

People's Republic of Bangladesh

Climate Adaptation and Livelihood Production (CALIP)

CALIP Mid-term Review Report Sub-Components 2, 4 and 5

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1. INTRODUCTION

1. The **Hoar Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP)** is supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with a loan of US\$ 55 million and a grant of US\$ 1 million and by the Government of Spain through the Spanish Trust Fund with a grant of US\$ 29.7 million. The project further receives funding of US\$ 15 million from the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) for activities targeted at climate change adaptation and piloting of innovative development approaches, under the supplementary project **Climate Adaptation and Livelihood Improvement Project (CALIP)**. HILIP/CALIP is implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and has been effective since July 2012. The project completion date is 30 September 2020.

2. HILIP operates in the Haor Basin. Large parts of the districts are within a deep floodplain, which remain under water for six months during the year due to heavy monsoon rains. This situation forces people to live under cramped conditions on a few elevated spots. Cropping intensity is low, infrastructure restricted, and the lack of employment opportunities leads to emigration. HILIP aims to contribute to the reduction of poverty in the Haor Basin and to improve living standards and reduce vulnerability of the poor by scaling up successfully tested interventions in the Sunamganj Community-Based Resource Management Project (SCBRMP). The main outcomes expected from the project include (i) enhanced access to markets, livelihood opportunities and social services (ii) enhanced village mobility, reduction in production losses and protection against extreme weather events (iii) enhanced access to fishery resources and conservation of biodiversity (iv) enhanced production, diversification and marketing of crop and livestock produce and (v) efficient, cost effective and equitable use of project resources.

3. The project has five components; (i) Communications infrastructure: under this component the project will build about 250 km of Upazila and union roads including submersible roads. The component will also build bridges and culverts, and 50 boat landing stages (ii) Community infrastructure: under which the Project will build 350 km of community (village) roads, 78 small village markets (hat bazaars), protection works against wave erosion for about 78 villages and 52 markets, (iii) Community resource management component under which the Project will provide support for 300 existing SCBRMP Beel User Groups (BUG) and 200 new water bodies under community management. The project will strengthen the institutional arrangements for Beel management and invest resources in developing water bodies to improve their productivity and biodiversity through Beels re-excavation (iv) Livelihood Protection Component under which the Project will assist with helping to protect existing sources of livelihood such as crop cultivation particularly rice, horticulture and livestock such as large and small ruminants, ducks, poultry, etc. by adopting a value chain approach and (v) Project Management Component will put in place the management structures to implement, coordinate and monitor all project activities.

4. The **Climate Adaptation and Livelihood Protection Project (CALIP)** is effective since September 2014 and is integrated into the HILIP implementation modalities and project management unit. CALIP activities are embedded in the HILIP components 2 and 4 and introduced an additional 5th component on knowledge management: i) C.2 Community infrastructure (USD8.6 million). CALIP supports the development and protection of community infrastructure through village slope protection, landscape level reforestation, common village amenities, model village construction, promotion of vegetative species and killas (platforms) for temporary paddy storage above flood water. ii) C.4 Livelihood protection (USD4.3 million). CALIP introduces new technologies and its linkages with markets; provides hands-on training and practical exposure; and pursues an inter-linked approach where village and road protection provide the demand for lucrative business opportunities; and iii) C.5 Capacity and Knowledge for Building Resilience (USD1.7 million). CALIP supports the generation of new knowledge and its management, capacity building of communities and institutions, installation of a weather and flash flood forecasting system to reduce crop loss, and advancing climate sensitive pro-poor policy dialogue through collaboration with local research institutions,

monitoring and documentation of impact and convening policy dialogue forums. The CALIP activities are financed with a USD15 million grant of the Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP).

5. The last supervision mission in December 2016 and implementation support in January 2017 confirmed that HILIP-CALIP is on track to achieve its targets. However, implementation delays were observed and some areas in particular to project management, fiduciary aspects and balance of implementation operation needed to be improved. As per loan and grant agreements, IFAD undertook the supervision mission for HILIP and a Mid-term Review (MTR) for CALIP on 06-19 May 2017.

2. HYDRO-GEOPHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXTS OF HAOR REGION

6. Haor is a region consisting of natural depressions, criss-crossed by an intricate river system. Haors also consist of a large number of perennial water bodies, called beels. These beels are breeding grounds for freshwater fish. The entire region is located just southern reach of Meghalaya Hills in Meghalaya State of India, which is why its hydrological cycle is overwhelmingly dependent on rainfall runoff occurring in Meghalaya Hills. The rivers emanated from Meghalaya Hills and adjacent hilly areas of Assam carry large volumes of water during the monsoon. In fact, the catchments of the Meghalaya Hills are the wettest parts on earth, receiving the highest amounts of rainfall on a given year (in the order of 11,000 mm per annum). Most of this water eventually passes through the Haor wetlands. On an average year, Haors are naturally inundated for about 6 to 7 months (Mid-May till mid-November). During monsoon, life in Haors become somewhat stagnant, while during the dry season (post-monsoon and summer), people are engaged in various activities.

7. Due to vast water bodies, the population density in Haor region is among the lowest in the country. People live in villages, which are located disjointed in earthen mounds. In earlier days, people just had freshwater fish, with a little bit of rice being grown in the upper reaches of the haor (called kanda). However, people could not plant modern high yielding varieties of paddy because of the fact that early runoff from Meghalaya Hills used to wash off all standing paddy before harvesting.

8. During the 1990s, there has been institutional support within the haor region which witnessed the creation of embankments along the rivulets, designed to hold water up to the first week of May for enabling the farmers to complete the Boro harvesting. Moreover, the Agricultural scientists have come up with a few paddy varieties which were not only high yielding, also could be harvested much earlier than the threshold dates (generally, the 9th of May is the design date for latest harvesting of most of the high yielding paddy). Such facilitation enabled the farmers not only to meet their already growing demand for granular cereals – the staple for the country, it also helped the farmers to use the wetlands as paddy fields and gain financially from surplus production of paddy.

9. However, the erratic nature sometimes cause outburst of convective clouds (non-monsoon) even in late March, which triggers sudden flash flood in Haor areas and devastates standing crops. The early occurrence of flash flood and subsequent crop loss in Haors is deemed as the single most reason for the inhabitants to experience perpetual poverty. In Bangladeshi standards, Haor represents the second highest incidence of poverty in the country.

10. Since paddy cultivation has become investment intensive in recent years, farmers leave no chance for a potential crop failure. They irrigate their lands; apply chemical fertilizers and pesticides/herbicides – often in larger quantities than the recommended doses. When the water volume becomes smaller during the dry season, such pollutants, often harmful to aquatic species including freshwater fish, becomes concentrated in remaining water. This is how fish larvae are exposed to harmful chemicals, which is attributed to the gradual decline in overall catch of freshwater fish in the Haor region. Moreover, the release of exotic harmful fish species has also been considered as a potential threat to Haor fisheries.

11. The Kandas of Haor region have been rich in terms of reed and bamboo species. Even 5 decades ago, there has been a healthy productive reed forest along the Kandas. Now a days, reeds have largely been denuded, while the remaining bamboo homestead forests are struggling.

12. Since the poor in the haor gain from paddy cultivation while the rich gain from proceeds of fish harvests (where a few poor find seasonal employment as fishing labours), the economy of the poor is heavily dependent on occurrence of flash floods. Moreover, there is hardly any diversification of employment, while the local level demand for labour is next to nothing – owing to not having any industrial activity.

13. The CALIP project, through the grant of US\$15 million, is aimed at reducing people's vulnerability by investing in resilient (i.e., protective) infrastructure, by creating opportunities in diversified livelihoods by imparting training, and through the dissemination of knowledge products following a few action research. The following are the findings of the Mid-Term Review of CALIP project.

3. OVERALL PROGRESS OF CALIP

14. The project CALIP became effective in September 2014 and was integrated into the ongoing Haor Infrastructure and Livelihood Improvement Project (HILIP) under the same project management unit (PMU). The project passed two and half years and has been able to demonstrate few successful models, generate positive impacts (early signs) and capture key learnings for further improvement under various components. Though the evidences were collected on an anecdotal basis during the MTR, such anecdotal evidences provide for sufficient insights to learn and identify good practices and therefore, adopt for scaling-up.

15. Overall, CALIP is severely underperforming. In comparison with the performance of HILIP, the up to date progress of CALIP has been rather slow. The financial progress of CALIP in AWPB 2016-17 is 24% against a cumulative progress of 5% only. On the other hand, the physical progress until March of AWPB 2016-17 is 36% against cumulative progress of 19%. The current year progress is higher compared to cumulative progress; however, both are actually very low. Despite slow progress of implementation of CALIP, it is heartening to find that, in the current fiscal year the progress is higher compared to cumulative progress for CALIP in spite of the early occurring severe flash flood (in 2017).

16. There has been appreciable progress in the implementation of Component-2. The annual achievement for Component-2 has been 62% against a cumulative progress of 47%. In component-4, again, due to late implementation of capacity building related activities involving village forestry, pond fisheries, advanced skill training and vocational training, CALIP recorded 24% against a cumulative progress of about only 5%.

17. In AWPB 2016-17, the project improvised its implementation strategy to some extent based on last supervision mission's recommendations and made attempts to reflect those into their actions. Consequently, they improved current year's progress for Village Forestry and Advanced Improved Training. In case of Pond Fishery, as per the agreed action in the last supervision mission, the project could not subcontract the training activities to World Fish Centre as of yet which resulted into very slow progress of this subcomponent. On the other hand, the progress in Vocational Training remained sluggish since last year due to non-recruitment of private service providers in parallel to public sector providers.

18. The worst performing Component being the Component-5 that deals with knowledge generation and management for building resilience against climate change related vulnerabilities. None of the studies (i.e., action research) have been commissioned, which has severely affected the policy integration potential of those critically important knowledge products. Moreover, the Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (FFEWS) has not been established yet, primarily to

very slow procurement of computers. Although the background activities involving FFEWS are continuing, due to inability to spend the line allocation for computers, the economic progress for the Component-5 appears to be frustrating.

4. PROGRESS REGARDING COMPONENT-2

19. The Component-2 of CALIP deals with Community Infrastructure, which aims to build the following community infrastructure services.

- Village Protection Against Wave Action
- Common Village (Internal) Infrastructure
- Construction of Model Villages
- Soil Sequestration and Slope Stabilization
- Slope Protection of All-weather Upazila/Union Road

4.1 Village Protection Infrastructure

20. Village protection walls create adaptive capacity of target villages by reducing the sensitivity of the village (i.e., haati) to high wave action (i.e., afal), the latter often occurring during peak monsoon. These waves erode villages sitting on high earthen mounds, devastating dwelling units in affected haatis, washing away productive resources including trees, homestead gardens and livestock (including poultry) – thereby triggering the pauperization process. Often homeless people are forced to displace themselves. The latter also increases social vulnerabilities. This is why village protection has been given high priority in the project.

21. The highly demanding sub-component has been progressing, however the cumulative achievement until March 2017 is about 39%. The early flood of 2016 and 2017, particularly the unusually early occurring 2017 flood have significantly reduced the 'effective time' for completing physical works, which in turn might have resulted in relatively slow progress of this sub-component.

22. In the beneficiary villages, it is often found that the inhabitants do not fill-in earth in the newly created shoulders, thereby risking the sustainability of the newly created infrastructures. The villagers often complain that, they cannot find adequate amount of earth to fill in the 'shoulder' in front of their dwellings. The poor villagers often do not have a land of their own or in most cases the land they own are located far away from the village. Therefore, it requires significant physical labour and efforts to manually excavate earth, carry to the respective villages and place it to fill in the shoulders. Although the villagers have pledged to do so, due to lack of capacity, they do not perform the duty and leave a gap between the protection wall and the courtyard. Since such verbal pledges are not working and the investments are at risk, it is recommended that the project would pursue a legal arrangement with the beneficiary villages before committing to the investment in village protection. Otherwise the sustainability of structures will be at high risk.

23. It is found that, the crest height of the protection structure has been correlated with maximum observed water level, without adding an extra allowance to cover climate change related potential rise in water level. This may be attributed to lack of clear awareness and knowledge among the project staff regarding climate change.

24. A study on climate change impacts and adaptation potential was supposed to be commissioned by the PMU. Due to delays in procurement of institution to conduct such a study, the outcomes could not be obtained and subsequently utilized to alter design criteria for the village protection infrastructures (The issues of studies are dealt with under section-6). In absence of the results of such studies, one has to rely on guestimates and accordingly, change design criteria for the said infrastructures. However, for such guestimation, climate-aware decision making is a must. It is recommended that, the project takes greater efforts towards organizing a day-long orientation session involving project staff regarding implications of climate change with particular reference to project

activities and outcomes. It is also recommended that the PMU organizes such an orientation session by September 2017, prior to any physical work possible during the dry season in 2017-2018.

25. The timing of construction work has been such that vetiver based bio-nailing of protection walls is generally done just before the annual rise in water levels and accompanying high waves, which is why there appears to be a high rate of mortality of vetiver. It is recommended that, efforts should be made to complete the physical works by the end of February, as much as possible, so that the subsequent plantation of vetiver in the holes within the structure leaves adequate time for the vetiver to establish itself before the waves destroy it.

4.2 Common Village (Internal) Infrastructure

26. The villages within the Haor region have been deprived of internal services such as pucca walkways, proper sanitary toilets, hygienically set up water collection points, street lights, etc. Therefore, there is a high demand for such services among Haor dwellers. Till March 2017, 89% of the targeted villages have been provided with common village internal infrastructure (as against a cumulative progress of about 53%), although the extent of provisioning for such services is found to be rather inadequate. Efforts have been made to cover as many villages as possible, however that yielded a thin spread of service provisioning. Efforts should have been made to analyze the minimum demand for each target village and plan around it before service provisioning. Moreover, the villages with wave protection infrastructure did not often receive support for internal services. It is recommended that, the two sub-components are combined so that the synergy is established in order to make a target village both resilient and livable at the same time. Furthermore, efforts should be made to allocate funds under this sub-component in a bid to provide solar based street lights in community spaces/centres and community resource centres (religious centres), and pilot biogas digesters where high demonstration effect for such technologies is perceived.

4.3 Construction of Model Villages

27. Two model villages (MV) were supposed to be completed by FY2016-17, none could be completed by May 2017. Detailed plans for the two model villages have been prepared, where emphasis has been placed on internal services. While the importance of livability and well-being is duly acknowledged, the efforts also need to be synergized with village protection works. The PMU claims that it has identified at least two sites for the construction of MVs, one in Mithapoin Upazila of Kishoreganj district and the other in Nasirnagar Upazila of BrahmanBaria district¹. The physical works need to be expedited in the pre-selected sites.

28. In Haor areas, most of the khas beels are already leased out as fishing grounds. Therefore, availability of beels, suitable for transforming them into elevated earthen mounds and subsequently into MVs, has been quite challenging. It is recommended that the PMU would engage with district administrations in respective districts and try to identify suitable khas beels.

29. Since the earthen mound will have to be created by excavating a beel, the beel must be in close proximity to the MV site. Otherwise, the cost of transport of excavated earth by the use of manual labour will be too high, perhaps beyond the estimated cost for the creation of MVs.

30. Further, there are social and economic considerations which need to be considered before identification of sites for potential MVs. If the potential MV is too far away from immediate services (say, connectivity with a submergible embankment, distance from bazars/mosques/schools, etc.), then the newly constructed MV might not be able to attract people to stay there despite investments. It is expected that the PMU will take utmost care in selecting the sites so that the investment will fulfill all the requirements of local poor people and also create room for landless people to resettle there.

¹ The MTR Team visited the site.

31. Identification of sites cannot be started before the beels within the Haors are adequately drained off and 'dry'. This specific hydrological realities generally occur within a specific time period, leaving only a little time window to work on. Subject to availability of khas lands that are 'not already leased out' and with official permission from district administration, the remaining three sites will be identified. Given the realities prevailing in Haor, the earliest completion time can be December 2017. Then the Labour Contracting Society (LCS) will have to be organized, given training and work order to complete the earthen works. If all these are done by April, 2018, there would be a very small time window to accomplish slope protection works of the newly constructed model village site/haati. For these two new sites, even if such progresses are made during November 2017 and April 2018, the other physical works cannot be accomplished before May 2019. However, with the existing two MVs, physical works can be completed by May 2018.

32. Initially it was thought that the earth recovered through excavation of beels might be useful in creating new earthen mounds for the construction of model villages. However, the very short time frame available for beel excavation (only possible when the water level inside the beel is at its lowest in any hydrological year) by means of manual labour leaves little practical opportunity to complete the physical work before the water level rises again on the bed of the target beels. This is why the construction of model village has been rather slow. Moreover, the abundance of humic/organic substances on the bed of a target beel does not allow quality physical works, where compaction of earth becomes problematic, leaving ample opportunity for the newly created earthen mounds to be eroded by waves and water flow. Since such earthen mounds are supposed to be created by the use of Labour Contracting Societies (LCS), the latter having no experience in the use of mechanized excavators, it appears very difficult to complete the job between December-March.

33. It is therefore recommended that, if the LCS contracting (legal) arrangement does not pose a legal barrier, LCS are facilitated to use mechanized excavators so that both earthen mounds (i.e., killas) and the same for the remaining 3 model villages are constructed quickly by using such excavators. In doing so, the physical works involving the construction of earthen mounds can be completed by end-March, 2018.

34. In view of inundation proneness of the entire Haor area, the elevation of MVs must be fixed, based on observed highest water levels in the respective Haors and keeping an additional level so that the MV can avoid being inundated in floods under climate change. The infrastructures within the MVs (say, mosque, women's corner, internal roads, etc.) also have to be given additional design draft heights so that those can continue to function even under worst flood conditions in future.

4.4 Soil Sequestration and Slope Stabilization

35. The pilot testing of construction and subsequent protection of earthen mounds (i.e., killa) has progressed satisfactorily (45% achieved by March 2017 with respect to overall target). During the early flood of 2017, such newly built killas have proved to be extremely useful for the local villagers to quickly harvest their paddy in spite of the flash flood. In a site (in Baniachang Upazila), the villagers expressed their profound gratitude regarding the construction of an (unprotected) killa and asked for a few such killas in various parts of the Haor. It is recommended that the number of killas may be increased from the current target of 20 to at least two such killas per target Upazilas (i.e., a total of 56 killas). The available budget for the construction of such an increase in number of killas may be found by reallocating the available budget, primarily from apparent savings in reducing the number of lesser demanding activities (for example, vocational training on bamboo and canes, given the much reduced availability of such raw materials).

36. The efforts on slope protection² need to be strengthened so that the newly built killas can be protected, even if the protection is based on vegetation (such as murta, vetiver etc with an outer lining of Hijol and Koroch trees). A synergy between component-2 and component-4 may be forged by sourcing such hijol and koroch saplings from nurseries which have been established by recipients of trainings on nursery establishment under component-4. The MTR mission was reported that the project personnel have indeed been collecting such saplings from newly established nurseries those are created by project beneficiaries.

37. In the Supervision Mission (conducted in December 2016), it was recommended that the project would integrate land reclamation works with mound protection work. The progress has been slow. The PMU claims that, due to difficulties in delineation of beel boundaries and not having available khas lands in the proximity of acquired beels, it was not possible to make progress in land reclamation for the construction of killas.

38. The MTR finds that part of the problem lies with the completion of demarcation of beels. Due to legal disputes and non-availability of district administration in any process of dispute settlement (owing to lack of manpower) in an event of demarcation, attempts of demarcation of beels for re-excavation and soil sequestration has been slow. The district administration often leases out khas beels, based on paper works (without having to physically check the actual condition involving the khas beel. Often, the beel in question is seen by the administration as a piece of land, ready to be leased out. However, in reality, the beel might have silted heavily, might have been encroached or might have been illegally occupied by others. All these brew conflicting interests and eventually lead to legal disputes in the process of demarcation).

39. The efforts towards pilot testing of beel bank protection were not visible. The progress has been nil so far. The non-availability of specific beel demarcation did not allow the project to start excavation of beel and subsequent slope protection. A greater effort is needed to demarcate the beels (also recommended by the Supervision Mission) in cooperation with the concerned District Administrations and then carry on the physical works.

40. Since both excavation of beels and floodplain afforestation involving hijol and koroch are highly desirable for the enhanced production of fish, it presents an excellent opportunity for demonstrating ecosystem based adaptation. Even though the progress is apparently slow, it would not be prudent to discontinue the work along these lines. In view of the importance of beel demarcation, re-excavation and subsequent earth sequestration (all are inter-connected), it is recommended that the PMU would make greater efforts to work with local communities, relevant district administration (i.e., Assistant Commissioner of Land), and local government institutions for speeding up demarcation of beels.

41. The benefits of the formation of Beel User Groups (BUG) and participatory co-management of wetlands and beels for increasing fisheries based livelihoods have already been demonstrated in a number of cases in Sunamganj, Kishoreganj and other districts. Such activities must be linked with beel re-excavation, subsequent soil/earth sequestration, timely imposition of fishing moratorium in designated beels during spawning times – all these are co-management activities which need to be facilitated and where possible, institutionalized involving BUGs and local administration. The entire range of activities is inter-linked and needs institutional support – additional to the supports being provided by the PMU.

42. It is heartening to find that the PMU has taken measures, where dispute resolution was possible, to erect pillars along the lines of demarcation. It is noted that, the physical work is only possible when the beels are completely drained off and virtually dry (i.e., after mid-December in any

² Due to relentless wave actions, earthen slope of haatis and haati-connecting roads often gets eroded. This is why slope protection becomes an important element to enhance resilience in a haor condition. The same logic for slope protection is applicable for unprotected slopes of all-weather Upazila and Union roads.

hydrological year). However, that coincides with transplantation of paddy seedlings. Therefore, actual progress is only possible after mid-January. Such reduction in actual working time has significantly affected the progress of the actual work.

43. It is therefore recommended that the project PMU will make greater efforts to convince the respective District Administrations regarding the relative benefits of beel co-management by local beneficiaries and arrange beel delineation by December, 2017. Following the beel delineation, efforts must be made to excavate the beels during the dry season of 2017-18 (December 2017 till end-April, 2018) and the subsequent beel protection works to be completed in conjunction with village forestry creation involving Hijol and Koroch (Component-4) vegetation – the saplings of such Haor-friendly varieties can be sources from the nurseries established by the beneficiaries under the project.

4.5 Slope Protection of All-weather Upazila/Union Road

44. Progress regarding slope protection of all-weather (Upazila/Union) roads has been noticeable (66% achieved until March 2017, as against a cumulative progress of about 35%), although more could have been achieved. Part of the underperformance may be attributed to the early occurrence of flash flood, which reduced the effective working time in Haor areas.

45. Many of the physical works under the Component-2 have been achieved by the use of LCS groups. The project has completed training to about 61% of the LCS Groups until March 2017. The relatively higher dropout rates involving LCS members during transplantation of paddy seedlings (Late-November till mid-December) and paddy harvesting (mid- to end-April, every year) significantly reduces availability and full attention of LCS members. This has been one of the chronic problems being faced by the project in accomplishing physical works in the project areas through the involvement of LCS members³.

46. It is found that the daily rate of compensation for the labour of LCS members in Haor areas is much less than the market price, especially during the two periods mentioned above and also in comparison with daily wage provided in stone queries (in Bholaganj Upazila, Sylhet) and in rice mills (predominantly in Bhairab Upazila, Kishoreganj and Brahmanbaria Sadar Upazila of Brahmanbaria district). Since such daily compensation rates are set for any LCS-related works irrespective of regional realities, the rate in Haor areas appears to be rather non-attractive (unless there is no such competitive work available in the neighborhood). The LCS policies for Haor areas need to be adjusted by the LGED in order to make the provision more attractive for potential LCS members. Otherwise, physical progress made during the dry season by the LCS members/groups will appear much less than anticipated, thereby affecting the timely achievements of the project.

5. PROGRESS REGARDING COMPONENT-4: LIVELIHOOD PROTECTION

47. Activities under Component 4 revolve around four subcomponents namely a) village forestry (bamboo, murta, hijol, koroch, vetiver, medicinal and fruit trees); b) pond fishery, c) advanced improved training (wood, bamboo, cane, murta, clay and other products) and d) vocational training. The Component-4 deals with organizing trade-specific batch-wise training of target groups so that tailor-made trainings may enhance skills of beneficiaries and they may utilize such skills to strengthen their livelihoods.

48. In order to handle a large number of target people, the project adopted group learning approach through lecture-base as well as demonstration. The group participants were selected based on interest, proximity of residence of members in each group and also referral method. The trainings are conducted by personnel from public agencies, NGOs/individuals, project staff and also lead farmers. Among the above-mentioned four subcomponents, the promotion of village forestry is

³ In contrast, a contractor tries to accomplish the same work by engaging labours, even if those labours are generally poor people from other districts. Contractors therefore can accomplish more physical works, which the LCS groups cannot accomplish – given the rather short 'effective working time' in haor areas.

expected to contribute to the protection of community infrastructures developed under Component 2 and this is how the synergy between these two components was envisaged.

5.1 Village Forestry

49. Under Village Forestry the project adopted few plant varieties to promote which are bamboo, murta, hijol/koroch, vetiver and medicinal/fruit trees. Selection of these plant varieties emanated from different purposes. Though plants are, in general, useful to retain soil from erosion, which is a common problem in the target area, promotion of the targeted plants have different primary purposes – bamboo, to supply in the market as raw materials for bamboo based products; murta, same as bamboo; hijol/koroch, to protect land from erosion; vetiver, same as hijol/koroch; medicinal plants/fruit trees, to sell leaves/fruits in the market. The implementation model for skill development was such that the project first developed trainers (both project staff and progressive farmers) who received training from formal institutions and those trainers provided training to the target people (a ToT approach).

50. About 49% of all trainings on village forestry targeted for FY2016-17 have been achieved. However, the overall progress on this sub-component has been slow (49% achieved during 2016-17 fiscal year), cumulatively achieving about 18% of all targeted training under village forestry. The progress in murta and vetiver production has been particularly slow (some 15 and 13%, respectively), despite the fact that the project itself is a potentially big client of all the productions in the first few years due to extensive slope protection plans under both HILIP and CALIP.

51. Under Village Forestry, a general observation is that such the adoption of technology and skills promoted is very low as the trainings could not offer a value proposition to the target people. The promotion was also very much supply driven in approach. Hardly any participant showed interest to join murta products training as there is scarcity of raw materials, little demand for the products in the market and availability of competing products (wooden or plastic) in a much competitive price. The same applies for cane products.

52. The MTR found that the core of the issue for lack of interests in village forestry (particularly local Vetiver and Murta) being economic and people's preference. The economic incentive for Murta and Vetiver nurseries (i.e., return from such activities) is rather low. The recipients of 3 days long training show greater interests in selling labour during transplantation of paddy seedlings and harvesting paddy⁴, then selling labour in highly paying pebble/stone queries in Sylhet during most of the dry period. This leaves little room to remain engaged in nurseries of village forestry. Therefore, sourcing adequate number of readily available saplings for component 2 from nurseries established under component 4 is not occurring smoothly, as it was envisaged.

53. Direct support provisioning for landless and extreme poor households towards establishing such nurseries are not working due to their inability to establish nurseries because of lack of access to high lands. In Haors, all the high lands are owned by relatively well to do families, where access for the poor is extremely limited, even non-existing for gainfully using such lands. In view of such problems, the project personnel have been trying to persuade the trainees to help bridge the two components. The provisions of placement of vetiver in the holes of the slope protection blocks have largely been accomplished, while the saplings are sourced from nurseries established by the beneficiaries under the project.

54. The project needs to expedite trainings that are accepted by local communities as useful. Selection of appropriate trade for training has to be chosen and imparted so that not only the recipients find opportunities for self-employment, also the right products are made available for the protection of valuable community assets such as embankments and roads, the potential producers do

⁴ The wage goes up to BdTk 700-800, compared to dull season (i.e., monsoon) where no land based activities is possible due to non-availability of land outside the otherwise cramped haatis.

not have to remain extremely vulnerable and food insecure, as they currently are following the severe crop-loss due to extreme flooding event of 2017.

55. Had the trainings been expedited, the business model could have pushed the recipients of such trainings from a position of vulnerability to self-reliance, even after being hit hard during the flood of 2017.

56. Given that the overall demand for murta and vetiver is rather low in the vicinity, particularly in the Haors of Sunamganj, Kishoreganj, Netrokona, Sylhet and Moulavibazar, one must be realistic in rationalizing the number of trainings and trainees on certain village forestry programme. There is supposed to be an assessment conducted for bamboo products, however, the MTR could not find any such assessment being completed. The MTR is informed that the PMU has taken initiative to plan for such an assessment, which is expected to be completed by December 2017.

57. The promotion of medicinal/fruit (bearing) plants was targeted deeming the income earning opportunities by selling leaves/fruits. It is worth mentioning that in last couple of decades commercial fruits/timber plants production in orchards and also in homestead areas saw a phenomenal growth in overall Bangladesh. Initially it was triggered by mass media campaign and also efforts by public extension agencies. Soon it was taken up as a business opportunity by thousands of nurseries all over Bangladesh who are still driving the growth. In the project, targeted participants are trained by project staff or public agencies and demonstration plots are developed. Inclusion of nurseries was found to be very few in numbers and not as the key driving force. It is noted that most of the target people do not have access to land for creating orchards as such but has homestead areas to plant a few trees which again most of them are currently doing. No wonder, the project recommends an increase of such training as the initial target number was kept low.

58. The respective numbers of trade-specific trainings, exhibited in the design, need to be adjusted/reduced significantly. The following table shows the overall project recommendations on changing targets of different training activities. It is worth giving a second thought, if training on any particular plant is not likely to create any meaningful impact, does it make sense to simply reduce the number? Or discarding it totally is more pragmatic e.g. in case of murta. A portion of the saved line budget (if any, saved from village forestry training) should go for increasing the number of new trade-specific vocational training/advanced improved trainings, along with a revision of list of vocational trainings. The rest of the saved line budget should be reallocated in more demanding activities such as killa construction. The PMU should revise the budget and propose it to IFAD for vetting and subsequent approval by September 2017, so that physical works may be continued soon after the monsoon season of 2017.

Name of CALIP Training	DPP Target (Batch)	Cumulative achievement up to March 2016-17	Remaining against DPP target	Proposed Reallocation (Batch)	Left out/ Additional
Village Forestry Training on Bamboo production	1680	411	1269	1120	Left out 560
Training on Murta production	1680	259	1421	340	Left out 1340
Training on Hijol /Koroch production	252	57	195	420	Additional 168
Training on Vetiver production	1680	216	1464	420	Left out 1260
Training on Nursery/ Medicinal plant/Fruit production.	420	86	334	840	Additional 420
ToT on Village Forestry	0	5	0	5	All 5 are additional
Total Village Forestry	5712	1034		3085	

59. In view of the above analysis, the revised strategy for the Village Forestry sub-component would be ***'promote selected plants through strengthening and incentivizing the local nurseries (or by creating new ones where unavailable)***. The key actionable steps under this strategy are:

- a. Drop murta promotion
- b. Select at least one nursery owner (or create one, preference is to find existing one) in each group and the demonstration would be under him/her
- c. Use the nursery owner as co-trainer alongside project personnel, public agency personnel
- d. Ensure the nursery owner keeps bamboo, vetiver, hijol/koroch in his/her nursery by offering an incentive that project would procure vetiver, hijol/koroch from him/her
- e. The incentive offered above by the project is only effective if he/she provides a free sapling of any item from vetiver, hijol/koroch, bamboo (the meagre cost is likely to be covered by increased sales volume) to any person buying a regular item (usually fruit/timber plant)
- f. Equip and link the nursery owners with sources of high yielding/hybrid varieties of fruits/timbers/medicinal plants
- g. The recommended and revised number of training batches (except murta) is acceptable. However, if number of nursery owners is not sufficient to conform to number of groups, the same nursery owners can be part of several groups.
- h. Add a new activity - Sales conference each year in each district for the targeted nursery owners. The agenda would be to discuss the challenges and prospects and identify market-led solutions. Each workshop should identify and award the best seller in each district.

5.2 Training on Pond Fisheries and Exchange Visits

60. The progress on various aspects of training related to the sub-component on pond fisheries has been slow, particularly during the past fiscal year (i.e., 7% achieved during FY2016-17). On cumulative counts, 24% has been achieved so far. The physical progress of this subcomponent stumbled as the subcontracting arrangement between the PMU and the WorldFish Centre has not materialized as of yet. Consequently, the progress is the lowest among all four subcomponents. While there have been examples of privately contributing to the expansion of culture fisheries by local people, it remains a mystery why this sub-sector has not achieved more. Moreover, expansion of pond fisheries can only be accomplished in the upper slopes of the Haor areas (locally known as *Kanda*), which are only occasionally inundated⁵. Therefore, it is hard to accept any delay in delivering such training and subsequent extension involving participants from Kanda areas, where flooding of 2016 or 2017 have not significantly affected people's livelihoods. The implementation partners need to be solicited by PMU to perform their responsibilities judiciously and timely so that the targets for training and subsequent implementation are achieved as per schedule.

61. It is reported that an MOU is being processed (not yet signed) between the World Fish (the partner with proven track record in such an endeavor) and the PMU, so that the World Fish delivers all the trainings regarding the sub-component and also provides technical support for the promotion of pond fisheries. The issues and concerns of applicable VAT and taxes have been resolved. The provisions include additional trainings on pond fisheries and exchange visits for the beneficiaries. All these are covered within the budgetary allocation for the sub-component.

62. It was reported that the PMU had difficulties in drawing institutional involvement in imparting trainings of pond fisheries, primarily due to lack of adequate institutional arrangement. Since the World Fish (WF) has excellent working relationship with the Department of Fisheries (DOF), it is expected that the institutional bottlenecks will no longer be slowing down the progress in such an important aspect. It is expected that the WF will engage trainers/ expertise of DOF to conduct the

⁵ Had those kandas been inundated, pond fisheries would not have been possible in the haor region.

trainings, keep communication with DOF, etc. Through the engagement of WF, the involvement of DOF expertise is more or less guaranteed.

63. The trainees on fish culture in ponds should be made aware that, in an instance of very high flood or untimely flood (as in the case of flood 2017), the producers must protect their ponds so that the fish cannot escape the pond. Otherwise, because of release of the culture stock from a pond, the capture fisheries will benefit but the investment of the target producers will be lost. The producer must learn simple techniques to protect their fish from escaping the cultured ponds. The extension and training personnel must share such ideas with the trainees and help them understand the risks of occasional inundation and modalities for protecting their investments involving low cost materials (for example, nylon-nets placed around such ponds much above ground levels across the banks of relevant ponds).

64. As an environmental safeguard, the proponents of pond fisheries should also be provided with information/knowledge regarding the potential adverse implications of introduction of alien and invasive species (such as piranha and Thai-*magur*) on the overall Haor fisheries production. The producers must be trained on not to commit to such dangerous species so that, in case of an accidental release of such species in the vast Haor water-bodies, no significant environmental and economic adverse effects are observed. The training modules must include risks associated with exotic species and the trainers must make adequate effort to introduce such risks to the trainees.

5.3 Training on Improved Wood/Bamboo/Cane Sector

65. The fundamental idea of including and promoting vocational and advanced improve training was to create opportunities for the target people to find off-farm jobs during the lean agricultural season (mainly the monsoon). In 2016-17 fiscal year, 59% of the trainings have been completed, while the cumulative achievement has been 25%. Under Advanced Improved Training, the project achieved very low progress under some skills and even zero under murta.

66. The value chain oriented training activities under the component-4 have not been preceded by any study for identifying socially acceptable livelihoods with economic potential that may offer a decent livelihood, alternative to business-as-usual typical livelihoods of target population. Since the activities came along as a wish-list, rather than being verified under prevailing socio-economic and environmental conditions, the trainings offered do not equally attract local people. For example, skill enhancement for Murta-based products was considered for 140 batches. However, in reality the training does not attract most of the people across the five districts; the potential gains from such activities are not perceived by target groups as attractive for ensuring their livelihoods. This is why, no progress has been observed for such trainings. It is recommended that the project will quickly re-assess local sensitivity to all forms of livelihood protection trainings and value chains and based on an improved understanding, the number of non-attractive sectors will be reduced and the resources will be reallocated to alternative trainings which have considerably higher acceptance among the potential recipients.

67. There is local level high demand for jute and bamboo products, such trainings have been considered to be attractive to local people. As a result, the progress on these two sets of skills enhancement training has been 69 and 42%, respectively, until March 2017. Despite the fact that the progresses on skill enhancement trainings on jute and bamboo products are satisfactory, the overall progress on Trainings on improved wood/bamboo/cane sector until March 2017 is 25% compared to the overall target.

68. In the recent past, the training service providers were also requested to provide better linkages to markets or outlets in Dhaka, where feasible. Such efforts are indeed being made, although the success rate is found to be low. Short trainings cannot effectively help build 'expertise' instantaneously, which however will eventually happen after a while. The Dhaka based markets demand products with high degree of finesse, which cannot often be met by trainees soon after

receiving such trainings. Where possible, limited efforts are made (one or two per district) to connect producers with urban-based markets. The efforts have been successful. For instance, certain producers of bags and nakshi-kantha have been tagged with representatives (middlemen) of outlets which are based in Dhaka.

69. The Supervision Mission recommended continuing discussion with large private sector to play greater role in the supply chain of various agricultural products. The PMU must make a plan in order to ensure that better inputs are available for the producers and more importantly, better marketing channels are established so that the producers can enter into bigger value chain.

70. In view of prevailing realities on the ground, the PMU has proposed reallocation of improved trainings, which is summarized as follows:

Reallocation Proposal for CALIP Training				
Name of CALIP Training	DPP Target (Batch)	Cumulative Ach. Up to May 16-17	Proposed Reallocation (Batch)	Comments
Village Forestry Training on Bamboo production	1680	467	1120	Significantly reduced
Training on Murta production	1680	297	340	Drastically reduced
Training on Hijol /Kororch production	252	63	420	Significantly increased
Training on Vetiver production	1680	236	420	Drastically reduced
Training on Nursery/Medicinal plant/Fruit production.	420	89	840	Doubled! (Increased)
ToT on Village Forestry		5	5	Introduced
Sub Total on Village Forestry	5712	1157	3085	Drastically reduced

71. Strategy **for Advanced Improved Training**: Having identified more appropriate skills (based on market demand), the project needs to review its implementation model for a more sustainable impact. It is noted that under Advanced Improved Training all are tangible products (goods) and hence, there must be wholesale buyers for those products. One big challenge for the participants to apply their skills is their poor connection with market which many occasions discourages participants from moving forward with the skill. Currently, the project engages individuals from NGOs (mainly to reduce training costs) to train participants who are not necessarily buyers of those products. However, incidents were observed where the trainers themselves were running businesses of the same products. The strategy for the promotion of Advanced Improved Skills would be, therefore, '**promote most demanded trades/skills training through buyers (who are knowledgeable about production) of the products**'. Since most of these products are rurally produced, many buyers themselves produce part of the merchandize and hence should be knowledgeable about production techniques. The participants of the training will also remain encouraged as they would perceive the trainer as a potential buyer if they could produce good products which would stimulate their learning process. The key actions under this strategy are:

- Identify wholesale (and/or large retailers) for selected products
- Negotiate with him/her to provide skills training. The project will provide transportation costs to the trainer but no training fees. Since there will be material costs/wastage during the training process, the project would bear them. The incentive for the trainer would be such that whatever products are produced at the end, he/she will get those. This will also incentivise the

trainer to make best use of raw materials with minimum wastage and the participants would learn better.

- c. An expected result is such that the trainer/buyer would identify participants who can produce better and is likely to continue purchasing from them. Interaction for more than a week (8-10 days long training) will also enable both trainer and participants to develop a potential long-term business relationship. The project personnel must interfere at minimum level during the training sessions so that the trainer and the participants can interact more at personal level.
- d. Towards the end, the trainer may ask participant/s to supply products to him/her after the training. The project must not interfere in this negotiation and help fix any price. It is very likely that the trainer/buyer may offer price which is much less than the retail price as he/she would buy in bulk. The project personnel not being part of the market may find this unfair seeing the difference in price between wholesale and retail. It must be understood that retail price includes so many other elements such as outlet cost, overhead cost, inventory cost and so on. For the participants, it is more important to get access to market. Once they will become familiar, they themselves will find more buyers and if not satisfied with the price offer, they may then move to others.

5.4 Vocational Training

72. The progress on vocational training has been less than satisfactory. Until March 2017, only 36% of all target vocational training sessions has been completed (the corresponding cumulative progress has been only 19%). The project has been trying to link up with formal institutions (such as REHAB – Real Estate and Housing Association, Bangladesh) in order to offer trainings in relation to construction works, with a view that such linkages will enable the trainees to get in touch with relevant market operators. However, such processes could not be expedited. The project should ideally engage with such actors and make utmost efforts during the time when (a) no physical work can be implemented during monsoon, and (b) most of the people remain idle inside haor areas (again, during peak monsoon).

73. In the field trip, successful cases have been found/observed regarding the fact that the beneficiaries becoming economically self-reliant after receiving vocational training on tailoring. The story of Mrs Archana (wife of Mr. Ashim Talukder of Sholachura village, Jamalganj Upazila) has been quite satisfactory. However, no such training could so far be organized during the entire FY2016-17, which is quite unsatisfactory!

74. The MTR mission is informed that the LGED personnel have been facing difficulties in identifying the deserving candidates for the vocational trainings. Since LGED is a GOB institution, its field and PMU-based personnel are subject to political influence and interference in selecting potential trainees. Proper targeting of training recipients is often hindered by political interferences, which eventually slow down the overall processes on vocational training. In such a backdrop, efforts must be made to render the responsibility of identification of target groups to NGOs such as BRAC, FIVDB, ASA, CSRL, etc. so that a stream of batches may be prepared and sensitized to receive such training. It is recommended that such an involvement of one or more NGOs may be integrated (as recommended by the Supervision Mission) and allocations are made in order to facilitate the said social engineering process.

75. The issues regarding reduction of trainings involving village forestry have been discussed in earlier section. However, the PMU has not reduced the overall number of vocational trainings and the net number of trainees. The PMU assures that the overall number of trainings and trained beneficiaries will remain the same. However, based on prevailing realities and market demand⁶, trainings on additional issues/skills/trades have been included. In choosing these additional trades/skills, efforts are made to identify those which would benefit women more than men so that the overall effort eventually help local poor women to be economically empowered. Many of the additional

⁶ In a dynamic economy, market demand for vocational training is supposed to be changing with time. The PMU therefore took an initiative to understand the currently demanding trades and re-organized their vocational training component.

trades are women-friendly: women are confident of sourcing all types of raw materials on their own and assured of accessing markets which are within their reach, without having to request their male counterparts/kins to help them market their produces.

76. The project is currently working with a few government run vocational training institutions to provide skill trainings to target participants. However, there are some limitations with these current institutions as well as other public institution to increase coverage for which it is important to contract private providers as soon as possible to achieve targets in time. The limitations are – a) the public providers do not provide training on all the market demanded skills; b) not all the public institutions have residential facilities; c) there are no job placement facilities; and d) they have their own priorities and training calendars. Although no private training providers have been recruited by now for vocational training, private trainers are currently providing training under Advanced Improved Training. In these cases, the trainers along with tools and equipment move to a project-rented facility nearer to the participants for the training period. This model seemed to be effective as the trainers, in these cases, are also business people of the same trade/product and potential employers of the skilled trainees.

77. At macro level, the project is preparing for convening a national level workshop involving private companies to influence them and extend their inputs delivery and service provisions further in the target areas.

78. The MTR mission is informed that, in the training sessions there hasn't been any integration of general information regarding the adverse impacts of climate change and possible mechanisms regarding safeguarding household and community assets and collective efforts towards reducing vulnerability of communities. Since CALIP deals with climate resilience and the people are indeed highly vulnerable to climate change, each training must have a brief but informative interactive session regarding awareness raising on climate change.

79. The Supervision Mission recommended that the PMU would ensure publicity of training opportunities in various media. Visible efforts are made; however the involvement of one or more NGOs in doing so, in addition to identification of candidate trainees, could be fruitful.

80. The following table gives a bird's eye presentation of the potential reallocation of batch-wise trade-specific trainings on vocational, as envisaged by the PMU.

Name of Vocational Training	DPP Target (Batch)	Cumulative Achv up to May, 17	Proposed Reallocation (Batch)	Comments
Training on Bamboo products	84	40	84	Remains same
Training on Jute products	42	63	86	Increased
Training on Cane products	70	6	6	Decreased
Training on Wood products	42	6	6	Decreased
Training on Murta Products	140	-	0	Omitted!
Training on Block - Batik	0	8	42	Introduced
Training on Carchupi	0		28	Introduced
Training on Pickle	0		28	Introduced
Training on Nokshi Katha	0	2	42	Introduced
Training on Packaging + Candle Making	0		28	Introduced
Confectionary	0		28	Introduced
Sub Total Advance improve training	378	125	378	Remains same

Vocational Training on				
Diesel engine/Pump repairing	21	6	57	Increased
Motor cycle repairing	21	3	63	Increased
Mobile phone/Computer repair	21	3	35	Increased
Tailoring	42	5	100	Increased
House Wiring/Electrician	50	14	75	Increased
Plumbing	40	3	36	Slightly decreased
Refrigerator Repairing	30	3	27	Slightly decreased
Welding	30	3	17	Decreased
Tiles and Mosaic +Mason/concrete	100	-	70	Decreased
Carpentry	25	-	0	Omitted!
Cook	25	-	0	Omitted!
Driving cum Auto - Mechanic		1	40	Introduced
Computer Application			30	Introduced
Sub Total Vocational training	550	41	550	Remains same

81. **Recommended strategy for Vocational Training:** One key difference between the trainings under Vocational Training and Advanced Improved Trainings is that the former includes skills that render services while the latter includes skills to produce goods. The duration of the courses and the training facilities also differ – the former is longer and in a setting where comparatively sophisticated tools and equipment are needed while the latter is shorter in duration and less sophisticated tools are required. The project has already revised the skill list and targets based on their understanding on the market demand. However, a deeper understanding on the vocational skills reveals few other dimensions. When looked at the market force how these skills are developed – it is mostly informal (apprenticeship basis for a much longer period). Skills acquired through training from formal training institutions are often not considered up to the mark by the employers in the informal market. And this informal market is predominant in overall Bangladesh context for such skills, let alone the project area. Discussion with graduates also reveals that what they learn from the formal training is good but not sufficient to handle day-to-day problems which are diverse. For this reason, the informal apprenticeship model became effective and driven by market force. However, most poor target people of the project cannot forgo opportunity cost to work as apprentice for such long period (often 1-2 years with meagre remuneration). Therefore, providing vocational skills training through formal institutions in a short period (45 days) is an appropriate approach to impart basic knowledge. However, the missing link is the connection with the job market. Therefore, the revised strategy for Vocational Training would be – **‘develop/improve vocational skills through intensive course in formal training institutions followed by attachment (as interns) with private businesses’**. The key steps to execute this strategy are:

- Identify formal training providers for revised set of skills
- Identify workshops/shops/repairing centres/individuals under each of the targeted skills. The business entities may have permanent shops (service centre) or can be individuals without any permanent shops. The training providing institutions should be made responsible/accountable to identify these private businesses also.
- Negotiate (or make the training provider accountable/responsible for negotiation) with the identified businesses to accommodate graduates as interns for one-two months. The businesses will have to have incentives to recruit these interns. It can be theoretically deduced that the business will have an extra pair of skilled hands, which should be an incentive itself. But in reality, businesses also need to verify the skills and therefore would

take the risk of product waste/damage/loss by the interns. The incentive offers by the project for different businesses will be different based on business nature. For businesses who can render services to LGED projects such as welding, plumbing, mason, electric works etc, the project can help them enlist as vendor with LGED and offer particular job during the period while the intern/s are with him/her. For businesses which do not have any direct service to offer to LGED projects such as diesel pump repairing, mobile repairing etc the project may simply help build his/her social capital by inviting to different training events to give speech and share his/her experience with the project. Allocating an allowance for the recruiters could be one option (to absorb the wastage/loss that may potentially happen because of the intern/s), however, this holds the risk mishaps and may lose the main purpose of the internship and therefore discarded.

5.5 Climate Change and Gender Issues

82. The CALIP project offers an excellent opportunity to exhibit how gender sensitivities are addressed in a project which is, by definition, aimed at building community resilience to climate change. In a sense, this is perhaps one of the first projects which has dual targets: climate change adaptation and risk reduction and simultaneously being gender-sensitive. In terms of participation, the project has involved many LCS groups; a majority of the beneficiaries are indeed women. However, the primary targets of most of the activities under Component-4 are to involve women as a primary focus of the component and empower women following accrual of anticipated benefits. However, the practical integration of gender component is found to be weak, perhaps owing to the staff turnover in relevant fields and also inability to build a general understanding of the gender aspects of various components of the projects.

83. While the PMU reorganized the vocational training component, careful efforts were made to include new trades for offering vocational training where women could easily become the primary beneficiaries. Trainings on Nakshi-kantha, karchupi, production and packaging of food products such as pickle and confectionary, even the production of candles are all excellent examples of gender-friendly trades where the women can easily learn techniques, enhance their skills and utilize such skills for creating self-employment opportunities. The plan must now be executed so that the poor women of the Haor areas get a real opportunity to diversify their economic status with little help from the project and thereby become self-reliant.

84. The project design warrants gender workshops to be held, aiming at informing project personnel and other stakeholders. The opportunities for cross learning have not been fully realized in terms of mainstreaming gender aspects in the project across all components and activities. For a greater synergy between and among various activities and components on gender issues, a greater collaboration between project proponents is a must. The staff, specially the field level staff, needs to be fully aware of the gender related opportunities in the project. Local level gender workshops involving staff members have reportedly been organized. However, the production of the said knowledge product on gender (and youth?) specific vulnerability to climate change with particular focus on the Haor region has just been planned. Once the knowledge product is completed (likely to be in December 2017), the output will be disseminated at beneficiary levels. Moreover, a national dissemination event is planned to be convened in May 2018.

85. It is recommended that all gender related trainings and workshops, except the national event, be completed by December 2017 in order to foster a comprehensive realization of gender opportunities within the project.

5.6 Disbursement of start-up support following vocational training

86. There appears to be a dilemma involving the recommended provision of giving away post-training 'start-up kits' to training recipients. No doubt, such little investments for purchasing kits would help training recipients, especially women, to make best use of his/her newly acquired skills and gain

from it financially. However, the project has a shortage in budget (especially for such a recommended activity). Moreover, the project has tried to conform its trade-specific training curricula along with the GOB requirements (managed by Technical Training Board) so that proper certification can be issued and the certificate holders can try to find formal employment (thereby making the training more useful and effective). In doing so, the vocational trainings are extended from a 28 days long programme into a 45 days long programme. Such an elaborated training programme demanded more budgetary allocation. Since the PMU did not reduce the overall number of vocational trainings, it had to reallocate budget for accommodating the additional days per training. This has left no choice but to find a viable alternative to giving away start-up kits or arranging finance for it. This is why the disbursement of start-up capital following vocational trainings on various aspects is found to be generally slow, even indefinitely delayed.

87. Bangladesh being the birthplace for micro-financing and there are a large pool of micro-financing institutions (MFI) in Haor areas (as elsewhere in the country), given the limitation of the project to offer financing from its own meager budget, the project has tried, where applicable, to link trainees with MFIs so that they can benefit from financing and purchase their own kits. Instead of the proposed 50% financing from the project for a kit, a willing MFI offers 100% of the finance and such financing can be paid back within a year or two, while the recipient of the financing (and the kit) keep using the kit and his/her newly acquired skills.

88. In addition to giving greater emphasis on certification, the PMU has taken initiative to organize placement of vocational trainees in formal employment. Such efforts would create more formal opportunities for the training recipients, enabling them to directly be in touch with employers. The MTR finds it a useful step towards resilience building, following vocational trainings.

89. The project proponents cited governance issues as stumbling block towards identification of deserving candidates for the available start-up capital. Political interferences are common in rural Bangladesh, especially in poverty pockets such as the Haor region. As soon as the rumor around giving away a subsidized/free 'start-up kit' is spread, the political masters exert enormous pressure on project personnel to include their own people as potential trainees and the overall targeting of the deserving poor people face problems.

90. Now that greater emphasis is placed on quality of training (increasing the number of days from 28 to 45, thereby conforming with GOB technical training guidelines), despite the significant increase in the estimated cost of delivery of vocational trainings. The cost escalation leaves little room for arranging start-up kits. Moreover, the project has arranged GOB endorsed certification after successful completion and it is pursuing post-training placement. Furthermore, the project personnel are assisting the recipients of various trainings to borrow finance from MFIs, as has been observed in the case of Ms. Archana (the tailor who has now become a successful micro-entrepreneur). Quality training, certification, placement and linkage with MFI offer a better package than giving away start-up kits, the latter also faces delivery related problems and issues.

91. Since availability of fund following the increase in budget to complete the elaborated trainings involving 45 days (in place of 28 days, as planned earlier) is highly uncertain, the distribution of start-up kit may be omitted. Instead, greater effort should be made towards linking up 'deserving' trainees with MFIs.

92. Despite political interference, the project must not stop thinking about finding a working modality to identify deserving candidates for vocational trainings, based on social status of respective beneficiaries. Local government institutions do have lists of destitute households, poor families, households having persons with disability, and women headed households⁷. While a batch is identified for a particular training, information regarding their socio-economic status (applying a

⁷ Those lists are generally followed in order to provide them services involving social safety nets and even cash/food relief. Generally, the Chairman of a Union Parishad retains such a list, which might require a further verification in a bid to avoid any mishandling of provisions to be made by the project.

multiple indicators) may be collected and analyzed objectively, to find out deserving candidates for the assistance regarding start-up capital. In order to have a decent spread of such assistance, a proposition may be made to offer 50% of the estimated capital requirement from the project, with a criterion that the rest may be arranged by the selected trainees themselves (which they are forced to do anyway in absence of the start-up capital). The PMU must make efforts to streamline disbursements of start-up capitals by no later than December 2017. The exact number of beneficiaries, segregated by trade, needs to be finalized, which will enable the PMU to estimate the costs involved for such financial facilitation. The cost requirement needs to be communicated to IFAD for concurrence. Moreover, the modalities for introducing the trainees with micro-financing institutions, where applicable, must also be continued.

5.7 Assistance for PMU towards identification of potential trainees for vocational training

93. Currently, the field staffs of the project are involved in identification of deserving candidates for a trade-specific training. Since the total number of trainings and trainees is very large and the potential targets areas are vast, it has created institutional problems in arranging trainings. The PMU has taken a few firm measures to advertise the project's offer to train poor individuals on specific trades. Dissemination modalities involve leaflet distribution in Bazars, miking during haat (weekly big marketing gathering), involvement of local leaders and respected citizens, etc. Efforts were made to involve the Partner Organizations (PO) of Palli Karma Sangsthan Foundation (PKSF). However, such effort could not be pursued further because of the special condition of PKSF, which places a bar on an individual or a household who have ever received micro-finance from any other NGOs – poor people without having any linkage with MFIs is no longer a reality, even in Haor region. Therefore, PKSF POs could not be engaged for widely disseminating the news about training.

94. In order to streamline identification of trainees for vocational trainings, the PMU requested for sub-contracting the task of identification of trainees and formation of a trade-specific batch of trainees from various parts of the five districts. It is also requested that, such a task may be given to a local and/or national NGO. It is expected by the PMU that such service provisioning may be contracted out to NGOs at a cost not exceeding BdTK 1.2 million, which is nominal compared to the total cost necessary for the respective component (i.e., Component-4).

95. In order to ensure a stream of batches of trainees, segregated by specific trade, such a modality may be supported, provided that the cost for procuring such services remains within the ballpark of the above mentioned estimated cost. This might reduce work load of field staffs and it might also allow field staffs to render their services towards implementation of not only Component-4, but all other Components of CALIP.

5.8 Guideline for performance review of skills trainers and graduates

96. Under the revised strategy suggested for Village Forestry, Advanced Improved Training and Vocational Training the performance measurement tools for the service providers (trainers) as well as for graduates need revision. The existing monitoring system should have a proper database for all the participants under different trainings to track and check their progresses. If it is not in place, the project should emphasize on building this database immediately and update it regularly. The M&E team of the project should define the indicators for both trainers and participants (both demand and supply side of the skills training) to measure the changes. In the revised strategy, changes in businesses of the trainers will also act as proxy indicators to determine the change in the lives of the participants. Following table provides a broad guidance and a checklist for the project to evaluate performance of both trainers and graduates.

Sub-component	Trainer (service provider)	Performance measurement checklist	Participants (service recipients)	Comments
Village Forestry	Nursery Owners	a) total sales figures b) item-wise breakdown of sales of the selected plants	a) New plantation by varieties	Service providers' figures to be in collected once every month; for participants through HH survey as per M&E plan
Advanced Improved Training	Product buyers	a) procurement volume (and value) of goods from graduates b) number of graduates supplying goods c) types of products procured from graduates	a) number of graduates making actual sales (not for own use) of the products b) number of buyers he/she selling to	Figures to be in collected once every month
Vocational Training	Formal training institutes (government/N GO/ private)	a) identification of businesses for internship placement b) direct job placement	a) Final exam results b) Own investment to start self-employment c) Engaged in an occupation that requires the skills	To be recorded once in every quarter
	Private businesses	a) retention of interns b) new jobs from LGED c) business growth (revenue)	a) Internship to permanent job b) increase in salary c) own-investment to start the business	To be recorded once in every quarter

6. PROGRESS REGARDING COMPONENT-5: CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE

97. The component deals with capacity building and knowledge management, with an aim to enable the target group to receive early warnings and advisories in the long run and safeguard their valuables and assets in any event of flash flood. Therefore, this component has high potential to contribute towards resilience building of the entire population of the Haor basin.

6.1 Action Research

98. No action research has been completed so far. It is found that, the processes for procurement of organizations/institutions likely to conduct such studies are time consuming, in relation to the prevailing procurement rules of GOB and subsequent approval from IFAD. The following gives a timeline for milestones achieved in the process of conducting the CALIP Baseline Survey, which is self-explanatory towards understanding the overall delay for not completing the study.

Milestone	Date completed
REOI issued	19.04.2016
Determination of marking/evaluation criteria	05.09.2016
Shortlisting of eligible companies	19.10.2016
Issuance of RFP	17.01.2017
Pre-bid meeting for explanations/clarifications	31.01.2017
Opening date for proposals	14.02.2017
Determination of marking criteria (??)	22.02.2017
Evaluation of Technical Proposals	12.04.2017
Combined technical and financial evaluation	25.05.2017

99. Clearly, awarding a contract to a vendor takes about a year or so, which should ideally be expedited in order to complete the studies. It is to be flagged here that, without the completion of the studies (especially the Baseline study), it would be extremely difficult to sieve through the project accomplishments and then convey the learning through policy dialogue for any potential policy influencing and subsequent policy uptake. At this stage, it appears a distant dream that the current efforts along knowledge management and action research would be adequate to facilitate the anticipated policy dialogue to be successfully convened during the course of the project.

100. As indicated earlier, physical works indeed suffer from inadequacy of time during the short dry season. Few of the action research/studies could have been continued during monsoon season, however the project could not avail such opportunities and could accomplish in this sub-component. The procurement process, which generally can work even during the monsoon period, should be expedited, as it has also been recommended by the Supervision Mission in December 2016.

101. Several researches, as mentioned in the Supervision Mission Aide Memoir, have not been conducted till date. Outcomes of a few intended studies are expected to guide policy and programme formulation in Haor region, which is why the studies are still relevant and important to be conducted. The intended duration of one or two studies are adjusted and substantially reduced, in order for those to play due roles in policy formulation.

102. The CALIP RIMS baseline study and the development of selection criteria for the target recipients of start-up capital (following receipt of training) have not been completed. These are major inputs towards better delivering the services for the building of community resilience in the Haor areas. The following table provides for a brief update on the status of conducting a few action researches under the project.

Sl.	Action research	Milestones achieved and current Status			
		REOI issued	Determination of marking criteria	Shortlisting	Status
1	Climate change forecasting and participatory scenario development & assessment of agriculture and fisheries sector & exposure to climate risks	19.04.2016	05.09.2016	29.01.2017	RFP comments received; no objection (NO) to be sought from IFAD
2	Consultancy for analyzing the environmental impacts of large-scale expansion of pond fisheries and effects of climate change	As above	As above	31.01.2017	As above. Now coalesced with serial number 1 above.
3	Consultancy for value chain and ecological analysis on commercialization of bamboo	As above	As above	11.01.2017	An MOU is completed with a GOB institution, will seek NO from IFAD
4	Service provisioning for a study on RET potential	31.03.2016	As above	29.01.2017	Draft RFP and shortlisting will be sent to IFAD for NO
5	Consultancy for examining the dynamics of reforestation at landscape level and strengthening ecosystem resilience				TOR approved. EOI to be completed
6	Monitoring the performance village protection, model village and slope protection				BUET has been approached. RFP ⁸ finalized. NO not yet sought from IFAD.

⁸ Despite having an MOU being signed, BUET must respond to the RFP to exhibit its willingness in order to fulfill the procurement requirement of GOB.

103. **It is reported to the MTR mission that it took quite a long time to employ a climate change specialist in the PMU, which** is also a factor towards causing significant delays in conducting the studies. It is recommended that effort need to be made to complete the studies by July 2018.

The study and subsequent investments in renewable energy

104. The study on appropriateness of provisioning of renewable energy technologies (RET) in the haor areas has not been completed yet. Like other studies, the Study on RET also faced significant delays along each step of procurement, apparently from both sides: the complex GOB procurement processes and the approval process in IFAD. It is understood that, the TOR for the study on RET has been approved by IFAD and the RFP is about to be issued for competitive bids. Meanwhile, the project PMU has short listed several companies for conducting the research. There is still an inadequacy in relation to available small finance of BDTk 500,000 (equivalent to US\$6,000), which might not be adequate to carry out the study.

105. Most of the respondents in the villages visited by the MTR Team indicated that, they do not have financial means to invest in replacement of photovoltaic cells or repair of RET, if any. Therefore, O&M cost must be plugged in the initial procurement of RET for expansion in haor villages. In addition, the promotion of RET must be accompanied with microfinance services to improve uptake by poorer farmers.

106. Ideally the Model villages should have been brought under RET. However, the model village activities will be limited to physical works, community services (such as internal roads, schools, community places, toilets, etc.) which can be easily linked to RET. The understanding of a model village should include aspects of energy access - solar for community services (lighting, communication, education) or biogas (waste management, sanitation, cooking fuel, organic fertilizer). The specific land holdings will be allocated to poor people/households, who have been the victims of recent afal-led erosion and subsequent forced displacement. No dwelling units will be built under the project. Therefore, it is fair to anticipate that the allotment of plots in the newly built model village will not be settling there, until they have adequate finance for building the dwelling units. That might not even happen during the remaining time for the project. Therefore, the logic for investing heavily on RET now (only two such earthen mounds for potential model villages are in existence) is rather premature. Moreover, the newly created earthen mounds for model villages need to be protected first, which might take more than one 'dry season'.

107. It is indeed disheartening that, despite the mention of expansion/promotion of RET in the Haor⁹ in the design document, the DPP of the CALIP project did not allocate any noticeable finance for such activities. Given the realities in the Haor as mentioned above and the need for lighting services in non-electrified villages, the need for RET cannot be overemphasized. The villages which are less likely to be connected with grid electricity during the course of the project need to be facilitated with RET. It is recommended that, the savings from lesser number of vocational trainings involving forest products (such as bamboo and cane) to be reallocated to the promotion of RET so that a springboard effect is obtained within the project period.

108. The MTR recommends the following for the RET activities:

1. In light of the delay in contracting the RET mapping and feasibility study, the pending RFP to be cancelled.
2. Available studies such as the one conducted by Practical Action in Sunamganj District to be utilized for deploying RET on the ground.

⁹ About 63% of the Haor villages are already connected to grid, although the quality of electricity service is rather poor, as elsewhere in the rural Bangladesh.

3. Since allocation for the promotion of Renewable Energy including solar and biogas has not been made adequately in the DPP, the project must include a budget line for “implementing Renewable Energy Technologies” in the AWPB and revise the DPP for a total budget allocation of US\$200,000 (approximately BDT 16,000,000).
4. In light of the tight timeline, a “single source selection” (SSS¹⁰) modality may be adopted for issuing a contract to an entity that can deliver results in the 4th quarter of this year. In addition to deployment of RETs in Sunamganj, this contract should build the RET mapping studies for the other CALIP target districts and deployment based on available resources. The PMU should propose to IFAD a reputable entity in Bangladesh that can undertake the above mentioned work. The entity should meet the following criteria:
 - a. Market penetration for RET in Bangladesh specifically in the Haor areas;
 - b. District/branch offices in Haor areas to provide cost-competitive and on-the-ground support in delivery, installation, operation, maintenance and post-sale services for RET; and
 - c. Promotion of RET through associated microfinance services to improve uptake by poorer farmers.

6.2 Capacity Building for Weather and Flash Flood Forecasting

109. The overall progress for the sub-component has been rather slow (32% achieved so far). The institutional bottleneck in the procurement of a fast computer system for a FFEWS partner, IWFM (in BUET), has just been resolved. It took a long time to negotiate with IWFM, BUET (a key partner in the pursuit of FFEWS) regarding the high quality of the fast computer as against the available resources for such an assistance from the project. IWFM has been refusing to accept any lower ended computer to suit to the allocated sum for the procurement, which is why the negotiation was inevitable. It is expected that the procurement related problem will be solved and by the end of June 2017, the procurement of fast computer will be completed within July 2017. However, a lot more is needed to be accomplished by the end of the project timeline.

110. Despite the fact that there have been inevitable delays in the procurement of fast computer, the partners regularly have attended the FFEWS meetings, as scheduled. There has been a noticeable reluctance exhibited by a key institution, the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) due to the fact that the allocation for mobilization of personnel has been reportedly underestimated. The PMU has come to an agreement with BMD to adjust financing available for the sub-component. It is expected that the real activities will soon begin involving FFEWS.

111. However, there has been some progress related to background activities. The model for generating forecast data for the Haor region has been in the process of being developed and subsequently, validated for the river systems within the Haor basin. The basic models are still being developed (the time allocated for model development stage has not yet elapsed). The development stage also includes model validation. The point-based inundation forecast is in progress. The addition of northern (i.e., upstream) points, despite being very useful, effectively slowed down the model development including validation. The relevant institutions under FFEWS have been working to include the upstream points for generating model-based forecast outputs.

112. The early flood of 2017 reminded all concerned with a harsh lesson that, had there been an early warning system for the Haor region, the farmers in some areas could have safeguarded their standing crops from eventual inundation. The absence of a flash flood warning, applicable at

¹⁰ The reasons for an SSS with Grameen Shakti is because: (i) they have installed 1.8 million solar home systems (SHS), 2 million biogas plants and Improved Cook Stoves; (ii) they have regional service centres and branch offices in all 5 districts in the Haor areas and therefore are familiar with the context and can mobilize staff to provide cost-competitive on-the-ground support in installation, operation, maintenance and post-sale services for RET; (iii) they promote a holistic approach which not only provides the technology but the associated microfinance services so that poorer farmers can afford to buy with suitable financing packages.

individual Haor level, has resulted in large scale crop loss that has been incurred by the local farmers. This also shows that the CALIP project (Component-5) has the potential to safeguard crops, in cases of occurrence of early flash floods.

6.3 Knowledge Management

113. The knowledge management sub-component has been severely slowed down due to (a) the non-availability of results from action research and (b) the absence of system (fast) computers, the latter to be stationed at IWFM, FFWC (at BWDB). A *Knowledge Management Strategy and Plan* was supposed to be prepared by the PMU, which has not yet been completed/finalized by the PMU. However, in the monitoring and reporting process/system, milestones of various sub-elements (in the form of deliverable on knowledge management), based on various types of knowledge products, have been integrated.

114. Progress on convening policy dialogue is also severely slow. Section 5.1 above has highlighted a few aspects about the Action Research. Unless the research products are available, it will be a futile exercise to call for a policy dialogue. As a specific case, a research is being conducted by BUET on the effectiveness of the use of vetiver. Once the research is finalized, the outputs of the research will be disseminated within the LGED community. The delay in commissioning the research has translated into further delays of convening the policy dialogue.

115. Therefore, the PMU must take adequate actions regarding expedition of action research, creation of knowledge from project related learning and then carry those messages at policy makers' tables. The current process must be expedited so that the relevant institutions can function properly and collaborate with each other towards the development of early warning system for flash floods and a locally-oriented dissemination mechanism.

116. In order to reach out to the policy making processes with knowledge products, the PMU must involve LGED to convene policy dialogue involving high officials of respective ministries (for example, for RET, the Energy Ministry and the Power Cell) and the members of the National Parliament through the involvement of relevant standing committees of the Parliament. Policy briefs to be shared and such meetings should be convened in presence of media for wider awareness raising. The academia and civil society organizations should also be involved so that they can popularize the ideas through their various involvements.

117. However, there should be effort to bring out policy briefs for the awareness of general mass on specific issues. This should be a separate exercise in comparison with the one mentioned above. The briefs should be written in easy Bengali and disseminated widely for greater penetration. The dissemination modalities must involve pamphlets, which may also be disseminated through community radios available in the Haor region. Specific policy advocacy elements, if identified, should be disseminated through other modalities such as hoardings and posters. Simple catchy messages might be useful in wider dissemination of project/Haor related messages.

118. The project is supposed to link up and contribute to the functioning of the newly established Environment and Climate Change Unit (ECC Unit) of LGED. The said ECC Unit has just been formed, however not yet fully activated. There is a dearth of available human resources on technical aspects of climate change. Therefore, LGED has to take significant measures to equip the research centre, organize capacity building and training for the staff and make human resources retention plan so that the said ECC Unit becomes sustainable. In this context, the GCF financed project will bring necessary budgetary allocation, which will be a boon for the establishment and functioning of the ECC Unit.

6.4 Pro-poor Climate Resilient Policy Dialogue

119. The performance of this sub-component involving policy dialogue has been inadequate. The efforts towards searching for good lessons from the project activities have not been satisfactory.

Without having a close look into good practices and experiences, it may be a futile exercise to inform policy makers on what needs to be integrated into national development frameworks and so on.

120. The Supervision Mission recommended to conduct a study on performance of slope and village protection infrastructure, so that lessons may be learnt and disseminated for policy integration. The process (involving PFP preparation, call for proposals, proposal evaluation and final procurement) needs to be expedited, which may also be done during the monsoon period.

121. The Supervision Mission also recommended to identify roles of various stakeholders on selected policy themes. The PMU places the responsibility on its partner organizations (i.e., IWFM, BMD and FFWC). The PMU must receive written account of such roles and make a final workplan on this issue.

7. INCLUSION OF RIMS INDICATORS IN MONITORING SOFTWARE

122. It is found that the RIMS indicators have already been included in the monitoring software for the project. The following indicators are found to be included:

Indicators for Component-2

- 102780 daily labour employed
- 224 villages protected (protection walls)
- 168 villages with common infrastructure service
- 5 model villages
- 20 killas and 50 beel-banks are protected using vegetative species
- 50 kilometer road slopes are protected with vetivar grass
- 542 LCS (groups) trained

Indicator for Component-4

- 137,844 persons trained in various production technologies

Indicators for Component-5

- Number of people reached by agro-meteorology weather forecast
- Number of institutions reached by FFEWS
- 5 Action Research studies published
- More than 2 policy processes initiated on building community resilience

123. It is to be mentioned here that a few ASAP related indicators have also been incorporated and also being reported through the project MIS system.

8. CONCLUSIONS

124. CALIP has reached its halfway and gathered a significant amount of experience to capitalize on its successes and addresses the weaknesses. The overall progress for CALIP up to its mid-term has been slow. Despite the fact that there has been natural processes which are causing unavoidable delays, there are institutional issues as well that also add complexities towards dampening the progress of the project.

125. Despite slow progresses under CALIP, there are a few bright outcomes, which need to be shared with wider stakeholders, especially following the flash flood of 2017. The project helped beneficiaries to attain a certain level of skills based on a few identified trades (i.e., employment sectors). The objective was to divert rice-based livelihoods into more sustainable and climatologically less susceptible livelihoods. Those of whom took the opportunity with utmost interests; they are on the way to become self-reliant, even when their respective neighbours have become destitute again following the severe crop loss. The stories of Mrs Archana of Sunamganj, a rural woman who was a poor housewife only seven months ago and now in a position to employ five neighbours, is worth highlighting. While most of the Haor people have been queueing up for receiving GOB relief, the Beel Users Groups formed by the project shared over BD TK 50 million among the BUG members – which also need to be shown to the GOB to explain the importance of collective actions for natural resource management and sharing the proceeds from such collective activities.

126. Its realization and subsequent efforts to identify the appropriate skills and thereafter revision of training list is already a big leap. However, identification of the right skills may remain fruitless until the right participants are picked up. In addition, in order to bring about sustainable impact and changes in the lives of the target people, selection of right partners (service providers) are equally important. The revised implementation strategy has accommodated all these dimensions and the project is likely to generate sustainable impacts if the strategy is adopted.

127. Where physical works are not involved, a greater effort by the PMU is needed to expedite those sub-components. Component-5 is particularly lagging behind.

128. The renewed emphasis on a few sub-components and activities need to be taken into consideration and accordingly, greater emphasis needs to be placed on those activities. The programme on construction of killa is such an activity. The RET programme has been hindered due to lack of financing, which needs to be addressed. In order to rationalize the rest of the activities, a revision of the budget may be unavoidable. It is recommended that a judicious budgetary reallocation is done, based on current understanding and renewed emphasis on various project activities.