



## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Key findings of the Impact Evaluation and the Socio-Economic Assessment of COVID 19 on urban poor commissioned by UNDP Bangladesh under its flagship project – Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP) will be presented.

## Mind the Gap: Evidence-Based Programming and Policy Dialogue for Urban Poor



May 31, Monday  
7 PM Bangladesh Time  
1 PM Greenwich Mean Time



**Chief Guest**  
**Mr. M. A. Mannan, MP**  
Hon. Minister of Planning,  
Govt. of the People's  
Republic of Bangladesh



**Chair**  
**Sudipto Mukerjee**  
Resident Representative,  
UNDP Bangladesh



**Moderator**  
**Anir Chowdhury**  
Advisor A2i,  
UNDP Bangladesh



**Presenter**  
**Dr. Abul Barkat**  
Human Development  
Research Centre (HDRC)



**Panelist**  
**Anowarul Haq**  
Social Development  
Adviser, Climate Change  
and Environment Team,  
(FCDO)



**Panelist**  
**Bushra Hassan**  
RBM, Monitoring and  
Evaluation Specialist,  
Regional Bureau for  
Asia-Pacific, UNDP



**Panelist**  
**Shagun Sabarwal**  
Director of Policy,  
Training and  
Communications,  
J-PAL South Asia



**Presenter**  
**Dr. Arjun Bedi**  
International Institute of Social  
Studies (ISS), The Netherlands



**Panelist**  
**Mohammad Tajul Islam**  
Director General,  
Bangladesh Bureau of  
Statistics (BBS)



**Vote of Thanks**  
**Ashekur Rahman**  
Assistant Resident  
Representative,  
UNDP Bangladesh



**Presenter**  
**Ellora Guhathakurta**  
M&E Specialist, LIUPCP,  
UNDP Bangladesh

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**GEI**  
Global  
Evaluation  
Initiative



## BACKGROUND

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** launched a five-year national project (2018-2023), the Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP), to reduce urban poverty. The project is being implemented in collaboration with by the **Local Government Division (LGD)** and funded by the **UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)**.

The LIUPCP aims to support balanced, sustainable, and pro-poor urban development in Bangladesh. The project will contribute to more effective and inclusive urbanization by working across three different levels of intervention: the **community level; municipal level and national level**. The project is being implemented in **19 Cities/Towns (11 City Corporations and 8 Municipalities)** across the Country with a focus on reaching out to the most marginalized populations amongst the urban poor.

To strengthen the evidence base and to measure the results, the LIUPCP in partnership with the Consortium Partners - **Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)** and the **International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Netherlands** – is carrying out a **Quasi-Experimental Impact Evaluation**. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, LIUPCP carried out a **Socio-Economic Assessment (SEA)** to understand the short term, medium-term and long-term impact of COVID -19 on the urban poor communities in LIUPCP areas across 19 Cities/Towns. This **Knowledge Sharing Platform** aims to promote cross learning through –

1. Sharing Innovative approaches in **equity-focused and gender-responsive Evaluation Methodologies**
2. Using the findings of the Impact Evaluation and Socio-Economic Study for **policy dialogue on urban poor**

## AGENDA

### Welcome Remarks

Moderator: Anir Chowdhury, Advisor A2i, UNDP Bangladesh

### 1900 - 1910

Chief Guest: M. A. Mannan MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Chair: Sudipto Mukerjee, Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh

### Presentation

Introduction to LIUPCP: Ellora Guhathakurta, M&E Specialist, LIUPCP, UNDP

Impact Evaluation Methodology: Dr Arjun Bedi, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Netherlands

### 1910 - 1945

Triangulation of Findings: Dr Abul Barkat, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)

### Panel Discussion

Mohammad Tajul Islam, Director General, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

Anowarul Haq, Social Development Adviser, Climate Change and Environment Team, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)

### 1945 - 2025

Bushra Hassan, RBM, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific, UNDP

Shagun Sabarwal, Director Policy, training and communications, J-PAL SA and Director CLEAR SA

### Vote of Thanks

### 2025 – 2030

Ashekur Rahman, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh



## ANNEX: BIOGRAPHY

### **M. A. Mannan MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Muhammad Abdul Mannan, MP joined the former Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) cadre in 1974 and served in the Government of Bangladesh in various positions, including as Deputy Commissioner of Kishorgonj, Mymensing and Chittagong Districts. He worked as Joint Secretary (Political) in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Director General in the Prime Minister's office and Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau. He also served in the Bangladesh Permanent Mission in Geneva as Economic Minister. He retired from Government service in 2003 as Chairman of Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC). He joined Bangladesh Awami League in 2005 and returned as a Member of Parliament (MP) on the Bangladesh Awami League ticket in 2008. In the 9th Parliament, he served as Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts. He also served as a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Defense. In the latter position, he represented the Honorable Prime Minister. Having returned a second time as Member of Parliament in 2014, he was appointed in the new Cabinet of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as State Minister of Finance on 12th January 2014. In April same year, he was given the concurrent responsibility of State Minister the Ministry of Planning. After the Eleventh Parliament election, he was appointed Minister of the Ministry of Planning on 7th January 2019.

### **Sudipto Mukerjee, Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh**

Sudipto Mukerjee is an Architect & Town Planner with more than two decades of experience in international development. Sudipto has previously worked with the Government of India (1992-1997), UK Department for International Development (1998-March 2005 as Infrastructure and Urban Advisor) and UN-Habitat (2005-2009, Head of Country Office). He joined UNDP in September 2009 in the Iraq Country Office and has since worked as Country Director in Sierra Leone (August 2013-October 2016) & UNDP Bangladesh (October 2016-November 2018). He assumed the responsibility of the Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh from December 2018. Sudipto comes with diverse crisis management experience having worked in Iraq (Conflict), Sierra Leone (Ebola Pandemic) and Bangladesh (Rohingya Refugee). Sudipto is also affiliated with the UN Staff System College as an Expert on Strategic Planning.

### **Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor, Aspire to Innovate (a2i), UNDP Bangladesh**

Anir Chowdhury is the Policy Advisor of the a2i Programme of the ICT Division and the Cabinet Division of the Government of Bangladesh supported by the UNDP. In this capacity, he leads the formation of a whole-of-society innovation ecosystem in Bangladesh through massive technology deployment, extensive capacity development, integrated policy formulation, whole-of-government institutional reform, and an Innovation Fund. His work on innovation in public service has developed interesting and replicable models of service delivery decentralization, public-private partnerships, and transformation of a traditional bureaucracy into a forward-looking, citizen-centric service provider. He is a member of the Prime Minister's National Digital Task Force, Education Minister's National ICT in Education Task Force, UNESCAP Regional Steering Group for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS), Co-Founder and Board Member of South-South Network for Public Service Innovation (SSN4PSI) and Co-Founder of South-Asia Civil Registration Network (CR8).

### **Ashekur Rahman, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh**

Ashekur Rahman is the Assistant Resident Representative (ARR) of UNDP Bangladesh. Currently, he heads UNDP's democratic and economic governance portfolios and brings rich years of experience in the development sector, both at the national and international domain, of which a decade he served within the UN system particularly in the areas of urban governance, social security policies, poverty reduction, and institutional reforms. Before joining UNDP, he worked for CARE International in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Madagascar. At UNDP, Ashek led high-impact, successful policy initiatives and projects such as the Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction Programme, widely known as UPPR (2009-2015)—the largest urban programme worldwide. Other notable achievements include providing technical assistance to the SAARC Secretariat to design a comprehensive slum upgrading programme for South Asian cities (2015), formulating UNDP's sustainable urbanization strategy (2016), and designing as well as formulating the National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme (2018-2023) – the largest urban SDG programme in Bangladesh and UNDP's single largest Urban programme globally.

### **Mohammad Tajul Islam, Director General, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)**

Mohammad Tajul Islam brings over 30 years of experience in government sector. In 1991, he started his first job with Khulna Divisional Commissioner Office as Assistant Commissioner. He served as Deputy Director General before joining as Director General in Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

**Dr Abul Barkat, Human Development Research Centre (HDRC)**

Dr Abul Barkat is one of the most illustrious Professors of Economics at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Popularly known as People's economist, Dr. Barkat is one of the most reputed and respected political economists in and beyond Bangladesh. As an erudite scholar and invincible social thinker, he, to his credit, has many high-quality research works (research books, edited volumes, journal articles, monographs and thought-provoking papers for national and international conferences) on multidimensional issues of human development.

**Dr Arjun Bedi, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), The Netherlands**

Arjun Singh Bedi is Professor of Development Economics and Deputy Rector for Research at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Also, he holds positions at the University of Bonn. His research focuses on labour and human resource economics in developing countries. His work has been published in several international economics and development studies journals.

**Anowarul Haq, Social Development Adviser, Climate Change and Environment Team, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)**

Anowarul Haq is presently working as Social Development Adviser in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He has more than 20 years of work experience in the development field that include participatory action and research, strategic impact inquiry, participatory impact assessment and underlying causes of poverty and marginalisation analysis is an expert in social protection work. He also has intensive experiences on the community-led total development approach, pro-poor and inclusive development with local government and influencing policies. Anowarul is a member of the Climate Change and Environment Team of FCDO Bangladesh and works as the office lead for social protection work. Before joining DFID Bangladesh, Anowarul worked with CARE Bangladesh as Director for Extreme Rural Poverty Programme.

**Bushra Hassan, RBM, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific, UNDP**

Bushra has worked for over 20 years with the private sector, academia, consultancies and the UN on the areas of international development, focusing on monitoring and oversight mechanisms as well as programme management. Currently working with UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific she supports the implementation of strong monitoring and evaluation systems, through capacity development, support and advice. She has rolled out monitoring and evaluation systems in her work in Somalia and Pakistan. Other than UNDP she has worked with the Polio Eradication Initiative with UNICEF and Women, Peace and Security Programme of UNWomen. Prior to her engagement with the UN, she has worked with Premier-Oil, LEAD-International, Hagler Bailly and the Stockholm Environment Institute.

**Shagun Sabarwal, Director Policy, training and communications, J-PAL SA and Director CLEAR SA.**

Shagun Sabarwal leads J-PAL South Asia's engagements with governments, donors, and civil society organizations to initiate new research, disseminate policy lessons, and scale up evidence-based programs. As Director of CLEAR South Asia, she promotes the centre's mission to strengthen the monitoring, evaluation, learning systems, and data use of decision-makers in the region through capacity building and advisory services. She provides technical and strategic direction to J-PAL South Asia's partnerships with state and central governments, including the Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO) at NITI Aayog, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), and the State Governments of Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab. Prior to joining J-PAL, Shagun was an Evaluation Specialist with 3ie and a Postdoctoral Fellow at Population Council.

**Ellora Guhathakurta, M&E Specialist, Managing for Impact (M4i) Unit, Livelihoods Improvement of Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP), UNDP**

Ellora Guhathakurta joined as the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist with the Livelihoods Improvement for Urban Poor Communities Project (LIUPCP), UNDP Bangladesh and leads the Managing for Impact (M4i) Unit. Ellora is a development professional with over 20 years of field, recipient government, NGO, UN and donor experience at Regional, National and Sub National levels on a range of programme, policy and corporate work. She combines highly developed technical skills in Programme Management and Monitoring and Evaluation across a wide range of portfolio. Her career has been built on progressively challenging positions ranging through: field-based staff and Project Coordinator in NGOs to Programme Officer for State and National Level portfolios in DFID India, DFID UK and DFID Ghana to Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist with UN Women MCO, India; UNDP New York and UNICEF India. In her last overseas assignment, she was deployed in Liberia, West Africa by the UN Mission's Ebola Multi-Partner Trust Fund to coordinate, plan and monitor with UN agencies and the Government for emergency response and recovery.