HYSAWA CASE STUDIES
Foreword

This book presents some of the case studies developed under different HYSAWA projects during 2007-16.

HYSAWA (Hygiene, Sanitation and Water Supply) is a non-profit financing organization, registered under the Companies Act, 1994. Established in 2007, the organization primarily aims at mobilizing resources for and supporting capacity development of local governments and communities to empower them to manage decentralized WatSan services in Bangladesh.

The development partners and LGD both view HYSAWA as a unique organization in many ways. This is because 1) it is a quasi-government organization with a Governing Board headed by LGD Secretary; 2) all of its projects are implemented through Local Government Organizations (LGIs) that were given mandate to deliver climate-resilient water and sanitation services; and 3) it builds LGIs’ administrative capacities as well not just for efficient service delivery, but also for expediting highly-searched decentralization process.

HYSAWA has facilitated establishment of necessary institutional arrangements within Union Parishads, and engaged private sector management firms and NGOs to provide capacity support to UPs. Some 14,000 UP functionaries were imparted with requisite capacity-building trainings so far to ensure service delivery in an effective, accountable and inclusive manner.

With HYSAWA’s financial and technical assistance, Union Parishads have successfully installed over 60,000 safe water points and 237 piped water systems, 3,500 institutional/public latrines. Hygiene messages to 9 million people at schools and communities, among others, by taking into consideration the views and priorities of local people, which indicates the success of HYSAWA’s governance initiatives.

The organization is governed by a Board which is chaired by the Secretary, Local Government Division of the Government of Bangladesh and comprised of representatives from ministries, Local Government Institutions (LGIs), civil society and development partners.

Our Donors

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

Switserland is a Member State of the European Union (EU)
CONTENT

01 CHILDREN ARE FUTURE PARENTS
02 CHILDREN TOO ARE AWARE OF HYGIENIC BEHAVIOUR
03 A CHILD'S PURSUIT FOR HYGIENIC PROMOTION
04 CHANGING LIVES IN SREEMOITOYA UNION
05 LIVING LIFE A NEW THANKS TO NITISHA
06 WATER HAS GIVEN US SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE
07 CARETAKER SHANAZ TAKING CARE IN MORE THAN ONE WAY
08 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER LOVELY KHATUN
09 AN ACCESSIBLE FRESH WATER SUPPLY
10 BLESSINGS FOR BETTER INCOME
11 BRINGING WATER TO A THIRSTY COMMUNITY
12 A DISCOVERY IN THE MUD NURSE
13 WATER BRINGS DIGNITY TO WOMEN
14 QUENCHING THIRST OF VILLAGE
15 SUSTAINABLE SAFE WATER OPTION
16 MY DREAM IS A SALTY PAN VILLAGE
17 ONLY THE LUXURY IN OUR LIFE
18 SAHAPUR BAZAAR COMMUNITY CAFÉ
19 WHERE THERE IS A WILL THERE IS A WAY RIGHT?
20 A PLACE IN GOVERNMENT FOR A BORN LEADER
21 NEW BEGINNING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT
22 PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE
Shulata Majumdar, a 23-year old community volunteer from Sriramkathi Union, of pirojpur expressed her excitement in a sharing meeting in the field. The volunteers are selected on the basis of their acceptance by the community, their willingness to spare time and their basic level of education. The best performing volunteers are often given awards in kind. Shulata has also been awarded once for her performance.

“Children are future parents and if they learn hygiene, sanitation and water use, they can then bring about these changes in their own children and that’s how life will change” She confirms.

Shulata is a college graduate and have been engaged with this work for over eight months. She proudly said she had made 100% sanitation coverage among 20 families she is responsible for. One tube well was installed by the UP with HYSAWA Fund for these families but is not enough, she pointed out. Working alongside her male counterparts, Shulata organizes monthly community meetings and provides practical training on hand-washing, menstrual hygiene, food hygiene and safe use of water.

With an audience consisting of mothers and children, Shulata’s training uses BCC materials such as posters, flip chart, flash cards and Ludu. Video shows and street dramas are also being planned. Shulata said women of her community now can access water within a short distance whereas in the past they used to cross the canal to fetch water, a task that cost them at least two hours a day. She aspires to have one more tube well in her community. The community has already identified, with her help, where the next tube well might be installed.

In HYSAWA funded programmes, there are, on an average, 100 such volunteers in each Union totaling to more than 40,000, of which more than 50% are women. They work during flexible hours purely on voluntary basis without any payment. These volunteers have received training on hygiene, sanitation and water supply from community workers and NGOs engaged by the Union following the government procurement procedure. The ultimate objective is to leave behind trained volunteers in the community to sustain these promotional activities when the project inputs are phased out. Shulata aspires to be a teacher in futuro and wants to teach children the things that she learned through her involvement in these activities.
CHILDREN TOO ARE AWARE OF HYGIENIC BEHAVIOUR

A pickle-seller used to sell various pickles to the school children. Soon after their orientation in the hygiene session, the four young boys noticed that the pickle-seller sells his food very unhygienically. He didn’t cover the pickles, flies are swarming around it and he doesn’t even wash his hands before serving to the students. At first, the Shihab, Rajib, Foyseal and Nasim tried to talk to the pickle-seller. They informed him that the way he was serving was highly unhygienic and that the students can fall ill for this. But, since they are mere children, the pickle-seller ignored. Despite telling the pickle-seller numerous times, he didn’t listen and kept serving pickles unhygienically.

Seeing this, Shihab and his friends approached their teachers for help. Even when the teachers told the pickle-seller to change his ways, he didn’t listen. Finally, after two weeks, with the help of the teachers, these 4 students drove the pickle-seller out of their school premises and told him never to return to their school. They took this drastic measure so that no student would fall victim to the pickle-seller’s unhygienic ways.

By doing such a brave thing, Shihab, Rajib, Foyseal and Nasim have set an example for their friends, teachers and everyone around them. They have showed that with a little bit of will and togetherness, being hygienic is not a difficult task at all. They are highly praised by everyone.

Peoples acceptance to behavioural changes indicates the success of a project. The programme is designed to bring school going children under hygiene promotion so that in future, they become the advocates for good hygiene practices. This is the story of four brave boys who are a ray of hope to this programme.

Mahilara Govt. Primary school is located in Barisal’s Gaurandi Upazila. Like others schools in this Upazila, students of this school also went through hygiene sessions conducted by NGO workers under HYSAWA Programme. Shihab, Rajib, Foyseal and Nasim are student of grade IV and active participants of the hygiene sessions.
Six-year-old **Orpa Majumdar** had contacted dysentery in her infancy. This disease had become so severe that she had been taken to a hospital where on-duty doctor injected sharp-pointed needle into her arms. Even now, two years later, little Orpa could still somehow recall that painful memory. Although she had been fully cured soon after, her disgust towards dysentery stays.

Orpa's mother Dipali Mondol is a member of Community Development Forum (CDF) in Magurkhali Union under Dumuria Upazila in Khulna. These CDFs are formed at community level with support of HYSAWA-SDC project to develop the capacity of community people and help them make hygiene, water supply and sanitation related plans for themselves.

Being a little child, Orpa follows her mother everywhere and becomes a regular attendee of the CDF meetings. In one such meeting, when she learnt that unhygienic practices result in waterborne diseases like dysentery, she thought it is this reason that had caused her experience syringe and needle in her early years. That of her feeling has brought an enormous change in her life, making her change the unhygienic habits once and for all.

First, she forced her mother to buy a hand-washing bucket which HYSAWA promotes as basic hygiene equipment. Since the bucket was bought, she never forgot to wash her hands with it and with soap before having meals and after using bathroom. She also persisted stubbornly that her parents clean their hands during these times, which they did. Over and above, she frequently persuades her playmates to wash hands and describes to them the effectiveness of hygiene practices that she has learnt from hygiene meetings.

"Frankly saying, we were not habituated to washing hands in a proper manner. It was her incessant persuasion that made us change our habit. Even now, if we forget to wash our hands, she never forgets to remind us to do that", Dipali Mondol said.

"I now believe every child has the potential to learn and help others to change for the better. Because this is what our little Orpa has shown us; she has shown what her true capacity is and how she can use this to bring desired changes in our attitudes," she added.
This is the place where I was born and grew up. I live here with my husband, one daughter aged 16 and one son, 19. I was five in 1971. Most of the people here then were very dirty. At that time the situation in my community was really bad and it is difficult to explain. Since then there has been a drastic change in hygiene behavior. Mostly in the last 2-3 years. People are more accepting of change than in the past. I think it is because of higher education levels, both formal education as well as awareness from radio and television messages.

I first started thinking about hygiene when all the children in this village were getting sick. I realized that only by washing hands you could reduce disease. When my youngest son was only three and a half years old he had serious diarrhea. It went on for 11 days. He now works as a salesman in Khulna.

As I realized the benefits of practicing simple hygiene steps I thought it would be better to share with others. I always have shared, but now as a HYSAVA project Community Volunteer I work in a more structured way to motivate others. I think messages about hand washing and safe water use are the most important things.

A deep tube well here was installed through HYSAVA in 2010. Around 30 to 35 families use this tube well. Before it was here I had to walk to a deep tube well over 1 km away. The water was with saline but we had no choice. There were shallow tube wells closer but they are contaminated with arsenic.

I get honor from people. I do this for the community and myself. I think results can only be achieved when everyone is involved. I work with 65 households in 3 villages. People are becoming more and more interested. I think we will get better and better. People will be ready to accept change.

Now that the season is changing and summer is coming children are getting affected by pneumonia, cough, fever and older people are suffering from fever and headaches too. Still, it is less than before. There is no diarrhea.
Akbar is an aged van driver. In a family of four, Akbar is the only earning member in his family. With limited resources, he is trying to educate his daughter and son and provide for this family. But there is more than this to Akbar’s case; he is diagnosed with arsenicosis. This happened back in 2005, when all the tubewells water across the country was tested by the government. Later, Akbar realised that both his father and uncle had died of arsenicosis, they were not aware about arsenic poisoning.

After being diagnosed with arsenicosis, Akbar changed the source for water for him and his family. He began brining water from various places, each at least 30 minutes walk away from his home. Sometimes he would walk, and if it was too far, he would take his van out to bring water. But, once after knowing, never did he touch the poisonous water again.

Life was difficult, but Akbar was managing by in 2013, when HYSAWA started working in Raipur, Madhukhali, Faridpur, Akbar was very eager to get a tube well near his house. So that no one is in his family or neighbours is affected by arsenicosis.

In the beginning, it was difficult to manage the community in CDF 701, ward no. 7, to raise money for community contribution. It seemed as though no one felt the need of a safe water point but Akbar himself. But he was adamant. This was once in a lifetime opportunity for him, and he did not want to let go of it. With the help of COs in this area, he came up with an idea. Akbar took a loan for BDT 6000, just so that he can pay for the contribution amount. His plan was to pay the amount for community contribution so that he doesn’t miss this opportunity, and later he will collect the respective amount from the neighbours. Things went according to plan.

The tubewell near his household is now set. The people are beginning to realise the difference. Slowly and gradually, they have started paying off the contribution amount too.

Akbar feels very lucky after receiving the deep tube well from HYSAWA. Unlike his father and uncle, at least he won’t die off arsenic poisoning. He lives a fitter and better life now.
STORY NO. 6

WATER HAS GIVEN US SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

One of the many goals for HYSAWA is to take safe water points and hygiene messages to the extremely poor and socially minor group. A case such as the Rishipara in Alipur, Satkhira couldn’t be more fitting.

Rishipara is under Alipur union in ward no-2. The community consists of at least 30 families, each with at least 5 family members... if not more. This is a much neglected community. In a mix of low-income Hindu and Muslim members, the people of this community live on roadside beside Kaliganj-Satkhira high road.

The land is not even theirs, however, they can account for at least four generations that have been living on the occupied lands. Most of men in this community work in fields for some petty cash, some are cobbler, some sweepers and some just smoke all day complaining about having no job to do.

The women would look after the children, cook and look after the wild boars that some families breed. For as long as anyone can remember in Rishipara, they have always lived poorly, both in terms of finance and hygiene.

When HYSAWA began working in this community, it was very difficult for the community organizer (COs) to conduct their sessions; the place was always unclean, smelled of wild boar and their leavings as well as open defecation. Most of the people are uneducated and prejudiced, so getting them to listen and comply was issue.

Despite these drawbacks, the CO kept doing her work. Gradually, when the people began warming up to the CO, one by one, they began talking about their problems. The biggest problem for them was the water point. There is a deep tube well about half-a-kilo from them, but it was socially inaccessible to them. More often than none, people would smirk at them; make them wait till everyone was done. Sometimes, they had even come away without water, simply because the people around told them to do so. Despite all these humiliation, the people of Rishipara continued going there because they had no other option. A safe water point here, was mandatory.

It’s been almost five months since a tube well was given here by HYSAWA. The community is extremely thankful. Not only that, they have learned to keep their surroundings clean and tidy. They are enjoying the benefits of having their own tube well, a healthier lifestyle and above all, a life without social objection.

These days, people from other surrounding areas also come here to take water, passersby stop here for a drink of safe water. Although a deep tube well and hygienic lifestyle cannot bring them jobs, however, it has certainly given them a slice of respect in the society.
I have been living here since birth; my mother purchased this land where my house is built 40 years ago. I lost my father in the liberation war. My mother could not stay in that place, the place where we were, because it was impossible to earn a living. She had no land and there were many shareholders. We moved here to support my mother. I was born at this time. Now I live in this village and grow rice on leased land. Some we sell and some we eat. This deep tube well was installed in December 2010. It is used by 10 families. Before this we used a shallow tubewell about ¼ km away. It contained arsenic.

I did not show symptoms of poisoning. Some others did, but no-one in my family. I had serious diarrhea twice and wasted a lot of money on this. One time, I remember, 10 years ago. I was sick for 12 days. I had to take oral and intravenous saline, other medication and bed rest. It cost around BDT 1500-2000 for the saline, and doctors fee. At that time we were earning BDT 3000-4000 per month.

Last October 2011 I did the caretaker training with HYSAWA project staff. Since then I’ve changed the washer once and checked the pump valve. In December I could not get water from the tube well so I opened the head. The check valve was faulty, it had become hard. I had to buy a replacement. It cost 35 Tk. The second time there was a problem I could tell that the washer was damaged. There was water in the body but it was not coming through the spout so the problem was in the bunker.

There is another caretaker too, a man, but he is now at work. He prepares locks and keys at Khulna New Market. In the training I also learnt about safe water use, I learnt about appearance. If it is dirty it is no good. I learnt to keep water covered in a pitcher and covered when being moved. As a Community Volunteer I’ve participated in all the training sessions; hygiene promotion, food hygiene, waste disposal, latrine hygiene. I disseminate what I learnt to others. In one month I do two to three meetings. My favorite topic is hygiene latrine improvement because more diseases and virus spread from here so if it is hygienic then most diseases are taken care of.

When it rains the land here is water logged. Last year many latrines were damaged. Some were repaired but others had no money, for that they need Union Parishad assistance. There has been a spike in diarrhea since then. The Union Parishad has given some ring slabs but we need more. What do I hope for my children? When my daughter is married I will check my son-in-law’s house. Is there a hygienic latrine or not. Is there safe water or not. I will make sure she is going to a good place.
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER LOVELY KHATUN ELECTED AS UNION PARISHAD MEMBER

Lovely Khutun lives in a village called Kismat Jhonjoria in Rampal Union of Sagerhat district of Bangladesh. She is 33 years old, unmarried and used to work as a fish trader in the local market. Despite being called ‘poor’ by some, Lovely has always been interested and motivated to engage in social work and develop her community. The people of Kismat Jhonjoria lived without a safe water facility for decades. The area was declared salinity affected and although many initiatives were taken for installation of tube wells over the years, all had failed.

Having no other option, the villagers sourced water from adjoining ponds, which are muddy, salty and contaminated by human and household waste. The HYSAWA-AusAID project began implementing WatSan programmes in Rampal Union in 2010. At that time the community people were disillusioned. They did not believe the project could deliver safe water options because similar interventions were promised by NGOs before, but that never happened.

Lovely Khutun however was different. When she first heard about the HYSAWA programme she was excited to understand it in detail and eager to help solve the water crisis in her community. Lovely went to the Union parishad and discussed the details with the UP chairman and members. She cross-checked what project staff said about the possible facilities, cost, rules and other formalities and became convinced that the support was worthwhile pursuing. Lovely went from door-to-door to gain backing for participation in the programme. She spoke with her friends, family and neighbours, formed a Community Development Forum (CDF) and made a proposal to the Union parishad for two tube wells.

In August 2011 construction of two tube wells began. Construction was completed in November and water quality tests were conducted for salinity, iron and arsenic. All were at acceptable limits. The safe water crisis has been resolved in her village. Her community people are highly satisfied and are grateful to Lovely for her initiative for getting safe water through the HYSAWA project. They observe the burden of waterborne diseases has reduced day by day.

One day in 2010 Lovely decided to become a Community Volunteer in the HYSAWA project. Day by day she became a representative of the poor in her community. One day in 2011, Lovely Khutun decided to run as a candidate in the UP election. The electorate acknowledged the leadership and commitment she had shown as a community volunteer and elected her to the Union parishad. As member now she is working for the people, by the people and together with the community for the betterment of all in Rampal.
Actually we did not expect that water supply could come here. It was a real surprise to see, because before we used to collect water from Jholmurie Digi pond. It was a 6 km return journey including a river crossing. The women go there twice a day; once in the morning and again at night.

I remember when the community organisers came here about one year ago, about seven months before installation, talking about a piped water supply system and connections at homes, some people then were not interested, but after seeing the benefits, seeing it is possible they became keen and now most have access to safe water at their homes. Four families use a faucet.

Now we have less anxiety. “Where will we find water, when will I have time, I have to work I need to eat”. I am also pleased with the water quality and our health. Before I used to use gas tablets for acidity but now it is not necessary.

I have two sons aged 15 and 11. They go to school and play Cricket. I hope for my kids to finish education and get good job.
STORY NO. 10
BLESSINGS FOR BETTER INCOME

Living in cities, most of us take basic necessities such as running water, electricity etc. Although a lot of the modern facilities are now widespread in rural Bangladesh, safe water is still a far-fetched reality for thousands and lakhs. Women in rural Bangladesh still walk for 30 minutes to 2 hours daily to fetch water for drinking purposes; as for daily purpose, it is more convenient for them to use ponds, rivers or nearby arsenic affected water points.

One of the main objectives of HYSWA is to bring safe water points closer to people with hardest access, hoping to make their lives a little easier, a little safer. This story is about a community who managed to do something extra with all the time they now save from not carrying water from a distance.

Dokkhin (or South) Biddyanandi is one of the villages in Hossainpur union’s ward no. 6. The union is under Kajor Upazila in Madaripur. Kumarbar or potter community resides just next to a river stream and they are one of the communities to have received a deep tube well from HYSWA. Previously, they used river water for every aspect apart from drinking purposes. Each woman from every household walked for at least 90 minutes to fetch drinking water from a deep tubewell.

But since installation of the tubewell from HYSWA, life has changed for the better. Around 12 families directly use this tube well and another 10 families come from nearby households. Both the men and women of this community are extremely happy. The men are happy because now they don’t have to travel back and forth to the river for molding their clay; and the women are happy because they have a little extra time for themselves. But since it is a potter community, there is always something to do. We caught the women kneading clay, molding on the necks to dried pots etc. When asked, they informed that because of the tube well so close to them, they are able to wrap up their domestic work soon and able to help out their husbands with pottery making.

Dulal Pal, one of the members of this community said, “now that the women are able to help out, business is good. We took out finished goods more quickly than before. And they also feel empowered that they are able to contribute to income. When the tube well came, we knew it would make life easier for the women, never really expected the bonus!”
Suffering was the only thing that remained constant in their lives. The 16 families of Etimpara area under Labsha Union Parishad have been living a somewhat stranded life since 2000 when a massive flood had engulfed their land. The flood water had not receded ever since. There is no source of income for the people in their area, so they have to go out to seek their livelihood elsewhere. Every time they go out, they use rafts made up of crushed pieces of polystyrene blocks because their locality is surrounded by water on all sides.

Despite living in a tiny piece of land completely encircled by water, the people had no access to any safe water source in their area which they could drink from. In order to collect water, they always had to cross the water body and leave their area.

“Wherever we go, we always carry a container with us to bring some water,” Shouli Begum, a resident of Etimpara in Satkhira Sadar Upazila in Satkhira district, said. “The tiny little children who can walk here know how to row a raft.”

“This is because if you want to drink, you must first learn the use of a raft and then leave home.” The Bangla word “Etimpara” means a place for orphan. The name was coined by the very people who live there. When asked why they picked such a bizarre name for their place, another resident Hajira Begum said, “We always felt like orphaned children. Nobody ever watched out for us and provided us with any help.”

Many a times the rafts turned upside down while being used, and the people boarding the raft fell into the water. Locals said the water in the lake is very much polluted. If they come in contact with the water, it causes itchiness and blister on their skin. The people saw the first flicker of hope when community organiser under HYSAWA-SOC Project Bondona Mondol visited their place a few months back. They were assured that a deep tube-well would be installed but they need to make a small community contribution for that.

Trapped in poverty, the people of Etimpara always find it difficult to make ends meet. That’s why they were not so sure if they could manage the amount required. Seeing their ordeal, residents of neighbouring Taltola Para had offered their help, promising to pay the money on Etimpara’s behalf if they failed. However, residents of Etimpara area have managed to roll up the contribution money without outside help.

While the wait for tube-well being nearing its end, the Etimpara people were faced with another problem. The mechanics who had come to install the tube-well refused to work because they said they could not carry their equipment across the water. Immediately the Etimpara people came up with a solution. They said they would carry the equipment on their shoulder if that’s what it takes to get the work done.

The years of ordeal for drinking water have finally come to an end. They are still struggling to make a meagre living, yet they are pleased that their life has changed for the better.
STORY NO. 12
FROM FOUNTAIN TO FAUCET A DISCOVERY IN THE HILL TRACTS

Accessing safe water in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) has been historically a greatest challenge in Bangladesh. Being hilly, CHT is geophysically under tertiary belt and its sub-surface soil is very hard and compact. Moreover, tertiary stone bed is deposited in different depths and in some areas stone is found in exposed condition.

The CHT people usually collect water from top-shallow contaminated water layer, fountain, rain water storage, canals and river all of which are basically contaminated sources. No such research on hydro-geological situation and appropriate technological investigation has been done.

Some local and national NGOs as well as the GoB are working on water supply provision but their interventions are limited. HYSAWA decided to do several test boring in the zone. HYSAWA provided technical support to some local contractors engaged by Union Parishads to dig through a heavy stone bed and hard clay strata.

In some areas suitable water layers could be explored. These areas were earlier known to be infeasible for ground water. People are not only happy there but also surprised and overwhelmed to see clean water is now available in their community where historically water was a scarce item. In 2013, 31 water points have been installed in three hill districts. In CHT area, fountain/spring layer were found in some areas and to avoid misuse those were converted into faucets by installing tap stand.
Story No. 13
Water Brings Dignity to Women

"It is awkward for a woman to cross streets, pass through market places and return in wet clothes. It also gives her a lot of pain if she gets drenched and still has to walk outdoors in cold winter weather" housewife Beauty Begum said. The 35-year old was describing the social agony and helplessness she and other women in her locality had to go through just to take a shower everyday. In the absence of any water source near their house, she said they had no other options but to walk half a kilometre towards a river.

The name of Beauty’s village is called Kuthipara, located at Jammagar Union under Baghipara Upazilla in Nature district. Outbreak of diseases like diarrhea and dysentery was pretty common in her village.

Women from these families had to walk some 200 meters to the houses of a wealthy family in order to fetch drinking water. “The land lady used to stand guard when we collected water least we collect more water than we are allowed,” said Beauty, recalling the humiliating experience.

Water drawn from the river was being used for washing and taking baths. The trip to and from tubewell or to the river for carrying pots filled water used to take two hours everyday. Later when community Organisers of the Union parished moved to form community development forum (CDF) for the ward to help identify the community’s needs for water and sanitation, female members of the 10 families - Rupali, Dula, Hajera, Beauty, Sufia, Sarejan, Bhanu, Monowara, Hasna and Shimu - have raised their demand for a tube-well. They sat together to discuss where the tube-well should be installed and decided on location which would be beneficial to everyone.

The women planted some trees throughout the years hoping to generate some extra income. Now they have decided to sell one of them to raise money for the tube-well. This way, Tk. 4,000 was collected which they deposited in the Union Parishad’s bank account. The bank account is maintained for the sole purpose of receiving community contribution.

“At last we have got our own tube-well. Do you know what value did this tube-well add to our lives? It protects our privacy and gives us dignity and immense pride,” Beauty stated. A water point installed very close to a house where most family members are physically challenged.
In many places of Bangladesh, arsenic contamination of ground water remains still endemic and Senhati Union of Khulna district is no exception. When information was being collected in Senhati UP to facilitate formation of a Community Development Forums (CDFs) under HYSAWA-SDC project, many communities were found where all tube-wells contained arsenic contaminated water. For example, all seven tube-wells located in Alauddin’s community were containing arsenic beyond acceptable level.

The prevalence of arsenic in the tube wells was so high that seven people from Alauddin’s family and families staying in his land as tenant showed symptoms of arsenic poisoning. Observing higher concentration of arsenic in ground water, officials of Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) painted the tube-wells rod, indicating that no one should drink water from them. The area are even afraid of drinking coconut water as they fear Arsenic might intrudes in the coconut.

Alauddin and his tenants poisoned by arsenic were suffering from skin infections, fever and itches. They eventually took medicines for it but their illness and affliction continued even after that. Later they came to learn that this happened as they did not stop drinking arsenic laced water while trying to cure the disease by taking medicines.

Talking to Fatema Khatun, a Community Organizer under HYSAWA-SDC Project, Alauddin recounted how even after taking medicine, they could not recover from the disease. He also said about the necessity of an arsenic free tube well in his locality, if not for anything else but for them to recuperate from disease. He pleaded Fatema if she could do something to help in that direction and alleviate their sufferings. Fatema Khatun communicated with the Union Parishad officials and informed them about the tormenting situation of people in that locality.

Afterwards, Union Parishad officials had decided to solve their problems by installing a deep tube well in that locality with funding from HYSAWA project. It has been agreed among the community people that the deep tube well will be installed at Alauddin’s House. The people saw that Alauddin had always been an active participant at CDF meetings, tried to follow a hygienic life and put in efforts to make others aware of hygiene which is the reason for their choosing.

After the tube-well was installed, Alauddin was advised by the Union Parishad officials to paint the tube well so that it did not get rusty. He was very quick to do that and painted the tube well before the Union Parishad officials even leaving his house.
Story no.15
MY DREAM IS A SATO PAN VILLAGE!

Interventions by HYSAWA project affect various people at various levels. Apart from direct beneficiaries, the project also encourages other people to adopt a healthy & wiser way of life. 
Ibrahim Sheikh is one such person. Ibrahim is a sanitary toilet maker; he makes & sells latrines complete with slabs, rings and pipes. He is in this business for roughly 15 years now. For years, Ibrahim have built and sold many ready latrines, but never in his professional life has he been as delighted as seeing a SaTo pan.

When HYSAWA introduced SaTo pan in Diara village of Digholia Sadar Union, Ibrahim was there. At first, the technology seemed confusing to him, but with a little bit of help from the CO in ward no. 4, he is now such a fan of this product that he advocates it to the villagers. He don’t stop there; he even took the dummy SaTo pan to Department of Public Health Engineering & DRAC office to inform them about the new & efficient technology of SaTo pan.

Ibrahim says, “This is a very good product. Its quality is very good & long lasting. The lock seal is very sophisticated; with the minimal weight it opens & closes instantly. I have already sold about 20 pans, and now am waiting to receive few more. When people come to me to buy pans, I advice against the traditional water seal pans & recommend these. I don’t want food or money, just supply me more SaTo pans so that I can help change my entire village!”
ONLY LUXURY IN OUR LIFE

We are hand-to-mouth people, but we can claim that we have one great luxury that many rich people do not have, it is our latrine,” said Aklima, a housewife dwelling in the slums of Rupsha Majhir Ghat. Her neighbours, Al-Amin, Kali Sipker, Sultan, Rina, Minara, Mymo, Manwar, and many others supported her while she was making this statement.

The slum is in Naifhati Union, Rupsha Upazila of Khulna District. Rupsha Ghat was named after the Rupsha River and is a well-known place in Khulna. Thousands of people cross the river through this Ghat every day. There are lots of fish-processing industries around this Ghat turning the area into a bustling workplace for hundreds of people every day – some work at the fish-processing industries, some pull rickshaw vans while others work as transport workers and boatemens.

These low-income groups live in the slums around the Ghat. The slum of Rupsha Majhirghat is one which is largely inhabited by the boatemen. More than 500 people live in an area of about 200 square meters. For drinking water, they depended on a shallow tube well affected by Arsenic. For other purposes they used river water which was also polluted.

The habitants were relying on hanging latrines. With HYSAWA's financing, the UP installed 18 stand posts from a nearby piped water supply system. Crisis for safe drinking water was thus overcome.

For want of space, individual households could not construct their household latrines. So, strategically, two communal (shared) latrines have been installed, one with two chambers and another with four chambers, both having separate facilities and entrance for male and female users. Besides, intensive hygiene promotion sessions were conducted on hand-washing and use of latrines.

HYSAWA funded 15 such communal latrines throughout the project area in Khulna region. The community takes care of maintenance by forming a committee and collecting monthly nominal charges from each family to cover the cleaning costs. Community volunteers educate the users on personal and latrine hygiene.

The people of Majhir Ghat are now very satisfied. Women, particularly who had to wait for the dark hours to attend to nature's call, have now found a comfortable place to go to when they need it.

Aklima said, “Our children will now grow up in a clean environment and have less chance of becoming sick from poor sanitation and water borne diseases,”
I have been Union Parishad Secretary since 1984. In this Union for almost 21 years. That coconut tree outside was planted when I first became secretary.

The water and sanitation crisis is big here. Before all these project activities 80% of people were affected by diarrhoea to a severe level. Now it is only on occasion. Still there is much to do. Due to additional human resources like the accountant and support from other HYSAWA staff in Khulna we can tackle this situation in a way we could not before. I like the tender processing and contract selection through the Project Implementation Committee (PIC). It is absolutely transparent.

We now maintain a cash-book, ledger which we update every day for the project. Now we are able to identify problems to the degree of actual problems and solve these in a due manner.

I was involved in HYSAWA from the first day. I was part of the selection committee for project staff. We had 103 applications for 32 positions in Fakirhat, for Community Organisers and Accountants.

We were looking for people with computer operation skills, people who could ride bicycles. Experience in the development sector, especially WatSan was looked at favourably. We also considered who was actually most needy for employment.

All the Community Organiser positions were for female applicants only. If men were in those positions it would not work. In fact it would be worse. For women it is easier to identify with water point users, most of whom are female too. They can motivate users. In our culture it is mostly the women who are involved in food and water.

As Union Parishad Secretary I participate in all the hygiene promotion sessions. I find the time. We make it somehow. “Where there is a will there is a way” right?

The accountant has his accounts and job description defined, but we co-operate. I stay in the Union Parishad building for as long as required. Sometimes the Community Organisers work here up to eight or nine at night. I stay, I leave after they leave and make sure they are safe. I hope to be a Union Parishad Secretary until 2018.

Most probably here, I have earned the faith of the community here. They deposit money to me directly for community contributions which then pass on to the Project Accountant.

I have most enjoyed the participatory approach in HYSAWA. They [the community] can submit a plan to us all by themselves.

In the future it will only get better. If the awareness can be increased then the situation can be improve. We need more software activities. If more courtyard meetings can be conducted by more and more female community members the situation will improve.
STORY NO. 18
A PLACE IN GOVERNMENT FOR A BORN LEADER IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

Who: Khadija Begum
What: Ward Member, Shatgombuj Union Parishad
Location: Bagerhat Sadar
Age: 42

I have lived in this Union Parishad for 30 years. I was married when I was 12 and so moved here. My husband is a businessman, in the fish industry. Now he is over 80.

I never imagined a career in politics. Never. It just developed like this! Before being elected as a Ward Member I was a Community Volunteer with HYSAWA. Before that I was a housewife. I have two sons aged 22 and 16 years.

Working as a volunteer I developed a reputation for my social work and gained trust. I got involved because the objective of that position was good. The people accepted me. When I was well known I stood in the election and people put their faith in me.

Now I am involved in broader ways. What I used to do before, doing courtyard sessions on hygiene promotion and sanitation and the like, I am still doing that.

But in addition I attend HYSAWA functions and participate in adopting any resolution and other decisions on implementation.

There is a shortage of sweet water here. It is demanded by everybody. In this Union Parishad 61 Deep Tube Wells have been installed with HYSAWA.

Every time I see somebody, they say ‘give me a tube well, I need one.’ There are some disputes over site selection, but we solve those through mediation and discussion. We resolve things so that the installation will benefit those people most in need.

Service to the community is the thing I like most about being a Union Parishad Ward Member. I look after Wards 7, 8, 9. The more I serve the community the more I am satisfied.
**STORY NO. 19**

**A NEW BEGINNING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BANGLADESH**

“A new beginning for Union Parishads” is how Betaga Union Chairman Mr. Swapan Das describes the opportunities afforded to his team and constituency by HYSAWA.

A chairman recently re-elected to his third five-year term said that never before had he been entrusted with the responsibility to manage, monitor and administer the people, projects and funds to the level that possible through the HYSAWA-Project. HYSAWA first called for expressions of interest to participate in AusAID funded water, sanitation and hygiene interventions from Union Parishads in Khulna Division in 2010. Chairman Swapan submitted an expression of interest and proposal for 60 water points and eight sanitation schemes, and in May 2010 successfully signed a MoU with HYSAWA to begin activities.

Chairman Mr. Swapan Das secured funds to implement hygiene, water and sanitation infrastructure and training for the people under his care. The initial water infrastructure alone directly benefits 610 families. 2775 people of whom 92% fall within the category of hardcore poor.

In 2011 HYSAWA also financed one piped water supply scheme in Betaga, bringing reliable and safe water to a further 1658 people. Through this partnership the Union Parishad has managed to provide a safe water supply service to 25% of the constituency. The Chairman is proud to say, “Now I am confident in and can demonstrate assistance to the hardcore poor.”

Chairman Das states, it is “the most [funds] I have ever had the opportunity to manage”. He describes that although other financing mechanisms have been available in the past, these have been small amounts that could be used with limited impact.

But it is not only about the money. The words accountability, transparency and participation feature in our conversation. “We have learnt about the Public Procurement Rules and followed them, managed contractors, continue to manage staff and always engage with HYSAWA on problems and successes”. The UP has recruited four staff to the Union Parishad team to support HYSAWA activities; three community organisers and one accountant. Every new initiative begins with consensus in a community meeting and the public disclosure display board behind us shows activities to date; community volunteers initiated, food hygiene training sessions completed number of tube wells approved, number installed, and number of community meetings held.

Equipped with this experience the Chairman imagines a new future for Union Parishads; one where local government institutions have the capacity to assume ownership over their own development and will be able to meet the needs and rights of the people who elect Union members to representative positions. He smiles, “if we can do this, we can do anything”.
A great change in the practices of Chalishia Union Parishad has taken place. Unlike past years, the Union Parishad now embraces transparency in its services. Its officials have become more accountable and all of the UP works are being done systematically.

According to the Community Organisers working there, the change has come about after the Union Parishad has entered into an agreement with HYSAWA Fund.

Each year, all Union Parishads of the country are provided with money and resources under the government’s Social Safety Net programmes.

Although the core objective of these programmes is to support vulnerable groups of people, it happened many times that the right people did not get benefits from it.

Chalishia was among such Union Parishads where many vulnerable and marginalized people had been left out of the government schemes due to selection error. In the absence of any proper method that could have helped determine financial condition of locals, the Union Parishad had to make decisions based on speculations, which sometimes served the interests of relatively richer section of population.

However, the UP managed to put this past behind itself after a baseline survey to segregate the poor from the wealthy was carried out under HYSAWA-SDC Project. This initiative has helped the UP to make informed decision, and as a result, money from other government projects has also ended up in the right hands.

Furthermore, the HYSAWA-SDC Project has encouraged the UP to improve transparency, which is regarded as a central pillar of Good Governance.

“During the inception period of the project, some UP members preferred not to attend monthly meetings, yet they were shown present on paper. They used to say that the reason for their absence was they were not paid for their attendance,” Mahmuda Akhtar Runa, a Community Organiser of the UP under Ovynagar Upazila of Jessore, said. But soon they realised that their absence would not go unnoticed and HYSAWA authorities would hold them to account for that. Besides, they understood that if they get involved with development activities through these meetings, they would be more popular among the people, which contributed to regularising their attendance.

Chairman Mr. Abdul Latif admitted that the change was happening in Chalishia Union Parishad. “The UP officials are now sufficiently transparent and accountable. And we can’t deny that this transparency is brought about due to our involvement in the HYSAWA-SDC Project.”
1. HAND WASH
2. MENSTRUAL HYGIENE
3. CLIMATE RESILIENT WATER POINT

4. DISABLED FRIENDLY SCHOOL LATRINE, 5. PUBLIC LATRINE, 6. COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION
7-8. PIPED WATER SUPPLY