and UZPAB. Women members of the associations’ Divisional and Regional Committees elected in 2011 met to elect their representatives to these national committees. Each of the national WCs developed its own strategic plan to assist their associations in critical functions such as dues collection and to highlight LG women’s issues in association policy advocacy agendas.

- **UzPAB** – The central Women’s Committee assisted by SDLG formed 7 elected Divisional Women’s Committees between April and June 2012, with each receiving 1.5 days of leadership training.
- **BUPF** – In early 2013, in response to demands from women elected representatives, SDLG will support the formation and training of divisional WCs.
- **MAB** – In Year 3, SDLG will support formation and leadership training for divisional WCs with expected completion by mid 2013. MAB was the last association to form a women’s committee in late 2012 after continued SDLG engagement with MAB leadership.

In 2013, SDLG will facilitate joint planning and action by the three national WCs to identify and advocate for common reform issues affecting women in LGs. If feasible, SDLG will support formation of some form of a national caucus of local government women representatives towards the end of Year 3.

**Training and Mentoring** – By observing performance in different events, in 2013, SDLG will continue to identify promising women leaders from the three central WCs and divisional WCs with the potential to learn and articulate LG association issues in seminars/workshops, trainings and consultation meetings organized by other institutions.

In July 2012, several women leaders were consulted by the visiting Gender Specialist from USAID, Washington. In September 2012, a group of 12 WC leaders were sponsored by SDLG to participate in an international training of grassroots women political leaders jointly organized by the Asian University for Women (AUW) in Chittagong and the U.S. Department of State, Office of Global Women’s Issues.

In 2013, SDLG will work with participants to such events so they can effectively share their learning with respective central and divisional WCs in order to develop capacities towards collective action on grassroots issues among a larger group of LG women leaders from all three tiers.

**Timing:** The BUPF and MAB Divisional WCs will be formed and trained on leadership in Q1 and Q2 2013 respectively.

**TASK C, ACTIVITY 2: EXPANDED IN-COUNTRY LEARNING TOURS FOR LG OFFICIALS**

**Approach:** In-country study visits among LG units provide practical learning opportunities for local government representatives. Through its Component 3 and 4 field trainings, the SDLG team identifies LGUs with governance ‘best practices’ at each tier and works with LG associations under Component 2 to host the tours. Building on in-country tours arranged in Project Year 1, the SDLG Project conducted four such tours in Year 2 in July and December 2012, with separate tours for upazila, municipal and union representatives. In each tour, 15 to 18 representatives participated. After observation and training in July, SDLG regional office coordinators are now leading in-country tours.

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Engagement with World Bank HLP – For UP study tours, SDLG coordinates with the World Bank’s Horizontal Learning Program (HLP) now housed at the Government of Bangladesh’s National Institute of Local Governance (NILG). Of the three study tours organized in December 2012, one is to an HLP identified ‘best practice’ UP.

**Timing:** In 2013, eight study tours are planned – four late in Q2 2013 after the completion of the planning and budgeting cycle for the Bangladesh government fiscal year, and four in Q4 after completion of remaining SDLG refresher trainings.

**TASK C, ACTIVITY 3: INTERNATIONAL STUDY TOURS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LG ASSOCIATION WOMEN’S COMMITTEES**

**Approach:** In 2011, SDLG issued a set policy for support to LG associations including international study tours. Under this policy, SDLG will organize one international study tour annually and will support LGA participation in one international conference or workshop annually. Certain conditions apply to the selection of participants to ensure diverse regional representation and the inclusion of women.

In 2012, SDLG organized two international study visits with participants selected in consultation with LG association partners – one in January for women representatives to observe the panchayat system of Kerala, India which has many similarities to that of Bangladesh; and a second in November to the Philippines with 17 elected leaders including six women, a MLGRD official, and a television journalist. SDLG also supported nine MAB members including two women to attend the World Urban Forum Conference held in Italy in September 2012.

For 2013, SDLG has encouraged BUPF in particular to identify an international workshop or conference relevant to rural elected governments for their participation, or a relevant regional meeting of the UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) of which BUPF is a member. An organized study tour to Indonesia or Sri Lanka with participants from all three tiers is also planned in 2013.

**Timing:** SDLG will organize a study tour to Indonesia or Sri Lanka in the Q3 2013. It expects to support BUFF participation in an international conference in Q1 or Q2.

**2.1.4 TASK D: PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**

In Year 2, SDLG proposed a focus on public-private partnerships (PPPs) between LGUs, the private sector and local communities to support quality service delivery, including modest infrastructure investments through a grants competition. SDLG is no longer pursuing this idea to allow for sufficient funding for other initiatives discussed in the section below on Windows of Opportunity. Informal ‘PPPs’ are being encouraged on a limited basis for simple infrastructure including water well installation by other donors and NGOs working on sector issues. Examples of successful PPPs were featured in site visits chosen for the Philippines study tour and SDLG continues to seek successful examples in Bangladesh among the unions and municipalities in its training area.

**2.2 COMPONENT 2: ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS**

The SDLG team has drawn on the experience of senior team members who worked under the USAID-funded Local Governance Initiative (LGI) Project and led the formation of BUPF and MAB. Between 2006 and the 2011 start of the SDLG Project, BUPF and MAB operational costs were fully funded by two USAID projects which also supported specific advocacy activities. In 2011, under the direction of the first USAID COR for SDLG, the project began a shift away from full funding of association office operations to prepare BUPF and MAB for financial sustainability without donor support.
This theme was reinforced during SDLG support to elections in 2011, and during strategic planning sessions, grant budget negotiations and leadership trainings (primarily for UzPAB) in 2012. In 2013, SDLG will continue with leadership and other trainings designed to equip elected representatives with the knowledge to lead effective and sustainable associations. Year 3 will require a sustained focus on long term viability after inadequate initiative by leaders to build membership and collect dues in Year 2.

2.2.1 TASK A: TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In the first half of Year 2, SDLG experience with leadership trainings directly implemented by the Component 2 Team Leader, and the need for additional attention to association sustainability, suggested a different approach to association training was needed. To allow SDLG senior staff greater focus and time to guide associations towards sustainability, in Q3 2012 a team of Bangladeshi training consultants were selected to conduct trainings in board management, association building and revenue generation for MAB and BUPF. Consultant approvals were received late in Q4 and trainings originally planned to begin in Year 2 will begin in early 2013. Leadership trainings for MAB and BUPF will be directly implemented by SDLG, as will women’s committee formation trainings discussed under Component 1, Task C, Activity 1 above.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 1: COMPLETE LEADERSHIP TRAININGS FOR BUPF AND MAB

**Approach:** Effective leadership at every level of an organization is essential to sustainability and success, and support institutionalizing a commitment to democratic practices among the organizations’ members. In 2012, leadership trainings were completed for the UzPAB executive committee, central women’s committee, and seven divisional and seven women’s divisional committees. Central and regional leaders in BUPF and MAB will be similarly trained by SDLG in 2013. The trainings cover leadership aspects such as traits and behavior, communication, team building, and value formation.

**Timing:** BUPF trainings began in December 2012 and will be completed by February 2013. MAB trainings are planned from March to June 2013.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 2: ASSOCIATION BUILDING, BOARD MANAGEMENT, AND REVENUE GENERATION AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY TRAININGS FOR UZPAB, MAB AND BUPF

**Approach:** As described above, three different trainings will be delivered by an external local consultant team to build association capacity centrally and regionally. Course content and materials will be developed by the consultants with guidance and final approval provided by SDLG. Highlights of topics to be included in each training course are shown below.

**Association Building**

- LG in the Constitution and LG Laws and Policies
- LG Association Role and Stakeholders
- Review of LG Association Constitution
- Roles of LGA Executive, Regional/District and General Members
- Tools for Effectiveness – Committee Meetings, Conflict Management, Networking

**Board Management**

- Roles of Board / Executive Committee Members
- Management Concepts – communications, supervision, meeting management, team building
- Office Administration – staff management, logistics, travel and transport
- Financial Management – approvals, budgetary controls, accounts, procurement, audit
- Ethical Practice
Revenue Generation

- Financial Overview
- Sustainability – meaning vs. perception
- Revenue generation – member fees, services, grant projects, other charges
- Management approach and sustainability
- Financial planning and sustainability

**Timing:** Trainings to begin in Q1 2013 and to be completed by the end of Q3.

### TASK A, ACTIVITY 3: DEVELOPMENT OF BUPF TRAINING CELL

From early 2012, SDLG trained selected acting and former elected representatives to serve as ‘resource persons’ for several of its trainings of union, municipal and upazila councils. Based on the actual training performance of its resource persons and the demand for training from its councils, Team Leaders of field training Components 3 and 4 and LGA strengthening Component 2 jointly concluded that BUPF was the only association that which remained a viable candidate for establishing a sustainable Training Cell. BUPF leaders identified establishment of a training cell was also identified as a priority task in their Strategic Planning Workshop.

**Approach:** In late 2012, SDLG submitted a request for approval for two training consultants to help develop a BUPF training cell. Assuming timely USAID approval, the development process will begin in early 2013 and continue throughout the year. The consultancy is designed to:

- Develop BUPF capacities on training needs assessment of its member Union Parishads, module development and providing need-based, customized, capacity development support to its members;
- Obtain accreditation from the National Institute of Local Government (NILG) as a legitimate training delivery organization allowing BUPF’s cell to earn revenue via “fee for services” and contribute to BUPF’s financial sustainability.

The Training Cell development process is divided into four steps:

- **Trainers Development** to select trainers and teach training skills and techniques
- **Training of Trainers** or ToT Course to teach LG content using SDLG’s existing training materials
- **Training Cell Development** including operating procedures, equipment and accreditation
- **Sustainability and Ownership Development** including marketing training to UPs

**Timing:** From January 2013 dependent on USAID approval.

### 2.2.2 TASK B: OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

In 2012, while all three LGAs participated actively in SDLG Component 1 advocacy events and their own public events, the LGAs failed to make adequate progress on key requirements for organizational sustainability. In May, BUPF signed a grant agreement providing full support for equipment and activity costs that required the association to pay 20% of its monthly operational costs. After much delay, agreement was reached with MAB in December on a grant budget and a grant agreement with similar requirements for 20% payment of operational costs, which will be signed in January 2013. The newest association UzPAB continues to receive direct, non-grant, support.

Throughout 2012, the Component 2 team urged older associations BUPF and MAB to activate and involve their district and regional committees in the process of building widespread support for the associations and collecting annual association dues. While several commitments were made by senior leaders to do so in various meetings, and plans described, these did not result in significant dues.
collection. To the extent that action was taken, it relied on the efforts of one or two central leaders and in isolated cases on assistance from local NGOs.

As the year drew to a close, the strengthening of member communications and dues collections received renewed focus. At the invitation of SDLG, the SDLG COR in December addressed members of BUPF’s working committee and described USAID’s investment approach toward development. The COR made it clear that USAID would redirect funds to more productive uses if Bangladeshi LGAs did not demonstrate the capacity to become financially and organizationally sustainable.

**TASK B, ACTIVITY 1: EFFECTIVE DUES COLLECTION AND MEMBER COMMUNICATION**

*Approach:* Following the disappointing results in 2012, SDLG conducted a day-long dues collection workshop with BUPF in December resulting in an agreed-on collection process with district committee assignments and specific monetary and time targets. In early 2013, similar workshops are planned for MAB and for UzPAB. Tracking of dues collection totals by SDLG will continue on a weekly basis in 2013 to closely monitor progress. Both BUPF and MAB grant budgets include funds for ‘membership building’ to pay for local transport costs for visiting elected councils. Depending on progress, SDLG will provide additional technical assistance as necessary to support the expansion of dues-paying association membership.

Closely linked to dues collection is member communications to build member support, commitment and involvement in LGA agenda and activities. In 2012, all three LGAs produced newsletters but not all met the target of a regular quarterly publication. In 2013, SDLG Component 2 staff will be joined by local communications subcontractor UNITREND to develop processes for regular, reliable newsletter production and distribution as well as membership communications through other low-cost, accessible means such as mass text messaging, automated calling and e-bulletins. This is discussed further in the Media and Communications section under 3.0 Cross-Cutting Themes and Approaches below.

*Timing:* Ongoing in 2013.

**TASK B, ACTIVITY 2: SUPPORT KEY ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES OF MAB, BUPF AND UZPAB**

*Approach:* This support will be provided under Component 1, Task B Policy Advocacy, Activities 1 and 2 which will involve MAB, BUPF and UzPAB in small private meetings with policy makers and in national public conferences on potential reforms designed to attract media coverage. Funds for additional advocacy activities by LGAs such as press conferences are included in grant budgets and SDLG is directly supporting attorney costs for court challenges to specific provisions of local government law.

*Timing:* As per Component 1 advocacy activities from March 2013 and as needed throughout 2013.

**2.3 COMPONENT 3: TRANSPARENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

In 2012, SDLG completed training of 500 union and municipal councils on all three key governance functions: financial management and revenue generation (FM), participatory strategic planning and budgeting (PSP) and service delivery and monitoring (SD). Training for upazilas on these functions began in late December 2012 after completion of an in-depth research, curriculum development and field testing process for the most complex and contentious of the three local government tiers.

SDLG delivers training through nine NGO partners all with previous experience in their assigned geographic areas and in training local council members. NGO partner training is monitored for quantity targets and quality delivery through three regional offices in Rangpur, Rajshahi and Khulna which conduct both scheduled and unannounced visits to NGO offices and local council training sites. The
SDLG approach to strengthening local government units under this component is closely linked to the approach for working with Citizens in Governance (CIG) Forums under Component 4.

2.3.1 TASK A: TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In 2013, SDLG will continue to build capacity of local elected councils in the same three key functions as 2012. In Year 3, unions and municipalities will receive refresher trainings and greater facilitation and mentoring of LGU representatives and especially Citizen-in-Governance (CiG) citizen group members to ensure that processes are being followed according to law and are effective in improving transparency and accountability.

Refining Training through M&E – Year 3 capacity building under Components 3 and 4 will benefit from the results of several monitoring and evaluation activities. These include:

- Field site monitoring visits by Dhaka and regional staff continuing in 2013,
- The second round of the Local Government Capacity Index (LGCI) begun in November 2012 with results available by the end of Q1 2013, and
- An SDLG mid-term survey started in December 2012 to be completed in Q1 2013.

These will help guide SDLG in refining refresher training content to improve specific areas of LGU and citizen learning. The LGCI and the mid-term survey are described further in Task A, Activity 1 below.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPACITY INDEX (LGCI) AND MID-TERM SURVEY

Approach: The Local Government Capacity Index or LGCI is a tool to determine the baseline capacity and competency of staff and systems of local government units (LGUs). LGCI data assists program staff in understanding the impact of training on the LGU’s governance processes and making mid-term adjustments to training content and delivery. The first round of the LGCI was completed early in Year 2 before SDLG field training was initiated. In November 2012, SDLG launched the second round of the LGCI to assess training effects in 500 LGUs. Partner NGO project officers again played the key role in administering the LGCI. However, to guard against bias, project officers did not conduct the LGCI exercise in the same LGUs they had worked in throughout 2012 but were assigned to assess different LGUs. In early 2013, LGCI fieldwork including focus group discussions, structured interviews, and document review will be completed with results available by the end of the first quarter of 2013. A 3rd round of the LGCI assessment will be conducted in late 2013.

In 2011, SDLG conducted a baseline survey. Besides providing valuable information on the need for, and content of, LGU and citizen training, the 2011 survey provided data for baseline values of key impact (rather than output) indicators included in project’s PMP (Performance Monitoring Plan). A **mid-term survey** is required to measure the 2012 annual values for these indicators to allow comparison with baseline and 2012 target values and assess progress. The mid-term survey was launched in December 2012 and initial results will be available during Q1 2013. In addition to survey questions needed to assess these PMP indicator values, the SDLG programs and communications teams contributed questions to the mid-term survey instruments that will provide data to assist their 2013 activity planning and content.

Timing: Second round LGCI results will be complete by March 2013 and a third round LGCI assessment will begin in October/November 2013. Preliminary mid-term survey results will be available in Q1 2013.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 2: TRAINING OF 100 UPAZILA COUNCILS

Approach: With the completion of upazila curriculum in late 2012, SDLG ‘master trainers’ in December conducted a ToT for 27 trainers including SDLG regional office coordinators, program coordinators from nine partner NGOs and 12 UzPAB leaders. The ToT on two of SDLG’s three upazila modules covered
participatory strategic planning and budgeting (PSP), and service delivery and monitoring (SD). Introductory planning meetings and trainings of upazila councils on these two topics began later the same month and will continue into the first half of 2013 to prepare upazila councils for the participatory planning process as mandated in the 2009 Acts. Instruction in the third module on financial management and revenue generation (FM) will begin soon thereafter.

Upazila modules will be team taught by senior instructors considering the status of upazila representatives and the complexity of exercising elected council authority over functions implemented by central government bureaucrats at the upazila level. SDLG regional coordinators will be joined by NGO program coordinators and a trained UzPAB resource person in conducting these sessions. UzPAB leaders were involved in reviewing and refining the training content.

**Timing:** PSP and SD module training for upazilas to be completed by April 2013 with FM module training to begin from May 2013.

**TASK A, ACTIVITY 3: REFRESHER TRAINING AND MENTORING FOR 500 UNION AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS; FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES**

**Approach:** As discussed earlier, M&E results and field experience will contribute to content of 2013 refresher trainings in PSP and SD for the 500 unions and municipalities trained in 2012. (Note: refresher training for FM was conducted for the 500 LGUs in summer 2012 based on observations and feedback on the initial FM training results.) As in 2012, selected BUPF members will participate in refresher ToTs and act as resource persons for NGO project officers training local councils. Refresher trainings are designed to solidify the role of CiG members and LGU representatives as experts in LG law, able to initiate and implement accountable and transparent LG processes, with a less reliance on NGO project officers who will act increasingly as mentors.

Unlike other currently active local governance training programs supported by SDC and the World Bank, SDLG offers only “software” in the form of training rather than “hardware” such as funding or equipment support to LGUs. PSP, SD and FM processes must be seen as yielding sufficient reward to motivate elected representatives and citizens to continue these on their own.

In the second half of the year, after refresher trainings are completed, SDLG partner NGOs will conduct several follow-up activities: (1) mentoring of CiGs and LGUs in proper implementation including standing committee functioning, (2) identification of potential ‘good practice’ LGUs, (3) preparation for implementation of World Bank HLP partnership in test districts (as discussed further in the section on Sustainability and Donor Coordination below), and the (4) LGCI Round Three exercise noted above.

**Timing:** PSP and SD refresher trainings for union and municipal councils will begin in February and will be completed by April 2013. Major follow-up activities will begin from mid 2013.

### 2.4 COMPONENT 4: CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

Strengthening *Democratic* Local Governance depends on meaningful and lasting citizen participation. While Bangladesh’s local government legislation formally provides for channels for citizen input in the form of ward committees, standing committees and open budgeting meetings at each tier, in the vast majority of local government councils these channels and their citizen members exist only on paper. Activities under Component 4 facilitate informed and effective citizen participation in these channels and closely parallel those above in Component 3.
2.4.1 TASK A: TRAINING AND FACILITATION ASSISTANCE

In practice, SDLG Team Leaders for both Components 3 and 4 work together in managing the implementation of LGU training and CiG interaction with local governments. In 2012, CiG forums were formed through an elections process and trained in the three key LG processes in all SDLG 500 unions and municipalities. CiG forums were not formed to work with upazila councils since channels for direct citizen participation are not mandated. Instead, union and municipal demands are to be voiced by union chairs and municipal mayors who are also voting members of the upazila council.

TASK A, ACTIVITY 1: REFRESHER TRAINING, PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND BUDGETING FOR CITIZENS GROUPS IN 500 UNION AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

**Approach:** In 2013, key members of CiG forums will participate in PSP and SD refresher trainings along with LGU councilors and chairs. In refresher trainings, CiGs and LGUs will refer to joint action plans developed in 2012 which list priority needs as determined by each ward. Not all of these needs will have been addressed in 2012. In addition, different wards may have new priority needs which will be drawn out through the ward committee, development planning and open budget meeting steps mandated in the planning cycle. Full understanding of citizen rights and responsibilities in the planning cycle by CiG members will support effective their participation and the accountable and transparent allocation of LGU funds, including own source revenues raised from household taxes and other local sources.

After the completion of the planning process in May 2013, SDLG partner NGOs will continue to mentor CiGs (and LGUs) in proper implementation including standing committee functioning.

**Timing:** Refresher PSP and SD trainings for union and municipal councils will begin in February and end by April 2013. Follow-up mentoring activities will continue through the end of 2013 with a focus on standing committees.

2.5 WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

In mid-2012, the SDLG Project submitted a number of concepts for consideration by the project COR for support under the Windows of Opportunity (WO) fund. These concepts did not include the Rapid Response Grants Capacity or the Performance Awards Based on LGCI Monitoring projected in the Year 2 work plan.

After issuing over 10 grants in early 2012, SDLG has minimized the project’s evaluation and selection time for grant awards. However, this time is a lesser part of the overall time required for issuing grants. Other major grant process steps are more time consuming and beyond project control, such as open competition announcement response period of 30 days required by USAID and approval by the Bangladesh NGO Affairs Bureau requiring at least 45 days. The Performance Awards concept to incentivize LGU capacity improvements has been replaced by non-monetary recognition of selected LGUs for their governance ‘good practice’ and use as destination sites for domestic study tours, first by SDLG and eventually under HLP.

Three WO concepts were approved by the COR for implementation. Implementation of two concepts will require an unanticipated additional level of effort (LOE) from professional staff particularly in the regional offices that train, guide and monitor NGO implementation of field activities. A request to modify overall and position specific LOE limits was submitted in late 2012 to the CO, however, no increase to the contract labor budget line is required or requested. The three approved WO concepts are:

COMPONENT 5, ACTIVITY 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

The objective of this activity is conduct research into the systems of auditing, a key form of monitoring of government expenditures, and systems of accountability with respect to local
While SDLG’s ‘bottom up’ activities to educate and activate citizens and LGU members are a significant step in improving accountability and transparency, the ‘top down’ audit and monitoring system of the central government also has a role to play. The Secretary of the MLGRD (Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives) has identified the Ministry’s large backlog of audit findings as a concern and this research is expected to suggest strategies to reduce this.

**Approach:** This activity began in September 2012 with research into formal audit and accountability systems by local grantee BEI (Bangladesh Enterprise Institute). SDLG has received the first deliverable, a set of diagrams and narratives describing the actors, roles and functions of the accountability system in law. In early 2013, BEI will submit a second deliverable based on the results of its field research into 28 LGUs including unions, municipalities and upazilas and describing how the system works or does not work in actual practice. After conducting gap and integrity analysis, a final report deliverable with recommendations for reforms to formal law and/or actual practice in order to address MLGRD audit backlog and strengthen system effectiveness will be submitted in late January 2013. A seminar with MLGRD officials to share results is set for February 2013.

**Timing:** This activity will be completed by March 2013.

**COMPONENT 5, ACTIVITY 2: WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

This activity will build on elements of SDLG third training module in service delivery and monitoring. Under this module, SDLG’s existing PNGOs are working with elected officials to activate union and municipal standing committees. Standing committees have important legal mandates to monitor and hold accountable performance in service delivery and citizens can directly work with local government to support improved services in areas such as health care, education, agricultural extension and others. With this activity, SDLG will provide tailored additional support to the already trained women elected representatives and women citizens participating in CiG Forums to help ensure they play effective leadership roles on standing committees, and will link women in district and regional LGA committees to this service delivery improvement effort.

**Approach:** In 2012, SDLG selected four new partner NGOs for this activity through open competition. As of December 2013, partner NGOs have recruited staff, established local offices and most have received NGO Affairs Bureau approvals. Field activities to begin in early 2013 are as follows:

- **Monitoring Services** - development, training and use of monitoring tools to assess performance of local and central government services
- **Reporting and Advocacy** – training in compilation of monitoring results and presentation of results to LG forums such as local councils, union development coordination committee (UDCC), and at the upazila level.
- **LG Association Linkage** – training in use of monitoring results by LGA committees for advocacy at upazila level; sharing of monitoring or service ‘good practices’ locally by LGA committees

**Timing:** Field activities will begin in early 2013 and be completed by December 2013.

**COMPONENT 5, ACTIVITY 3: PILOTING SDLG SUPPORT TO USAID SECTORAL PROJECTS**

In addition to Office of Democracy and Governance activities, USAID programming emphasizes sectoral development work to improve agriculture, the environment, health and education, etc. This activity is designed to pilot test assistance to existing USAID sectoral projects to support their present effectiveness and contribute to future sustainability by:

- Ensuring representatives from project sectoral groups have a voice not only in sectoral service delivery issues but also broader local government functions.
- Increasing chances that sectoral project experience will be used after the project period by integrating citizens into local government decision-making.
• Linking project sectoral work more closely with sectoral committees and decision making process mandated in Bangladesh local government law.

**Approach:** SDLG will choose a small number of locations for pilot testing in 2013 and directly implement the activity with the additional requested regional staff labor hours. Assistance to three types of USAID sectoral projects is planned:

• **Environment / Global Climate Change:** SDLG assistance would link sectoral environment groups under projects such as IPAC and CREL to citizens and councilors in each union trained under the SDLG program and actively participating in local government decision making on funding and planning.

• **Health / Global Health Initiative:** SDLG discussions with MaMoni, an integrated safe motherhood program, have identified the SDLG working district of Laxmipur as a potential joint working area. MaMoni plans to introduce its services to all LGUs in this district in 2013. SDLG assistance would link MaMoni with citizens and councilors in unions trained under the SDLG program who are active in local decision making in general and health-related committees in particular.

• **Food Security / Feed the Future:** In SDLG unions, citizens in the sectoral committee related to agriculture are concerned with local extension officer performance and the impact of new technology and techniques on crops production. SDLG will link these trained sectoral committees with USAID sectoral project activities to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of food security activities.

**Timing:** Activities are expected to begin in Q1 2013 after placement and training of new regional project officers and continue through December 2013.
3.0 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES AND APPROACHES

The SDLG Project integrates several cross-cutting themes across its several components. These are Donor Coordination and Sustainability, Gender and Youth, Media and Communication, and Monitoring and Evaluation. These themes and the associated activities are designed to improve the inclusion and effectiveness of core project activities, and the continuation of project impact after the project period.

3.1 DONOR, PROJECT COORDINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

SDLG donor / project coordination falls under three broad categories – coordination on local government association support, coordination to improve effectiveness of SDLG field training activities, and coordination to support other USAID Democracy and Governance project activities. Coordination on LGAs and on field training also contributes to the sustainability of SDLG project impact in the post-project period complimenting SDLG’s own activities to achieve sustainability.

3.1.1 DONOR AND PROJECT COORDINATION

**Local Government Association Support** – As discussed under Component 2, Task B, from project start SDLG has worked to ensure that LGAs pay an increasing portion of core operating expenses such as office rent, supplies and staff salaries. This would be difficult to achieve without the support for this objective by other international donors and agreement to direct their funding at programmatic or equipment support rather than core expenses.

In Year 1, SDLG achieved this understanding with Germany’s development agency GiZ which was exploring support to MAB and the Danish agency DANIDA which was finalizing support to MAB and BUPF. In Year 2, this understanding continued. DANIDA’s head of cooperation emphasized the theme in her speech to a MAB national election convention while GiZ contributed an expert trainer to a multi-day strategic planning workshop for MAB. In 2013, coordination with GiZ and DANIDA will continue and SDLG will meet with other donors as needed.

**SDLG Field Training Collaboration** – SDLG in 2012 discussed collaboration on local governance with SDC, UNDP, JICA and the World Bank HLP. With SDC and UNDP, this collaboration consisted of information sharing on programs. With JICA and World Bank HLP, collaboration will involve field activities.

In 2012, information was shared on upazila level programming where SDC has been working with a few upazilas in its areas for the past year, and UNDP, which has delivered basic training to most upazilas. After these exchanges, SDLG had a high level of confidence that the upazila training it planned covered key functions in more depth and was more explicit about how upazila elected representatives could work despite obstacles from bureaucrats and MPs. In January, 2013, SDC intends to host a three-party meeting with UNDP and SDLG, and similar exchanges are expected later in the year.
In mid 2012, SDLG contributed its views to a study on JICA – USAID governance cooperation in Bangladesh conducted by a USAID mid-level officer on a one-year work assignment to JICA’s head office in Tokyo. This review included UDCCMs (Union Development Coordination Committee Meetings – supported by JICA and required since 2011 under law). As a result of that review, SDLG and JICA have agreed in principle in 2013 to implement promotion of selected standing committees through JICA’s ongoing training program, and SDLG’s promotion of a role for activated standing committee members in UDCCMs.

With the World Bank HLP, SDLG has included HLP unions in its domestic study tours but full participation as an HLP partner would require a substantial investment in staff time and resources to establish in each district the HLP model of peer selection and rating of best practices and exchange visits. HLP recently indicated to SDLG that it can fund an external coordinator for a district which would allow districts to join as full partners with minimal burden on SDLG staff. In 2013, an HLP workshop will be held with SDLG staff to clarify its approach. SDLG intends to test HLP partnering in one district by July 2013, with plans to expand this to SDLG’s other 21 districts if a no cost extension is granted.

**USAID Democracy and Governance Project Collaboration** – Over the past year, USAID’s Office of Democracy and Governance actively encouraged cross-project synergies during implementing partner meetings, some of which took place over several days outside Dhaka and included project field site visits. Those visits resulted in several meetings among SDLG, the parliamentary strengthening project **PRODIP** and the domestic violence prevention project **PHR**, identification of overlapping geographic areas and complementary field activities, and concrete plans to collaborate in Khulna Division. In 2013, partner NGOs field staff from SDLG, PRODIP and PHR will implement these plans to have trained councilors and CiG members join and contribute expertise and access to their groups.

### 3.1.2 SUSTAINABILITY

SDLG Project activities are designed to create changes in laws and policies, build association organizations and institutionalize governance practices that will advance accountability and transparency through decentralized local governance. These policies, organizations and practices are project impacts or outcomes that must be sustainable to contribute to Bangladesh’s development in the long term. If policy or legal changes are easily reversed, or association organizations are unable to function independently, or good governance practices are not continued with the election of new representatives, then the changes created under SDLG would not be considered to be sustainable.

**Sustainability of Policies under Component 1** – In its research and advocacy activities, SDLG works together with LGA leaders. For each LG tier, SDLG and LGA leaders have targeted three specific policy reforms – one to allow greater revenues or control over revenues, one to allow greater control over spending or services, and one to remove legal clauses allowing arbitrary suspension of elected representatives. In 2013, through court cases, press briefings, private policy dialogues, and small meetings, LGA leaders will continue to work to broaden support among MPs and bureaucrats for these changes drawing on arguments and examples developed and rehearsed with SDLG technical assistance.

If MLGRD issues a new or revised policy mandating one of these reforms, or if the court orders the revision of legal clauses and the concerned parliamentary committee approves the revision, then that policy change would be considered sustainable. In 2013, the months prior to the national election provide an opening for policy change, as do the months following the election in 2014 when a new parliament will convene and be under public scrutiny to fulfill recent election pledges on decentralization of local government.

**Sustainability of Organizations under Component 2** – As detailed in the section above, SDLG from the project start has emphasized the need for older associations BUPF and MAB to begin paying an increasing share of their core operating costs from regular membership dues collection. In late 2012, after
limited success in dues collection, a similar message was given to UzPAB. With SDLG assistance, all three LGAs issued newsletters to members or potential members in 2012. In 2013, technical assistance to the LGA secretariat offices and committees will broaden the member communications channels available to include ‘front-line’ mass text messaging, e-newsletters, informational pamphlets, etc. and stress the need for prompt communications on LGA events and successes to members to build a sense of loyalty and ownership.

The ability for BUPF, MAB and UzPAB to pay at least 50% of their core costs and count at least 50% of councils as their dues-paying members would be major step forward from the low levels of cost contribution and dues payment in 2012. This level may be achieved by 2013, but some donor support would continue to be needed for LGAs to keep their secretariat offices functioning. It is likely that further membership building work in the 2014 post election period would be required for LGAs to raise these percentages to 80% or 90%, and allow LGAs to attain the threshold level of sustainability needed to continue basic operational and advocacy activities independently without external support.

Sustainability of Practices under Components 3 and 4 – Under SDLG, local government council members are trained in key practices of accountable and transparent governance. Unlike previous and current local government programs such as those implemented by Rupantar (ILLG) or funded by SDC (Sharique in Rajshahi) or the World Bank (LGSP), SDLG neither provides funds directly to councils nor works with the same councils for over 4 to 5 years.

The SDLG management team believes the lack of direct funding to councils is actually an advantage to institutionalization of key practices because the resulting benefits to the LGUs and citizens are recognized as coming from the practices themselves. Since the project period is short, SDLG relies on these benefits combined with key features of the field training to support institutionalization or sustainability of these practices in each council.

- **Training Curriculum Emphasizes Basis in Law** – Training materials are closely based on provisions of the 2009 Acts and include resource sheets with selected relevant text from the laws. Both LGU members and citizens realize the law requires them to follow the practices being taught.

- **Citizens-in-Governance Members Provide Continuity** – Unlike many citizens groups, CiG forums are designed to work with local councils and CiG members are trained along with LGU members. While future elections may bring new council members, most CiG member citizens will remain in the community and demand continuation of accountable and transparent practices.

After one year of training in 2012, proper implementation of governance practices in 100% of the LGUs is not expected. Project Year 3 in 2013 provides the opportunity for refresher training and further facilitation and mentoring to strengthen implementation. An extension in 2014 will allow targeted support to those LGUs where proper practices are not yet fully institutionalized to maximize the sustainability of governance practices among the SDLG-trained local councils.

### 3.2 GENDER AND YOUTH

Throughout implementation of all activities, the SDLG Project is reinforcing the capacities of women elected officials and citizens actively participating in their communities to better accomplish their mandates, serve as role models and ensure their contributions to strengthening local governments. In its citizen group activities, the inclusion of youth is emphasized.

SDLG achievements in promotion of gender equity and inclusion of youth in project components include:

**Citizen in Governance (CiG) forums Formation:** In 2013, women will continue to represent no less than a third (33%) of the membership of CiG forums. CiG formation process allows for a membership that broadly reflects the gender, economic, social, ethnic and political mix of the local community. The percentage of youth aged 25 and younger in CiGs in 2012 was 12%.
**Local Government Unit (LGU) Training:** By law, each union or municipal council must have at least three women representatives elected to reserved seats. All SDLG LGU trainings include the full council with these women members attending. In 2013, as explained under the Windows of Opportunity component, SDLG will deliver a major project activity focused on educating and facilitating a leadership role for women (both local council members and CiG citizen members) in the local standing committees that are key channels of citizen input into service delivery.

**Domestic and International Study Tours:** In 2012, a total of five study-in-country study tours were arranged with women comprising 25-35% of the participants. In January 2012, an all-women international study tour to the Indian state of Kerala featuring effective roles played by female representatives was conducted and in November 2012, 35% of the participants in SDLG’s international study tour to the Philippines were women. Similar inclusion will be practiced in 2013. In the Philippines tour in particular, two of the three selected site visits were to two high-performing municipalities lead by female mayors.

**Research and Advocacy Policy Dialogues:** In 2012, women elected representatives from each tier of local government participated in all policy conferences, closed door policy dialogues and public policy roundtables conducted by two research and advocacy grantee organizations. In many cases, each LGA was represented by two persons - its President or Secretary General and the head of its Women’s Committee or a selected women’s leader. The inclusion of women as participants (presenters, facilitators, panelists) researchers and consultants will be required of the new research grantee in 2013.

**Leadership Trainings or Events:** In the past year, SDLG has organized leadership training for a core group of women representatives from all three LG tiers and has sponsored their participation in leadership trainings by other organizations such as the Asian University for Women. Many of these women are the same individuals participating in international study tours and research and policy dialogues. SDLG’s approach is to focus its capacity building efforts on the same individuals over an extended length of time using different events and observe changes in attitude and actual improvement in public speaking, group leadership and other skills over time. If additional trainings or events of value are identified in 2013, SDLG will support women’s participation in these events.

**Committees in Local Government Associations:** All three LGAs completed formation of central Women’s Committees in 2012, and UzPAB completed formation of WCs at the divisional level that committed to advance issues of concern to elected women leaders while also assisting in association building, primarily through dues collection. In 2013, BUPF and MAB will also form WCs at the divisional level with a similar dual purpose. SDLG has supported the central committee formation process financially while divisional formation processes are self-funded. SDLG provides leadership training is provided to all newly-elected women’s committee members, and includes gender-sensitivity in leadership training for LGA mostly male leadership.

**Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** In project training activities, the project’s M&E system ensures that data is collected and disaggregated by gender.

### 3.3 MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

The SDLG communications strategy features three objectives: strengthening journalists’ coverage of local government, enhancing LGA internal communications and external media outreach capacity, and improving citizen participation and understanding in local governance. In 2012, a series of planning, research and analysis activities were conducted by local grantees and subcontractors with the guidance of USN communications agency HDI. In 2013, these preparations will continue to inform communications activities targeting journalists, LGAs, and citizens in SDLG field sites and at large.
Media Training and Capacity-Building activities will enable media professionals to report on benefits of effective and transparent local service delivery, and raise the frequency and quality of media reporting on local government issues. Greater understanding will be fostered among media professionals of their role as informed watchdogs in holding leaders accountable. New and emerging media will be developed and supported to increase engagement through radio and TV call-in shows, community radio programs, Facebook and Twitter usage, along with news and information exchanges online and in live panel discussions. Local Government Association and Community Participation activities will help local government associations build communications capacity, increase member participation, promote successes and advocate for policy change. Advertising and Promotion Campaign activities will increase awareness among the general public of the benefits of effective and transparent service delivery by local government and the critical role that citizens play in generating demand for, and contributing to, good governance in Bangladesh.

Media Training and Capacity-Building: SDLG training and technical assistance will target journalists and media professionals who work for media outlets known for informing the public with fact-based journalism in a variety of formats. The curricula for training workshops will ensure media professionals are aware of SDLG activities and key issues related to local government reform. Activities will include:

- Training workshops with follow up mentoring held specifically for TV talk show hosts, producers and panel discussion moderators to assist in producing lively, compelling programming that highlights the local government issues of the day. At the same time, select local government representatives will be trained to be effective guests on TV programs.
- Travel grants to a small group of journalists. A journalist-mentor, with experience in covering LG issues, will guide the selected journalists in researching and producing feature stories.
- Roundtable discussions held in regional areas in which a panel of commentators will review various local governance issues and local press will be invited to provide insight.
- Trainings for a select group of LGU officials and community leaders on writing op-eds for newspapers, highlighting priority issues relevant to local governance. Op-eds will then be placed in key newspapers.
- Increasing local media coverage of ward meetings, planning meetings and citizen forums to help these discussions reach beyond the small group attending the meetings.
- Online community engagement to enable greater impact and reach influential online contributors.
- An awards ceremony to motivate both journalists and media decision-makers, and recognize excellence in reporting on local governance issues.

Local Government Associations and Citizen Participation: Communication activities will be used to improve citizen demand for, and knowledge of, local governance and promote citizen participation in decision-making. At the same time, specific activities will improve the policy advocacy capacity of LGAs (MAB, BUPF and UzPAB) to press for national policy changes. Illustrative activities will include:

- Building media outreach capacity by training LGA leaders how to engage the media, how to develop messages and craft media outreach plans; how to comment on the local impact of national policies;
- Developing LGA member marketing plans with membership goals and objectives.
- Using digital and email strategies to engage LGA members, and maintain membership directories.
- Holding LGA and CiG Award events to develop awareness and promote membership benefits.
- Creating LGA promotional videos for each organization to support membership and dues collection
- Producing a CiG promotional video to recognize CiG members and engage citizen interest
- Developing and maintaining LGA web pages.
- Streamlining the production of quarterly newsletters for LGAs

Advertising and Promotion Campaign: The advertising and promotion campaign will increase public awareness about the benefits of quality service delivery through local government institutions and the
critical role that citizens play in generating demand for good governance. The campaign will target the public broadly, cutting across demographics and social sectors to include rural, urban and peri-urban populations and include both marginalized and middle class populations. A combination of mass media; inter-personal communication, and new and non-traditional media, where appropriate, will be used. Illustrative activities include:

- ‘Promotion in a Box’ kit for CIGs for user friendly distribution and display. The box will include print citizen’s guide, poster or other creative material that delineates elected officials’ responsibility (e.g. charter, pledge statement w/picture—that they attach) with an accompanying citizen guide on the avenues to participate in local decision making.
- Video and radio ads on LGU responsibilities and citizen satisfaction with services, avenues for citizens for direct participation, and messaging on the connection between local generation of revenues and the provision of local services.
- A regular multi-format, interactive radio program for Bangladesh betar, community radios and FM radio channels, and support to community radio stations in SDLG treatment areas.
- Piloting test communication interventions where community youth document the progress in their communities and share with others (video blogs, “eye/I reports”), including local CiG members
- Cartoon competition and exhibition targeted to youth to explore LG issues of importance to youth.
APPENDIX A - PROJECT YEAR 3 TASK AND TIMELINE
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<td>• Continued Support to Women’s Committees in LG</td>
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<td>Associations</td>
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<td>• Expanded In-country Learning Tours for LG Officials</td>
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<td>• International Study Tours for LG officials and LG</td>
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<td>Association Women’s Committees</td>
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| Component 2: Advocacy and Capacity Building of         |         |         |         |         |      |
| Local Government Associations                         |         |         |         |         |      |
| Task A. Training and Technical Assistance             |         |         |         |         |      |
| • Complete Leadership Trainings for BUPF and MAB       | x       | x       | x       | x       | x    |
| • Association Building, Board Management, and Revenue  |         |         |         |         |      |
| Generation and Financial Sustainability Trainings for  |         |         |         |         |      |
| UZPAB, MAB and BUPF                                    | x       | x       | x       | x       | x    |
| • Development of BUPF Training Cell                    | x       | x       | x       | x       | x    |

| Task B. Operational Support Services                  |         |         |         |         |      |
| • Effective Dues Collection and Member Communication  | x       | x       | x       | x       | x    |
| • Support Key Advocacy Activities by MAB, BUPF and UPAB| x       | x       | x       | x       | x    |

<p>| Component 3: Transparent and Effective Service         |         |         |         |         |      |
| Delivery by Local Governments                          |         |         |         |         |      |
| Task A: Training and Technical Assistance              |         |         |         |         |      |
| • Local Government Capacity Index (LGCI)               | x       | x       | x       |         | x    |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training of 100 Upazila Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refresher Training and Mentoring for 500 Union and Municipal Councils; Follow-Up Activities</td>
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<td>Component 4: Citizen Participation in Local-Decision Making</td>
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<td>Task A. Training and Facilitation Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refresher Training, Participatory Planning and Budgeting for Citizens Groups in 500 Union and Municipal Councils</td>
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<td>Component 5: Windows of Opportunity</td>
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<td>Local Government Audit and Accountability Systems</td>
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<td>Women’s Participation in Local Government</td>
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<td>Reporting and Performance Monitoring</td>
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<td>Quarterly Financial Reports</td>
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<td>STTA Reports and Special Reports (intermittent)</td>
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**Key:**

X = Activity Execution