

Association for Integrated Development-Comilla (AID-COMILLA)

**Alternative Livelihoods Options Project**

**Under**

**SHIREE**

**(Stimulating Household Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment)**

**GRADUATION /LESSION LEARNING REPORT**



**Funded by: Department for International Development-UK**

**Managed by: Harewelle International Limited. UK**

**Project area: Parsuram Upazila , Feni District**

**Project Period: September 2009 to September 2012**

**Prepared by: M & E Team, AID-COMILLA**

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**Acronyms used:**

AID-COMILLA	Association for Integrated Development-Comilla
DFID	Department for International Development
SHIREE	Stimulating Household Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment
ALO	Alternative Livelihoods Options Project
BHH	Beneficiary House Holds
LSP	Livestock Service Provider
DLO	District Livestock Officer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion

## The Project Description

**The Innovation:** The direct beneficiary will be given a heifer with other facilities/ supports e.g., supplementary feedings, hands on training on care and management, de -worming, vaccination and back stop support/ advise. In presence of project technical staff beneficiary or nominee will chose the cattle & bargain and fix the price in cattle market. Having the first calf, the beneficiary will rear the calf up to 4 (four) months. Then she will donate/hand over the first calf to another neighbor who qualifies to become project beneficiary. If it is male calf, the beneficiary will rear as beef fattening and after 18 months she will sale it and purchase Heifer. AID COMILLA will ensure that intra beneficiaries transfer take in place.

**Theory of Change:** AID-COMILLA 's theory of change out of poverty identifies the following three inter-related and mutually reinforcing domains of change that speak to economic, social and political dimensions of empowerment: Making the poor powerful through better access to, and use of resources and services, including markets and employment opportunities; Making power work for the poor by facilitating the creation of spaces for the poorest to participate in local government and development processes; and Altering social relationships to address exclusion and marginalization and reduce exploitation by, and dependence on, others. Together these three domains articulated for impact on extremely poor people capture the requirements for a process of social transformation to foster the economic, social and political empowerment of extremely poor people to achieve their own solutions for development. The SHARP project purpose is designed to be achieved by outputs in four interlocking areas of social inclusion; economic empowerment; pro-poor governance; and learning and influencing. Central to the project will be the use of a community led approach to achieve planned outcomes.

**When will the poor be better off by the initiative, and how long will it last:** The livelihoods concept is based on a clear graduation process that expands income and economic options available to the poor, assisting to lift out of poverty to economic independence, through a combination of institutional, resource arrangements and financial support. This relates to freedom of choice and voices of women. Assumed that at the beginning of Year2, participants of cycle1 will have greater access to income options and increased cash earning, gradually improved by means of economic solvency, food security and assets ownership. Would take longer time for second and third participants and continuing for 2-3 years. Social, neighborhood bonding and solidarity is strengthened because contribution of initiative project, expected to last beyond the project period say 3rd years.

**Beneficiary:** Identify 10% bottom poor (direct participants): The GOB strategy document states that poverty is a broad front. It is related to income levels, food security, quality of life, asset bases, human resource capacities, vulnerability and coping strategies, human security and initiative horizons. A similar concept is covered by MDG. A recent study conducted by AID-COMILLA using FGDs identified following major problem, mentioned by extreme poor households: No source of income; Lack of HHs productive assets/ resource (especially livestock); Poor infrastructure and limited/no access to market; Poor health condition, less access to hygienic latrine and safe drinking water; No electricity; Lack of quality vegetable seeds); Lack of knowledge and skills. Thus, project found the initiative very much relevant to address the problems.

**Targeting Criteria:**

<b>Compulsory</b> (It means when the verification team goes in field to validate the proposed participants house holds list, each and every single criteria must match with the participants house holds}	<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	Income generating asset worth less then Taka 5,000 (Livestock-1, (Minor Cattle) or 04 goats or 30 poultry and others
		No access to productive land Women with up to 01 pair of gold ear rings and 01 nose ring
	<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>	Not a member of any MFI
<b>Supplementary</b>	<b>Proxy Indicator</b>	Less then 150 days days/year income earnings opportunities as day laborers
		Female headed households
		Poor quality of the house made of grass roof, patchwork of katcha materials and very poor tin shade
		No more then 01 earning member in the households
		Severe food insecurity-less than 03 meals a day for at least 04 months in a year.

To identify the participants appropriately the project will apply adaptive criteria as defined by donor, which covers the following targeting criteria and indicators:

**First order criteria:** must be applied in targeting the extreme poor households focusing female-headed households and separated women.

A. Few assets:

1. Few livestock – may have access to one cow on a shared basis but no ownership of the cattle, may own up to 2 goats and up to 10 poultry birds.
2. Land size up to 0.05 acres including homestead/ courtyard.
3. Negligible amount of jewelry.
4. No productive or income-generating assets (rickshaw, van, boat, sewing machine, farm tools, fishing gears).

**Second order criteria and indicators:**

1. Low livelihood potential:
  - 1.1. Daily labour is of an insufficient amount (less than 150 days per year).
  - 1.2. Domestic service in return for food and minimal or no wage and children who also work (under age 14) rag picking, in shops, restaurants, as porters.
2. Poor food security: Periodic or continual food shortage (at least 6 months with only 1-2 meals/day).
3. Vulnerable:
  - 3.1. Female-headed households (widows, divorced, separated or abandoned women)
  - 3.2. No savings or assets to sell to meet unexpected expenses.
4. Inadequate shelter: Poor quality housing – grass roof, patchwork of katcha materials, not weatherproof or flood proof.
5. Weak human resources (knowledge and skill, education/ literacy, social capital).

**Graduation model for lifting people out of poverty** is grounded in AID-COMILLA's understanding of extreme poverty as powerlessness, and the identification of limited and fragile livelihood opportunities, social inequalities and weak governance as the underlying cause of extreme poverty in rural areas. Graduation out of extreme poverty depends on the extent to which a household is able to achieve or be impacted by shifts in the interrelated domain of changes. These domains of changes refer to economic, social and political dimensions of empowerment which make up AID-COMILLA's theory of change; Enabling extreme poor people in rural areas to sustainably overcome the barriers that prevent them asserting their rights. The economic, social and political dimensions of empowerment are drawn as the major axes in the tree which provides a graphical representation of the ALO graduation module. These axes define the gradually expanding pool of capabilities and freedoms of the project's extreme poor target population. Scope for wider replication and sustainability in terms of women economic empowerment and a direct contribution of maximum benefits to eradicate extreme poverty are the logic/rationale for funding.

**Long term objectives:**

- Improved livelihoods security of extreme poor vulnerable households and lifting them from extreme poverty.
- Strengthened social cohesiveness and solidarity amongst the target participants and other community members.

**Immediate/ Short term objectives:**

- Create alternative income generating sources
- Increased homestead productivity
- Improved nutritional status of households members
- Awareness on basic rights and entitlements

## The Lesson Learned / Graduation Report

**Background :** The project is an innovative type programme being implemented by AID-Comilla at Parsuram Upazila of Feni District with financial and technical support from SHIREE under their “Innovation Fund – Round1” programme and funded under DFID Economic Empowerment of the Poorest (EEP) initiatives. The project covers Conditional Asset Transfer, beneficiaries training on livelihoods, IGA, Livestock Service Programme, Market Development, Vegetable Gardening, and Local Service Provider (LSP) Development etc.

**Goal of the ALO Project:** The goal of the project is to reduce extreme poverty and hunger in the proposed working area. The project will enable both the British and Bangladesh Governments to fulfil their commitment to the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and specifically for SHIREE, Goal 1 (eradicate extreme poverty & hunger) and Goal 2 (achieve universal primary education), by 2015.

**Purpose of the ALO Project:** The ALO project is working exclusively with female headed households (HHs) to generate alternative livelihoods options, strengthen social cohesiveness amongst target beneficiaries and their community, increase HH productive assets, and ensure food security during lean season.

**However, the project has two defined areas as its purpose:** a) Enhanced alternative livelihoods option and income generation of 1,500 extreme poor households sustainable in coastal areas; b) Strengthened social cohesiveness and solidarity amongst the target beneficiaries and the community. The project aims to create access for females to new income generating options and increase household productive assets and food security in specific nutritionally poor time periods.

**The lower levels of outcomes are to:** (1) Strengthen and enhance capacity of the extreme poor households to manage livestock and produce home grown nutrition and cash crop vegetables and fruits. (2) Develop Local Service Providers (LSPs) as part of a community-based technical support system. (3) Induce Local Service Providers (LSPs) to be more responsive towards extreme poor women’s needs and establish linkages and access to the local markets for economic growth.

**Long term objectives:** (1) To improve livelihoods security of extreme poor vulnerable households and lifting them from extreme poverty. (2) To strengthen social cohesiveness and solidarity amongst the target beneficiaries and other community members.

**Immediate/Short term objectives:** (1) Create alternative income generating sources; (2) Increase homestead productivity (3) Improve nutritional status of households members; (4) Raise awareness on basic rights and entitlements

### **Methodology and approaches of the project:**

- ✓ AID-COMILLA has been working with Chars Livelihoods Programme (CLP) which is funded by DFID. In that project AID-COMILLA works with extreme poor HHs in Kurigram Chars, provides them Cattle (Asset) for income generation. The purpose of the CLP project is to help the HHs improve their income generation which has positive impact towards their livelihoods and food security. The current innovation is taking this idea which is proven and tested by AID-COMILLA in the Chars of Kurigram and adding a 'Conditional Asset Transfer'. In ALO project, the primary beneficiary, whom AID-COMILLA will provide productive assets like heifer, they would transfer their calves to other beneficiaries of their status free of cost. The

purpose of this project is not only income generation and food security but also building the community fellow feelings as well as solidarity.

- ✓ Through the innovation each targeted HH will receive assets worth around BDT 15,000.00 (asset transfer for one time, supplementary food cost @250 BDT per month in kind for 12 months)
- ✓ The beneficiary will preferably be given a heifer with other facilities and support e.g. supplementary feed, de-worming and vaccination medication, hands-on cattle husbandry and management training, and backstop support and advice.
- ✓ Supply of vegetable seeds as cash and nutritious crop for the households.
- ✓ The beneficiaries take care of the given asset and apply necessary measures to inseminate their heifers (preferably through artificial insemination – AI) and subsequent rearing/fattening of offspring. The beneficiaries will be the owner of a heifer (whose estimated market value will stand at Taka 25,000 after 6 months of rearing) and that will be replicated within and beyond the project period.
- ✓ The innovation helps beneficiaries to earn additional income by selling milk every day at an approximate value of Taka 40.00. This will be continued within and beyond the project life.
- ✓ This innovation helps them to increase soil fertility and contribute to maintaining a healthy environment using the cow-dung for fertilizer instead of buying chemical fertilizers. Use of dung as a fuel will also help stop use of wood as a fuel source. Both will contribute to HH savings as they will not need to purchase wood or fertilizer.
- ✓ Having the first calf, the beneficiary rear the calf up to 06 (six) months. Then she donates the first calf to a neighbour who qualifies to become a project beneficiary. If it is a male calf, the beneficiary rears it as a beef cow and after 18 months she sells it and purchase a Heifer. AID-COMILLA ensures that intra beneficiaries assets transfers take place in time and quality.

#### **Expected outputs of the innovation:**

- ✓ 1,500 women of extreme poor households and 15 potential LSPs are provided with awareness and skill development training by EOP.
- ✓ Heifer and stipend in kinds provided directly to 750 households in Yr1 and replicated to the 1,500 extreme poor households in Yr2 and Yr3 respectively.
- ✓ 1,500 extreme poor households engaged in heifer management and income generating activities
- ✓ 1,500 targeted households provided vegetables seeds and engaged in improved homestead vegetable production.
- ✓ Increased productive assets lifting from poverty
- ✓ Established linkage of working communities with local markets and middle men.

#### **Major project activities:**

- ✓ Inception meetings; Staff appointment, office establishment/renovation & staff orientation

- ✓ Selection of project working villages
- ✓ Finalize detailed implementation plan (strategic and tactical)
- ✓ Design internal monitoring tools and system; establish project baseline and revalidate the targets
- ✓ Ensure necessary de-worming and vaccination by the NGO for the asset purchased
- ✓ Regular follow up and veterinary support services for the assets by the technical staff of the NGO
- ✓ Assist the participants/beneficiaries in profitable marketing and reinvest for earning further profit
- ✓ Selection of targeted households and paravets
- ✓ Distribution of assets and stipend in kinds to the beneficiaries
- ✓ Capacity building training and awareness session
- ✓ Technical & back-stop support including feeding, artificial insemination and vaccinate the heifers
- ✓ Mobilize IGA/small entrepreneurs groups and establish Linkage with local institutions/markets
- ✓ Capacity building of natural leaders/disaster volunteers with the assistance of other allied organizations working on disaster preparedness, response and mitigation
- ✓ Accumulate local resources to mitigate and coop disaster shocks

## **LESSION LEARNT BY YEAR**

### **YEAR 1: SEPTEMBER 2009-AUGUST 2010**

The first year activities of the project cover the period from September 2009 to August 2010. The inception period of the project totalled 4 months from September 2009 to December 2009 during which the targeting and selection criteria were developed. By December 2010 Aid-Comilla had selected 750 BHHs, all verified by shiree. Each had been transferred a heifer and provided initial training in cattle rearing. Vaccinations, de-worming and vitamin supplements were regularly provided through the enlisted 15 Livestock Service Providers (LSPs). As of December 2010, 204 BHHs had started receiving milk from their cattle, approximately 4,150 litres of milk was produced in the first 4 months. All 750 BHHs had been using cow dung as fuel and saving Tk.100 per month (Annual Report 2010). Also 61 BHHs from the second round had been selected, verified by shiree, and included in the transfer list. 808 BHHs had been provided with fodder cuttings and seed of jumbo and Napier grass. Many of the BHHs cultivated jumbo grass in groups on plots of 5 to 10 decimals owned by local government or borrowed from neighbours with permission. During project design Aid-Comilla calculated a mature heifer would cost approximately Tk. 15,000. During the inception phase Aid-Comilla learnt that, within the local and nearby markets, heifer costs were in the range of Tk.16, 000 - 17, 000. This was due to a shortage of heifers in the local market. Aid-Comilla requested shiree management to consider the issue and approve higher procurement cost heifers. Aid-Comilla learnt that some target BHHs were so extremely poor that they did not agree to undertake cattle rearing because of their inability to bear the feeding and other management costs, without

project support (approximately 50-60% of the total cattle rearing cost). The Annual Report notes that many BHHs found it difficult to feed their own families let alone livestock. They also learnt that some beneficiaries could not afford to construct cattle sheds from their own means.

The Annual Report 2010 highlights other challenges faced by Aid-Comilla. Some animals had to be replaced through finances from the contingency budget due to poor performing heifers. In addition, Aid-Comilla learnt that semen for AI collected from the government livestock department gave a very poor rate of conception, whilst semen collected from BRAC centres produced better results. Non-availability of vaccines was also a problem. Contextual problems also centred on theft of cattle by smugglers close to the Indian border, leading to BHHs keeping livestock within their sleeping quarters at night. A major setback for Aid-Comilla in its first year arose when a flash flood adversely affected the area. There was significant damage with most areas seeing more than 20% of land flooded, with 80% land flooding in a few extreme cases. Around 20-80% of BHH's vegetables, 20-80% of BHH's fodder and about 75% of BHH's compost were destroyed in the flash flood. Due to heavy rainfall, most BHH's rice straw was also destroyed so cattle feed scarcity occurred and as a result the price of cattle feed increased. Where Aid-Comilla, according to the SILPA Report 2010, had done well includes the tracking of household inputs (all participants had a passbook to record their project activities) and developing clear monthly and quarterly output figures. However, the SILPA Report highlights that progress had been slower than originally planned, in part due to the flash flooding. 120 BHHs had received agricultural training and livestock training, 435 BHHs have received monthly stipends, 23 cattle had successfully received AI and 720 BHHs had received quality summer vegetable seeds for homestead gardening.

The report mentions that Aid-Comilla argued that delays had been caused by a prolonged inception period, unavailability of purchasable heifers in the local market and the lack of anthrax and FMD vaccinations. ALO stopped purchasing heifers for a two week period as middle-men were artificially increasing prices. The report mentions that some of these factors are reasonable but that as an experienced cattle asset transfer partner, Aid-Comilla should have been able to plan well ahead for vaccine procurement. Aid-Comilla worked extensively with local government and regularly held meetings at district and upazila level to share information and learning's from the project. It also reported that the NGO would like shiree's help to hold a bigger workshop at the end of the project to share all three years of learning and to showcase its successes, as there was some scepticism at the project inception workshop. The OPR report also pointed out that the heifers procured for the project required very close monitoring from staff with a high level of technical knowledge, expressing some concern that the existing staff did not have enough expertise in this specific field.

AID-COMILLA and shiree agreed that a shiree Programme Manager would take a more active role in assisting with the vital technical aspects of the project. A significant concern emanating from the first year stems from a criticism from the SILPA Report over Aid-Comilla's innovation model whereby it is cited that (as of May 2010) the transfer model was unlikely to meet the project's purpose level targets. Although Aid-Comilla had transferred the first assets to the first round BHHs early in Year 1, only 12 heifers were purchased pregnant and only 20 had subsequently given birth by the 8th month of the project. The review called into question the feasibility of 750 calf transfers happening by the end of Year 1, with major project-level implications for the second cycle calf transfer. The issue was also raised as a significant point in the OPR 2010. The OPR mentions that Aid-Comilla had not decided on the exact revision of the model, but the options of goat transfers to second year BHHs or buying calves for transfer at market were options Aid-Comilla came up with in light of the projected project short falls. Another option presented included selling non-pregnant cows and buying two small heifers and providing one heifer to primary beneficiaries in the second year and another one to secondary beneficiaries in the third year. Another criticism stemming from the SILPA Report mentions that transferring cattle in the final year of the programme would not be beneficial for those BHHs unless they received a full year's support from

Aid-Comilla, identifying a need to ensure that the calves raised for transfer are well maintained and cared for.

## **YEAR 2: SEPTEMBER 2010-AUGUST 2011**

A significant revision to project activities in Year 2 was the decision by Aid- Comilla and shiree to revise the number of BHHs down from 1,850 to 1,500. The 300 BHHs to have been selected in the third year of the project were cut and the decision made that the remaining time of the project would focus on the calf transfer from the primary 750 BHHs selected in the first year to the remaining 750 BHHs over Year 2 and 3 of the project. In Year 2 AID-COMILLA selected 505 BHHs from the remaining 750 BHHs to be covered over Year 2 and 3. This was above the target of 398 BHHs that had been set at the beginning of the year. The target for Year 2 for calf transfer was 398 calves, the same number as the target number of beneficiaries. Aid-Comilla was able to transfer 323 calves to the new set of beneficiaries, an achievement of 81%.

Aid-Comilla successfully completed refresher calf management training for the 750 BHHs from the first year and an additional 281 BHHs from the second year selection. Fodder and seed supply was provided 207 BHHs to ensure better feeding for cattle. The feeding support for heifer and calf was increased to Tk.250 per month for 12 months. In the December 2010 Self-Review Workshop Report

Aid-Comilla noted that the poor quality heifers that were selected in the first year originated from the nearby Indian hilly areas and therefore it took time to acclimatise. Aid-Comilla further explained that project activities from then on tried to get the best out of a poor original stock of cattle. In the report Aid-Comilla expressed that the budgeted amount was not enough to procure good quality heifers and that in future projects the budget should be increased to reflect this. In addition, Aid-Comilla noted that it rushed to meet the deadline of purchasing heifer from the local market and had to pay a higher than normal market rate at the time. Aid-Comilla expressed that in any future project it would ensure selection to suit the specific purposes of the project and should avoid the border area market. In the report Aid-Comilla reflected that more careful selection is needed in purchasing of heifers to avoid selection of animals with unsound reproductive capacity.

A similar lesson related to purchase of cattle is that of transportation. In the same report it is mentioned that there is no budget for cattle transport, and that therefore beneficiaries did not show interest to buy heifers from distant markets. A significant lesson learnt from the flash flood in the first year was that staff needed more training on disaster management and disaster risk preparedness. Aid-Comilla trained all BHHs on 'coping with disaster' but noted that extra financial support is necessary in future. In the December 2010 Self-Review Workshop Report Aid-Comilla suggested that heifers be kept on raised beds during times of heavy rain or flooding. Feeding support was an issue raised consistently in Year 2 with the suggestion that stipend needed to be increased to ensure proper nutrition for heifer and calf. Cattle feed and fodder prices remained high rendering BHHs unable to procure from the market.

Aid-Comilla suggested that it could motivate BHHs to use fallow land, roadsides and the banks of rivers and streams (khasland), and ensure fodder cultivation through large scale land leasing. In the March 2011 Self-Review Workshop Report it is noted that calves were not receiving sufficient milk from their mothers due to poor feeding practices and therefore milk production was very low due to lack of green grass and high market prices for concentrate feeds like oil-cake, molasses and pulse bran. Only a small number of BHHs could collect grass from elsewhere for their heifers and cows. Aid-Comilla started to supply milk for naturally very weak calves but also suggested that calf-starters should be given to the weakest calves. A big issue from the first and second year was that of inadequate feeding and management, with further knock-on effects resulting in immaturity, delayed maturity and reproductive problems reducing conception rates for cattle. The lesson from this is educating and motivating BHHs for proper feeding and management of cattle.

In the March 2011 report Aid-Comilla suggested that LSPs needed to be trained more and motivated to provide better service to BHHs on feeding management, treatment and fodder cultivation. Vitamin and mineral-supplementing medicines were given out in the second year to improve health conditions of cattle. In the same report, Aid-Comilla suggested that stipend support should be continued beyond the calf transfer as stipend is given for one year after the purchase of the initial heifer. However, Aid-Comilla learnt that some BHHs' heifers were not producing calves from the second issue of heifers, leading to disinterest of some BHHs in rearing their heifers, so further support is needed and motivation given to help rear heifers to produce a calf. The health of most cattle was reported to not be very good so Aid-Comilla decided to ensure routine de-worming every 6 months. It was recognised that de-worming every 4 months is preferable but not feasible, due to the cost and inadequate supply of medicine. Another issue was that of poor quality fluid semen provided by Department of Livestock Services AI workers, with Aid-Comilla citing conception rates as very poor.

To mitigate this Aid-Comilla contracted BRAC AI workers operating in the working area to provide more reliable frozen semen for AI. AID-COMILLA suggested that a separate cadre of AI workers is needed for this component alone and that LSPs can be trained as AI workers. In the March Self-Review Workshop Report Aid-Comilla reported that the LSPs showed a keener interest in preventative vaccines and primary disease treatment. By August, Aid-Comilla reported in the August report that the LSPs were continuing to participate in preventative vaccination in the area. The LSPs also extended first aid and primary animal health care to BHHs and other cattle of the community. The project provided an honorarium for the vaccinations. Aid-Comilla learnt that establishing linkages between the LSPs and the Upazila livestock office was important.

As part of the overall project package, Aid-Comilla provided improved vegetable seed and skill development training for homestead vegetable gardening as Aid-Comilla learnt many BHHs lacked year round income. In the March report the NGO recognised that BHHs need access to supporting supplementary IGAs, which is why it promoted homestead gardening as an option that could work according to their budget. In the August 2011 Self-Review Workshop Report Aid-Comilla noted that as heifers do not provide year round income and homestead gardening was only enough for home food security, it would consider adding a second IGA in the third year if possible with budget provision.

### **YEAR 3: SEPTEMBER 2011-SEPTEMBER 2012**

In the December 2011 Self-Review Workshop Report it was recognised by Aid-Comilla that old and infirm beneficiaries created limitations to project implementation. It realised that they needed to work more closely with this particular group. In the report Aid-Comilla again reported that old age BHHs should have minimum capacity to rear and manage heifers and should be physically fit for work. It reported that it was working more closely with this group but that they were ultimately a limitation to project success. The lesson learnt was that beneficiaries should be physically fit to care for livestock and related work as it requires intense support and attention. Furthermore, during the same self-review workshop Aid-Comilla noted that BHHs showed a greater interest in giving their calves to other BHHs and that BHHs had been transferring and sharing ideas, knowledge, experience and interest among other BHHs. Aid-Comilla reported that it was motivating all BHHs through the weekly group meetings so that they could learn from each other and help each other improve their livelihoods. Aid-Comilla reported that most BHHs had a desire to learn new things about their livelihoods but that emphasizing the practice of new ideas is important to sustain and recover from any difficulties.

The final quarter of Aid-Comilla's ALO project focused on developing a robust exit strategy with support of shiree programme staff. In order to prepare for the phase out of the project, they also prepared contingency plans to support any disadvantaged beneficiaries.

## **CONCLUSION**

AID-COMILLA delivered heifers to the original 750 BHHs in the first year but had to revise its innovation model as it was unable to meet the targets of transferring calves to the 1,050 remainder BHHs in project years 2 and 3. The number of BHHs was cut from 1,850 to 1,500 and the calf transfer was stretched over the remainder of the project time from the end of year 1. This meant that the original 750 BHHs that had received heifers would transfer their first-born calf to the second set of 750 BHHs over the last 2 years of the project. In addition, AID-COMILLA rushed to procure 750 heifers in the inception period and as a result ended up with low quality foundation stock of heifers. The project suffered another major blow during the flash flooding in the first year. Poor feed and fodder availability meant that BHHs struggled to adequately feed heifers. The low conception rates may be attributed to this leading to a much lower than projected number of calf births in the first year, thus impacting on the innovation model and resulting its subsequent revision. However, AID-COMILLA was able to meet most other targets and provide training to all of its BHHs. It constantly strove to address the issue of poor cattle feeding management and was able to successfully develop its LSPs. Many of the BHHs saw increases in income due to the project activities (see Chapter 2) and the project was able to get back on track after an initial inconsistent year.

## **ISSUES REGARDING SCALABILITY**

Aid-Comilla required considerable technical support regarding their livestock intervention. If the project were to be scaled up, widespread technical support (e.g. vaccinations) may present considerable constraints to project activities. Strong linkages with the Department of Livestock Services or other service providers would be critical to success. Furthermore at a larger scale the procurement of adequate high quality stock would be even more challenging with the risk of disrupting the market (i.e. driving up prices). Careful planning and sequencing of market activities (for buying or selling) would hence be critical.

**A publication of**

**Association for Integrated Development-Comilla (AID-COMILLA)**

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