EVALUATION REPORT
Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR)
Final Performance Evaluation

This publication was produced by Social Impact, Inc. for review by the United States Agency for International Development.
Cover photo: Women political party leaders at a DPR conference.

Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) Final Performance Evaluation

USAID/Bangladesh
IDIQ AID-388-TO-17-00001; Task Order AID-486-I-14-00001
May 5, 2017
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This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared independently by John Lis, Adam Reisman, Shantanu Majumder, and Nasir Uddin for Social Impact, Inc.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Awami League</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNP</td>
<td>Bangladesh Nationalist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDCS</td>
<td>Country Development and Cooperation Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DG</td>
<td>Democracy and Governance</td>
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<td>DI</td>
<td>Democracy International, Inc.</td>
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<td>DPR</td>
<td>Democratic Participation and Reform</td>
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<td>ET</td>
<td>Evaluation Team</td>
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<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFES</td>
<td>International Foundation for Electoral Systems</td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td>Intermediate Result</td>
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<td>JP</td>
<td>Jatiya Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJSJ</td>
<td>Narir Joye Shobar Joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMP</td>
<td>Performance Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA</td>
<td>Request for Applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPO</td>
<td>Representation of the People Order</td>
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<td>SI</td>
<td>Social Impact, Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPL</td>
<td>Strengthening the Political Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>WYC</td>
<td>Women and Youth Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>YFP</td>
<td>Youth Fellowship Program</td>
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</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION
The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh supported the Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) project, a six-year activity implemented by Democracy International (DI) from April 2011 to April 2017 with a budget of $13.4 million. The Department for International Development (DFID) provided partial funding through a grant to USAID. DPR had three objectives: 1) Enhance Grassroots Participation, 2) Improve Information Access and Utilization, and 3) Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM AND USAID’S RESPONSE
Bangladeshi democracy “has been interlaced with military rule, political polarization, weak institutions of governance, and pervasive corruption,” according to USAID. In the wake of the 2008 elections, USAID saw an opportunity to support Bangladesh in seeking to consolidate and sustain democratic gains, and to strengthen the governance institutions and processes needed for economic and development progress. The DPR Request for Applications (RFA) directed applicants that the project “expected to focus development activities at the local level and primarily target the membership base and mid-level structure of beneficiary political parties.”

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION
USAID/Bangladesh contracted Social Impact, Inc. (SI) to conduct this final performance evaluation to assess the technical and programmatic validity of DPR’s goals; assess DPR’s performance in achieving results; and assess sustainability aspects of the project. The Mission intends to use evaluation findings and recommendations to inform the implementation of a new political process activity, Strengthening the Political Landscape (SPL), implemented by DI.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
The evaluation employed a mixed-methods design consisting of document review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and mini-surveys. The evaluation team (ET) collected data in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Rajshahi (see Annex F). The mini-surveys reached 25 youth fellows and 28 women leaders who were direct beneficiaries of DPR in the five other divisions. The ET interviewed 64 key informants, and 43 youth fellows and women leaders participated in eight FGDs. Triangulation enabled the ET to cross-verify and cross-validate findings to identify correlations between findings and determine overall program effectiveness.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
Evaluation Question 1
To what extent has DPR been successful at achieving activity objectives? What were the unintended outcomes, if any?

Findings
DPR used a multi-party strategy to increase women’s representation: the Narir Joye Shobar Joy (NJSJ) campaign; seven Women and Youth Centers (WYCs); and education about a legal requirement that parties include 33 percent women in all main party committees by 2020. DPR found that the greatest change for women took place in fiscal year (FY) 2016, when 17.3 percent of women queried by DPR said they had moved into party leadership positions (versus a target of 15 percent set for that year). Women who participated in trainings universally cited acquiring new skills and confidence as a major benefit of these activities. Key among these new skills were communications and advocacy. While male
leaders still demonstrated a conservative mindset toward women, some progress has been made in shifting this perspective.

The youth fellowship program (YFP) that recruited youth leaders from across the country consisted of a series of trainings and meetings with political leaders and experts in Dhaka over four to six months. Fellows were also required to host three events in their home districts. Of the 207 youth fellows, 69 were promoted within their parties during the project, but the ET was unable to determine how many advanced to senior roles. Nearly all fellows praised how the YFP increased their knowledge and abilities. In Dhaka and Chittagong, youth fellows and local/junior leaders said that senior leaders were not kept aware of DPR activities and the skills that youth had gained, which minimized participants’ ability to advance in the party. Rajshahi leaders liked that the YFP enabled them to cultivate new talent for their parties and that it focused attention, and sometimes generated action, on issues frequently neglected at the grassroots level.

Key activities under Objective 2 included training to conduct and use research. Even though DPR exceeded its targets on Performance Management Plan (PMP) metrics and the major parties valued the surveys and training, the ET found that the parties lacked the capacity to absorb and/or the interest to apply this assistance by the end of the project. Among party members who were familiar with this work, there was a general lack of receptivity toward it. Capacity and interest in research activities varied by party, with the Awami League (AL) generally more receptive and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) more skeptical of public opinion surveys.

Under Objective 3, DPR provided support to party conferences and councils at the grassroots, district, and national levels. Party members’ views varied significantly. While most saw DPR’s support as positive, there was some concern that DPR was interfering in internal party activities, particularly among AL leaders in Dhaka and Chittagong. While DPR’s work on the conferences was generally valued among BNP leaders and all parties in Rajshahi, some leaders expressed skepticism that the conferences had improved communication between the grassroots and senior leadership. DPR supported the development of party web portals, but party leaders were generally unenthusiastic about their benefits.

The main unintended consequence of DPR was building trust across parties by bringing together members from the different parties during activities, most notably the YFP, in which young individuals from the four largest parties participated together. Senior leaders cited this as a positive development for the young people in their parties. Respondents who viewed cross-party activities positively cited a necessary role for DPR in organizing and supporting such activities.

**Conclusions**

DPR contributed to increased representation of women in political parties and effectively leveraged a 33 percent quota for women on party committees. Youth are generally not moving into leadership roles, in part due to the parties’ unwillingness or inability to create post-fellowship opportunities. DPR contributed to incremental changes in political culture and its successes at the grassroots levels demonstrated the potential of the project. DPR’s research component was not successful due to limited receptiveness among the parties. Party conferences and councils were generally valued by participants, and support for BNP conferences and councils is still needed. The benefits from cross-party activities were significant, particularly in building trust between the major parties and in promoting cooperation in addressing local problems. Such activities show continued promise in SPL project and should include party members at all levels.

**Evaluation Question 2**

To what extent were women and youth engaged effectively by DPR's interventions in the targeted areas?
Findings

DPR events engaged women in significant large numbers. DPR targeted 27,800 aggregated attendees to participate in events over the life of the project. The actual number of attendees was 40,861; and 26,522 (65 percent) of them were women (versus 14,339 men). Among interviewees and FGD participants, DPR was viewed as having increased the political space within which Bangladeshi women operate not only by creating more training opportunities and party roles, but also by shifting the political culture to change male party members’ attitudes toward that participation.

A total of 218 leaders completed the YFP against the target of 246, DPR engaged young men and women equitably. Engagement across parties was equitable as well. Although DPR engaged a relatively small number of young party members overall, fellows substantially increased their political skills in several key areas, which made the engagement both relevant and useful for their careers. Both women and youth reported that communication and advocacy skills were the most valuable.

Conclusions

DPR ensured equal gender representation for its youth activities, and proportional party representation for women and youth activities. Women and youth were provided with skills needed for them to increase their representation in party leadership.

Evaluation Question 3

To what extent are the activity’s objectives still valid for the current development circumstances in Bangladesh?

Findings

To assess the current state of political development in Bangladesh and contrast it to 2011 when DPR began, the ET interviewed political scientists, journalists, and embassy political officers. The leaders of the two main political parties remain the same as in 2011, and their rivalry remains fierce. AL won the last two elections and holds an overwhelming majority in Parliament. BNP boycotted the 2014 elections, and a failure to contest the next elections could result in BNP being deregistered. BNP faces financial difficulties and resource constraints. Western diplomats said extremist organizations, like a local branch of the Islamic State, are a threat.

Looking at the DPR project objectives in light of the current circumstances noted above, the ET found that parties are unlikely to achieve the requirement that women comprise 33 percent of party committees, though AL officials indicated that their party was likely to come close to this goal and BNP officials expected to fall short. The path for youth to assume leadership positions is blocked by senior officials who refuse to retire; nevertheless, a training program for youth members of parties is needed to prepare them for their eventual rise into senior ranks. DPR’s research component found little receptivity among the parties. BNP leaders were more welcoming of support for party councils.

Conclusions

DPR’s Objective 1 remains valid. While Objective 2 remains valid in broad terms, the lack of receptivity for DPR’s approach argues for more innovative initiatives. DPR Objective 3 remains valid, as there is still a need to support parties in organizing conferences and councils.

Evaluation Question 4

How much progress has DPR made in ensuring sustainability of activities beyond USAID support? What measures should be taken to enhance sustainability, if any?
**Findings**

The key element of the DPR sustainability plan was the establishment of leadership academies within each party to continue the training that DPR had provided to youth fellows and women leaders. AL and BNP established these academies in 2016, but they are not operational. In a related effort, DPR began a training of trainers (ToT) program in November 2015 with the goal of enabling parties to use these trainers for party-funded training. Regarding research, AL institutionalized its research function, BNP does not have a research wing, and Jatiya Party’s (JP’s) wing was discontinued. As for DPR support for party councils, AL officials said they can organize councils, while BNP officials said they would welcome support. Multi-party events require outside funding and support.

**Conclusions**

The party leadership academies and ToT program could have been effective means of sustainability had DI started the initiatives earlier in the project. The research component of DPR has not been sustainable without USAID support. AL is capable of sustaining councils, though its commitment to grassroots conferences is unclear. BNP will not be able to sustain the scope of such events without outside support. USAID support is needed for multi-party events.

**Evaluation Question 5**

*To what extent do political party members and civil society actors perceive DPR as successful in achieving its objectives?*

**Findings**

DPR participants, party leaders, and civil society organization (CSO) representatives reported that DPR training approaches were innovative, their content useful, and their learning applicable to strengthening trainees’ roles within the parties. However, key informants’ perceptions of the project’s success differed among its three main objectives, with most interviewees viewing Objective 1 as successful, most being unaware or negative toward Objective 2, and most disregarding Objective 3. A total of 52 respondents characterized DPR as successful, 27 called it partly successful, and zero responded that it was not successful. Two-thirds of mini-survey respondents said DPR was successful, though nearly half of women stated that it did not enable them to have a stronger role in their party and that they did not advance as a result of DPR training.

**Conclusions**

DPR is generally viewed as successful, but women from Barisal, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Sylhet reported less progress with respect to specific DPR activities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendations for USAID**

1. Continue funding grassroots activities with women and youth.
2. Promote new approaches to evidence-based policymaking.
3. Continue to fund support for party conferences.

**Recommendations for DI**

4. Use public opinion surveys to inform other SPL activities.
5. Emphasize cross-party activities for women and youth.
6. Consider women and youth participants from all grassroots levels.
7. Increase the number of youth fellows trained.
8. Establish better relations with senior party leaders to promote DPR/SPL alumni.
9. Continue to use the 33 percent quota for women to leverage party roles for women leaders.
10. Start ToT programs earlier in the SPL period of performance.
11. Support parties to continue to develop leadership academies.
12. Develop women and youth leadership curricula for parties.
13. Propose cross-party activities for senior leaders.
14. Better communicate the purpose and use of web portals at all levels of parties.

LESSONS LEARNED

• Consider new approaches when old approaches become stagnant. DPR proposed a new model for political party programming which recognized that Bangladeshi parties were mature and had outgrown the need for traditional programming.

• First identify the problem. DPR was designed to address an identified problem in Bangladeshi politics.

• Maintain flexibility to pursue unintended successes. The most significant unintended consequence of DPR was the cross-party trust-building engendered by the multi-party activities of the YFP.

• Consider different approaches when activities fail to gain traction. Other approaches to encouraging use of research to promote evidence-based policymaking, such as dialogue between parties and research organizations like think tanks and CSOs, could offer an alternative path to improving policy deliberations within parties.

• Operate outside the capital. Beneficiaries outside Dhaka were more welcoming of DPR support than beneficiaries in Dhaka.

• Build demand as well as supply. Many senior party leaders were unaware of what DPR accomplished and the skills gained by participants.

• Find the right points of entry for Democracy and Governance (DG) programming. Support for Bangladeshi political parties proved successful, in contrast to a parliamentary strengthening program.
I. INTRODUCTION

Since independence in 1971, Bangladesh’s established political parties have invested great authority in their leaders, but struggled over how to encourage participation and incorporate input from their large and diverse memberships. Political parties recognize a need to increase their meaningful interactions with voters between elections and to develop inclusive strategic visions for the future.

To enable political parties to meet the needs of their internal party constitutions, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh supported the Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) project, a six-year activity implemented by Democracy International (DI). The project was implemented nationwide in all eight divisions of Bangladesh from April 11, 2011 to April 30, 2017, and it had a total budget of $13,398,233. The Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom provided $8,948,233, which constitutes 67 percent of the total DPR budget.

The goal of DPR was to increase opportunities for participation and leadership of women and youth in political parties, to develop the capacity of parties to conduct and utilize research in their decision-making processes, and to respond to the needs of political parties for stronger internal communication, organizational best practices, and compliance with electoral law. To achieve its goals, DPR conducted activities under three major objectives detailed below.

Objective 1: Enhance Grassroots Participation. Under this objective, DPR aimed to increase the political engagement of women and youth in political parties and more broadly in national political activity. Throughout the activity period, the project established seven regional co-located Women and Youth Centers (WYCs), created a Developing Young Leaders Fellowship Program (hereafter the youth fellowship program or YFP), conducted the Narir Joye Shobar Joy (NJSJ) initiative, launched an awareness campaign consisting of a series of town hall meetings to inform women and youth on ways to participate in the political process, and implemented a Micro-Activities funding mechanism to help encourage and fund innovative projects designed by local youth and women’s groups to foster DPR goals.

Objective 2: Improve Information Access and Utilization. The second objective was to enable political parties to increase their capacity to access and utilize evidence for research-based decision-making. To strengthen the capacity of parties to conduct and utilize research, DPR conducted a series of activities to highlight the value of public opinion research, to develop effective polling and research strategies, and to incorporate research findings into policy formation and communications strategies. These included conducting public opinion polls, designing party-specific survey instruments in consultation with parties, sharing findings with parties to inform decision making, and setting up the Computer Assisted Telephone Survey System (CATSS).

Objective 3: Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics. This objective aimed to provide incentives for responsive politics in Bangladesh. DPR conducted activities to assist parties in developing more sophisticated and strategic constituency initiatives and to encourage them to consider the strategic advantages of broader engagement. Activities to support this objective included a national conference series, assistance with party councils, polling agent training, the creation of an intra-party web portal, and support to specific party requests for technical assistance through a Window of Opportunity fund.

This report details the results of a final performance evaluation of DPR, conducted by Social Impact, Inc. (SI) for USAID/Bangladesh. In what follows, the evaluation team (ET) lays out the development problem and USAID’s response; evaluation methodology and limitations; findings and conclusions, organized by evaluation question; lessons learned; and recommendations for USAID and DI going forward.
II. THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM AND USAID’S RESPONSE

THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

DPR was designed to address a number of interlocking development opportunities and challenges in Bangladesh—a country with a mixed history of democratic governance. The DPR Request for Applications (RFA) notes that Bangladesh democracy “has been interlaced with military rule, political polarization, weak institutions of governance, and pervasive corruption. Partisan deadlock over electoral issues led to the cancellation of the 2007 parliamentary election and the establishment of a military-backed caretaker government, which ruled the country under a state of emergency for nearly two years.” In contrast, the December 2008 parliamentary election was seen as competitive, well-administered, and participatory.

USAID’S RESPONSE

In the wake of the 2008 elections, USAID saw an opportunity to support Bangladesh in seeking to consolidate and sustain democratic gains and to strengthen the governance institutions and processes needed for economic and development progress. The DPR RFA directed applicants that the project “expected to focus development activities at the local level and primarily target the membership base and mid-level structure of beneficiary political parties.”

USAID’s 2011-2016 Country Development and Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) calls for programs to support increased citizen engagement, which will “generate increased demand for democratic governance and better services, which in turn, will culminate in improved accountability and responsiveness to citizen needs.” DPR supports the CDCS objective of “Governing Justly and Democratically” and Intermediate Result (IR) 1.1: “Strengthened Political Processes” under Development Objective 1: “Citizens’ Confidence in Democratic Institutions.” DPR’s objectives, as detailed above, were meant to directly contribute to this USAID IR.

Political parties are important mechanisms of democratic governance and political processes. They can help to articulate citizens’ interests and concerns, to generate and promote policies, and to provide constituencies with clear and coherent electoral alternatives. Another crucial function is to create a political democratic culture within the party, which can promote democratic political culture of the society at large. DPR is based upon the premise/hypothesis that if grassroots participation in political parties is increased, especially of marginalized groups such as women and youth, if political parties’ access to information and their capacity to utilize it is increased, and if parties conduct politics more responsive to citizens’ and grassroots interests and concerns, then political processes in Bangladesh will strengthen.

This theory of change is based on several key assumptions, namely that the political situation in Bangladesh remains generally stable; the space for civic participation in politics and good governance processes remains open; political parties remain cooperative with DI and continue to be open to USAID and other donors’ assistance; and Bangladesh is not afflicted with natural disaster of such magnitude that programming becomes unmanageable.

Implemented by DI from April 2011 to April 2017, DPR pursued the IRs presented below in Table 1.

*Table 1: DPR Project Objectives and Intermediate Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1: Enhance Grassroots Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IR 1.1</strong> Leadership opportunities for youth are expanded.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IR 1.2</strong> Representation of women in political parties is increased.</td>
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</table>
**Objective 2: Improve Information Access and Utilization**

IR 2.1 The political parties’ capacity to conduct and utilize research is strengthened.
IR 2.2 Relevant research tools are developed to enable their use of existing and to-be-developed information resources.

**Objective 3: Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics**

IR 3.1 Pathways of coordination, communication, and dialogue within the parties are improved.
IR 3.2 Internal reform initiatives are supported.

In March 2017, USAID and DI signed an agreement for a five-year follow-on project to DPR called Strengthening the Political Landscape (SPL). As with DPR, DFID is contributing to the follow-on project. The two IRs for the new program are:

*Table 2: SPL Project Intermediate Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IR 1: Political party activists and politically active citizens have the skills and knowledge to be effective leaders and advocate for more inclusive policies and practices within their parties.</th>
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<tr>
<td>IR 2: Increased skills of political party activists and politically active citizens to engage constructively to mitigate conflict.</td>
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</table>

Among the DPR objectives and activities to be incorporated into party reform activities of the new program are:

- Strengthening Inclusivity in Parties Through the Party Conference Initiative
- Support Sustainable Engagement of Women and Youth in Politics
- Building Party Capacity to Conduct and Use Research
- Enhance Grassroots Engagement with Evidence-Based Policy Tools
- Support Development of Leadership Training Units within Parties
- Build Future Party Leaders with Three-Tiered Capacity-Building Program
- Facilitate Internal Party Modernization and Reform

While cross-party trust-building was not a formal objective of DPR, the ET found that it was a significant unintended consequence (see Evaluation Question 1). Recognizing this impact and the need to reduce political violence noted below (see Evaluation Question 3), USAID also included the following activities among those listed in the SPL program description:

- Create and Expand Young Party Leaders’ Willingness to Work Across Parties
- Support Multiparty Forums and Campaigns that Focus on Public Issues
- Promote Constructive Engagement Across Parties Through Networking
III. EVALUATION PURPOSE, USE, AND QUESTIONS

Through the Democracy and Governance (DG) Programs’ Monitoring and Evaluation Support Activity task order, USAID/Bangladesh engaged SI to conduct a final performance evaluation of the DPR project implemented by DI in Bangladesh. SI conducted the mid-term evaluation of DPR in October 2014.

The objective of this final performance evaluation is to assess the technical and programmatic validity of DPR’s goals; assess DPR’s performance in achieving results; and assess sustainability aspects of the project. The Mission intends to use evaluation findings and recommendations to inform the implementation of a new political process activity. While USAID has already finalized the Program Description for the SPL, the Mission expects DI to shape its strategy in light of these evaluation findings and recommendations, particularly as it continues work with women leaders in political parties, youth fellows, research, and party councils.

The audiences for this final performance evaluation include USAID/Bangladesh, U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh, DFID, the USAID Asia Bureau, and other bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors working for democratic governance in Bangladesh. Additionally, USAID plans to share the evaluation report with DI to highlight successes and challenges related to implementing a similar democratic participation project in Bangladesh. During the in-brief on February 28, 2017, the ET discussed with USAID the audiences for the evaluation and their respective information needs.

This final performance evaluation focused on evaluation questions offered by USAID, listed below.

**Effectiveness:**

1. To what extent has DPR been successful in achieving activity objectives? What were the unintended outcomes, if any?
2. To what extent were women and youth engaged effectively by DPR’s interventions in the targeted areas?

**Relevance:**

3. To what extent are the activity’s objectives still valid for the current development circumstances in Bangladesh?

**Sustainability:**

4. How much progress has DPR made in ensuring sustainability of activities beyond USAID support? What measures should be taken to enhance sustainability, if any?

**Client Satisfaction:**

5. To what extent do political party members and civil society actors perceive DPR as successful in achieving its objectives?
IV. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods design consisting of four data collection methods: document review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and mini-surveys. Annex B shows the relationship between the evaluation questions, data sources, and methods used for data collection and analysis. Due to time and budget constraints, the ET conducted data collection during March 2017 in three of the eight divisions in which DPR was implemented. In consultation with USAID, the ET selected the cities of Chittagong and Rajshahi for site visits (in addition to data collection in Dhaka) to include areas in which each political party is strong and to reflect geographic and economic diversity (see Annex F: Map of Evaluation Sites). During the most recent, fully contested parliamentary elections in December 2008, Chittagong elected more Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) members than any other division, and Jatiya Party (JP) ran strongly in Rajshahi in 2008 and 2014. Chittagong Division has the highest per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in Bangladesh.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Document Review

The ET conducted a review of documents produced by and relevant to the DPR project and used this literature to develop an initial response to the evaluation questions. The ET also used information from its document review to refine the data collection protocols. For a list of all documents consulted for this evaluation, see Annex D.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

The ET used a purposeful sampling approach to identify candidates for KIIs; while the selection of key informants was informed by recommendations from DI and USAID, the ET also applied several criteria in the selection process, including the key informants’ relative positions of authority within their respective parties, the degree to which they were beneficiaries of DPR support, and whether their responses were likely to help the ET answer the evaluation questions. The ET interviewed 42 key informants in Dhaka, eight each in Chittagong and Rajshahi, and six at DI headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, for a total of 64 (20 female, 44 male). Interviews took place at locations selected by the interviewees. Table 3 below shows the number of respondents per district for each data collection method; a complete list of KII respondents can be found in Annex E.

KIIs were conducted one-on-one or in small groups as appropriate. Data collection protocols (see Annex C) consisted of interview questions that addressed and derived from the evaluation questions, as well as from the ET’s document review, its discussions with USAID and DI staff, and its evaluation design knowledge. These protocols guided KIIs with the following target groups:

- **Senior Political Party Leaders and Women Leaders:** In each of the evaluation sites, the ET conducted KIIs with senior Awami League (AL), BNP, and JP leaders and with women leaders in Dhaka who participated in the project. Specifically, the ET talked with district and upazilla level political leaders who were involved in DPR to discuss internal party changes (if any) since the introduction of the project.

- **Other experts:** Journalists, academics, and civil society activists were consulted to obtain outside perspectives on political party developments during the DPR period of performance.

- **DPR staff:** DPR staff in the Dhaka office, in the WYC in Chittagong and Rajshahi, and at DI headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, were interviewed.

- **Donors and Implementers in Dhaka:** The ET also spoke with USAID, DFID, and USAID implementers in the DG sector, including the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Asia Foundation.
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The ET conducted a total of eight FGDs with a total of 43 DPR project beneficiaries (34 female, 9 male) who participated in training for women leaders or in the YFP. In Chittagong, there were two FGDs with women leaders, disaggregated by political party, and one mixed-party FGD with male and female youth fellows. In Rajshahi, there were two FGDs with women leaders, disaggregated by political party, and one FGD with youth fellows. There were two FGDs in Dhaka with youth fellows: one was a bipartisan, mixed-gender group; the other with three AL women who could not participate in the first group due to a party event. FGDs were conducted at the DI office in Chittagong, a hotel in Rajshahi, and a non-governmental organization office and university facility in Dhaka. No one who was invited to an FGD indicated that there was any issue with accessibility.

Mini-Surveys

The ET conducted two mini-surveys: one with youth fellows, and one with women leaders who participated in DPR activities. The mini-surveys (see Annex C) consisted of 10 closed-ended questions per target group. Intended to achieve wider geographic coverage than was possible with in-person data collection, the ET conducted the mini-surveys by telephone in Bengali, targeting 30 respondents representing each group. The surveys excluded participants in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Rajshahi because the ET conducted FGDs with youth and women leaders in those divisions.

Using a random number generator, respondents were selected from numbered lists of youth fellows and women leaders provided by DI, controlled to ensure geographic, party, and gender representation. For each survey, six respondents were identified from each of the five target divisions: Barisal, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Sylhet. Of the 30 respondents targeted from each group, a total of 25 youth fellows (11 female, 14 male) and 28 women leaders participated, out of 207 youth fellows and 26,522 women attendees. Party distribution was based on the representation of each party in each group. For the youth fellows, there were 12 AL, 11 BNP, 4 JP, and 3 Jamaat respondents. For the women leaders, there were 15 AL, 14 BNP, and 1 JP respondent.

While the mini-survey results are not statistically significant, quantitative data produced through the mini-surveys were used to triangulate qualitative data obtained through the ET’s KIIIs and FGDs.

Table 3: Respondent Statistics by Data Collection Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>KII</th>
<th>FGD</th>
<th>Mini-Survey</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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6
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<th>Division</th>
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<th>FGD</th>
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<td>Female</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DATA ANALYSIS**

ET members conducted three internal debriefs during fieldwork to discuss evidence collected and preliminary findings and conclusions. Triangulation enabled the ET to cross-verify and cross-validate the findings that emerged from using the above methods and data sources to identify correlations between findings and determine DPR’s overall effectiveness. In particular, the ET utilized methodological triangulation to develop parallel protocols with the same or similar questions across its KIIs, FGDs, and mini-surveys. This enabled greater data triangulation because each method addressed sub-sets of the same evaluation questions, and findings were validated or refuted by the other techniques. Methodological triangulation also enabled the ET to strengthen the potential linkages and accuracy of its data if the results obtained through one method are less conclusive than another method.

**Data Analysis Methods**

The ET employed several data analysis methods to identify key findings from the collected data, as well as to draw conclusions and make recommendations on sustaining the positive results of DPR. The type of analyses depended on the specific data being assessed:

1. **Contribution Analysis** – Contribution Analysis is an approach for assessing and inferring causality in program evaluations. It provides evidence for drawing conclusions that DPR’s activities have contributed to positive, documented results identified by the ET. Such analysis was most useful in confirming the relevance of the program’s development hypothesis.

2. **Trend Analysis** – Trend analysis enabled the ET to examine different DPR indicators over time to identify patterns of convergence or divergence of outputs and outcomes toward objectives.

3. **Comparative Analysis** – The ET compared DPR results across stakeholder groups, political parties, and research areas to assess convergence or divergence in perspectives.

4. **Gender Analysis** – A key component of the ET’s social analysis was capturing of gender-based results. While a key IR under DPR Objective 1 was to increase the political engagement of women, the DPR project also sought as much as possible to incorporate gender engagement across all objectives and activities. The ET similarly worked across all DPR objectives and activities to
capture and compare results of the project as it specifically benefited (or did not benefit) female Bangladeshis. All data collected through KIIs, FGDs, and mini-surveys were disaggregated by gender and analyzed for effects on female beneficiaries of the project.

LIMITATIONS

USAID/Bangladesh has provided assistance to political parties and the electoral process since 2003. The fact that multiple donors and implementers have been actively working in the DG arena presented challenges for making judgments about attribution. Given that this limitation was understood by USAID and the ET from the outset, the evaluation focused less on attribution and more on implementation, approach, and contributions of the DPR project. The ET encountered several other risks to data quality and attempted to mitigate each risk, as detailed below:

- **Recall Bias:** Some senior political leaders blended their experience with DPR and the earlier project implemented by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), an issue exacerbated by the similarity in their names. A few DPR beneficiaries responded to questions posed by the ET with answers that blended their experiences into a composite memory. Some party members who participated in more than one DPR activity, such as women who participated in the Youth Fellowship and women's leadership programs, did not distinguish them as separate activities. The ET mitigated this risk by collecting data from 129 beneficiaries and senior party leaders through KIIs, FGDs, and mini-surveys to triangulate responses as described above and increase the validity of the evaluation findings.

- **Response Bias:** In some cases, respondents confused the independent SI evaluators with DI employees, sometimes using the pronoun “you” when referring to DI in KIIs with evaluators. This problem was exacerbated by the similarities in the DI and SI logos depicted on the business cards used by SI consultants and DI employees. The ET mitigated this risk by providing a formal statement to respondents emphasizing SI’s independent role before beginning its KIIs, FGDs and mini-survey interviews (and repeating this if needed during the interviews or FGDs). The ET was especially cognizant of the risk of response bias in cases when USAID representatives accompanied team members during FGDs and KIIs. To mitigate this risk, the ET asked follow-up questions (as needed) to obtain more specific information – e.g., examples – from respondents. In order to reduce the possibility of party members not speaking forthrightly for fear of disrespecting party leadership, the ET conducted party-disaggregated FGDs with women leaders. KIIs were conducted with women leaders in Dhaka to provide more opportunities for members to speak openly.

- **Selection Bias:** The ET worked closely with staff based in the DI Field Office to organize FGDs with DPR beneficiaries, using contact lists provided by DI and in some cases requesting DI assistance to reach unresponsive key informants. There was a risk that DI selected the most active, responsive, or engaged beneficiaries—meaning that the ET may have heard from key informants or trainees who reported positive experiences. This appeared to be the case with the FGDs in Chittagong and Rajshahi. It is likely that only those beneficiaries with favorable impressions of DPR were willing to travel to the FGD site and spend two hours meeting with the ET; those with unfavorable impressions would have been unlikely to attend. To mitigate the risk of selection bias, the ET invited all youth fellows in each division and all women leaders on the DPR lists. Survey respondents were selected at random.

- **Sampling:** Due to time and budget constraints, the ET conducted face-to-face meetings in only three of the eight divisions in which DPR was implemented. To mitigate this less than 100 percent coverage of the project area, mini-survey respondents were selected from the other five divisions.
V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

EVALUATION QUESTION 1
To what extent has DPR been successful at achieving activity objectives? What were the unintended outcomes, if any?

Findings

Objective 1: Enhance Grassroots Participation

Women

DPR used a multi-party strategy to increase women’s representation: The NJSJ “When Women Win, We All Win” campaign, which convened women activists to lobby for a more effective presence in politics, including on party committees; the seven WYCs, which served as resource hubs and conducted activities to grow and maintain women’s participation in Bangladeshi politics; and the education of political parties regarding Representation of the People Order (RPO) amendment of 2009, which requires parties to include 33 percent women in all main party committees by 2020.

Performance Monitoring Data

For results under Indicator 2 (Percentage increase in women in mainstream leadership positions in political parties), DI reported achievement over indicator targets (ranging from 10–15 percent depending on the FY) by 1-3 percentage points for all years except FY2017. The largest absolute increase in women in leadership positions was reported in FY2016, when it reached 17.32 percent (versus the target of 15 percent). The baseline percentage increase prior to DPR’s implementation was 1-2 percent, according to the Performance Management Plan (PMP)’s performance indicator reference sheet (PIRS). The failure to meet the FY2017 target (a 12.85 percent value versus a 15 percent target) can be attributed to the reduction of funds available to DI during DPR’s final extension year, and the fact that the party council processes, during which new members are added, were winding down during that period. However, while the indicator’s definition specifies that these leadership gains consist of positions obtained in main party leadership committees (versus women’s or other party wings), it does not disaggregate the administrative levels at which these gains were made (i.e., ward, union, sub-district, city, or district) or in which division they were made.

The number of women involved in the parties has significantly increased as well, with nearly all women interviewees and FGD participants crediting DPR for this increase. PMP Indicator 7 (Number of attendees at DPR activities conducted to raise awareness of women’s political participation) and Indicator 21 (Number of individuals who receive United States Government (USG)-assisted political party training) show increases in the number of women participants in DPR events in the project’s early and middle years: for #7, the number of women attendees jumped from 1,284 to 10,915 from FY2012 to FY2013, although both indicators’ women numbers declined significantly as well in FY2016 and FY2017 (this can be partly explained by the reduction in USAID funds for DPR during its final year).

Interviews & Focus Group Discussions

Through DPR’s WYCs and related trainings, women in FGDs and KIIIs with the ET universally cited acquiring new skills and confidence as a major benefit of these activities. Key among these new skills were communications (to different audiences, through press conferences, with party leaders, messaging), how to organize and implement advocacy interventions, development of election and campaigning abilities, and knowledge of the constitution.

One AL woman party member stated that DPR enabled her to transition from the Mohila AL (i.e., women’s wing) in Rajshahi City to the party’s executive committee, where she is now a member. “The
[DPR] training gave me the skills to organize trainings myself and advocate,” she said. “This earned me the respect of party leadership, who asked me to join the executive committee.”

FGD and KII participants from all parties also stated that DPR, through its trainings, formal and informal meetings, press conferences, and other women-focused activities, utilized the RPO amendment to significantly increase awareness, understanding, and acceptance of an increased role for women in the parties, particularly among male colleagues and leaders. A female former MP stated that this was what made DPR unique in comparison to previous political-party strengthening projects: “It mainstreamed women’s roles in politics,” she said.

In many of these activities, DPR also used this requirement with the party leaders to obtain specific numeric commitments toward the RPO’s target. “They extracted concessions from top leaders to get closer to RPO goals, which enabled more women to assume positions within the party,” noted one woman FGD participant.

While both BNP and AL male leaders at all levels still demonstrated a conservative mindset when it came to women ascending to more senior roles within the parties or becoming nominees for office, some progress has been made in shifting this perspective, including at the district and grassroots levels. All male leaders who spoke with the ET were familiar with and accepted the RPO requirement as a goal of their party, and the majority cited examples of women’s increased responsibility within the parties, either in terms of increased numbers in heretofore male-dominated posts or committees, or in positions with greater authority. The progress being made toward the RPO’s 33 percent quota also has led to calls for new party and electoral mandates; the majority of BNP and AL women interviewees suggested requiring that a minimum percentage of candidates (e.g., 10 percent) for direct election to Parliament be women.

Several male leaders even echoed arguments women had made for increased responsibility, such as their ability to enter homes that men could not in Bangladesh’s conservative society, and the view that more female party members in more senior roles would attract more women voters to their respective parties.

**Grassroots-Level Progress**

At the grassroots level, the ET found that actual gains by women have been modest but concrete, and were made with help from DPR, based on KII and FGD responses. More of these gains have benefitted AL women. Examples of these gains included:

- 6 out of 71 city committee members are now women (formerly only one woman)
- 10 percent of AL district-level and city-level party roles are now held by women
- At least 12 women are active at senior levels of AL’s Rajshahi city committee, including two vice presidents and an organizing secretary
- 6,000 AL women were present for sub-district council

In contrast, while BNP women gained skills and stated they had made progress within their parties as a result of DPR, they also said that the restrictive and polarized political environment limited their abilities to conduct trainings, hold press conferences, and undertake other political activities designed to increase their experience and recognition within the party. Specifically, BNP women FGD participants (as well as BNP male political leaders) stated that the current polarized political environment had undermined DPR’s work in Rajshahi. All BNP members said the police were conducting actions that made conditions unsafe for BNP political activities, including vandalism to homes of BNP members, imprisonment of BNP leaders, and the prohibition or shutting down of BNP public panels, press conferences, and political rallies. The majority also stated that the AL was directly coordinating these activities or at least tacitly permitting them to take place. Rajshahi’s then-acting mayor (a BNP FGD participant) was jailed after being accused of vandalism, arson, and possession of explosives.
Obstacles Remain

Women’s advancement, into the most senior party roles at the district and national levels, remains elusive for several reasons. First, female respondents stated that they are frequently pushed into the women’s wings of their parties, are less powerful and influential bodies; additionally, while local leaders are complying with the RPO’s 33 percent quota for women party members, female respondents said they were assigned less significant roles, such as advisors. “We’re being included but in less important positions” said one woman member who had tried unsuccessfully to move from her position in the women’s wing to the district-level central committee.

Moreover, central leaders still dominate party processes, which makes it politically dangerous to speak truth to power. “You can’t say anything within the party against our leaders or their decisions,” said one BNP party member. “Otherwise, you’ll get sacked.” Finally, the traditional male-dominated culture of both main parties has been one of the key obstacles to women advancing within their parties or as candidates. For example, FGD participants stated that AL local election nominating committees in Rajshahi declined to recommend women for MP positions, despite the urging of the Prime Minister herself to submit names of more women candidates to AL’s central leadership in Dhaka.

AL and BNP women also voiced frustration with “hybrid politicians” (i.e., individuals with money but little political experience) who are given senior roles within their parties as well as office nominations for which they are not qualified.

Youth

The YFP consisted of a series of trainings and meetings with political leaders and experts for the fellows in Dhaka over an extended period; e.g., a one-week orientation in the first month, and shorter follow-up trainings over the next four months. Fellows, who are selected from around the country and nominated by the senior leader from their respective administrative unit (e.g., city, district, central), were required to host three events within their home districts. These events would typically include conducting a conference on women’s or youth issues, a local advocacy campaign, and a press event. As part of this process, fellows were typically tasked with identifying a significant issue affecting their neighborhoods, gathering citizens’ signatures on the issue to raise its profile with local leaders, and meeting with relevant government officials to encourage or gain agreement on steps to address the issue.

Performance Monitoring Data

Within the DPR PMP Indicator 1 (Number of youth fellows promoted by their parties to a position with increased responsibility) shows that 69 youth were promoted in their respective parties during the course of the project (32 female, 37 male), exceeding its target of 45. However, these 69 youth represent only one-third of those who completed the YFP over the life of DPR. Additionally, the indicator broadly defines what it means to be “promoted,” including advancements to senior and mid-level leadership roles, but also to the equivalent of more junior positions; e.g., appointment to a youth wing committee. Because these promotions are not disaggregated by levels of seniority, the ET was unable to determine how many of these advancements were to more senior roles, which would have provided a better gauge of how effective the fellowships have been in expanding youth leadership opportunities. Under Indicator 3 (Number of young political party leaders who completed the YFP), the project reported that 207 individuals finished the training over the life of the project versus their target of 235, with DPR falling short most substantially in FY2014 (28 out of 50 completing the program). Both USAID and DPR staff stated that the 2014 parliamentary elections disrupted the original YFP for that year; specifically, the FY2014 shortfall was due to the second fellowship class of FY2014 starting later than anticipated in 2014 and therefore not finishing until Quarter 1 of 2015.
Fellows’ Perspectives on DPR Youth Activities

Fellows were passionate about the fellowship program and the skills and experience they acquired because of it. With very few exceptions, the fellows repeatedly praised how the program increased their knowledge and abilities regarding their parties’ constitutions, event organization, building a base of popular support, messaging key themes based on public opinion, conducting political campaigns, communicating with specific audiences, holding press conferences, leading advocacy initiatives, and other activities necessary to build a successful political career. Many stated that their YFP activities allowed them to engage with party leaders to a degree not possible prior to the DPR project, and to demonstrate their value to the party. “With leaders coming to our activities, it gave us access,” said one AL fellow. “We’re able to speak with them more than we ever did before.”

Senior and Youth Leaders’ Perspectives

Party leaders involved with the YFP and fellows who spoke with the ET were divided in their opinions of how strong a role the fellowships played in expanding youth leadership roles within parties. In Dhaka, at the most senior levels of the AL, and to a lesser extent, the BNP, top leaders said they genuinely did not consider the effects of the program as significant. Party leaders in Dhaka and Chittagong also generally saw less value in the training, referencing political connections, the ability to finance their own campaigns, years of experience, and/or the ability to apply their new knowledge in practical ways as more significant factors to expanding leadership roles for youth. “If I’m a district chair and am looking for candidates to recommend, I don’t care if you’ve been trained by DI,” said a Dhaka-based former Member of Parliament (MP) familiar with the YFP. “I care whether you’re connected, have money, and can organize a campaign.” More than a few youth fellows stated that AL senior leaders might also see DPR’s benefits to women and youth as a threat to the political status quo and their role in it.

Some senior leaders who were familiar with DPR said they did see a difference in youth fellows following participation in DPR. One BNP youth wing leader in Chittagong said that youth fellows were better able to serve the party after they completed training, citing their work on local issues through the YFP and noting that leaders then assigned them to work on upazilla (sub-district) issues. However, a senior BNP official on the central committee said, “The initiative was excellent, but the impact was very little.” He went on to fault DI for not communicating to the party a list of young party members who had participated in the YFP: “BNP requested a list of their names, but DI never gave it to us,” he said.

Similarly, leaders of the student wing of the AL have been reluctant to accept input from or create opportunities for youth fellows because they see them as a threat or potential rivals, according to YFP FGD participants. Notably, one AL youth fellow said the party’s powerful central committee actually was a more equitable body for fellows’ participation and allowed them to “play more meaningful roles” than within the party’s youth wing.

Even those fellows citing or anticipating progress toward more senior positions within their parties based on DPR support acknowledged that this progress was contingent on traditional gatekeepers’ support. “DPR’s training has helped me impress my mentor, which should help me gain a more senior role in the party,” said one AL fellow.

Regional- and Dhaka-Based Perspectives

In Rajshahi, top leaders generally viewed the YFP more favorably.1 They liked that the YFP enabled them

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1 There were several factors that prompted more favorable reactions among some interviewees to DPR activities in Rajshahi. For example, BNP appreciated that DPR sometimes provided the party “cover” to hold political events
to cultivate new talent for their parties and that it focused attention and sometimes generated action on issues frequently neglected at the grassroots level (e.g., sanitation, road conditions). Among fellows, a common finding was that the fellowship training alone was not enough to advance, but that it was giving them solid advantages in terms of new skills, name recognition (from constituents within their administrative units, and/or from party superiors who had seen or been made aware of their work), and access to leaders. Another observation was that the parties would not or could not create meaningful (or any) post-fellowship positions for YFP graduates.

In Dhaka and Chittagong, both senior leaders and youth fellows said that senior leaders were not kept aware of the DPR activities and the skills that youth had gained, which minimized their ability to advance in the party. “Many top leaders in my party are not aware of what DPR is,” a BNP youth fellow in Dhaka said. A senior BNP official in Dhaka said, “DI needs to interact with the top leaders. They need to talk to the top leaders.” A colleague on the central committee added that the party did not know which BNP party workers had benefitted from DPR training, which he attributed to a lack of communication from DPR officials.

Officials in Chittagong cited the same lack of communication. A BNP official in Chittagong said, “They [DPR] didn’t create awareness. We were not aware of what they were doing.” A senior BNP colleague there said he had not had contact with DI for two years, and he noted that the telephone number for him that DI had provided to evaluators was out of date. A senior AL counterpart in Chittagong said that he had no regular contact with DI and DI staff did not follow up with him.

**Objective 2: Improve Information Access and Utilization**

DPR undertook a range of activities to strengthen parties’ capacity to conduct and utilize research. Key activities included training in research methods (for groups such as the AL’s Center for Research and Information [CRI]); training party leaders to raise awareness of the benefits of using opinion research; creation of research tools such as the Computer Assisted Telephone Survey System (CATSS), Bangladesh Barometer; and survey work, such as CATSS-based public opinion surveys, face-to-face surveys, and FGDs on party popularity and issues of national importance.

**Performance Monitoring Data**

For the DPR PMP Indicator 10 (Number of individuals trained in political or opinion research methods), the project reported training 200 people in opinion research (84 women, 116 men) versus its target of 185. Under Indicator 11 (Number of political party units that use DPR supported public opinion research and training to design voter outreach strategies), 22 units used this research and training to design voter outreach strategies versus a target of 8. Lastly, under Indicator 15 (Number of research projects completed), DPR conducted 69 research projects during its six-year duration (34 CATSS-based surveys, 18 F2F surveys, and 17 FGDs), which far surpassed its target of 44.

Despite the fact that DPR exceeded its targets on the above metrics, the key finding from the KIIs, including those with USAID and DI staff, was that while the major parties valued the surveys and the training, they lacked either the capacity to absorb this assistance and/or sufficient interest in utilizing it.

(e.g., when police were told that meetings or rallies were sponsored by DPR, they sometimes let them go forward, or did not close them down). Additionally, both BNP and AL leaders in Rajshahi spoke of greater levels of mutual respect for the other party, in part due to DPR’s activities. Specifically, DPR sponsored events that brought senior leaders of different parties together in Rajshahi, which improved relations and even built some friendships between local AL and BNP leaders, according to interviewees from both parties.
Moreover, very few of the party leaders interviewed at the grassroots and regional levels were even aware of DPR’s research work. Among those party members who were familiar, there was a general—although not universal—lack of receptiveness. Capacity and interest in research varied by party.

Awami League

The ET met with senior staff from the CRI, a group closely identified with the AL that serves as an unofficial think tank and research wing for the party. DPR worked closely with CRI to improve its understanding of survey methods, obtain input on questions for party-focused surveys, and help with “message testing.” CRI staff emphasized the importance of DPR support in these areas. For example, DPR’s organization of three workshops for CRI on sampling techniques for public opinion polling; design of survey questions; and development of party surveys for outreach and active listening in the spring of 2016 provided CRI with a new level of technical knowledge. “The use of polls is not yet widely accepted in Bangladesh, so this training to understand how to conduct them better was very useful,” said a senior CRI staffer.

CRI found political “message testing” it did with DPR to be particularly helpful. Based on DPR research, CRI was able to modify party themes or styles in speeches, press statements, and posters to more accurately reflect voter likes and dislikes. “After we brought this data to party members and showed them how simple changes could produce these easy wins, you could see lightbulbs start to go off,” said a CRI research analyst. After this, AL started including specific facts and numbers in campaign posters. CRI also admitted to benefiting from one-on-one attention from DPR on message testing and survey question design. “We were the only party that really showed that level of interest,” said the senior CRI staff member. DI staff views of the AL with respect to research supported the ET’s findings. “They are committed to research,” said one DI staffer. “They have people who understand research. They have good research wings. They were not conducting focused research, so we provided training.”

However, CRI staff stated that application of this learning was limited to DPR-produced polls (through CATSS) and not through any polling of their own, which they said they lacked the resources to produce themselves. Staff also stated that they had little interest in continuing the polling and messaging work themselves if DPR’s support with AL stopped.

BNP

BNP currently has no active research wing. Although several senior party interviewees cited a plan to launch a BNP research cell, the ET was unable to determine details about the organization of the cell or the timeline for its launch. The common view among both USAID and DI staff was that BNP was not able to put the necessary time and resources into building the cell or its general research capacity and hence was largely unable to take advantage of DPR’s research activities. “BNP is the big challenge,” a DI staffer said. “We put in the time and effort. We found they are responsive to the grassroots, but in research, we could not make much improvement.”

Several BNP interviewees voiced doubts about the utility of polling research, with one senior central committee leader saying his party relied on “different mechanisms to evaluate our positions.” Others were concerned that polling might provide evidence that public support was shifting away from BNP after several years of what they saw as a concerted AL campaign to vilify them. It should be noted that the mid-term evaluation of the DPR project cited one example of the BNP’s greater receptivity to and action based on DPR-produced polling earlier in the life of the project, i.e., that after DPR presented BNP with poll findings showing that BNP-organized hartals (strikes) were having a very negative effect on BNP’s popularity, those hartals stopped for several months. However, the ET did not find evidence that this trend continued or of any other notable examples of BNP polling-based actions during the remainder of the project.

An additional issue among BNP interviewees and FGD participants was the most recent DPR-supported
political party poll, which resulted in resentment against DPR by some in BNP. Specifically, BNP party leaders and members aware of the poll felt its questions and results were designed to make the AL look better and the BNP worse (the results showed a big increase in the number of respondents who said they had not decided who they would be voting for, and a similarly big decrease in those who said they would be voting for the BNP). However, while all felt the poll was inaccurate, the overwhelming majority aid they wished DPR was not ending and hoped they would be able to continue working with DI under a future program.

Jatiya Party

DI worked early in the life of DPR with JP to build that party’s research skills. One JP member (Bobby Hazzaj, Advisor to the Party Chairman) managed the party’s research wing, spearheaded productive research efforts with DI, and was one of DPR’s “early successes” under Objective 2, according to DI staff. However, this changed after 2014 when Hazzaj left the party to run as an independent mayoral candidate in Dhaka City and started an independent political organization (“Shopner Desh”). JP’s research wing ceased activity after his departure and has not been active since, DI staff told the ET.

Additional Findings

Party member respondents who were aware of research produced by DPR noted that there was a general cross-party wariness about making decisions—or being perceived as making decisions—based on research from a non-Bangladeshi organization, even one deemed as independent and trustworthy as DI. Even those open to the idea of utilizing research more concretely in the parties’ decision-making processes acknowledged the challenge of changing leadership mindsets in this regard: “It’s the decisions of the president and secretaries that matter, not research,” stated one YFP participant.

Significantly, while none of the major parties demonstrated significant interest in or capacity to absorb DPR’s research work, USAID, the U.S. Embassy, and DI saw research as useful for other “engagement” purposes: to help DI advise party leaders on grassroots demands; convince entities, such as newspapers, to reference research; and highlight trends that align with Mission or Embassy interests. This interest, which is in line with a similar finding from the DPR mid-term evaluation, led to presentations and briefings for USAID, U.S. Embassy, UK Embassy, UK High Commissioner, and the U.S. Ambassador.

Objective 3: Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics

Party Conferences and Councils

DPR worked at three levels in an effort to help party activists at the grassroots level share their ideas and concerns with those at higher levels of the party:

- District Grassroots Representative Conferences (DGRCs) were intended to reach the upazilla (sub-district), union, and ward levels. According to the DPR Year 5 (2015) work plan, they included a plenary session and subcommittees to work on electing delegates to higher-level conferences, develop communications between grassroots and party leaders, select women committee members, and review candidate selection criteria.

- District Councils were held in the 64 districts of Bangladesh to elect party leaders at this level.

- National Councils were held in 2016 by the three main parties, between four to six years after the previous councils. The national councils elected senior party leaders and offered district leaders the opportunity to speak in front of leaders and thousands of colleagues. DPR did not provide direct assistance to parties to organize their national councils but attended all of them as observers.

According to DPR’s PMP, 200,000 people attended “DPR organized national and regional party
conferences” (Indicator 17), compared to a target of 47,000.

The ET found that party members’ views of the conferences and councils varied significantly. The two activities are different in nature: The DPR-organized conferences are intended to enable grassroots leaders and members to discuss internal party reform, while the councils elect party committee members, with DPR playing an advisory role, particularly in regard to procedure. The conferences were an integral part of the DPR project in its earlier years; by the October 2014 mid-term evaluation of DPR, DI staff stated DPR was shifting its focus from the grassroots conferences to the councils. The mid-term evaluation found that the grassroots conferences had some success in increasing party transparency and responsiveness at the district and sub-district level. However, the ET found that party members and leaders who were interviewed in 2017 tended not to distinguish between the earlier grassroots conferences and the later party councils. This may reflect a lack of communication by DPR, particularly with senior party leaders. As a result, in this final evaluation it was difficult to separate the views of party members and leaders toward the DPR-organized conferences, on the one hand, and the party-organized councils that DPR supported, on the other hand.

While most of those interviewed saw DPR’s support as positive, there was some concern that DPR was interfering in internal party activities, particularly among AL leaders in Dhaka and Chittagong. While DPR’s work on the conferences was generally valued, particularly among BNP leaders and all parties in Rajshahi, some leaders expressed skepticism that the conferences had actually improved communication between the grassroots and senior leadership. AL senior officials said they organized district councils without DI assistance and said internal party elections proceeded smoothly.

“DI said that in the districts, they could organize councils,” said one top-level AL central official. “I said the councils are for the parties themselves. I said that we could fund councils. I said that it was illegal for a foreign entity to fund political parties. … It is one thing to promote democratic values; it is another to fund a political party.” An AL leader in Chittagong echoed this official’s views. “DI wanted to help us, but we didn’t accept their help,” he said.

However, in Rajshahi, AL senior leaders saw DI as setting their party up for success at the councils and other district- and grassroots-level events by creating new approaches for parties to communicate with their members. For example, at DPR’s suggestion, party leaders sat with members at tables of 8 to 10 people, rather than on a dais. At the ward level, DPR supported AL by having party members anonymously fill out short surveys at events; the answers revealed that some members thought their leaders were not carrying out certain responsibilities and contained some suggestions on how they could address these. Examples such as these “improved our two-way communication and reduced confrontation,” according to a Rajshahi party leader. “The real importance of DI’s role was in facilitating a change in our processes.”

A BNP leader in Chittagong said DPR assistance was needed by his party to organize conferences. He said that his party was stymied in its efforts to organize councils at the sub-district and district level by the government’s refusal to permit the opposition party to use meeting spaces. He added that the party’s national council had done little to improve communication between the grassroots and central leadership, a theme echoed by other BNP officials. “We went to the council in Dhaka with hope, but they just gave us speeches. We had hoped to go to Dhaka and be heard,” he said. “They don’t listen to us. It is not reaching anywhere. … Decisions are just imposed on us.” A donor official echoed that view. “The bottom-up approach didn’t work, the idea that they would influence the top,” he said, adding that the AL councils were successful, but not BNP’s. “There is no democracy inside the parties,” a journalist said. “Everything is decided by the top leaders.”

**Party Web Portals**

DPR also supported the development of party web portals at the national, district, and local levels. DI
stated that it successfully deployed the core technology for maintaining member data, communicating via e-mail and SMS, and direct communications between central leaders and party members. DI stated in its PMP report that 90,000 party workers were in the databases, compared to its target of 63,000 (Indicator 18).

Party leaders were generally unenthusiastic about the benefits of the web portals. Many were unaware of the initiative, indicating that the utility of the database and web portals was not communicated well to parties, which a USAID official said was also a finding during quarterly field visits by the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR). Other party leaders were lukewarm on the concept of the web portals, and some were outright dismissive of DI’s role. An AL official in Chittagong said, “It is partly done.” Women’s leaders and youth fellows, drawn from the party grassroots, were unaware of the web portals. One top-level AL official criticized DI for compiling a database of party workers. “I said that we were registering our workers,” she said. “That was weird. Why would they have a database of our workers?”

Unintended Outcomes
Cross-Party Trust-Building

The main unintended outcome of DPR came from bringing together members from different political parties during activities. This outcome was cited repeatedly by party leaders, women leaders who participated in events, and youth fellows—often as their initial, unprompted response when asked about experiences with DPR. Considering the political rivalries discussed under Evaluation Question 3, this represented a significant finding. “Multi-party activities were not part of the program before,” a DI official said. “This is a key area where we can engage with the levels below the top and try to break through the divide. We have seen evidence of youth fellows defying calls to participate in violence.”

The activity cited most often for building trust across parties was the YFP, in which young individuals from the four largest parties participated together. They noted that the YFP provided them a platform that would not otherwise exist for discussing issues with and building ties to the other party. Fellows described how they sat together, talked together informally, and even roomed together in a hotel during visits to Dhaka. Back in their home districts, youth from different parties worked together on YFP projects that aimed to bring practical solutions to local problems without reference to party or ideology.

Evaluators observed this phenomenon at work during a FGD in Dhaka. “Before DI, it would have been unthinkable to have 26 of us [fellows] from different parties sitting together,” said one fellow. “But the fellowship gave us the opportunity to get to know them and become friends—and the ability to accommodate other positions.” A youth fellow from Dhaka added, “I feel if this continues that new leadership will emerge from this practice of meeting with other political parties.” During this FGD, YFP graduates from both AL and BNP stated that they built friendships with members of the opposing parties through the YFP, with two AL and BNP fellows saying they collaborated through their fellowships on an advocacy campaign. In another discussion, an AL fellow spoke of having helped a BNP leader in her district to organize a program for the poor. Senior leaders also cited this development as a positive one for the young people in their parties. “A program where you bring people together from different parties is useful in a country that is polarized, where different parties don’t meet,” said one top-level AL central official.

A DI staffer in Chittagong noted that youth fellows there had arranged three workshops against political violence, inviting district leaders to attend, and had conducted a rally to decrease political violence. “All fellows are trying to reduce violence,” he said. A youth fellow in Dhaka said, “Those who received DI training will never resort to muscle power. …. We became friendly. We forgot who was Awami League and who was BNP.” A colleague added, “DI has influenced friendship and accommodation across the
political aisle. I will not resort to enmity or clashes. I will think first.”

Drawing on this positive experience, several participants stated that DI should consider a similar program to bring together more senior party leaders in an effort to bridge the political rivalry between the two largest parties. “The current leadership and the future leadership consider each other as enemies,” said one BNP central committee official. “If we sit together, it is difficult to hate each other,” said another senior BNP leader in Dhaka. An AL youth fellow said, “DI should involve senior leaders. The attitude of senior leaders would become welcoming.”

More broadly, several respondents also viewed a DI role as necessary for organizing and supporting such activities in the future. They said that no individual party would use its own funding and resources to support an activity involving, and perhaps benefitting, other parties. An AL official in Chittagong said, “Actually, to develop a democratic culture, we need to work among the political parties. DI has some role to play as a convener between parties.” A BNP counterpart in Chittagong said, “It can be possible only because DI can bring BNP and Awami League together.” DI plans to expand its work with cross-party fellowship activities in the SPL project, according to the award document.

Youth Fellowship Alumni Association

When DPR began the YFP, it had not planned for donor-funded follow-on programming with the fellows. As a result of positive reaction to the YFP, a group of youth fellows took it upon themselves in 2013 to form an Alumni Association. By 2015, more than 100 graduates came together in an effort to continue to work together, including multi-party work to prevent political violence, such as a series of meetings in Rajshahi in 2013. While the creation of the Alumni Association showed promise for sustaining the work of the YFP, evaluators found that the association had become dormant by early 2017. Youth fellows from later classes, particularly in 2016, were unaware of the association. DI officials said that this was due to difficulties in gaining a legal status for the association as its founders had envisioned, and they said that they responded by including fellowship alumni in ongoing fellowship activities. “The fellows from five or six years ago are at the core of our program now,” a DI official said.

Conclusions

Objective 1

Women

DPR contributed to increased representation of women in Bangladesh’s political parties. While progress varies by party and region, DPR’s work contributed to more women becoming involved in Bangladeshi political parties and more women assuming senior party roles, based on the ET’s analysis of KII, FGD, and PMP data; e.g., the percentage of women in mainstream leadership positions in political parties jumped 10-15 percent each year for all except the last year of the project.

DPR contributed to incremental changes in Bangladesh’s political culture. DPR contributed to increasing women’s representation in political parties because it helped operationalize basic ideas within Bangladesh’s conservative political culture: that women could play key roles in parties and that they could prove this via opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities to male counterparts.

DPR effectively leveraged the RPO requirement. DPR effectively used the RPO’s 33 percent quota in party constitutions to increase women’s committee numbers and begin changing mindsets. DPR-supported progress toward the quota contributed to women from both parties pushing for additional mandates, such as the suggestion that at least 10 percent of candidates for direct election to Parliament be women.
Youth

Youth are generally not moving into leadership roles. DPR helped the fellows be more visible and active, but these factors are usually not sufficient by themselves for youth to obtain leadership posts in their parties due to suspicion or lack of awareness by entrenched senior leaders; party youth leaders who may see YFP graduates as a threat or potential rival; and the ongoing culture of favoritism, nepotism, and patron-client relations.

There is a lack of post-fellowship opportunities. There are few formal opportunities within the parties for graduates of the YFP to continue building their skills or apply what they learned on a broader scale, even among those who have advanced their parties’ interests by utilizing YFP skills.

Grassroots successes and support demonstrate DPR’s potential. Gains by some AL and BNP fellows within their parties have been discernable, as has increased support by forward-thinking regional party leaders, such as in Rajshahi. Moreover, many YFP graduates demonstrated a willingness to take different approaches than their elders to politics, most notably a desire to work across party lines to address problems affecting Bangladeshis. As one youth fellow noted, “DPR has started changing the traditional way of politics in Bangladesh. Not continuing this work will halt this change.”

Objective 2

There is little receptiveness to DPR’s research activities among Bangladesh’s parties. While support for evidence-based policymaking is needed, there was not much interest found among the parties for the research activity. Even within the AL’s CRI, which demonstrated the greatest capacity for and interest in the support, there would be little interest in polling and messaging if DPR’s survey work and engagement with AL stopped.

DPR Objective 2 interventions overall were not successful. Despite USAID viewing research as useful for other “engagement” purposes, the ET concluded that the research component was not successful in the context of DPR Objective 2 due to lack of receptiveness by Bangladesh’s major parties.

Objective 3

DI support for party councils was generally valued by participants, though some party leaders dismissed the importance of DI involvement, particularly at higher levels. There was a significant partisan divide: BNP leaders generally welcomed DI assistance and support, while AL leaders, particularly in Dhaka, were indifferent or even hostile to a DI role in these events. There was also a regional divide: Both major parties in Rajshahi viewed DI’s role as positive, while central party leaders in Dhaka were less welcoming of DI support, and there was a partisan divide in the views of leaders in Chittagong.

Given the needs of the beleaguered BNP relative to those of the well-resourced AL, the ET concluded that support for future BNP councils is needed. While a future program cannot assist only one party—which could lead to accusations of partiality and possibly to obstruction by the government party—it may be the case that future support for party events would be welcomed by BNP and rejected in part or whole by AL, resulting in assistance being targeted where it is most needed.

Based on the lack of party receptivity and awareness, the web portals may not gain traction within the parties. While the initiative may have been needed, the web portals garnered little positive response from those few respondents who were aware of their existence.

Unintended Outcomes

While unintended, the benefits from cross-party activities were significant, particularly in building trust between the major parties and promoting cooperation in addressing local problems. Such activities show continued promise in the follow-on SPL project and should include party members at all levels.
**EVALUATION QUESTION 2**

To what extent were women and youth engaged effectively by DPR’s interventions in the targeted areas?

Findings

**Women**

The ET found that DPR events engaged women in large numbers, including for YFP activities, grassroots party events, and activities that were part of party conferences, councils, and workshops. DPR targeted 27,800 aggregated attendees to participate in these events over the life of the project. The actual number of attendees was 40,861; and 26,522 (65 percent) of them were women (versus 14,339 men).

Table 4: Number of Attendees at DPR Activities to Raise Awareness about Women’s Roles (Ind. 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY11</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY12</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2135</td>
<td>1284</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY13</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>14458</td>
<td>10915</td>
<td>3543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY14</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>9469</td>
<td>6057</td>
<td>3412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY15</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>10011</td>
<td>6029</td>
<td>3982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY16</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>3696</td>
<td>1768</td>
<td>1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY17</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27,800</td>
<td>40,861</td>
<td>26,522</td>
<td>14,339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through its KIs and FGDs with party women, the ET found that DPR increased the political space within which Bangladeshi women operate not only by creating more training opportunities and party roles (e.g., through effective use of the RPO Amendment’s requirement to increase women’s participation in discussions with party leaders) but also by shifting the political culture to change male party members’ attitudes toward that participation. Specifically, DPR’s ongoing education and awareness-raising activities (e.g., NJSJ campaign, RPO Amendment’s 33 percent quota) created awareness and acceptance from male party members and leaders interviewed by the ET. Women party members acknowledged and credited DPR with this gradual shift. “[DPR] created opportunities and tools for more participation by women, which led to women’s leadership within the party,” said one AL woman interviewee. “When men have seen what we can accomplish for the party as leaders, they’ve been encouraged to support our new roles.”

**Youth**

A total of 218 leaders completed the YFP, against the PMP’s aggregated target of 246, with DPR meeting or nearly meeting its annual targets in all years except FY2014, when 28 of 50 completed the fellowship. A breakdown of these numbers demonstrates that DPR engaged men and women equitably; 109 men and 109 women graduated from the YFP. Engagement across parties was equitable as well, with virtually even representation by AL and BNP for all YFP classes, and a robust presence by JP and Jamaat.
Table 5: Number of Young Party Leaders who Completed the Youth Fellowship Program (Ind. 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>AL</th>
<th>BNP</th>
<th>JP</th>
<th>JIB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY14</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY16</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skills – Women and Youth

The ET determined, through KII and FGD responses, that although DPR engaged a relatively small number of young party members overall, fellows substantially increased their political skills in key areas, which made the engagement both relevant and useful for their careers. Table 6 demonstrates the most valuable skills that women and youth fellows reported learning through the DPR project.

Table 6: Most Valued Skills Acquired by Women and Youth through DPR Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Skill</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Youth (men)</th>
<th>Youth (women)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication (speaking, press, personal presentation, messaging)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy/organizational skills</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign/election skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a platform/political base</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductions/meeting senior leaders</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of party constitution and organization</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Leadership”</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two top skill areas reported by both women and youth were as follows:

- **Communication**: Key informants and FGD participants listed several capabilities they learned with DPR’s help that gave them a political “voice,” including how to deliver a speech, speak with media (e.g., on talk shows), speak with different audiences (e.g., swing voters and party leaders), and stay “on message.” Women respondents said that communication was the most important skill, although women youth fellows thought it to be of less importance than advocacy.

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2 Numbers from first YFP class for FY2012 not available in PMP; these numbers were identified and calculated from a review of DPR quarterly reports. The target number was assumed from the actual number of 2012 fellows.

3 Target numbers assume the following calculation: PMP-reported targets for FY2013-FY2017 + target calculated by ET for FY 2012 (11), in which no PMP target data was available.
- **Advocacy/Organization**: This skill set included the ability to identify an issue, organize coalitions and constituencies to build networks and public support for the issue, and lobby relevant government officials to compel changes.

All fellows who met with the ET reported being promoted, given increased responsibilities in their party roles, and/or recognized by their immediate party superiors for their work to a different degree than prior to their fellowships. Fellows credited their enhanced skills, as well as name recognition by leaders (or their community), promotions, and broader responsibilities to the YFP.

**Conclusions**

DPR recruited women and youth repeatedly for relevant activities such that there was equal representation by gender (for youth activities) and/or proportionate representation by party. Based on its analysis of relevant PMP data (Indicators 3 and 7) as well as KII and FGD data, the ET determined that DPR equitably and sustainably (i.e., throughout the DPR period of performance) recruited women and youth for project activities.

Women and youth were provided with skills necessary to enable them to increase their representation in their parties and in leadership roles. Based on its tabulation of the types of skills learned and the number of references to each skill, as well as on its analysis of KII and FGD data, the ET concludes that DPR provided women and youth with skills necessary to enable their increased representation and ascension to leadership roles within their parties.

**EVALUATION QUESTION 3**

To what extent are the activity’s objectives still valid for the current development circumstances in Bangladesh?

**Findings**

To assess the current state of political development in Bangladesh and contrast it to 2011 when DPR began, the ET interviewed political scientists, journalists, and political officers from Western embassies. These respondents cited some continuity over the past six years, some areas in which the need for DPR-like programming has increased, and some upcoming milestones for political developments.

**Current Circumstances**

The leadership of the two main political parties remains the same as in 2011, and the rivalry between the AL leader, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and BNP leader Khaleda Zia remains fierce. “There is no doubt that these are top-down political parties as long as the leaders live and breathe,” a DI official said. A DI colleague said, “There are more challenges in the political environment than six years ago. BNP is going to need support to keep on track and organize for the next elections. That is a key change from six years ago. The relationship between the parties has been deteriorating since 2011.” A BNP youth fellow said, “If you stop the involvement of the founders of the Awami League and BNP, many of our problems will go away.”

In looking at the two main parties, it is evident that their situations and needs are noticeably different.

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4 One BNP youth fellow credited DPR with helping him earn a secretary position within the local youth wing of his party, while three others said they had won (or would shortly be appointed to) more senior party committee positions at the district or sub-district levels.
The AL has won the last two elections and holds an overwhelming majority in Parliament. AL officials control the machinery of government; in fact, some AL party officials evinced difficulty in distinguishing between party and government. One AL official in Chittagong, when asked about his party’s research capabilities, replied, “Yes, we do conduct public opinion polling. We do it very confidently. We have teams that report to us, government agencies.” A political science professor said of the AL, “Leader, party, government, and state have become synonymous.”

BNP boycotted the 2014 elections in a dispute over the refusal of the AL government to permit a caretaker government to oversee the elections. Political experts said that it is imperative for BNP to contest the next elections, expected to be held in late 2018 or early 2019, because a failure to contest consecutive elections could result in BNP legally being deregistered as a political party. “If they don’t participate, they risk being defunct as a political party,” a Western diplomat said. BNP’s boycott adds a new dynamic to the current circumstances, as BNP holds no seats in Parliament and functions as an extra-parliamentary opposition. A Western diplomat characterized Bangladesh as “a one-party state.” BNP is not able to use parliamentary debate and procedure to advance its interests and counter the government, and BNP has no MPs serving as a shadow government in waiting should the party win the next elections. This also means that there are no incumbents to stand in the next elections, which could facilitate the candidacies of new faces.

As an extra-parliamentary opposition party, BNP initially chose to take its supporters to the streets to protest government actions—often via “hartals” or general strikes. DI officials noted that they showed polling data to BNP leaders that demonstrated hartals were causing the party to lose popularity. As a result, DI officials said, BNP stopped the use of hartals. Nevertheless, experts said, political violence remains a serious problem in Bangladesh. “Money and muscle in politics are getting worse,” said another program implementer. “In Bangladesh violence is an element to taking power,” a journalist said. “They don’t need intellectual people; they need people who help them keep power,” a civil society official said. BNP members, particularly in outlying areas, spoke of being arrested and beaten by security forces ultimately under the control of the AL government. Many BNP members interviewed stated that they were facing criminal prosecution, and leader Khaleda Zia continues to face legal action. BNP officials and outside experts said that the party faces financial difficulties and resource constraints. Members said that organizing party events was difficult because security forces break up BNP gatherings. In addition, extremist organizations like a local branch of the Islamic State are a threat. “The threat of violent extremism is real,” a Western diplomat said.²

“BNP is a dysfunctional organization,” a Western diplomat said. “BNP is anti-Awami League. It is not a party of ideas.” A USAID implementer said, “If there is no [political party] program, it would be detrimental to BNP. This election could be definitive. If you start to marginalize parts of the political sphere, what option do they have other than violence? If you have a program, you may be able to help the party take part and mitigate political ostracism.”

Implementer Approach and Donor Engagement

USAID and DI officials noted that a traditional political party program, focusing on central leadership and

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campaigning, is not needed in Bangladesh because the parties have decades of experience contesting elections. What made the DPR approach different, they said, was its focus on the grassroots of political parties, including its operation of WYCs in divisions outside Dhaka. WYCs served as satellite offices in each division and enabled DPR to reach grassroots party workers, rather than focusing efforts in the capital. In the program description for its follow-on program, USAID wrote of this approach, “DI has achieved more success using this approach in five years than other implementers using more ‘traditional’ party strengthening models achieved over the preceding 20 [years].” A DI official said that “working with central party leadership exclusively is not the path to repair Bangladesh’s democracy. That’s where the problem is.”

Another circumstance of note is the desire of donors to engage with political parties. DI and donor officials noted that DPR provided a vehicle for their diplomatic missions in Bangladesh to build and maintain contacts with political parties, in outlying divisions as well as in Dhaka. Because BNP is not represented in Parliament or government, traditional government-to-government diplomacy does not provide an avenue to maintain contacts with BNP officials, who still retain significant support among the Bangladeshi people, according to outside experts. One political scientist estimated that one third of Bangladeshis are consistent AL supporters, one third consistent BNP supporters, and one third swing voters. “Engagement gains you something,” a donor official said. “You know what is happening, and you try to push them.” An implementer official said, “A political party program gives the donor access to the party. … Can you change the party leadership? No, but you can build a foundation at lower levels.”

**Validity of Objective 1: Enhance Grassroots Participation**

**Women**

The RPO law requires that women comprise 33 percent of party committees by 2020. Party leaders stated that they were unlikely to reach this threshold, though AL officials indicated that their party was likely to come close to this goal. BNP officials expected to fall short; in fact, several BNP officials and DPR women participants admitted that the AL does a better job of promoting women than BNP, a view corroborated by AL respondents. “I think the Prime Minister is interested in advancing women,” a Western diplomat said. “Khaleda Zia? Not so much.”

“Our leader Sheikh Hasina is working relentlessly to promote more women. We have made tremendous progress in women’s participation,” said an AL woman leader from Dhaka, who stated her belief that the party would reach the 33 percent target by 2020, a view shared by central committee members interviewed. Other women interviewed also shared that view. “Sheikh Hasina is possessed by that target,” a youth fellow in Dhaka said. “She is involved in the process.

In April 2016, DPR reported that women comprised 12 to 15 percent of mainstream leadership of political parties at the national level, dropping to 1 percent at the grassroots level. According to DPR quarterly reporting, the percentage of women on the AL National Executive Committee stood at 15.6 percent as of January 2017. DPR did not report similar data for other parties. A senior BNP leader estimated that there were “not more than 50 women” among the 392 central committee members, or less than 13 percent.

A major impediment to greater inclusion of women on party committees is a perception by senior leaders that there are not enough qualified women in the party to fill the positions. This perception was confirmed by DI officials, by senior party officials, and by DPR women participants themselves, though the perception was stronger among BNP members than their AL counterparts. DI officials said, “We believe this is an excuse, more likely to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, than an accurate perception.” Senior officials said that training programs for women would be needed for them to reach the 33 percent threshold. “Achieving the 33 percent target will be a challenge,” said an AL official in Chittagong. “When you look at the girls, how many are qualified for the posts? I think we need time.” He cited education,
intelligence, interest, and ability as qualifications needed for a party leader. Citing attitudes of men in BNP, a male senior leader of the party in Dhaka said, “I don’t think we will reach 33 percent by 2020. They don’t feel they must do it. They don’t feel the necessity.”

The AL has been relatively consistent in nominating women as candidates for Parliament. According to one top-level central leader, the party nominated 18 women candidates in 2008, 16 of whom won seats, and nominated 15 women candidates in 2014, all of whom won. These candidates for individual constituencies are in addition to women nominated for seats reserved for women; there are 50 reserved seats in Parliament that are proportionally allocated based on each party’s share of the constituency seats. That leader said of DPR training for women leaders that “I don’t think it would make a huge difference” in women becoming candidates, noting that their “acceptability” in their districts was the most important factor in gaining a nomination.

Women from JP who participated in the YFP stated that there is a society within JP to help ensure that the party reaches the 33 percent quota. One young woman stated that she was nominated for a position on the central committee of the JP women’s wing because her successful completion of the fellowship “gave evidence of my qualifications.” A senior JP leader said that she believes that “no other organization besides DPR had done this kind of work on this scale.” She added that a key result of these programs has been that they’ve “helped women become conscious of their responsibilities within the party … As a result of DPR, more party women are in positions of authority.”

Youth

Party members stated that the path for youth to assume leadership positions is blocked by senior officials who refuse to retire from their posts. The ET was told of a case where a leader of a party student wing was unable to move into positions on the main party committee for decades, noting that the “student” leader’s own son had grown and joined the student wing led by his father when he matriculated at university. “Most leaders don’t want to leave their positions. The youth are blocked,” said a BNP leader in Chittagong. An AL youth fellow in Dhaka said, “Senior leaders don’t want to be replaced by young leaders.” Outside experts shared this perception. “MPs don’t give up their seats until they die,” said another USAID implementer. “We have some people in politics in their 70s and 80s,” a journalist said. “We don’t have a culture of retiring from any post. We don’t allow other brains to come up. It’s everywhere in our society.” The strength of financial interests was also cited as an impediment to youth looking to move up in their parties. A youth fellow from JP in Chittagong said, “I have been in politics for years, but I cannot improve my situation. I work at the grassroots level, but now someone is nominated as a leader because they have money.”

Nevertheless, party leaders and members stated that a training program for youth members of parties is needed to prepare them for their eventual rise into senior ranks when age and mortality inevitably take their toll on current leaders. “These boys and especially girls will find leadership roles in the upcoming days,” said one top-level AL official. A donor official said, “The national leaders will be gone in 10 years. If you don’t engage now, you will lose those 10 years. Disengagement is not a good option.” A Western diplomat said, “It’s a longer-term investment in what happens when Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina go.” A civil society official said, “If you don’t invest in youth, things will never get better.”

As noted under Evaluation Question 1, party leaders also cited greater cross-party cooperation as a significant unintended outcome of DPR programming, particularly the YFP. A senior JP leader said DPR’s cross-party work lessened enmity between the parties. “I’m not sure about the men, but I’ve seen a number of women from different parties become good friends,” she said.

Validity of Objective 2: Improve Information Access and Utilization

As noted above under Evaluation Question 1, DPR’s work on the research component found little receptivity among the parties, though the AL viewed DPR’s assistance in this area more favorably than
did BNP. In particular, senior BNP officials in interviews were dismissive of the value of public opinion surveys. One senior leader at party headquarters in Dhaka stated that BNP had “different mechanisms to evaluate our positions”; for example, he said, party activists talk to protesters who attend BNP events protesting government policies and speak directly to the protesters about their views of a specific policy. He cited the case of BNP-organized protests against the government hike in gas prices, where party activists spoke to protesters who said, “This is the right demand.” The leaders said BNP policy was “based on what we heard when we were distributing leaflets.”

A donor official said, “I spoke to a senior leader of BNP who said, ‘We cannot place data before our leadership because they only want to see good things.’ No one has the courage to say, ‘You are wrong.’” A youth fellow from BNP said, “We fear our party leader more than we respect her. Our top leader gets the wrong information. She hears what she wants to hear, not what is happening.”

In response to Evaluation Question 1, the ET concluded that DPR was not successful in achieving Objective 2, indicating that work remains to be done in this area. Evaluators also found limited receptivity to assistance in this area from the parties, particularly BNP, though this may be partly due to recent survey results with which some BNP members were dissatisfied. The ET found no evidence that further work in this area would be any more successful in a follow-on program. However, the SPL program does call for work in this area. According to the program description, “DI will focus on three approaches: (1) building the capacity of—or where they do not exist, creating—party research institutes; (2) supporting the institutes to conduct public opinion research; and (3) helping the parties to disseminate polling results.”

The SPL program description also contains new ideas for using research and helping parties to develop evidence-based policymaking. These include:

- Promote Engagement in Policy Discussions Between Parties and Constituents
- Promoting Constituency Engagement with Party Representatives (including briefings on relevant findings from DPR research)
- Enhance Grassroots Engagement with Evidence-Based Policy Tools

In comparison to DPR activities, which were not well-received by the parties, these new SPL initiatives offer different approaches to address the need for evidence-based policymaking in parties. One senior AL official in Chittagong said, “If this is developed, radicalized people will not be able to continue their activities. DI depends on logical politics. [DPR participants] don’t go into violent activities.” Another USAID implementer said, “That is a weakness of parties: There is little policy work going on. I don’t know if the parties are there yet. [Their view is,] Who cares what people think?” In addition, one civil society respondent suggested that DI in the future should partner with civil society organizations (CSOs) and think tanks to share their research on policy issues with political parties, as a way to help parties identify issues of concern to voters and possible solutions.

**Validity of Objective 3: Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics**

The three leading parties successfully conducted national party councils in 2016. Their party constitutions call for councils to take place every three years, so the next councils should be held in 2019. This creates an opening for SPL to provide support to the grassroots conferences in the run-up to those national councils. Indeed, SPL does call for DI to support expanded party conferences in 17 priority districts and to facilitate transition to a sustainable party-led conference model.

However, the ET found differing levels of receptivity to DI support for party conferences depending on the party and location. As noted above, BNP leaders were generally welcoming of assistance, due to their party having fewer resources and facing government harassment. For example, party officials said that they welcomed DI support, in part, because it provided a measure of protection from harassment that enabled party conferences to occur without interference. “We want to know from them what kind
of support they can provide,” said one BNP central committee official. AL officials, particularly in Dhaka and Chittagong, were less welcoming of DI involvement and indicated that their party was capable of organizing party conferences without outside support.

Whether such a component can succeed in making parties more responsive is also an open question. “Parties do not have internal democracy. They are all family run,” said a Western diplomat. “I don’t think there is much chance of internal democracy in parties,” said an implementer. “What political parties are suffering from is a democratic deficit,” said a professor. “They are all family run. None of our parties are professional.”

Conclusions

**DPR Objective 1 remains valid in the current political circumstances in Bangladesh.** The requirement that women comprise 33 percent of party committees by 2020 provides an incentive to parties to promote women, and party officials believe that a shortage of qualified women will prevent their parties from reaching this target. In addition, the upcoming parliamentary elections by early 2019 provide an opportunity for women to gain party nominations for seats, particularly in BNP, which has no incumbent MPs. Working to develop the skills of women in political parties would enable those women to take advantage of opportunities over the next three years and beyond.

Training for youth is also needed. While upward mobility is limited within parties due to the tendency of officials to remain in their posts, party officials recognize the need to have qualified younger party members ready to assume party leadership roles when their opportunity comes. The ET concluded that investment in young political activists remains necessary.

**While Objective 2 remains valid in broad terms, the lack of receptivity for DPR’s approach argues for more innovative initiatives.** The ability to conduct and utilize research to inform evidence-based policymaking remains a need for Bangladeshi political parties, particularly BNP. However, the path taken by DPR with regard to public opinion surveys found little receptivity. Instead, public opinion survey data could be used to identify main concerns of Bangladeshi citizens that could be the focus of other SPL programming. Additionally, a broader definition of “research” could include policy analysis and recommendations from Bangladeshi CSOs and think tanks, which could be shared with political parties to provide them with possible solutions to societal problems.

**DPR Objective 3 remains valid, as there is still a need to support parties in organizing conferences and councils.** In particular, BNP will need support, given that it has fewer resources and faces obstacles in organizing and convening such conferences. DI will need to be careful in dealing with AL and recognize that receptivity is likely to be greater in certain divisions than in other divisions or the central level. This disparity could provide a vehicle for DI in practice to offer more support to BNP, where the need is greater, while being evenhanded in its offers of support to the less-receptive AL.

**There remains a need for cross-party trust building.** While not an objective of DPR, this proved to be an important unintended outcome. There remains a need for activities to reduce political polarization in Bangladesh, which could help to reduce political violence. SPL initiatives in this area would represent a timely update of the DPR objectives in light of the current political circumstances. Such multi-party events require an outside convener because no party will fund multi-party activities.

**EVALUATION QUESTION 4**

How much progress has DPR made in ensuring sustainability of activities beyond USAID support? What measures should be taken to enhance sustainability, if any?
Findings

According to DPR work plans, a key element of the DPR sustainability plan was establishment of leadership academies within each party to continue with training that DPR had provided to youth fellows and women leaders. BNP approved creation of a leadership academy at its national party council in March 2016, and AL established a similar academy in September 2016. Party leaders and DI officials said that while these academies have been established in name, they are not operational. DI intends to support these academies (referred to as Leadership Training Units) in the new SPL project.

In a related effort to ensure sustainability, DPR began a training of trainers (ToT) program in November 2015, with the goal of equipping alumni of the NJSJ and YFP with skills to conduct their own training of party members. DPR trained 62 AL and BNP members as trainers at two leadership academies in November 2015 and May-June 2016. In turn, those 62 trainers organized 129 trainings for 3,095 party members. DI officials said that the goal was for parties to be able to utilize these trainers for party-funded training. DI officials said they could not begin the ToT program earlier than they did because they would not have been able to identify the appropriate people to participate and implement trainings without the strong network of fellows, women leaders, and supportive party leaders.

There are a few examples of those trained through DPR ToT activities who then conducted trainings themselves with their own or party resources:

- In Rajshahi, district and city, the AL supported local party leaders in conducting two follow-on trainings at their party offices in September 2016 with 65 participants (36 male and 19 female).
- In Sylhet, BNP leaders provided support to organize two trainings in August 2016. A total of 43 grassroots leaders participated in the trainings.

Senior AL and BNP leaders attended these trainings and said they were planning to independently organize additional trainings “in the coming months” or on an ongoing basis, but there was no reference to further trainings in DPR reports.

With regard to research, the AL institutionalized its research function in CRI. The Jatiyo Party had established a research wing, but it was discontinued when the director departed in 2014 to form his own party. BNP does not have a research wing, and numerous BNP officials indicated that the party does not value research.

The future of councils is uncertain. Officials of the two main parties said they will hold national councils in three years as required by their constitutions. While AL officials are confident of their abilities to organize councils without outside support, BNP officials said they would welcome support. They expressed concerns about organizing events in the face of government harassment. It is unclear to what extent DPR-supported democratic changes in procedure will be incorporated by the parties.

With regard to multi-party events, members of all parties stated that such activities will not take place without outside support. They said that an outside convener is needed because no single party will fund or organize events that could benefit rival parties.

One additional aspect of sustainability cited by DI and USAID officials is the focus on youth. They said young party activists will be active for decades to come, enabling DPR training to bear fruit over the long term. “The fellows are long-term sustainability,” said a DI staffer. “Working with the alumni network – part of sustainability is working with these individuals as they move into leadership roles.” The converse, however, is that evaluating youth training activities is difficult in the short term because youth will not achieve senior leadership positions until years later. “It will take a long time to encourage young people to move up to become senior leaders,” said a senior BNP leader in Dhaka. A donor official said, “Change will not happen today or tomorrow, but when these people’s time comes.”
Conclusions

The party leadership academies and ToT program could have been effective means to ensure sustainability of DPR leadership training for women and youth; however, these initiatives began too late to be sustainable as of April 2017, when DPR ended. These initiatives could have helped to ensure sustainability had they begun earlier, but there is no guarantee that they could have maintained the pace of training that is possible with outside support. Furthermore, DPR needed time to identify appropriate trainers and build support for the ToT program.

The research component of DPR has not been sustainable without USAID support. While CRI, the AL’s research institute, is operating without outside support, the JP research institute has closed, and BNP never started such an institute. Even CRI has shown itself to be reluctant to conduct public opinion surveys on the scale of DPR.

AL officials are capable of sustaining national and district councils without donor support, though it is unclear whether such events will be implemented as rigorously as they were with DPR support and whether the AL shares a commitment to grassroots conferences. Without donor support, BNP will not be able to sustain the scope of such conferences and councils.

Donor support is needed for multi-party events. DI’s role as a neutral convener and USAID funding will be necessary if such events are to be organized and play a role in building trust and reducing political violence.

EVALUATION QUESTION 5

To what extent do political party members and civil society actors perceive DPR as successful in achieving its objectives?

Findings

The DPR PMP asked local political party leaders in a survey if they were satisfied with DPR’s party support (Indicator 20), with the possible answer along a 4-point scale. For years for which data were available (FY2014 and FY2016), the average targeted satisfaction rate was 89 percent; the average actual rate was 85 percent, just missing this target. The ET’s own findings provide moderate, but by no means overwhelming, support for the PMP results. While findings from the KIIs and FGDs strongly support the argument that DPR was a success in the eyes of political party members and civil society actors, results from the ET’s mini-surveys are more balanced, with some responses demonstrating that not all involved with DPR felt the same level of progress was being made across its three objectives.

KII & FGD Findings

With near unanimity among DPR participants, party leaders, and CSO representatives interviewed face-to-face, respondents reported that DPR training approaches were innovative, their content useful, and their teachings applicable to strengthening trainees’ roles within their parties. However, key informants’ perceptions of the project’s success differed among its three main objectives:

- **Objective 1**: This was viewed by a large majority of participants as successful, with DPR women’s activities winning the strongest praise by women, but also by youth, other political party leaders, and CSOs. The YFP was also spoken of positively, although fewer saw it as the “game changer” that the women’s activities were. Some youth fellows took DPR to task for not considering a post-fellowship component for graduates, and others (party leaders in particular) were not sure it was that helpful for those who participated. CSO representatives generally saw the DPR’s women and youth activities as helpful, with one saying it would be “counterproductive” to stop these activities now.
Several also said that although the polarized political environment made it difficult to engage all parties effectively (e.g., police shutting down or prohibiting BNP rallies in Rajshahi), it was important for a group like DI, which has earned a reputation for neutrality and integrity among the parties over the six-year duration of DPR, to be trying to provide such support.

- **Objective 2:** The overwhelming majority of party members were unaware of this component of DPR, and the few that were aware saw little benefit because the research did not directly impact their political careers. BNP party leaders and some BNP women were outright negative regarding DPR’s research component, based largely on their perception of the most recent DPR-sponsored political survey (see Evaluation Question 1, Objective 2 findings above). While CSO representatives saw potential in the DPR’s research work, all were dubious about how much the parties used it. This objective was not perceived as successful.

- **Objective 3:** Nearly all respondents—participants and senior party leaders alike—disregarded Objective 3 when asked their views on whether DPR achieved its objectives. As noted above under Evaluation Question 1, views on the success of Objective 3 varied by party and division. BNP leaders generally had a more favorable view than did AL leaders, and leaders from both parties in Rajshahi had a more favorable view than did their counterparts in Dhaka and Chittagong. CSO representatives saw the parties’ internal communication and coordination processes continuing to be a top-down, closed process, with central party leaders making key decisions.

**Satisfaction Scale Results**

To create a quantitative means of analyzing its qualitative findings, the ET developed a two-level scale for assessing the degree of political party member and CSO satisfaction with DPR. Based on how they responded, key informants or FGD participants were categorized as perceiving DPR as either “successful” or “partly successful.” Those respondents categorized as “successful” saw DPR as having made a positive difference in their skill level, position within the party, and/or the political culture of their party; they also had no serious complaints about DPR or DI generally.

**Table 7: KII and FGD Perceptions on DPR’s Success**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DPR Program Was…</th>
<th>Partly Successful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Women (Total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
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<td>Chittagong</td>
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<td>2 (2 AL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
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<td>5 (5 BNP)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth (Total)</td>
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<td>Dhaka</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Chittagong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
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<td>1 (BNP)</td>
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<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Male &amp; Female Political Leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chittagong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rajshahi</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL (women, youth, party leaders)</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Dhaka</td>
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</table>
Respondents categorized as “partly successful” saw relatively fewer positive impacts for them personally (although they might have still had positive remarks about DPR) and had at least one significant complaint about the design or execution of a particular DPR activity that was within DI’s control.

The results of this scale, detailed above in Table 7, indicate overall that among political party members, 63 percent of key informants and FGD participants saw DPR as successful, with women making up the lion’s share of this group. Among women, 74 percent of women’s program participants (versus women youth fellows and female political leaders) view DPR as successful. Among women leaders, the most striking difference was in the geographic split of BNP women’s responses: in Chittagong, all six BNP women saw DPR as successful; in Rajshahi, five of seven BNP women saw it as partly successful. (This is explained by the issues BNP women had with DI’s execution and post-activity follow-up toward the end of the project, which are detailed under Evaluation Question I.) Among men, 52 percent overall saw DPR as successful. Within this group, the largest number of men seeing DPR as “partly successful” were political party leaders. No respondents replied that DPR was not successful.

**Mini-Survey Findings**

Notable mini-survey findings on the topic of satisfaction with DPR included the following:

- While most FGD and KII participants were positive about DPR’s contribution to their upward mobility in parties, and nearly two-thirds saw DPR as “successful” (Table 7), mini-survey responses produced some notable contrasts. First, almost half of women respondents (12 of 28) disagreed with the statement that “my participation in DPR activities has enabled me to have a stronger role in my party.” Second, half of women (14 of 28) answered “no” in reply to the question, “Have you advanced in your party as a result of DPR trainings?” (4 of 6 who responded “no” were from Sylhet; 5 of 6 respondents from Khulna said they had advanced).

- In contrast to the above findings, the mini-survey found that only 28 percent of fellows disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, “my fellowship has enabled me to have a stronger role in my party” (although 5 of the 7 that did disagree with this statement were women, the party split was almost even: 4 AL, 3 BNP). Similarly, a smaller number of youth respondents (32 percent) said they had not advanced as a result of the DPR training – i.e., 68 percent did advance. The 8 that said they did not advance were split evenly by gender and party (half BNP and half AL).

- Nearly half of women respondents (12 of 28) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “my party has increased the number of women candidates over the past five years.” This disagreement was split relatively evenly across districts and parties, although 7 of the 12 women were from BNP, including the two who strongly disagreed. In contrast, only 7 of 25 (28 percent) of youth survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the equivalent statement for youth candidates (72 percent agreed or strongly agreed that their party had increased the number of youth candidates over the past five years). These 7 respondents were split relatively evenly between gender and party.

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6 For Table 7, “political party members” include women, youth and other male and female political leaders.
A smaller but still sizeable percentage (32 percent) of women disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “my party has increased the involvement of women in important party activities in the past five years.” These responses were also split relatively evenly between districts and parties, although 3 of the 4 “strongly disagree” ratings were from AL women respondents. In the youth survey, 6 of 25 (24 percent) disagreed with this statement.

There was an overwhelmingly positive response from women regarding the level of DPR support they received during their activities, with 23 of 28 agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that “DPR staff support remained strong from the beginning to the end of my participation”; 10 of 28 “strongly agreed.” Similarly, 80 percent of youth respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

A large percentage of women respondents (71 percent) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “In Bangladesh’s current political environment, the skills I learned from DPR are still relevant.” An even larger percentage of youth respondents (88 percent) echoed this sentiment.

Nearly two-thirds of women respondents said their party had made internal reforms to improve coordination, communication, and dialogue with women. These respondents were almost evenly split between the AL (6) and BNP (8). A smaller percentage (56 percent) of youth respondents said their parties had made similar reforms.

Only 11 percent of female respondents said their party had made greater use of research tools in the last five years. More than half (53 percent) said they did not know if their party was using the tools. A higher percentage of youth respondents (28 percent) said their parties were making greater use of these tools. All 7 youth respondents were from Khulna or Sylhet; they were otherwise evenly split by gender and relatively evenly by party (2 JP, 2 Jamaat, 2 BNP, 1 AL).

Only 18 percent of women said their parties would provide training to increase women’s leadership opportunities after DPR ended in April 2017. More than 64 percent said their parties would not. A larger percentage of youth respondents (44 percent) said their parties would provide training for youth leadership after DPR.

Conclusions

DPR is generally viewed as successful. The majority of the ET findings support the conclusion that DPR was generally considered a success in the eyes of political party members and civil society actors, with a few exceptions. Data from KIIs and FGDs, including the success scale (Table 7), support this view.

Some women reported less progress. Results from the ET’s mini-surveys demonstrated that women respondents—including women youth fellows—in the five target districts (Barisal, Khulna, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Sylhet) did not see the same benefits from DPR activities. This view cut across the main parties (AL and BNP). However, as most comments in the survey’s open-ended response box7 from these women respondents were moderately to very appreciative of DPR, this conclusion may indicate a frustration with the ongoing, traditional obstacles (e.g., conservative political culture, nepotism, lack of funds) that women confront as they seek greater representation in Bangladesh’s political parties.

7 The response box allowed respondents to provide more details on any of their quantitative answers.
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USAID

1. USAID/Bangladesh should continue funding grassroots activities with women and youth.

Given the success of DPR’s efforts to enhance grassroots participation by women and youth, as well as the continuing need for such interventions, USAID should continue to fund such activities in the SPL program. Activities should focus on the grassroots levels (i.e., upazilla/sub-district) and union levels of the parties. At these levels, there is more of the necessary political “space” and buy-in from key local leaders to enable women to acquire the skills and know-how to become effective party members and leaders. USAID should encourage DI to continue to use successful models of the NJSJ and YFP activities.

2. USAID/Bangladesh should promote new approaches to evidence-based policymaking.

Rather than focus on improving parties’ use of public opinion surveys, USAID should promote their utilization of other types of research. USAID should encourage DI to facilitate cooperation between political parties and outside organizations, such as think tanks and CSOs, to enable those groups to share their research about problems confronting Bangladesh and proposed solutions to those problems. This would enable researchers who have analyzed public policy issues to share their research with parties, whose members are positioned to implement solutions.

3. USAID/Bangladesh should continue to support party conferences.

USAID should continue to support district councils in order to maintain the gains realized by DPR in the frequency of the councils and integrity of the process. USAID should encourage SPL to expand support of upazilla (sub-district) and union-level councils, thereby strengthening communication and coordination between the grassroots, district, and central levels of the party. BNP has shown itself to be more receptive and has a greater need for outside support for conferences; while support necessarily must be offered to the AL, in practice BNP may benefit more greatly from such efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DI

4. DI should use public opinion surveys to inform other SPL activities.

DPR’s promotion of the use of public opinion surveys by political parties failed to gain traction, due to a lack of receptivity by the parties. Rather than continue to promote survey use as an end unto itself, DI should instead use survey results to support other objectives. For example, SPL could use surveys to identify the top three areas of concern for constituents of a district, then use this information to help party activists design projects to address constituent concerns. For an example of using public opinion surveys in this fashion, DI may wish to consult the evaluation of the Promoting Active Citizen Engagement project in Lebanon.8

5. DI should emphasize cross-party activities for women and youth.

One of the aspects of DPR valued most by participants was the cross-party nature of events, particularly the YFP, which participants said helped them to better understand their counterparts from other parties and to renounce political violence. Given the emphasis on reducing political violence in the SPL program, 8 Social Impact Inc., Promoting Active Citizen Engagement (PACE): Final Performance Evaluation (Washington: USAID, September 2014), pp. 14-16, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K89V.pdf
DI should emphasize cross-party activities to promote understanding and reduce the risk of political violence.

6. **DI should consider women and youth participants from all grassroots levels.**

DI should expand the “pool” from which youth fellows are drawn by recruiting qualified candidates from below the district level at the grassroots levels (e.g., unions, wards). This will create a more diverse, representative group of potential fellows from which to select.

7. **DI should increase the number of youth fellows trained.**

Youth fellows trained under DPR substantially increased their political skills in several key areas, which made the engagement both relevant and useful for their careers, and engaged in important cross-party exercises, which built their empathy for and relationships with young politicians from other parties. The benefits of the fellowship could serve more young Bangladeshi politicians if this activity was continued and scaled up in the future, either by increasing the size of each fellowship class or adding one or more classes each year.

8. **DI should establish better relations with senior party leaders to promote DPR/SPL alumni.**

While DPR training was positively cited by participants, senior party leaders did not view DPR alumni more favorably when considering candidates for party positions; many senior leaders were unaware of the skills that those participants had gained from DPR. DI should improve its outreach to senior party leaders to inform them about how the SPL program improves the qualifications of party activists who participate. DI should promote DPR and SPL alumni as candidates in the parliamentary elections to be held by early 2019, especially in those constituencies where a party does not have an incumbent MP.

9. **DI should continue to use the 33 percent quota for women to leverage party roles for women leaders.**

With the RPO law requiring that women comprise 33 percent of party committees by 2020, DI should build on successes of DPR to promote its women alumni for leadership positions in their parties over the next three years. With many senior party leaders claiming that they cannot achieve the quota because of a lack of qualified women in their parties, DI should use its relationships with senior leaders to inform them about the training that participants received and the qualifications of individual women who would be suited for such positions on party committees.

10. **DI should start training-of-trainers programs earlier in the SPL period of performance.**

A training-of-trainers program can be an effective way to ensure the sustainability of training; however, the ToT component of DPR started too late for it to be sustainable by the project’s end. DI should start its ToT work early in SPL to ensure that it is sustainable by the project’s end in 2022.

11. **DI should support parties to continue to develop leadership academies.**

DPR attempted to ensure sustainability through development of leadership academies in each party that were envisioned to organize DPR-type training for women and youth; however, these academies were not operational by the end of the project. As envisioned in the SPL program description, DI should work with parties in the SPL project to ensure that the academies become operational and utilize the skills of trainers trained by the ToT component of both DPR and SPL.

12. **DI should develop women and youth leadership curricula for parties.**

Yet another way for DI to advance the sustainability of its programming would be to develop written curricula for its women and youth leadership programs that could be adopted by trainers at leadership academies. This would ensure that the skills and ideas that DPR participants found valuable would be
accurately transmitted to future trainees, even after DI ceases its involvement.

13. **DI should propose cross-party activities for senior leaders.**

DPR participants who valued the trust-building aspects of DPR cross-party activities stated that political violence would continue until senior leaders decided to stop it. Drawing on their positive experience with counterparts in other parties, they recommended that DI organize workshops and discussions (not training) for senior leaders from the different parties. Such activities would focus on finding common solutions to societal problems facing Bangladesh and how parties could cooperate to solve them.

14. **DI should better communicate the purpose and use of web portals at all levels of parties.**

In the new SPL program, DI plans to support the migration of its database to the individual parties and to familiarize them with the database. In light of findings that the parties were not well-aware of the web portals or their utility, DI should better communicate their purpose and use.
VII. LESSONS LEARNED

• **Consider new approaches when old approaches become stagnant.** DI proposed a new model for political party programming which recognized that Bangladeshi parties were mature and had outgrown the need for traditional programming. The resulting DPR project achieved more in five years, according to USAID, than previous programs had in 20 years. “Our program took a different approach,” said one DI official. “[Other programs] were training post-graduate politicians in kindergarten tactics. Bangladesh is not a newly transitioning country. They know how to do their jobs.”

• **First identify the problem.** DPR was designed to address an identified problem in Bangladeshi politics. “One of the real problems is elite vs. elite competition,” a DI official said. “We were breaking down an elite stranglehold. No one had attempted to do that.” While party elites still control the parties, DPR promoted greater grassroots participation, particularly outside Dhaka.

• **Maintain flexibility to pursue unintended successes.** The most significant unintended consequence of DPR was the cross-party trust-building engendered by the multi-party activities of the YFP. USAID should provide implementers with sufficient flexibility to devote increased resources to activities that demonstrated unforeseen success.

• **Consider different approaches when activities fail to gain traction.** DPR efforts to promote use of public opinion surveys gained limited traction within political parties. Other approaches to encouraging use of research to promote evidence-based policymaking, such as dialogue between parties and research organizations like think tanks and CSOs, could offer an alternative path to improving policy deliberations within parties.

• **Operate outside the capital.** This evaluation found that beneficiaries outside Dhaka were more welcoming of DPR support than beneficiaries in Dhaka. This was an important component of DPR’s innovative approach to political party programming and one that enabled its success. “The field offices were our central focus,” a DI official said.

• **Build demand as well as supply.** DPR succeeded at developing a supply of trained, qualified women and youth party activists; however, many senior party leaders were unaware of what DPR accomplished and the skills gained by participants. DI needs to develop and maintain its relationships with senior leaders to ensure that they appreciate the skills developed through DI training and that they are prepared to help trainees advance in the party.

• **Find the right points of entry for DG programming.** Support for Bangladeshi political parties proved successful following the December 2008 elections, in contrast to a parliamentary strengthening program that was evaluated in 2015 and found to be largely unsuccessful. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to DG programming, and each mission needs to assess the particular circumstance of a given country at a given time and find the right points of entry for a successful program.
ANNEX A: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK

Scope of Work
for the Democratic Participation and Reform Program
External End Performance Evaluation
USAID/Bangladesh
Office of Democracy and Governance

Activity/Project Name: Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR)
Contractor: Democracy International
Cooperative Agreement/contract number: Cooperative Agreement AID-388-A-11-00003
Total Estimated Cost (TEC): $12,364,850
Life of Project/Activity: April 11, 2011 - April 10, 2017
Activity Geographic Regions: National coverage
Mission Development Objective (DO): MO- Bangladesh, a knowledge-based, healthy, food secured and climate resilient middle income democracy; DO-Citizen confidence in governance institutions increase

I. Background
Throughout Bangladesh’s political history, the country’s long-established political parties have invested great authority in their leaders but struggled over how best to encourage participation and incorporate input from their large and diverse memberships. Political parties now recognize a need to increase their meaningful interactions with voters between elections and to develop inclusive strategic visions for the future. To enable political parties to meet the needs of their constitutions, USAID Bangladesh has been supporting a five-year activity entitled “Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) in Bangladesh implemented by Democracy International”. The goal of the activity is to increase opportunities for participation and leadership of women and youth in political parties, to develop the capacity of parties to conduct and utilize research in their decision-making processes, and to respond to the needs of political parties for stronger internal communication, organizational best practices, and compliance with electoral law. This goal aligns with USAID’s mission goal in Bangladesh to increase citizens’ confidence in democratic institutions. This program will also bolster USG’s strategic objective, “Governing Justly and Democratically.” To achieve these results the program will conduct activities under three major program objectives.

Objective 1: Enhance Grassroots Participation. Under this objective DI will increase the political engagement of women and youth in political parties and more broadly in national political activity. There are 2 intermediate results under this objective:
1.1. Leadership opportunities for youth are expanded, and
1.2. Representation of Women in political parties is increased.

Throughout the period of the program DI has established seven regional co-located Youth and Women centers, create a Developing Young Leaders Fellowship Program, launched an awareness campaign consisting of a series of town hall meetings to inform women and youth on ways to participate in the political process, and implement a Micro-Activities funding mechanism to help encourage and fund
innovative projects designed by local youth and women’s groups which will foster the goals of the program.

**Objective 2: Improve Information Access and Utilization.** The second objective of this program is to enable political parties to increase their capacity to access and utilize evidence/research based decision making. The intermediate results under this objective are:

1. The political parties’ capacity to conduct and utilize research is strengthened
2. Relevant research tools are developed to enable their use of existing and to-be-developed information resources.

To strengthen the capacity of political parties to conduct and utilize research, the program will conduct a series of activities to help political parties appreciate the value of public opinion research, to develop effective polling and research strategies, and to incorporate research findings into policy formation and communications strategies. Activities under this objective will include the development of an Applied Research Program, which will include focus group discussions (FGD) and national and regional surveys, a targeted research training program, and an expanded training-of-trainers program following the upcoming elections.

**Objective 3: Improve the Environment for Responsive Politics.** This objective aims to provide incentives for responsive politics in Bangladesh. The 2 intermediate results under this objective are:

1. Improved the pathways of coordination, communication, and dialogue within the parties
2. Internal reform initiatives are supported

The program will conduct activities to assist parties in developing more sophisticated and strategic constituency initiatives and to encourage them to consider the strategic advantages of broader engagement. Activities to support this objective will include a national conference series, the creation of an intra-party web portal, and support to specific party requests for technical assistance through a Windows of Opportunity fund.

Gender and Youth engagement, while also a specific program objective, will be incorporated into program activity throughout all program objectives. This approach will ensure that women and youth benefit from and participate in all DPR activities. To track the program’s progress in engaging women and youth, disaggregated data on women and youth will be collected whenever possible.

**Development Hypothesis.** Political parties are important mechanisms of democratic governance and political processes. They can help to articulate citizens’ interests and concerns, to generate and promote policies and to provide constituencies with clear and coherent electoral alternatives. Another crucial function that political parties can play is to create a political democratic culture within the party which can spill over in and promote democratic political culture of the society at large.

This project is based upon the premise that if grassroots participation in political parties is increased, especially of marginalized groups such women and youth, if political parties access to information and their capacity to utilize it is increased, and if parties conduct politics more responsive to citizen’s and grassroots interests and concerns, then political processes in Bangladesh will strengthen.

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9 Hereafter referred to as responsive politics.
Critical Assumptions: Progress on DPR’s expected results assumes that:

- The political situation in Bangladesh remains generally stable.
- The space for civic participation in politics and good governance processes remains open.
- Political parties remain cooperative with DI and continue to be open to USAID and other Donors’ assistance.
- Bangladesh is not afflicted with natural disaster of such magnitude that programming becomes unmanageable.

II. Objectives of the Evaluation

The objective of this final performance evaluation is to assess the technical and programmatic validity of DPR’s goals; assess effectiveness; assess DPR implementers’ performance in achieving results and also assess sustainability aspects of the activity.

The audience for this final performance evaluation includes USAID/Bangladesh, US Embassy state department in Bangladesh, UKAid, political parties of Bangladesh, the USAID Asia Bureau and, other bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors working for democratic governance and other concern development partners.

The findings of the report will be used in implementation of a new political process activity. The report will be shared with implementers of the new activity to inform them about the success and challenges. USAID expects the implementers of the new political process activity to shape their activity and strategy considering the findings of the this evaluation report.

III. Evaluation Questions

This Scope of Work is for a final performance evaluation of the DPR program implementation from April 2011 to April 2017. The evaluation should review, analyze, and evaluate the DPR program using the following prioritized questions. The evaluation should make conclusions based on the findings, identify opportunities and make recommendations for improvement. In answering these questions, the Evaluation Team should assess both the performance of USAID and that of the implementing partner(s).

Effectiveness:

- To what extent has DPR been successful in achieving activity objectives? What were the unintended outcomes?
- To what extent were women and youth engaged effectively by DPR’s interventions in the targeted areas?

Relevance:

- To what extent are the activity’s objectives still valid to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh?

Sustainability:

- How much progress has DPR made in ensuring sustainability of activities beyond USAID support?
- What measures should be taken to enhance sustainability?

Client Satisfaction:

- To what extent do political party members and civil society actors perceive DPR as successful in achieving its objectives?
IV. Proposed Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation team is encouraged to use a mixed method approach that would include the use of different tools to tease out qualitative and quantitative information and suggest alternative approaches during the planning stage. For example, given the sensitive nature of political issues, the evaluation team could suggest alternative or additional approaches that can maximize data collection and analysis.

The evaluation methodology will include following tools, however the evaluation team is encouraged to propose new methods of data collection and analysis in the work plan:

1. **Desktop Review of Key Documents and Initial Analysis**
   The Evaluation Team shall review relevant USAID and sector specific documents, as well as key documents from USAID’s implementing partners and outside sources.

   The Evaluation Team will use this literature to develop an initial response to the questions listed in Section III above, and to set forth hypothesized cause-effect relationships that can be tested through field research and interviews. The Evaluation Team will also use the information from the desk review to design tools for conducting key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

2. **Conduct Interviews in the field:** The Evaluation Team will conduct interviews with USAID/Bangladesh, relevant USAID/Washington staff, program participants, implementing partners, sub-contractors and sub-grantees, relevant GOB representatives, civil society representatives, the media, donors, stakeholders, and other relevant beneficiaries. The team should create a sampling frame to conduct interviews of stakeholders and field visits with 1-2 sub-grantees under each type of sub-grant. The Evaluation Team’s work plan should include an interview list and proposed field visits.

3. **Conduct Focus Group Discussions**

   The evaluation should include focus group discussions with the target beneficiaries and other stakeholders involved in the implementing of the DPR program. To measure clients’ satisfaction as well as program effectiveness, along with other tools, the team should conduct focus group discussions with media, civil society, elected officials and local and regional government officials in targeted regions.

   The Team will build on the proposed methodology and provide more specific details on the evaluation methodology in the Evaluation Work Plan (see Deliverables below). The evaluation will be participatory in its design and implementation and the evaluation methodology will be finalized through further review and discussion between USAID/Bangladesh and the Evaluation Team. The methodology narrative should discuss the merits and limitations of the final evaluation methodology. In the final evaluation report, the evaluator should also detail limitations and how these limitations were addressed or how limitations were taken to account in proposing recommendations. The Evaluation Team will design appropriate tools for collecting data from various units of analysis. The tools will be shared with USAID during the evaluation and as part of the evaluation report.

   The information collected will be analyzed by the Evaluation Team to establish credible answers to the questions and provide major trends and issues.

**Existing Sources of Information**

USAID/Bangladesh DG Office will provide documents for the desk review that are not available from other sources and contact information for relevant interviewees. The list of documents is presented in
Annex-B. The list is not exhaustive and the Evaluation Team will be responsible for identifying and reviewing additional materials relevant to the evaluation.

VI. Deliverables

All deliverables are internal to USAID and the evaluation team unless otherwise instructed by USAID. Evaluation deliverables include:

Evaluation Team Planning Meeting(s) – essential in organizing the team’s efforts. During the meeting(s), the team will review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members’ roles and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods and instruments, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and prepare for the in-brief with USAID/Bangladesh;

Evaluation Design and Work Plan – Complete a detailed work plan (including task timeline, methodology outlining approach to be used to answer each evaluation question, and describe in detail the team responsibilities, and the data analysis plan): the draft work plan will be submitted within 10 working days after commencement of the evaluation; the final work plan will be submitted within 3 days after the international team members’ arrival in Bangladesh.

Evaluation Design Matrix – A table will be prepared that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection sources, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be finalized and shared with USAID/Bangladesh before evaluation fieldwork starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.

Data Collection Instruments – Data collection instruments will be developed and submitted to USAID/Bangladesh during the evaluation design phase prior to the commencement of the evaluation fieldwork. The completed evaluation report should also include the data collection tools, instruments and list of people interviewed as an annex in the evaluation report.

In-brief Meeting – An in-brief meeting with USAID/Bangladesh will be held within 2 working days of international team members’ arrival in Bangladesh;

Mid-term briefing and interim meetings - The Evaluation Team Leader (or his/her delegate) will brief the DG Monitoring and Evaluation program COR on progress with the evaluation on a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to USAID/Bangladesh as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities for the evaluation should also be discussed with USAID/Bangladesh.

Debriefing with USAID – A PowerPoint presentation of initial findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations will be made to USAID/Bangladesh before the international team members depart from Bangladesh.

Debriefing with Partners - The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to USAID partners (as appropriate and as defined by USAID) through a PowerPoint presentation prior to the team’s departure from the country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider partner comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the final evaluation report.

Draft Evaluation Report – The Evaluation team will analyze all data collected during the evaluation to prepare a draft Performance Evaluation Report and submit the report within 15 working days on after
the departure of international team members from Bangladesh. The draft report must be of a high quality with well-constructed sentences, and no grammatical errors or typos. The report should answer ALL the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the evaluation questions were answered. The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the final report section below. USAID will provide comments on the draft report within 10 working days of submission. The Evaluation Team will in turn revise the draft report into a final Performance Evaluation Report, fully reflecting USAID comments and suggestions.

**Final Report:** The Evaluation Team will submit a final Performance Evaluation Report that incorporates Mission comments and suggestions no later than ten working days after USAID/Bangladesh provides written comments on the draft Performance Evaluation Report. The format of the final report is provided below.

The final report must meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report must represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people’s opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final performance evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a cover sheet, table of contents, table of figures and tables (as appropriate), glossary of terms (acronyms), executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, scope and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include, in the annex, any “Statement of Differences” by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations. The report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. The report will be submitted in English, electronically in both word and PDF forms. The report will be disseminated within USAID. Upon instruction from USAID, DG Monitoring and Evaluation activity contractor will submit (also electronically, in English) this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information to Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) for
dissemination among implementing partners, stakeholders, and the general public. The DEC submission must be within three months of USAID’s approval of the final report.

All quantitative data, if gathered, must be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A CD with all the data could be provided to the COR.

VII. Team Composition/ Technical Qualifications and Experience Requirements for the Evaluation Team

The Contractor will provide a team of specialists for the evaluation composed of experts in conducting assessments and evaluations of this nature. The team will include and balance several types of knowledge and experience related to program evaluation. Individual team members should have the technical qualifications as described below. The proposed team composition will include one team leader and two team members. USAID will select/approve the proposed candidates for each position based on the proposed methodology and the strength of the candidate(s).

**Team Leader (International):** A mid-level social scientist/political scientist with an advanced degree in a relevant discipline and at least eight (8) years of experience. Experience in democratic participation programs and political parties programming in developing countries is required. Prior experience and ability to conduct and lead evaluations, in particular on democratic participation issues, political party strengthening programs, and to write well in English is required. The team leader will provide guidance for the team, finalize the evaluation design, coordinate activities, arrange meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations. S/he will also lead the preparation and presentation of the key evaluation findings and recommendations to USAID/Bangladesh. Ability to produce a high quality evaluation report in English is essential.

**Team Member (International)- One:** A mid-level evaluation specialist with an advanced degree in a relevant discipline and at least five (5) years of experience. Experience in design, management monitoring and evaluation of democratic participation programs in developing countries is required. Prior experience and ability to conduct evaluations, in particular on democratic participation issues, political party strengthening programs, and to write well in English is required. S/he will work with the national team member to manage focus group discussions (FGD) and other data collection methods, analyze findings and draft the evaluation report.

**Team Members (National)- Two:** Team members’ experience should include post-graduate level social science, law, economics, and/or political science experience. In-depth knowledge of issues relating to Bangladesh political development, political parties, and process of democratic participation and role of civil society in developing and/or transitional democracies is required. Experience in conducting evaluations or assessments is essential. Ability to conduct interviews and discussions and write well in English is essential.

**Illustrative Budgeted Level of Effort (LOE)**

Below is the illustrative budgeted LOE per position for this activity. Illustrative LOE may be modified based on the complexity of the activity and in accordance with the approved work plan. The Contractor will monitor labor costs across all task order activities to ensure that the approved budget for Labor costs is not exceeded.
### Illustrative Budgeted LOE

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### VIII. Conflict of Interest

All evaluation Team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the program being evaluated. USAID/Bangladesh will provide the conflict of interest forms.

### IX. Scheduling and Logistics/Logistical Support and Government Furnished Property

The proposed evaluation will be funded and implemented through the new DG Monitoring and Evaluation Activity. The activity implementer will be responsible for all offshore and in-country administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate consultants. Their support includes arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel, hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, photocopying, arranging field visits, local travel, hotel and appointments with stakeholders.

The Evaluation Team will be required to perform tasks in Dhaka, Bangladesh and also will travel to activity sites within the country. The evaluation Team should be able to make all logistic arrangements including the vehicle arrangements for travel within and outside Dhaka and should not expect any logistic support from the Mission. The Team should also make their own arrangement on space for Team meetings, and equipment support for producing the report.

#### Schedule – tentative

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<tr>
<td>Review background documents and preparation work</td>
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<td><strong>Draft work plan</strong> submitted to USAID/Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Travel to Bangladesh by expat team members</td>
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<td>2/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet with Democracy International staff</td>
<td>2/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Final Work Plan to USAID</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis in-country</td>
<td>3/1-3/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Team submits draft presentation for USAID/Bangladesh DG Team review; data analysis continues after submission</td>
<td>3/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID provides comments (as needed) draft presentation; team continues fieldwork</td>
<td>3/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation and debrief with DG Team and USAID/Bangladesh</td>
<td>3/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debrief meetings with key stakeholders</td>
<td>3/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expat team members depart Bangladesh</td>
<td>3/17-3/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce draft report</td>
<td>3/20-4/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Draft Evaluation Report to USAID/Bangladesh</td>
<td>4/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID and partners review draft and provide comments</td>
<td>4/9-4/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review draft comments, edit, finalize report</td>
<td>4/21-5/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit Final Evaluation Report to USAID/Bangladesh</td>
<td>5/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X. Reporting Requirements

The total pages, excluding references and annexes, should not be more than 30 pages. The following content (and suggested length) should be included in the report:

Table of Contents

Acronyms

Executive Summary - concisely state the project purpose and background, key evaluation questions, methods, most salient findings and recommendations (2-3 pp.);

Introduction – country context, including a summary of any relevant history, demography, socio-economic status etc. (1 pp.);

The Development Problem and USAID’s Response - brief overview of the development problem and USAID’s strategic response, including design and implementation of the PHR program and any previous USAID activities implemented in response to the problem, (2-3 pp.);

Purpose of the Evaluation - purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 pp.);

Evaluation Methodology - describe evaluation methods, including strengths, constraints and gaps (1 pp.);

Findings and Conclusions - describe and analyze findings for each objective area using graphs, figures and tables, as applicable, and also include data quality and reporting system that should present verification of spot checks, issues, and outcomes (12-15 pp.);
Lessons Learned - provide a brief of key technical and/or administrative lessons on what has worked, not worked, and why for future project or relevant program designs (2-3 pp.);

Recommendations – prioritized and numbered for each key question; should be separate from conclusions and be supported by clearly defined set of findings and conclusions. Include recommendations for future project implementation or relevant program designs and synergies with other USAID projects and other donor interventions as appropriate (3-4 pp).

Annexes – to include statement of work, documents reviewed, bibliographical documentation, evaluation methods, data generated from the evaluation, tools used, interview lists, meetings, focus group discussions, surveys, and tables. Annexes should be succinct, pertinent and readable. Should also include if necessary, a statement of differences regarding significant unresolved difference of opinion by funders, implementers, or members of the evaluation team on any of the findings or recommendations.

The report format should be restricted to Microsoft products and 12-point type font should be used throughout the body of the report, with page margins one inch top/bottom and left/right.
## ANNEX B: EVALUATION DESIGN MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Question</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Data Collection Methods</th>
<th>Data Analysis Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EQ 1. To what extent has DPR been successful in achieving activity objectives? What were the unintended outcomes, if any?</td>
<td>- DPR and WYC staff, USAID, DPR&lt;br&gt;- DPR QRs and PMPs&lt;br&gt;- DPR surveys of YF participants.&lt;br&gt;- YF participants&lt;br&gt;- Party branch leaders&lt;br&gt;- DPR surveys of women participants&lt;br&gt;- Women participants</td>
<td>- Document review&lt;br&gt;- KII&lt;br&gt;- FGD&lt;br&gt;- Mini surveys</td>
<td>- Content Analysis – For identifying DPR program successes (or lack of successes)&lt;br&gt;- Contribution Analysis – For inferring causality between DPR’s activities and their contribution to documented results identified by the ET&lt;br&gt;- Trend Analysis – For assessing progress against program indicators&lt;br&gt;- Gap Analysis – For assessing anticipated DPR program performance and where, if at all, it fell short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ 2. To what extent were women and youth engaged effectively by DPR’s interventions in the targeted areas?</td>
<td>- PMP indicators&lt;br&gt;- QRs&lt;br&gt;- DPR staff, USAID, women and youth participants</td>
<td>- Document review&lt;br&gt;- KII&lt;br&gt;- FGD&lt;br&gt;- Mini surveys</td>
<td>- Content Analysis – To identify DPR program’s women- and youth engagement-centered successes (or lack of successes). To compare these results across the program’s supported political parties and geographic areas of focus&lt;br&gt;- Contribution Analysis – For inferring causality between DPR’s women- and youth-engagement-centered activities and their contribution to documented results identified by the ET&lt;br&gt;- Trend Analysis – For assessing progress against women- and youth-engagement-centered program indicators&lt;br&gt;- Gap Analysis – For assessing anticipated DPR program performance in women- and youth-engagement-focused activities, and where, if at all, they fell short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ 3. To what extent are the activity’s objectives still valid to the current development circumstances in Bangladesh?</td>
<td>- DG assessment&lt;br&gt;- Midterm evaluation&lt;br&gt;- Outside experts, DPR staff, DI staff, USAID, party leaders</td>
<td>- Document review&lt;br&gt;- KII</td>
<td>- Content Analysis – Will be used to compare original objectives against current needs; will also be used to compare these results across the program’s supported political parties and geographic areas of focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ 4. How much progress has DPR made in ensuring sustainability of activities beyond USAID support, if any? What measures should be taken to ensure sustainability?</td>
<td>- PMP indicators&lt;br&gt;- QRs&lt;br&gt;- DPR staff, USAID, party leaders, women, youth, outside experts</td>
<td>- Document review&lt;br&gt;- KII&lt;br&gt;- FGD&lt;br&gt;- Mini surveys</td>
<td>- Content Analysis – To identify program’s successes (or lack of successes) in sustainability; to compare these results across the program’s supported political parties and geographic areas of focus&lt;br&gt;- Gap Analysis – For assessing anticipated DPR program performance in its activities’ sustainability, and where, if at all, these efforts fell short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQ 5: To what extent do political party members and civil society actors perceive DPR as successful in achieving its objectives?</td>
<td>- PMP indicators&lt;br&gt;- QRs&lt;br&gt;- Party leaders, youth, women, DPR staff, civil society</td>
<td>- Document review&lt;br&gt;- KII&lt;br&gt;- FGD&lt;br&gt;- Mini surveys</td>
<td>- Content Analysis – To identify findings that provide evidence of perceptions of success by program beneficiaries. To compare these results across the program’s supported political parties and geographic areas of focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX C: DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

For the purposes of the DPR Evaluation, data obtained through interviews will be kept private and anonymous. Quantitative data results will be aggregated to demonstrate overall numbers—e.g., X% of FGD participants were women, were from the AL or BNP parties; Y% of participants had participated in the YFP at least two years ago, etc. The ET will use collected qualitative data to help identify and support evidence of program successes (or failures), and may use non-attributed—i.e., anonymous—quotes from its FGDs, KIIs and the mini-surveys as part of this process.

Political Party Leader

1. What has been your experience with the Democratic Participation and Reform Program, or DPR, which is implemented by Democracy International on behalf of USAID? (EQ5)
2. How many women are on your committee? (EQ2)
3. With regard to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) requirement for women participation on committees, do you have plans to increase to RPO requirement and have you implemented them? (EQ2)
4. Did your candidate selection process in 2014 include consideration of women? (EQ2)
5. What is your impression of DPR’s youth fellowship program for training young people from your party and helping them work with party committees? Have you sponsored any fellows or seen their work in your district? (EQ2)
6. What role do women and youth play in your party committee? Are they actively involved in discussions? Has this role changed in the last 5 years? (EQ2)
7. How does your party use research, surveys or data produced by DPR or anyone else? (EQ1)
8. From your perspective, is it important for political parties to include public opinion surveys, data and research into their operations and campaigns? (EQ1)
9. Did you participate in the District Party conferences sponsored by DPR? What was your role? How would you evaluate the success or importance of the conference? (EQ1)
10. How were candidates selected for recent local elections? Were the best candidates selected? (EQ2)
11. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation, will enhancing grassroots participation in Bangladeshi political parties, particularly among women and youth, have any effect on the parties? (EQ3)
12. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)
13. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)
14. DPR activity will end in April 2017. How does your party intend to continue training activities designed to expand leadership opportunities for youth and increase representation of women? (EQ4)
15. What steps has your party taken to conduct research and utilize it in decision-making?
16. How has internal reform been institutionalized in your party to improve coordination, communication and dialogue? (EQ4)
17. Are you satisfied with the level of coordination and dialogue between local and national leaders in your party? (EQ4)
18. Overall, what was your impression of DI? How frequently did you interact with DI staff? (EQ5)
Women Beneficiary

1. What has been your experience with the Democratic Participation and Reform Program, or DPR, which is implemented by Democracy International on behalf of USAID? (EQ2, 5)
2. Has your local party seen more women serving on party committees in recent years? If so, to what extent have DPR activities contributed to this? (EQ2)
3. As you know as per the Political Party Registration rules 2008 of the Election Commission, all political parties have to include 33 percent women in all executive committee positions by 2020. The parties also need to show that they are steadily accommodating more women in the committees since 2008. Do you think DPR from 2011 to 2017 has contributed in achieving the target in your local party? (EQ2)
4. DPR conducted a number of activities to promote women running for and winning public office. Did these activities contribute to more women becoming candidates and winning office? (EQ2)
5. How would your engagement in politics be different today if you had not been participated in DPR activities? (EQ2)
6. What obstacles still exist to increasing the participation of women in politics and as candidates in the elections? What more could be done? (EQ3)
7. How effective was the support from DPR after your first activity? Was help there when you needed it? (EQ1)
8. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation, will enhancing women’s participation in Bangladeshi political parties have any effect on the parties? (EQ3)
9. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)
10. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)
11. DPR activity will end in April 2017. How does your party intend to continue training activities designed to increase representation of women? (EQ4)
12. How has internal reform been institutionalized in your party to improve coordination, communication and dialog, particularly with women? (EQ4)
13. Overall, what was your impression of DI? (EQ5)
14. How frequently and/or actively did you interact with DI/DPR/WYC staff? (EQ5)

Youth

1. What has been your experience with the Democratic Participation and Reform Program, or DPR, which is implemented by Democracy International on behalf of USAID? (EQ2, 5)
2. How have DPR activities changed your party’s level of engagement of youth in the past 5 years? (EQ2)
3. Can you find any change in recent years in approach among the senior leaders regarding paving the way for the young generation, such as including youths in important posts and committees, and nominating youths as candidates in local or national elections. (EQ2)
4. How would your engagement in politics be different today if you had not been participated in DPR activities? (EQ2)
5. What obstacles still exist to increasing the participation of youth in politics and as candidates in the elections? What more could be done? (EQ3)
6. Is there any increase in involving youths in important party activities instead of using them mostly in street-centric activities since DPR project has been initiated? (EQ2)
7. How effective was the support from DPR after your first activity? Was help there when you needed it? (EQ1)

8. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation, will enhancing youth participation in Bangladeshi political parties have any effect on the parties? (EQ3)

9. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)

10. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)

11. DPR activity will end in April 2017. How does your party intend to continue training activities designed to increase youth leadership opportunities? (EQ4)

12. How has internal reform been institutionalized in your party to improve coordination, communication and dialog, particularly with youth? (EQ4)

13. Overall, what was your impression of DI? (EQ5)

14. How frequently and/or actively did you interact with DI/DPR/WYC staff? (EQ5)

USAID

1. Which activities of DPR do you consider particularly successful? Which were not successful? Why or why not? (EQ1)

2. Were there any unintended outcomes from the program? (EQ1)

3. What lessons were learned in the implementation of the DPR Program, if any? (EQ1)

4. Were women better represented in parties as a result of DPR programs? (EQ2)

5. Were there more women candidates in elections, and were they more successful, as a result of DPR? (EQ2)

6. Did the youth training program increase participant skills and capacity? (EQ2)

7. Were youth more active in party management and decision-making? (EQ2)

8. What was the impact of research and surveys on the supported parties? (EQ1)

9. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation today, will enhancing grassroots participation in Bangladeshi political parties, particularly among women and youth, have any effect on the parties? (EQ3)

10. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)

11. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)

12. DPR activity will end in April 2017. How do parties intend to continue training activities designed to expand leadership opportunities for youth and increase representation of women? (EQ4)

13. What steps have parties themselves taken to conduct research and utilize it in decision-making? (EQ4)

14. How has internal reform been institutionalized in the main parties to improve coordination, communication and dialog? (EQ4)

15. How have DPR activities changed the parties’ level of engagement of women and youth? (EQ1)

DI

1. Toward which objectives did DPR make the greatest progress? Why? (EQ1)
2. Toward which objectives did DPR make the least progress? Why? (EQ1)
3. Which of DPR’s activities related to research, data and surveys do you consider particularly successful? Which were not successful? (EQ1)
4. To what do you attribute that success/failure? What lessons can be learned? (EQ1)
5. How did DPR support the party conferences? How did parties change as a result? (EQ1)
6. Were party conferences successful? To what do you attribute that success/failure? What lessons can be learned? (EQ1)
7. Did the youth training program increase participant skills and capacity? Were youth more active in party management and decision-making? (EQ2)
8. Were women better represented in parties as a result of DPR programs? Were there more women candidates in elections and more elected as a result of DPR? (EQ2)
9. Did DPR coordinate these activities with other donors/implementers? How effectively? (EQ1)
10. What were the toughest challenges in implementing DPR at both the local and national level? How did you tackle the challenges? (EQ1)
11. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation, will future work to enhance women and youth participation in Bangladeshi political parties have any effect? (EQ3)
12. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved in the future, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)
13. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)
14. How do parties intend to continue training activities designed to expand leadership opportunities for youth and increase representation of women after DPR ends? (EQ4)
15. What steps have parties themselves taken to conduct research and utilize it in decision-making? (EQ4)
16. How has internal reform been institutionalized in the main parties to improve coordination, communication and dialog? (EQ4)
17. What examples can you provide of political party members and civil society actors demonstrating that they view the DPR Program as successful? (EQ5)

Outside experts/Other Donors

1. Have leadership opportunities for youth in Bangladeshi political parties expanded over the past five years? Why? (EQ2)
2. Has representation of women in political parties increased in the past five years? Why? (EQ2)
3. Have political parties strengthened their capacity to conduct and utilize research over the past five years? How and why? (EQ1)
4. Have political parties developed their own research tools, such as the ability to conduct polling and research and to incorporate research findings into policy and communication strategies? How and why? (EQ1)
5. Have political parties undertaken internal reform initiatives to improve internal coordination, communication and dialog? (EQ1)
6. Has the level of coordination and dialogue between local and national parties and their leaders changed in the last five years? How and why? (EQ1)
7. What do you view as the obstacle(s) to ensuring democratic participation in Bangladesh? How could a future political processes program be designed to overcome these obstacles? (EQ3)
8. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological division amongst the parties, democratic deficit at state and party level, absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of this situation, will future work to enhance women and youth participation in Bangladeshi political parties have any effect? (EQ3)

9. If parties’ access to information about public opinion is improved in the future, will the parties utilize this research to develop party platforms, or will party leaders alone decide the direction? (EQ3)

10. Will political parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog, or do party leaders prefer a top-down approach to party activities? (EQ3)

11. How do parties intend to continue training activities designed to expand leadership opportunities for youth and increase representation of women after DPR ends? (EQ4)

12. What steps have parties themselves taken to conduct research and utilize it in decision-making? (EQ4)

13. How has internal reform been institutionalized in the main parties to improve coordination, communication and dialog? (EQ4)

14. What are the reasons behind the reluctance of party bosses in general to implement such reforms? (EQ3)

15. Taking into consideration recent political developments and possibility of national election in 2019, please discuss the chances of increasing the number of women and youths in senior positions in the parties. (EQ4)
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOLS

Instructions for Moderator

I. Introduction:

The moderator should first introduce herself or himself, then welcome and thank all of the focus group discussion (FGD) participants for being there. The moderator should then explain the purpose of the FGD, how participants were selected, any potential benefits or risks to participating in the FGD, and how long it will take.

II. Ground Rules:

While the ground rules will vary depending on the FGD, they will generally include the following:

- Everyone is encouraged to share their ideas, and the FGD is stronger if everyone participates.
- There are no wrong answers, and everyone’s perspective is equally valued.
- The ideas shared during the FGD should not be shared outside the FGD with non-participants in order to respect participants’ privacy.
- Disagreements about ideas can be valuable and productive, but personal attacks will not be tolerated.

After establishing these ground rules, the moderator should ask if there are any questions or concerns participants have, and these issues should be addressed and consensus reached as a group before moving on.

III. Confidentiality:

The moderator should clearly describe how the data collected will be used, including with whom it will be shared, and crucially, whether names or other personal or identifying information will be included with the data. The moderator must be honest about how the data will be used, but should also reassure the participants that the data will be treated sensitively and that their privacy will be respected to the greatest degree possible given the needs and purposes of the evaluation.

For the purposes of the DPR Evaluation, data obtained through FGDs will be kept private and anonymous. Quantitative data results will be aggregated to demonstrate overall numbers – e.g., X% of FGD participants were women, were from the AL or BNP parties; Y% of participants had participated in the Youth Fellowship Program at least two years ago, etc. The ET will use collected qualitative data to help identify and support evidence of program successes (or failures), and may use non-attributed – i.e., anonymous – quotes from its FGDs, KIIs and the mini-surveys as part of this process.

After providing this information, and to ensure the data collected are reliable, the moderator will explain that participation in the FGD is entirely voluntary and that there is no consequences for declining to participate. After informing participants of this information, the moderator should ask each member to confirm that they consent to participate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQ Category</th>
<th>FGD Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Women & Youth Engagement (EQ2)** | 1. What has been your experience with the Democratic Participation and Reform Program, or DPR, which is implemented by Democracy International on behalf of USAID? In which activities did you participate? How frequently did you interact with DI/DPR/WYC staff?  
2. How effective was the support from DPR after your first activity? Was help there when you needed it? |
| **Effectiveness (EQ1)** | 3. What are the top one or two skills you learned as a result of the DPR training? What have you been able to do within your party as a result?  
4. How would your engagement in politics be different today if you had not participated in DPR activities?  
5. Overall, are you finding that more women are serving on your party’s committees in meaningful ways in recent years? If so, to what extent do you think DPR contributed to this?  
6. DPR conducted a number of activities to promote women running for and winning public office. Did you benefit from these activities yourselves? Do you think these activities contribute to more women becoming candidates and winning office? |
| **Relevance (EQ3)** | 7. What obstacles still exist to increasing the participation of women in politics and as candidates in the elections?  
8. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological divisions amongst the parties, democratic deficits at state and party level, the absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of these factors, will enhancing women’s participation in Bangladeshi political parties be able to affect the role of the parties? If so, how?  
9. Do you believe parties’ access to and appreciation for public opinion research and research tools has improved? If so, how will the parties be able to utilize this research, if at all (or will party leaders alone decide the direction)?  
10. Do the parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog? If so, what kinds of reforms will be permitted by parties at the grassroots level (versus party leaders’ top-down approach to decision-making)? |
| **Sustainability (EQ4)** | 11. DPR activity will end in April 2017. Will your party continue training activities designed to increase representation of women? Which activities?  
12. If your party has made any of the reforms we discussed earlier (e.g., greater participation of women and youth, improved access to and appreciation for public opinion research and research tools, improved internal coordination and communication) do you believe these reforms will be sustainable? If so, how? |
| **Client Satisfaction (EQ5)** | 13. Do you think DPR activities were successful in helping to enhance grassroots political participation by women and youth, improve information access & utilization, and improve the environment for responsive politics? Which activities were effective? Which were not? |
### Youth Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQ Category</th>
<th>FGD Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Women & Youth Engagement (EQ2)** | 1. What has been your experience with the Democratic Participation and Reform Program, or DPR, which is implemented by Democracy International on behalf of USAID? In which activities did you participate? How frequently did you interact with DI/DPR/Fellowship staff?  
   2. How effective was the support from DPR after your first activity? Was help there when you needed it? |
| **Effectiveness (EQ1)**           | 3. What are the top one or two skills you learned as a result of the Youth Fellowship Program or other DPR training? What have you been able to do within your party as a result?  
   4. How would your engagement in politics be different today if you had not participated in DPR activities?  
   5. Have you seen any changes amongst your party’s senior leaders in how they work with the younger generation, such as including youth in important positions and committees, and nominating youth as candidates in local or national elections? Have you benefited from these activities yourselves? |
| **Relevance (EQ3)**               | 6. What obstacles still exist to increasing the participation of youth in politics and as candidates in the elections?  
   7. Observers of politics in Bangladesh have noted sharp ideological divisions amongst the parties, democratic deficits at state and party level, the absence of good governance and extensive use of money. In light of these factors, will enhancing youth participation in Bangladeshi political parties be able to affect the role of the parties? If so, how?  
   8. Do you believe parties’ access to and appreciation for public opinion research and research tools has improved? If so, how will the parties be able to utilize this research, if at all (or will party leaders alone decide the direction)?  
   9. Do the parties support internal reform initiatives that improve internal coordination, communication and dialog? If so, what kinds of reforms will be permitted by parties at the grassroots level (versus party leaders’ top-down approach to decision-making)? |
| **Sustainability (EQ4)**          | 10. DPR activity will end in April 2017. Will your party continue activities designed to increase youth participation in Bangladesh’s political parties and the political process? Which activities?  
   11. If your party has made any of the reforms we discussed earlier (e.g., greater political participation of women and youth, improved access to and appreciation for public opinion research and research tools, improved internal coordination and communication) do you believe these reforms will be sustainable? If so, how? |
| Client Satisfaction (EQ5) | 12. Do you think DPR activities were successful in helping to enhance grassroots political participation by women and youth, improve information access and utilization, and improve the environment for responsive politics in Bangladesh? Which activities were effective? Which were not? |
**SURVEY PROTOCOL**

Youth

**Part 1: Survey Respondent Information**

Date: 
Gender: 
Political Party: 
District: 
Division: 

How many years ago did you participate in the Youth Fellowship Program?

**Part 2: Scale Questions**

*Instructions for Survey Respondent:* Please choose a number on a scale of 1-5 that corresponds with how you feel about the following statements (*1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree*). You are welcome to elaborate on your response after choosing the number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My party has expanded leadership opportunities for youth over the past five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My party has increased the number of youth candidates over the past five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My party has increased the involvement of youth in important party activities in the past five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My fellowship has enabled me to have a stronger role in my party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. DPR staff support remained strong from the beginning to the end of my fellowship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. In Bangladesh’s current political environment, the skills I learned during my fellowship are still relevant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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*Use the space below to record any comments by survey respondents regarding their responses to questions 1-6*
Part 3: Yes/No Questions

7. Have you advanced in your party as a result of DPR training?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know

8. Has your party made internal reform to improve coordination, communication and dialog with youth?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know

9. Has your party made greater use of research tools in the last five years?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know

10. Will your party provide training to increase youth leadership opportunities after DPR ends in April 2017?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know

Use the space below to record any comments by survey respondents regarding their responses to questions 7-10
Women

**Part 1: Survey Respondent Information**

Date: 
Gender: Female
Political Party: 
District: 
Division: 
How many years ago did you participate in DPR activities?

**Part 2: Scale Questions**

*Instructions for Survey Respondent:* Please choose a number on a scale of 1-5 that corresponds with how you feel about the following statements (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). You are welcome to elaborate on your response after choosing the number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<td>1. My party has expanded leadership opportunities for women over the past five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2. My party has increased the number of women candidates over the past five years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3. My party has increased the involvement of women in important party activities in the past five years</td>
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<td>4. My participation in DPR activities have enabled me to have a stronger role in my party</td>
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<td>5. DPR staff support remained strong from the beginning to the end of my participation</td>
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<td>6. In Bangladesh’s current political environment, the skills I learned from DPR are still relevant</td>
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</table>

*Use the space below to record any comments by survey respondents regarding their responses to questions 1-6*
Part 3: Yes/No Questions

7. Have you advanced in your party as a result of DPR training?
   d. Yes
   e. No
   f. Don’t know

8. Has your party made internal reform to improve coordination, communication and dialog with women?
   d. Yes
   e. No
   f. Don’t know

9. Has your party made greater use of research tools in the last five years?
   d. Yes
   e. No
   f. Don’t know

10. Will your party provide training to increase women’s leadership opportunities after DPR ends in April 2017?
    d. Yes
    e. No
    f. Don’t know

Use the space below to record any comments by survey respondents regarding their responses to questions 7-10
ANNEX D: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Donor Documents:


DPR Project Documents:

15. USAID/Bangladesh. *Quarterly Report - Program Startup – Q4 2011: Democratic Participation and*
DPR Surveys, Assessments and Research:

43. Democracy International, Inc. USAID, and UKAid. “TK” Survey of Bangladesh RMG Workers, April
Summary of Findings. 2014, PowerPoint

46. Polling Agent Training_1.VOB (n.d.). [Video].
47. Polling Agent Training_2.VOB (n.d.). [Video].

Secondary Research:

## ANNEX E: PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Note: FGD respondents’ names have been omitted.

### DHAKA DIVISION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Silja Paasilinna</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chief of Party</td>
<td>International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monzur Elahe Suman</td>
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<td>Program Manager</td>
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<td>Golam Mustafa</td>
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<td>Sara L. Taylor</td>
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<td>Md. Abdul Alim, PhD</td>
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<td>U.S. Embassy/Dhaka</td>
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<td>David Gray</td>
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<td>Adrian Jones</td>
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<td>Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed</td>
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<td>Numan Ahmed Khan</td>
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<td>Institute for Environment and Development (IED)</td>
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<td>Shahnaz Sumi</td>
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<td>Julfikar Ali Manik</td>
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<td>Harun Ur Rashid</td>
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<td>Dr. Naseem Akhter Hussain</td>
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<td>Katie Croake</td>
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**CHITTAGONG DIVISION**

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<tr>
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**SYLHET DIVISION**

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**KHULNA DIVISION**

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<td>Dilruba Khanum</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.M. Nazim Mahmud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shahrier Nazim</td>
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<td>Tania Rahman</td>
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<td>Imran Shanewaz</td>
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<td>Firoza Bulbul Koli</td>
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<td>Bulu Roy Ganguly</td>
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**BARISAL DIVISION**

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<td>Manaj Provakar</td>
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**MYMENSINGH DIVISION**

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<td>Maksud Bin Jalal Plabon</td>
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<td>Monzurul Karim</td>
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<td>Mahfujur Rahman Talukdar</td>
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<td>Latifa Showkat</td>
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<td>Mohila Awami League (AL)</td>
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ANNEX F: MAP OF EVALUATION SITES

Locations visited by the evaluation team are indicated with a blue circle. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were conducted in these locations.¹⁰

¹⁰ Map from http://www.mapofworld.com/bangladesh/bangladesh-political-map.html
ANNEX G: DISCLOSURE OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>John Lis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Team Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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<td>Evaluation Position?</td>
<td>☑ Team Leader ☐ Team member</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Contract No. AID-486-I-14-00001; Order No. AID-388-TO-17-00001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID Project(s) Evaluated (Include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable)</td>
<td>Democratic Participation and Reform (DPR) Program, Democracy International</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose. ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:

I have worked as a consultant for APO and IRI, which may be seen as industry competitors with DI.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

| Signature | [Signature] |
| Date      | 2-29-17 |
Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Adam Reisman</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Sr. DRG Analyst</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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| I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose. | □ Yes ■ No |

If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:

1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant through indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
3. Current or previous direct or significant through indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including membership in the project design or previous iterations of the project.
4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an (overtly or covertly) competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

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Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Dr.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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| USAID Project(s) Evaluated (include project name(s), implementer name(s) and award number(s), if applicable) | (1) November 2014 – January 2016, Mission of Interest: Expert for USAID's Bangladesh's Advisors Development Program (BDP6) Program Performance Evaluation conducted by Social Impact, Washington D.C.  
| I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose. | ☐ Yes ☑ No |

If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:

Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:
1. A close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant though indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
3. Current or previous direct or significant though indirect experience with the project(s) being evaluated, including involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.
4. Current or previous work experience or seeking employment with the USAID operating unit managing the evaluation or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular project(s) and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature

Date 08/02/2017
Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nasir Uddin</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have real or potential conflicts of interest to disclose.</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No</td>
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If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:
- Real or potential conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:
  1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
  2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant through indirect, or the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
  3. Current or previous direct or significant through indirect involvement in the project design or previous iterations of the project.
  4. Current or previous employment with the USAID or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
  5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry (collaborating with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
  6. Preconceived ideas toward individuals, groups, organizations, or objectives of the particular projects and organizations being evaluated that could bias the evaluation.

I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature: [Signature]

Date: February 08, 2017
Disclosure of Conflict of Interest for USAID Evaluation Team Members

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Md Pervaz</th>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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If yes answered above, I disclose the following facts:

1. Close family member who is an employee of the USAID operating unit managing the project(s) being evaluated or the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
2. Financial interest that is direct, or is significant through indirect, in the implementing organization(s) whose projects are being evaluated or in the outcome of the evaluation.
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5. Current or previous work experience with an organization that may be seen as an industry competitor with the implementing organization(s) whose project(s) are being evaluated.
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I certify (1) that I have completed this disclosure form fully and to the best of my ability and (2) that I will update this disclosure form promptly if relevant circumstances change. If I gain access to proprietary information of other companies, then I agree to protect their information from unauthorized use or disclosure for as long as it remains proprietary and refrain from using the information for any purpose other than that for which it was furnished.

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 8/1/2017