

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Project

Phase II: Final Evaluation Report



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List of acronyms

AACO	Assistant Accountant-cum-Computer Operator
AVCB	Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CPD	Country Programme Document
DC	District Court
DCo	District Coordinator
DDLG	Deputy Director, Local Government
DMIE	Decentralized Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation
DRM	Dispute Resolution Mechanism
DTP	District Training Pool
EU	European Union
HH	Household
IPA	Innovations for Poverty Action
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Perception
LGD	Local Government Division
LGSP	Local Government Support Project
MRC	Monitoring & Reporting Coordinator
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
PC	Project Coordinator
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PMU	Project Management Unit
PNGO	Partner Non-Government Organization
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RBM	Result Based Monitoring
RCT	Randomised Controlled Trial
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
<i>Shalish</i>	Bengali name for traditional informal courts conducted by village leaders
ToC	Theory of Change
UC	Upazila Coordinator
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad (lowest tier of government in Bangladesh)
USD	United States Dollar
VC	Village Court
VCA	Village Court Assistant
VCMC	Village Courts Management Committee
VCMIS	Village Courts Management Information System
WB	World Bank

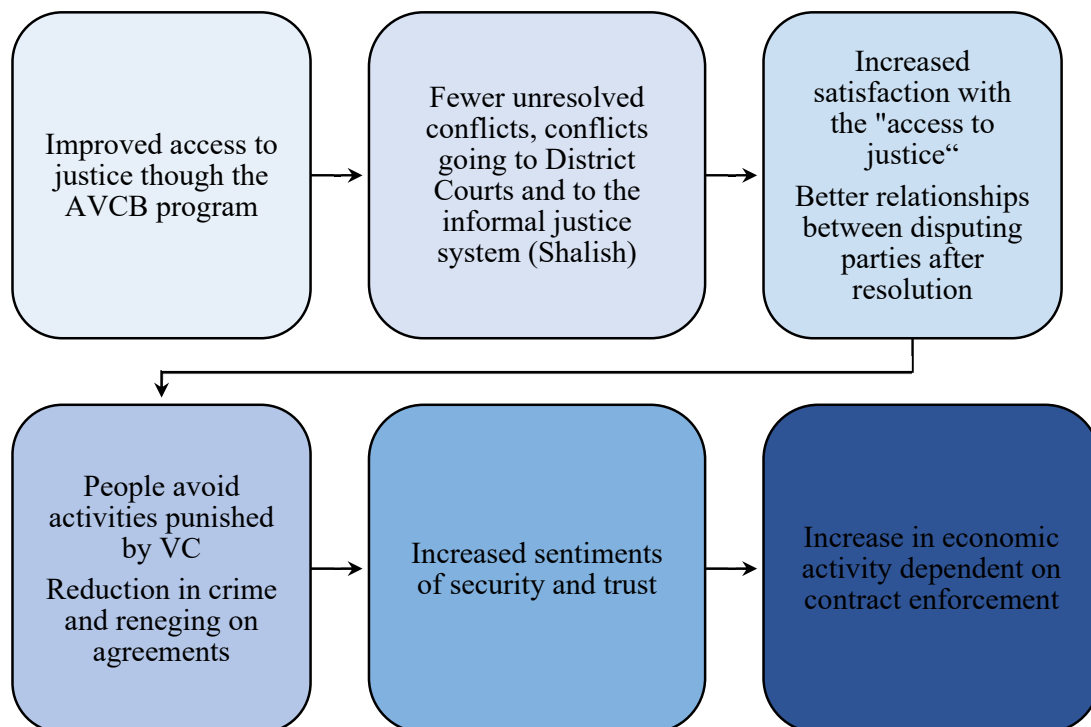
Executive summary

In 2006, the Government of Bangladesh replaced the Village Court Ordinance 1976 with the Village Courts Act to create a functional semi-formal system of Village Courts (VCs) at the lowest tier of the local government, the Union Parishad (UP). VCs are designed to resolve small disputes at affordable costs and with fewer administrative complications, increasing access to justice for those who cannot afford resorting to the formal court system for resolving small disputes. Village Courts are secular and can adjudicate cases for religious as well as ethnic minorities.

In practice however, the implementation of the VC system was poor and most UPs lacked active, functioning VCs. To address this problem, the Government of Bangladesh—with technical assistance from UNDP and funding from the EU—launched the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) program. The AVCB program makes VCs active and functional by providing material support, human capital support, training for the UP officials, and awareness campaigns for the citizens living in the UP. In its first phase, the AVCB program was implemented in 351 UPs. Recently, the program has expanded to an additional 1,080 UPs.

During the second roll-out phase, a **randomized controlled trial (RCT)** in Dhaka and Chattogram, the two largest of Bangladesh's eight divisions, was conducted. In these two divisions 267 UPs were randomly assigned to treatment – receiving the AVCB program (178 treatment UPs) or control – not receiving the AVCB program (89 control UPs). The random assignment allows evaluation of the causal impact of the AVCB program on a range of outcomes in accordance with the theory of change. Besides, 90 randomly chosen unions from other six divisions were included in the study to collect data simultaneously with Dhaka and Chattogram in order to describe changes in the AVCB outcomes over time across the country.

Figure 1: TOC for AVCB Programme



For the Endline assessment, data collection occurred from January to February 2021 on disputes, dispute resolution and the functioning of Village Courts (VC) from a sample of **132** Union Parishads (UP) in the area that received the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) program (the project area) as well as from **47** UPs that will not receive the program (the control area). The data comes from **3,435** households and **432** UP officials. Data was collected from four sources: household survey, beneficiary survey (only from treatment unions), Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) survey of UP officials, and administrative data of VCs.

Results/Findings

A. Household and beneficiary survey

1. Sixteen percent (16%) of the households in the sample had an ongoing dispute and thirteen percent (13%) had resolved at least one dispute within the past 2 years in the baseline. The rate of unresolved disputes decreased to fourteen percent (14%) and the rate of resolving at least one dispute in the past 2 years increased to twenty-seven percent (27%) in the endline. Eighty percent (80%) of the households with a dispute claimed to be or have been the plaintiff in the baseline which reduced to sixty-six percent (66%) in the endline.
2. While just 3% of eligible cases eventually came to village courts in the baseline, this increased to 21% in the endline. Moreover, the rate of eligible cases eventually coming to VCs is 25% of the total eligible cases in the treatment areas while this is 13% in the control area, perhaps indicating the success of the AVCB program in increasing demand for VC as an affordable and credible DRM. The most common type of disputes within the VC's jurisdiction are land disputes followed by verbal fight.
3. The rate of disputes with a monetary value reduced to fifty percent and average value of the dispute reduced to BDT 1,83,000 in the endline from BDT 2,72,177 in the Baseline. This is indicative of the fact that a large portion of the disputes may not be resolved in VCs due to a case value limit of BDT **75,000**.
4. Household head's age and household's per capita expenditure are positively and significantly related to having disputes. One additional year of the household head's age is associated with a 0.1 percentage point increase in the probability of dispute. Furthermore, age of the head of the household and the relationship with the UP member/councillor is significantly associated with disputes being resolved.
5. The use of *Shalish* has been significantly reduced in the project area since the baseline- with a drop from 85% to 64%. On the other hand, the use of VCs among all resolved cases significantly increased from 2% to 19% in the project area.
6. The speed of dispute resolution improved in both *Shalish* and VCs in the project area. While the average time from case file to judgement was 4.8 months for *Shalish* in the baseline, it reduced to 1.1 months in the endline. For VCs, it was 102 days in the baseline and 48 days in the endline. The average time in the district courts went up from 34 months from baseline to 45 months in the endline.
7. More than **50%** of the users of VCs live below the World Bank poverty line which also indicates that AVCB program helps increase affordable access to the poor. The average cost of resolving a dispute in *Shalish* stated in the endline survey was BDT 713 and BDT **569** in VCs in the project area. The cost is BDT 1,168 for *Shalish* and BDT 2,713 in VCs in the control area. This is compared to the baseline, in which the average cost was more than BDT 3,000 for both *Shalish* and VCs. Besides, an average amount of BDT 233 was required for beneficiaries to resolve disputes in the VCs in endline.

8. People who said they are very satisfied with the VCs' decision increased from 0% in the baseline to 47% in the endline in the project area. Also, people who said they are very satisfied with VC processes increased from 3% in the baseline to 49% in the endline. Beneficiary respondents reported slightly higher satisfaction than the general households with 53% beneficiary households reported that they are very satisfied with the VC decision. On the other hand, the percentage of VC users reporting satisfaction with the VC's services they received increased from baseline (83%) to endline (91%).
9. The higher proportion of the study population expressing that VCs have helped to reduce petty crime increased from 29% at baseline to 64% at endline. This increase was much greater in project areas (31% to 75%) than in control areas (26% to 34%). In terms of fairness, the three DRMs seem to be relatively similarly viewed by the population. The vast majority of the people perceive VCs, *Shalish* and district courts as completely fair or somewhat fair. Additionally, the percentage of respondents finding village courts completely fair increased from 50% at the baseline to 64% at the endline.
10. People seem to have a realistic view of how long it takes to resolve a case in *Shalish* and district courts. The average response to how many days it takes to resolve a dispute in *Shalish* is 16 days while for district courts this number is 909 at the baseline and 61 days and 1507 days respectively at the endline. These numbers are relatively similar to the actual time it took for people to resolve cases discussed above. For VCs the perception is that it takes approximately 33 days to resolve a case there at the baseline and 61 days at the endline. People's perception in the project area are closer to the actual experience.
11. Beneficiaries rated VCs highly with 71% beneficiaries thinking that VCs are completely fair. Beneficiaries also found VCs more efficient as they reported that VCs take on average 30 days to resolve cases compared to 74 days taken in *Shalish* and approximately two years in district courts.
12. The AVCB program helped increase the level of knowledge about VCs among the study population. Compared to the baseline rate of 3% respondents who could spontaneously mentioned that they heard about VCs, the endline rate rose to 64% in the project area - a 61 percentage point change. The knowledge also increased in the control group by 41 percentage point. People who never heard of VCs was a whopping 91% at the baseline in the project area which reduced to a mere 10%.

B. UP representatives Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of VCs from KAP Survey

. The same respondents from baseline were tracked, with modest attrition.

1. UP representatives and officials spend a lot of time resolving disputes. At the baseline, UP chairs spent on average 22 hours per week resolving, on average, 36 disputes in a 3-month period. That time UP chairs mainly use *Shalish* to resolve disputes (78%). By the endline, UP chairs' effort in VCs and *Shalish* Parishad increased while it decreased for *Shalish*. On average they resolved 43 cases in the last 3-month period and spent 28 hours per week in dispute resolutions – a big jump from the baseline. Average number of *Shalish* conducted in the past three months decreased from 28 to 23 but average number of village court cases increased from 6 to 12. Average number of *Shalish* Parishad cases increased from 2 to 9.
2. A similar pattern was observed in the “Ordinary UP members”, i.e. those positions not reserved for women. Female UP members were also much more engaged in the dispute resolution process in the endline. It appears that AVCB program increased effort of the UP officials to resolve cases in VCs. While the effort invested in the control group remained the same between

the baseline and endline, effort in terms of number of cases resolved and hours spent in VCs almost doubled in the project area.

3. UP representatives and officials are expectedly more knowledgeable about the VCs than the general population. When only 58% of the representatives and officials could spontaneously say they knew what a VC was at the baseline, it increased to 91% at the endline. However, **91%** of the UP officials could spontaneously explain what a VC was. The lack of knowledge was concentrated among the UP members and more specifically among the female UP members. In the project area, the number of respondents able to answer at least five knowledge questions correctly increased from 11% to **59%**. This increase was only from 10% to 33% in the control area.
4. It appears that a significant majority of the UP officials in the project area expectedly learned about VC processes through training. Unexpectedly, however, many UP officials in the control area also reported receiving training though far smaller than the project area. Perhaps there are other NGO or government programs offering training on VC processes.
5. Although most of the steps were followed by at least some of the UP officials, only 3% of UP officials described cases where they followed all the steps in the correct order at the baseline. An impressive 40% UP officials followed all steps correctly in the project area compared to 30% in the control area at the endline, suggesting AVCB program's success in creating awareness of following VC rules. Overall, UP officials in the project area correctly followed 0.6 step on average at the baseline which jumped to 4 steps at the endline. While correctly following steps also increased in the control group, the increases is less than half of the project area.
6. Each UP should send a quarterly return regarding the activities of the VC in their union to the UNO. The quarterly return should be signed by the UP chair. In the survey, UP chairs and UP secretaries were asked about their knowledge about this process to see if they know about their responsibilities. As can be seen below the knowledge about the responsibility was relatively high with 78% of respondents knowing about the quarterly return in the baseline. The rate increased to **99%** at the endline in the project areas and to 81% in the control area.
7. While *Shalish* was the preferred way for the UP officials to resolve petty disputes in the baseline, village courts became most popular in the project area. When 72% of the UP respondents preferred *Shalish* and **26%** preferred VC at the baseline, 32% preferred *Shalish* and **65%** preferred VC at the endline. In the project area, more than 75% UP respondents preferred VC, while it was approximately 32% in the control area. Most popular reasons for preferring VC are its easy application, it is bound by law, it does not require a lawyer and disputes can be solved in a short period of time.
8. One important aspect of any DRM efficiency is whether it can enforce its decisions or not. UP officials and representatives were asked to which degree they thought that VC, *Shalish* and *Shalish Parishad* can enforce their decisions on a five-point scale where 1 was not capable at and 5 fully capable. Very few UP officials and representatives think there are severe problems of enforcement for either the VC or *Shalish*. At the baseline, 37% UP officials perceived that VCs are fully capable of enforcing which increased to 64% at the endline. In the project area, 68% UP officials said that VCs are fully capable to enforce at the endline, 46% of those in the control area said so. Perception on the enforcement capacity of *Shalish* went down on the other hand. 43% UP officials said that *Shalish* is fully capable to enforce at the baseline and the rate came down to 28% at the endline. Only 21% UP officials in the project area said that *Shalish* is fully capable to enforce compared to 46% in the control area.
9. Easy access to justice, easy process, legal binding, and absence of lawyers were cited as the greatest strengths of VCs across the project and the control area at the endline. At the baseline, that disputes can be resolved in a short period of time and that VCs are inexpensive are the main perceived strengths of the VC. The main weaknesses are perceived to be shortage of manpower, inadequate training facilities and lack of awareness about VC among local people.

Quicker resolution was a popular strength at the baseline but became less popular at the endline as the rate came down from 67% to 60% who believe disputes can be resolved quickly in VCs.

C. Review of administrative records of UPs

1. There were relatively few (39%) of UPs with *Ejlas* at the baseline which increased to 89% at the endline. 98% UPs in the project area had *ejlas* compared to 55% UPs in the control area. Overall, 91% UPs had a designated day in a week for VC hearing at the endline which was 79% at the baseline. And when compared to the control area, 100% UPs in the project area were found to have a designated day compared to 55% in the control area. No UPs had AACOs at the baseline, but 39% UPs reported to have one at the endline. 43% UPs in the project area had an AACO and 24% UPs in the control area had the same. In all respects, **38%** of UPs were fully self-sustaining (having *ejlas*, designated day for hearing and AACO) in the endline that was 0% in the baseline.
2. In terms of documentation about half (51%) of the UPs maintained some type of documentation in the baseline. This rate increased an impressive 100% at the endline. A total of **98%** UPs maintained all required forms at the endline, a vast improvement from the baseline of 1%. In the project area, 98% UPs had all forms and documents whereas no UPs in the control group had so.
3. 41% of all recorded cases in the project area fall within VC's jurisdiction at the baseline which improved to **95%** at the endline. There was shift in the pattern of cases resolved in VCs between the baseline and the endline in the project area. Where land disputes constituted 44% of the disputes in the project area at the baseline, these were 13% of all cases at the endline. Physical fight without bloodshed, verbal fight, and loan dispute became the most common disputes at the endline in the project area.
4. On average, 51 cases were registered per year per UP in the endline which was 17 in the baseline. But compared to control area at endline, it is **60** cases for project area and 18 cases in the control area. At the baseline, 61% cases that fell under the VC jurisdiction were solved through complete hearing after the formation of village court. At the endline, only **30%** cases were solved this way. The dominant method found at the endline was the Rule 31, 57% cases were solved this way, which was mere 8% at the baseline. And, in the endline 12% cases were found to be resolved by pre-trial which was 31% at the baseline. However, **93%** of all cases were resolved through VCs in the endline which was 41% in the baseline under project area. Mentioned, 100% of resolved cases were enforced in both project and control area in the endline.
5. In terms of the time, it takes for the VCs to resolve a dispute the average was 39 days at the baseline and **25** days at the endline.
6. Of the cases recorded by the UPs 25% of all cases were reported by women while 28% of cases within the VC's jurisdiction were reported by women at the baseline. This increased to **30%** and 29% respectively in the endline. On the other hand, engagement of female representatives in the judges' panel (in decision-making process) has been improved significantly from baseline (2%) to endline (15%). In the project area, **61%** cases included a female judge at the endline whereas it was 1% at the baseline. None of the cases in the control area engaged female judges, despite the fact that around 30% cases were brought by women applicants.
7. While the most common cases brought by women were reclaiming marriage and land disputes at the baseline, physical fights without bloodshed, loan dispute, and verbal fights became more common at the endline.
8. Five major procedures were tracked for each recorded case: 1) Petition submission using form no.1, 2) Final order found in the case order form no. 3, 3) Summon was issued and sent to the

defendants using form no. 4, 4) both parties appoint their representatives, and 5) voting ratio of decision is recorded. If the case is resolved through Rule-31, only the first three steps need to be followed. If the case is resolved through pre-trial, then the first four steps are followed. All the five steps are required to be followed if the case is resolved through complete hearing.

Among cases resolved through Rule-31, 82% followed all three procedures at baseline, and 100% did so at endline. Among cases resolved through pre-trial, 26% of cases followed all four procedures at baseline, increasing to 97% at endline. Lastly, among cases resolved through a complete hearing, 4% of cases followed all five procedures at baseline, increasing to 88% at endline. However, **95%** of the cases resolved following related all procedures.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Context

The rule of law is generally regarded to be a necessary condition for economic development. The judiciary, or the system of courts that interpret and apply the laws, is the main institution ensuring that the rule of law is respected, and that justice is accessible to all citizens.

Lack of access to justice is a substantial problem in Bangladesh. Formal courts take a long time to resolve disputes and are complex and expensive to use.¹ The average time period for dispute resolution in a District Court, the lowest tier of formal courts, is approximately three years (in addition, the decisions take approximately a year to be enforced).² The average cost to a household for resolving a case in a district court is BDT 350 thousand (approximately USD 4,200) or 128% of the average annual household expenditure, making it inaccessible for most of the rural population. As a result of these lengthy wait times and high monetary costs, informal Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (DRMs) are common. However, these mechanisms often lack the ability to enforce decisions and are conventionally perceived to be biased due to the local power structures.

In 2006, the Government of Bangladesh replaced the Village Court Ordinance 1976 with the Village Courts Act to create a functional semi-formal system of Village Courts (VCs) at the lowest tier of the local government, the Union Parishad (UP). VCs are designed to resolve small disputes at affordable costs and with fewer administrative complications, increasing access to justice for those who cannot afford resorting to the formal court system for resolving small disputes. Village Courts are secular and can adjudicate cases for religious as well as ethnic minorities.

In practice however, the implementation of the VC system was poor and most UPs lacked active, functioning VCs. To address this problem, the Government of Bangladesh—with technical assistance from UNDP and funding from the EU—launched the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) program. The AVCB program makes VCs active and functional by providing material support, human capital support, training for the UP officials, and awareness campaigns for the citizens living in the UP. In its first phase, the AVCB program was implemented in 351 UPs. Recently, the program has expanded to an additional 1,080 UPs.

During the second roll-out phase, a randomized controlled trial was conducted in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions, the two largest of Bangladesh's eight divisions. In these two divisions 267 UPs were randomly assigned to treatment – receiving the AVCB program (178 treatment UPs) or control – not receiving the AVCB program (89 control UPs). The random assignment allows evaluation of the causal impact of the AVCB program on a range of outcomes in accordance with the theory of change. Besides, 90 randomly chosen unions from other six divisions were included in the study to collect data simultaneously with Dhaka and Chattogram in order to describe changes in the AVCB outcomes over time across the country.

1.2. Purpose and the structure of this report

The purpose of this report is twofold: a) provide changes related to AVCB outcomes over time, and b) provide estimates of impact on important outcomes due to AVCB program. To achieve this purpose, findings are organized under three main sections. The first section is a description of the baseline and endline estimates of different outcomes so that readers can compare the changes over time. Estimates

¹ The Justice Audit Bangladesh found that there were 1.7 million pending cases in the beginning of 2017 and forecasted that this figure would rise to 6.8 million in 2022. <https://bangladesh.justiceaudit.org/>

² These are averages for all resolved disputes in the household survey. These estimates can be considered lower bounds since unresolved disputes which have not yet been resolved are not included.

of baseline and endline are provided by treatment group (where AVCB program has been implemented) and control group (where AVCB program has not been implemented) so that readers can compare additional changes potentially attributable to the AVCB program. In the second section, provide the impact evaluation of the AVCB program for readers to learn the causal estimates of the AVCB program by limiting analysis to Dhaka and Chattogram portion of the data since that falls under the Randomized Controlled Trial. The last section is a summary of findings under relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability so that readers can link important AVCB outcomes to these important and general success indicators.

Data was collected from four sources: household survey, beneficiary survey (only from treatment unions), Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) survey of UP officials, and administrative data of VCs. While the household and beneficiary survey focus on the experience and perception of the households, KAP measures the ability, perceptions and practices of the UP officials who are prime in making VCs functional. Administrative data on the other hand focuses on collecting factual data on institutional functionality from administrative records. Due to this distinction in focus areas of each data source, the first section on the findings, i.e. comparative changes over time, will be further subdivided into three sub-sections: household and beneficiary survey, KAP survey, and administrative data.

1.3. Theory of change

This section presents a multi-step theory of change addressing the potential effects of the AVCB program on the lives and well-being of UP residents. This theory of change demonstrates that the AVCB program may have both positive and unintended negative effects, and that empirical research is needed to understand the actual effects. Each step also highlights the outcome variables used to test the hypothesis. Figure 4 provides a visual outline of the theory of change.

Large scale projects, especially in low- and middle-income countries, often suffer from problems in implementation. As it is clearly seen from the lack of adherence to the Village Court Act before the AVCB program, creating the VCs and making them functional is a complex task and there are numerous ways in which this could potentially fail. The first aspect of functionality is that UP representatives and officials have sufficient training and knowledge to conduct the VC, are committing time to doing so, and are documenting the process as per the regulations. A second aspect of functionality is that the population knows about the VC and that they are inclined to use it for cases that the VC is designed to solve. Therefore, some important outcome variables would be UP officials and citizens' degree of knowledge about VC rules and regulations; time spent by UP officials on resolving cases in VCs; adherence to VC documentation protocols by the UP; knowledge among population of VC existence and inclination of people to use the VC to resolve hypothetical cases.

A second important dimension of this Theory of Change (ToC) is the demand. Even if the program has a successful implementation and the VCs are therefore functional, it is not certain that the VC services will be demanded by the citizens. It is possible that even if the VCs follow the rules and regulations, the existing DRM will be more attractive to resolve disputes. Therefore, understanding how the AVCB program changes the demand for VC services is an important component of the study.

A third dimension of the ToC is the quality of the VC process. It is possible that the VCs are quicker and cheaper than the DRMs that would have been used if the VC had not been activated. Furthermore, resolutions that are better enforced through the VCs reduce the risk of the disputes extending post-judgment. However, it is also possible that adding rules and regulation as well as documentation requirements to the informal justice resolution system slows down the process and makes it more complicated and harder to understand.

With a change in how disputes are resolved it is possible that important measures of subjective wellbeing also change. For example, with a better functioning VC, it is expected that more people will

be satisfied with the justice system they are able to access, which may have a deterrent effect on petty crimes. However, the VCs could also have adverse effects on people's perceptions. For example, if more disputes are brought up and resolved, that may increase the perception of how large of a problem crimes and disputes are. Trust may also decrease as a result of more disputes being resolved openly.

The last dimension of the ToC is the economic and productive activities that may depend on informal contracts and credible local dispute resolutions. With better law enforcement and fewer instances of unlawful behavior, people may increase participation in economic activities that require trust or contract-based engagement.

1.4. Project stakeholders

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh Project attempts to examine the demand for Village Court's services in the rural communities. Besides, it builds capacity of the service providers of the Village Court to meet the community demand duly. To interact both supply and demand sides, the project has worked with different stakeholders like Local Government Division (LGD), European Union, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Local Administration, Judiciary, Local Government Institutions and others.

Table 1.1: The role and involvement of stakeholders in the AVCB II project

Name of Stakeholder	Functions/ Roles
Local Government Division (LGD)	Provide funds to implement the AVCB (Phase II), project implementation; support policy influence and legal review framework; coordinate with other ministries; publish circular regarding project issue.
European Union (EU)	Provide funds to implement the AVCB II and monitor the project activities.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Provide funds to implement the AVCB II, ensure technical support to implement the project, collaborate and coordinate between the government and the EU to enhance the quality implementation of the project.
Local Administration (District Training Pool)	Officials from different departments of local administration put their efforts as the member of the District Training Pool (DTP) to cascade the VC knowledge to capacitate the UP machinery as VC service delivery hub.
District Judiciary	Refer the cases to the Village Court that falls under the VC jurisdiction. Receive the cases as appellate authority of the VC.
National Institute of Local Government (NILG)	Train the District Training Pool (DTP) to cascade it to the service providers of Village Court and incorporate the VC issues in the curriculum.
Deputy Director of Local Government (DDLG)	Facilitate the project interventions by directing the UNO and UPs with the support of project-provided District facilitator and ensure the GoB monitoring following the Decentralized Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation (DMIE) system, and functioning the Village Courts Management Committee (VCMC).
Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Facilitate the project interventions by directing the UPs and ensuring the GoB monitoring following the Decentralized Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation (DMIE) system and functioning the Village Courts Management Committee (VCMC).
UP Chairman and Other UP representatives	Provide Village Court services at the Union Parishad to activate the VC as the VC Chair and selective panel board member, respectively.
Account Assistant cum Computer Operator (AACO), UP Secretary	Provide first-hand support to the service seeker and support the UP Chair to run the VC following the Act and Rules.

2. Evaluation objectives and scope

2.1. Evaluation objectives

In Bangladesh, a significant challenge is the lack of access to justice. Formal courts take a long time to make decisions and are expensive to operate. Informal dispute resolution methods (DRM) are prevalent, however they frequently lack the authority to enforce decisions and are sometimes seen as biased by local power structures.

In response to these issues, the Union Parishads, the lowest tier of local administration, were mandated to hold regular Village Courts (VCs). The VC are intended to settle lesser disputes for a lower cost and with fewer administrative complexities, while still retaining the country's enforcement power and some bias-reduction measures. The VC system, on the other hand, was not adequately implemented, and most Union Parishad VCs were dormant and ineffective.

The Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) program was established as a collaboration between the government, EU and UNDP to address this issue. This objective of the evaluation is to find the causal effect of the AVCB program using randomized assignment of the AVCB program. We evaluate the impact approximately 4 years after the start of the AVCB program. For this evaluation we conducted surveys with households in **179** UPs and other surveys were conducted in **145** Ups. In baseline, we considered 1,080 UPs (the number of UPs in the project AVCB II) in total and among them 197 UPs were selected for the Endline Survey.

2.2. Evaluation scope

This evaluation sets a bar for the AVCB program by having most of the outcome variables being measured for the whole population or the population with disputes. The study tries to investigate how the AVCB program might have both intended and unintended negative consequences, and that more empirical research is needed to figure out what those consequences are.

The VC functionality was observed from two different aspects. The first aspect of functioning is that UP officials and representatives have appropriate training and knowledge to perform the VC, spend time doing so, and ensure that the process is documented in accordance with rules. A second aspect of functionality is that the general public is aware of the VC and is likely to use it in circumstances that the VC is designed to address.

An essential part of our research is determining how the AVCB program affects demand for VC services. It is possible that VCs are faster and less expensive than the DRMs that would have been employed if the VC had not been activated. Also, resolutions may be effectively enforced, reducing the possibility of post-judgment conflicts.

Another key component of the research is to see how AVCB affects disagreements. Better dispute resolution may lead to fewer disagreements because continuing issues are addressed more quickly, and persons are deterred from engaging in illegal behavior because they know they will be held more accountable.

Thus, the different aspects were considered and evaluated to identify the potential impacts of the program in the study.

2.3. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation carried out following five important criteria a) Relevance, b) Effectiveness, C) Efficiency, d) Sustainability, and e) Impact. The AVCB program was randomly assigned to one-third of the UPs (145 UPs, additionally 34 UPs for the household survey) in our study as our principal identifying approach. The UPs were those who were eligible for the AVCB program in all divisions where baseline and follow-up surveys were conducted. The sample UPs were evenly distributed geographically by stratifying the randomization by geographical area (Upazila).

The randomized assignment of the AVCB program in our research area allows us to determine the causal effect of the program because there should be no changes in the distribution of potential outcomes between the treatment and control groups due to randomization.

2.4. Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions were selected from various implications to find the impact of the program in multiple dimensions.

The variables that were considered to identify the effects of VC functionality include degree of knowledge about VC rules and regulation by UP officials and citizens; time spent by UP officials on resolving cases in VCs; adherence to VC documentation protocols by the UP; knowledge among population that VC exists and inclination of people to use the VC to resolve hypothetical cases.

The parameters considered in the aspect of demand for VC dispute resolution include fraction of pre-existing disputes that are resolved by each DRM; fraction of pre-existing disputes that are still unresolved; Fraction of new disputes that are resolved by each DRM; fraction of new disputes that are still unresolved; number of cases reaching District Courts.

Again, the factors taken into account for the effect to access to justice and quality of dispute resolution include degree of knowledge about VC rules and regulation by UP officials and citizens; time spent by UP officials on resolving cases in VCs; adherence to VC documentation protocols by the UP; inclination of people using the VC to resolve hypothetical cases.

To find the impact on frequency of dispute and crime, factors that were considered cover frequency of dispute and crime.

To understand the perceptions of disputes, justice and trust, the factors taken into account are subjective descriptions of how large of a problem crime and unresolved disputes are also assess the trust and communal harmony.

Similarly, the similar variables were considered and analysed for the beneficiaries as well for the convenience and effectiveness of the study.

2.5 . Evaluation approach and methods

In this section the exact methodology of data collection will be described in detail.

2.5.1. Sampling

For the overall evaluation of the Activating Village Courts Bangladesh (AVCB) program data was collected from 90 Union Parishads (UPs) across the 6 divisions of Bangladesh that will not participate in the RCT (the **non-RCT** area). Data was also collected from 107 UPs in the two divisions, Dhaka and Chattogram, “the **RCT** area”. The selection strategies between the non-RCT and RCT areas differ and are therefore described in two different sections of this document. The reason for the difference in

sampling strategy is due to different data requirements from the non-RCT and RCT area. Also, the lessons learned from data collection in the non-RCT area were used to design the sampling strategy for the RCT area.

2.5.1.1. Non-RCT area

Selection of UPs

90 UPs were selected using simple random sampling stratified on Division (15 UPs from each division).

Protocol for short targeting survey³ sampling

1. Listing the wards: A surveyor met with the UP chair as well as potentially other knowledgeable people in the UP council. The surveyor asked the UP chair to select one ward as the most dispute prone ward and classify approximately one third of the rest of the wards as “Above normal levels of dispute”, one third as “Normal levels of dispute” and one third as “Below normal levels of dispute”.

2. Selecting a ward: A ward was then selected using a pre-programmed tablet. The ward was randomly selected with a 8/15 probability of choosing the most dispute prone ward, a 4/15 probability of choosing a “Above normal levels of dispute” wards and a 2/15 probability of choosing a “Normal levels of dispute” and a 1/15 probability of choosing a “Below normal levels of dispute” ward.

3. Dividing the ward into sub-UP areas: This ward was then divided into so called “sub-UP areas” such as villages or neighbourhoods (*paras*).

4. Categorising the sub-UP areas and selecting a sub-UP area: The sub-UP areas were then ranked in terms of their proneness to dispute. Again, the pre-programmed tablet was used to pick one sub-UP area in such a way that the top ranked sub-UP area had a twice as high probability to be chosen compared to the second ranked, the second ranked had twice as high probability to be chosen compared to the third ranked etc.

Selecting what households to interview

5. 60 households were interviewed per sub-UP area: A total of 60 randomly selected households were then interviewed per sub-UP area

The surveyor tried to interview the household head. If the household head was not available, the interviewer interviewed the eldest son of the household head (if knowledgeable and not a minor). If the eldest son is not available, the interviewer will try to interview any other son that is not a minor and is knowledgeable. If none of the sons are available then the interviewer will try to interview the wife of the household head, if knowledgeable. If the wife is not available, the interviewer will try to interview anyone else in the household who is not a minor and is knowledgeable. If no one in the household is home the surveyor will note this household down as empty in the tablet and interview the next household instead.

Protocol for Household sampling for the full household survey

Selecting the households:

Among the 60 households surveyed in the targeting survey, 20 households from each sub-UP area were selected for the household survey. The households were selected using unequal probability sampling

³ In some project documents this survey will be referred to as a census since it was initially planned to be a census of whole sub-UP areas.

where a higher probability is given to households that reported having a dispute in the past year and an even higher probability is given to households reported having an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the Village Court.

In a sub-UP area with no disputes the probability of being selected for the household was approximately $20/60=1/3$. If a household is the only household in a sub-UP area with a dispute the probability of this household being selected was approximately $5/6$ and if the household has an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the village court the probability was approximately $23/24$. Naturally, the more disputes and unresolved disputes within the jurisdiction of the VC there are in a particular sub-UP area, the lower are the probabilities that a specific household was selected.

Using this strategy raises the proportion of households with disputes from 21% in the census to 52% in the household survey. Similarly, it raises the proportion of households who have an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the VC from 5.8% in the census to 16% in the household survey.

Replacement strategy:

For each sub-UP area there are 20 “selected households” and 10 “replacement households” the replacement households are selected using the same criteria as the selected households, but the list of replacement households can obviously not contain selected households. If a selected household is unavailable, then a replacement household will be surveyed instead.

Protocol for selecting UP members

In addition to households the UP chair, the UP secretary and one (out of nine) ordinary UP member as well as one (out of three) female UP member was interviewed. The UP members, both female and ordinary, were selected using simple random sampling so each ordinary UP member had a $1/9$ probability of being sampled while each female UP member had a $1/3$ probability of being sampled. If a particular UP member is not available (s)he will be replaced by a replacement that was selected using the same simple random sampling strategy.

2.5.1.2. RCT area

Sampling UPs from RCT area

The RCT area UPs were selected by simple random sampling stratified on treatment status and division. If a particular UP was not available due to weather conditions or not relevant because it was being merged with an urban area and would therefore could not receive the AVCB program it was replaced by a randomly selected UP in the same district with the same treatment assignment.

Protocol for short targeting survey sampling

- 1. Selecting a ward:** Each of the 9 wards will have an equal probability of being selected.
- 2. Dividing the ward into sub-UP areas:** The surveyor met with the UP chair or the UP member of the selected ward. They will have divided the ward into sub-UP areas and a sub-UP area was selected by simple random sampling using a pre-programmed tablet.
- 3. 90 households were interviewed per sub-UP area:** A total of 90 randomly selected households were then interviewed per sub-UP area.

The surveyor tried to interview the household head. If the household head was not available, the interviewer will have interviewed the eldest son of the household head (if knowledgeable and not a minor). If the eldest son is not available, the interviewer will try to interview any other son that is not a

minor and is knowledgeable. If none of the sons are available then the interviewer will try to interview the wife of the household head, if knowledgeable. If the wife is not available, the interviewer will try to interview anyone else in the household who is not a minor and is knowledgeable. If no one in the household is home the surveyor will note this household down as empty in the tablet and interview the next household instead.

Protocol for Household sampling for the full household survey

Selecting the households:

Among the 90 households surveyed in the census, 30 households from each sub-UP area will be selected for the household survey using the information collected during the census. The households are selected using unequal probability sampling where a higher probability is given to households that reported having a dispute in the past year and an even higher probability is given to households reported having an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the Village Court.

In a sub-UP area with no disputes the probability of being selected for the household was approximately $30/90=1/3$. If a household is the only household in a sub-UP area with a dispute the probability of this household being selected was approximately $5/6$ and if the household has an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the village court the probability was approximately $23/24$. Naturally, the more disputes and unresolved disputes within the jurisdiction of the VC there are in a particular sub-UP area, the lower are the probabilities that a specific household was selected.

Using this strategy raises the proportion of households with disputes from 16% in the targeting survey to 40% in the household survey. Similarly, it raises the proportion of households who have an unresolved dispute within the jurisdiction of the VC from 4.4% in the census to 12% in the household survey.

Replacement strategy:

For each sub-UP area there are 30 “selected households” and 10 “replacement households” the replacement households are selected using the same criteria as the selected households, but the list of replacement households can obviously not contain selected households. If a selected household is unavailable, then a replacement household will be surveyed instead.

Protocol for selecting UP members:

In addition to households, the UP chair, the UP secretary and one (out of nine) ordinary UP member will be interviewed, as well as one (out of three) female UP member. The UP members, both female and ordinary, were selected so that they represent the ward where the household survey was conducted. If the UP chair was not available, the panel Chairman was interviewed as a replacement. If a particular UP member is not available (s)he will be replaced by a replacement that was selected using the same simple random sampling strategy.

Review of administrative VC data:

The review of the administrative data was done by asking the UP officials if they kept any record of the cases they had resolved through the VC. If they had such records, they were asked to show the type of records kept. Among the records the number of forms that were kept according to the official regulations were counted. After this the forms and registers were studied and all the cases recorded were typed into a pre-programmed tablet.

2.5.1.3. Ethical Consideration

The IPA has its own mechanism for securing ethical clearance from the appropriate authority. Furthermore, the team adhered to the UNDP's ethical guidelines. Among the ethical considerations were the following:

- All respondents were informed and asked to consent in accordance with standard and pre-agreed-upon consent protocols. The surveyor carried a consent form and read it to the participants. Before proceeding with the survey, they obtained permission from the respondents. Furthermore, the study team obtained consent before taking any photographs.
- Enumerators carried out systematic searches using a database.
- Enumerators demonstrated the integrity in their own behaviour through entire survey process throughout the survey process,
- Enumerators were mindful of respondents' security, dignity, and self-worth, Enumerators obtained informed consent from participants to ensure that they could make a conscious, deliberate decision to participate or not.
- Enumerators articulated and considered a wide range of general and public interests and values related to the study.
- There were no monetary rewards for survey respondents.
- Data confidentiality was maintained throughout the study period.

2.5.2. Weighting of observations for summary statistics and analysis

Since the sampling strategy differs between the RCT and non-RCT area and since weighted random sampling is used at several stages of the sampling process the sample will be weighed according to the probability that any individual observation is observed. This will be done for both the household survey and the UP officials survey.

The weighting of the sample will be done using sampling weights which are the inverse of the probability that any given observation is observed in the whole project population. This means that observations that were observed with a higher probability will have a lower weight in the generation of summary statistics.⁴ This means that estimates will be representative of the population in the whole project area if nothing else is indicated or the non-RCT area or the RCT area if that is indicated.

2.5.3. Quality control mechanisms

2.5.3.1. Data collection and entry program

To ensure the highest level of data quality and security digital tablets were used to collect the data, as they enable a quick survey turnaround time, minimize data entry errors, and ensure automated data security. After the questionnaires were finalized, the questionnaires were programmed into SurveyCTO format, which is a high-quality platform that offers the features necessary for data security and quality. SurveyCTO allowed automatically checking for consistency and constraints which reduced the data entry error.

2.5.3.2. Recruitment of qualified field staff

Experienced and qualified data collection team were recruited and trained for each of the surveys separately. The training sessions included both classroom training and field practices. Since data were collected on tablets, staff were trained on the paper versions of the questionnaires before training on administration using tablets. The training began with sessions on ensuring ethical and unbiased data

⁴ Standard errors are obtained using a heteroskedasticity robust (Huber-White) estimator taking into account the inverse probability weights.

collection. The next sessions focused on understanding of the study and its research questions. Pairs of enumerators then practiced data collection for the entire questionnaire.

2.5.3.3. Pilot test

A false launch pilot was used to assess the capacity of each field staff member to perform the tasks in a real-life context. During the pilot, data were collected from households from areas outside of the study area. Following the false launch, the Field Managers evaluated each enumerator and supervisor using relevant criteria and compiled a final enumerator list. The false launch pilot also served as an opportunity to fine-tune some of the questions and SurveyCTO codes.

Through the pilot test, the average amount of time required to complete each section of the questionnaire was estimated. For monitoring purposes, this information was to identify any potential lapses during the actual survey by comparing the time required during the pilot to that required during the actual survey.

Before the commencement of data collection, the Field Managers tested each of the tablets to make sure all programs are correctly installed. Furthermore, they piloted the Cloud Server to make sure data extraction worked properly.

2.5.3.4. Field-work management and supervision

Respondent tracking:

The short targeting survey and the full household survey collected detailed identifiable information, such as multiple mobile numbers (including from at least two of each respondent's relatives/friends) and the full address of a household within the same neighbourhood that knows about the sample household. This information minimizes the survey attrition rate. The selected survey respondents were given a unique ID before starting the survey. Using the assignment sheet that had necessary tracking information, the enumerator found the household corresponding to a particular ID. Once the enumerator entered the ID into his/her tablet, relevant information (e.g. village name, household name, name of the head of the household) popped up on the screen and the enumerator matched information on the tablet with that of the actual household, and then began surveying.

Quality control:

A number of methods were employed to maintain data quality, including:

- **Accompaniments:** Almost 10% of surveys conducted by each enumerator were observed by field supervisors.
- **Back checks:** 10% of surveys were randomly selected to be partially resurveyed within a week of the original survey. Back-checked data was compared to the original data in order to identify errors and take necessary corrective measures.
- **Spot checks:** The Field Managers and the core research team regularly visited the study area to randomly check individual enumerators and provide feedback.
- **Random recording of surveyors and back-checkers:** Randomly selected surveys were recorded and audited.
- **Consistency checks:** Consistency of data across all interrelated questions was ensured by adding different constraints in the SurveyCTO form.
- **Monitoring feedback:** The enumerators and supervisors met every day to discuss all monitoring feedback and improve their data collection efforts.
- **Other checks:** The Field Managers performed various checks, such as consistency checks and back checks, on the data on a regular basis. This helped identify any issues with the data, such as completion rates or accuracy, and take prompt action to correct any issues. Since the data were collected on tablets and uploaded in the cloud on a daily basis, the Field Managers were able to access the uploaded data in near real-time.

To ensure that the methods and processes met ethical standards, all study components were reviewed and approved for implementation by the IPA Institutional Review Board (IRB). The applications contained copies of all data collection materials, study protocols outlining the risks and benefits of the study, informed consent forms and a detailed description of the data collection procedure. All research staff at IPA listed in the IRB applications also provided evidence of having completed appropriate training for research with human subjects. Enumerators signed confidentiality agreements to protect data from respondents.

Additionally, to ensure the appropriateness of questions, all questionnaires were piloted. Feedback from the pilot exercises was used to make final modifications of the questions. Devices used to collect the data electronically are password protected. All data collected are de-identified, encrypted and saved in secured locations on IPA servers.

We followed the obligations of evaluators (independence, impartiality, credibility, conflicts of interest, accountability) in accordance with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical standards.

3. Methodology and data collection

This section provides an overview of the methodology and data collection.

3.1. Impact evaluation of the AVCB program

Impact evaluation of the AVCB program was conducted using two different methodologies. The first is a simple pre-post comparison of the project area. The second is a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) where UPs that were randomly assigned to receive the program are compared to a control group that were randomly assigned not to receive the program. Due to logistical and project administrative limitations, it was not possible to randomise all UPs that the program will be implemented in; instead the RCT was carried out in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions. The RCT areas in Dhaka and Chattogram were more intensively surveyed. Henceforth this report refers “the project area” as all the 1,080 UPs where the program is being implemented, “the RCT area” as the both treatment and control UPs in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions and the “control area” as the randomly selected UPs in Chattogram and Dhaka divisions where the program was not implemented. Since the project area is spread across all of Bangladesh’s eight divisions while the control area is concentrated in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions, these areas are not expected to be similar in the way that the treatment and control area will be. However, for the difference-in-difference analysis, the project area and control area are assumed to have had similar trends in the absence of the AVCB program.

The original RCT design aimed to provide a measure of the causal effect of the program in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions while the difference-in-difference strategy will provide evidence toward assessing the external validity of the results for the rest of Bangladesh.

3.2. AVCB program

The AVCB program improves the UPs’ capabilities to run effective courts. A functional VC requires that the elected officials of the UP are able to understand and implement VC laws and regulations. In the VC system, each disputant party can nominate one non-UP person as a judge. Therefore, the people most likely to be elected judges are required to have training on the relevant laws and procedures.

Although most UP representatives are engaged in dispute resolution, they mostly interact with the Shalish system. Therefore, they are limited in their understanding of dispute resolution through the VC mechanism. Few UP officials had a comprehensive understanding of the VC rules and regulations during testing.

The AVCB capacity building activities entail training of the UP officials on the VC processes. The training specifically targeted female UP members and general members with greater urgency. The training on VC for UP representatives and UP officials started on May, 2017 and ended on June, 2018. The capacity building and training components were implemented union-wise by partner NGOs hired by the UNDP. Partner NGOs were trained by the UNDP and the Local Government Division.

Another major component of the AVCB program is to create awareness of the VC mechanism through campaign and advocacy. The program undertook community mobilization activities such as common area meetings that brought together immediate neighbours, community-wide meetings that brought together residents of a neighbourhood, rallies, and multimedia drama shows in each program UPs. These activities began on July 2017; some of them are repeated periodically to date. These outreach activities targeting were implemented union-wise by the partner NGOs.

To ensure continued functionality of the VCs, it is also important to encourage monitoring by the district administration. The program facilitated workshops for government officials, district court judges, and

journalists. These workshops were conducted between October 2017 and November 2018. These activities were conducted by the UNDP.

The AVCB program supplied the required forms and furniture to make the VCs functional, and hired a Village Court Assistant (VCA) for each UP. The forms and furniture were supplied between April 2017 and November 2017. Hiring of VCAs was complete by June 2017.

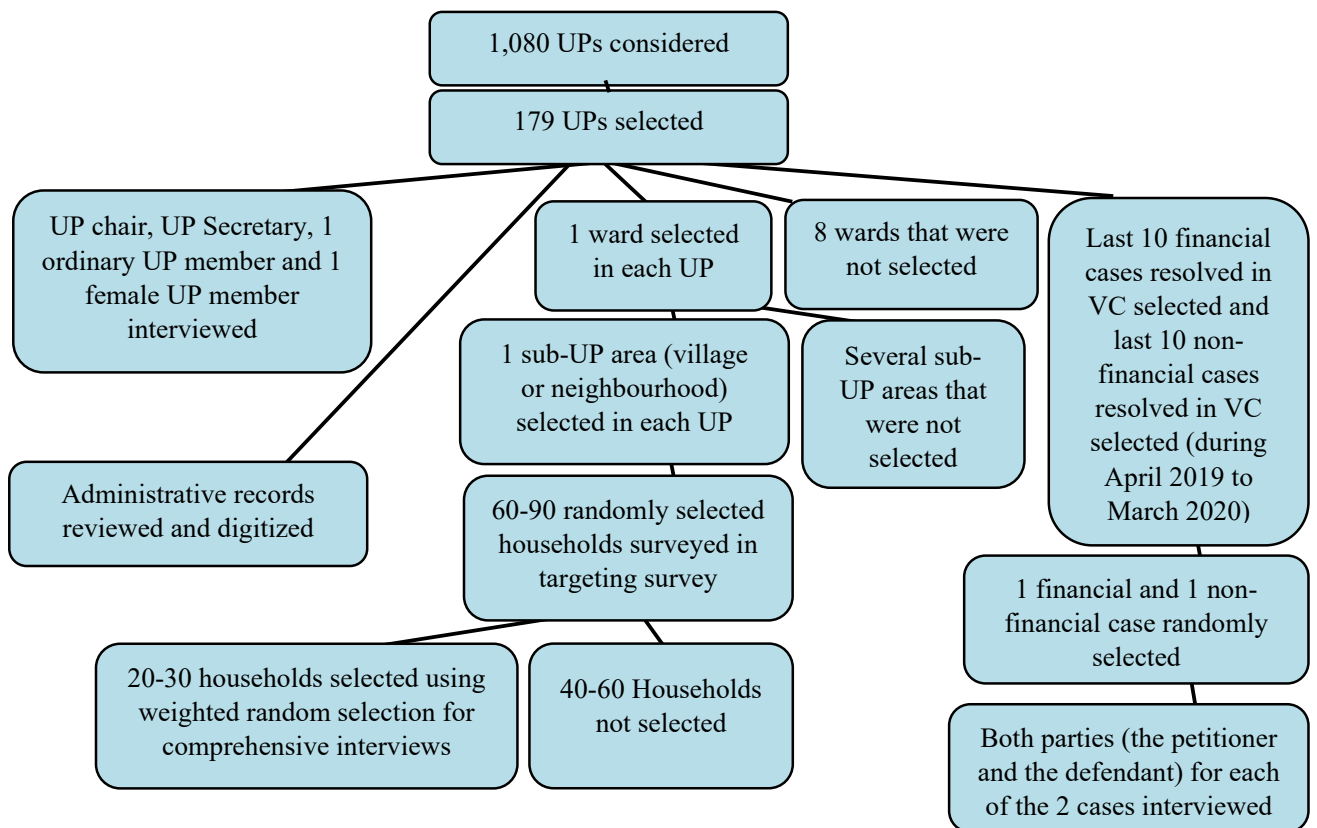
3.3. Data collection

3.3.1. Household sampling process

The UPs were selected using simple random sampling stratified on geographical location. In each UP, a ward was selected for surveying. The enumeration team collected a list of villages in that union. The head of the enumerator team put the list of the villages in a pre-programmed digital device that randomly select one village from the list. 60 to 90 households from that village were selected using systematic random sampling methods. Basic household characteristics and dispute data were collected from them in the targeting survey.⁵

After conducting the targeting survey, households were selected for the full household survey using weighted random sampling where a higher weight (i.e. a higher probability) was given to households that had either had an ongoing dispute or had resolved a dispute within the last 2 years. 30 households were selected from each village of the RCT areas and 20 households were selected from each village of the non-RCT area. The following diagram provides a glimpse of the sample selection process.

Figure 2: Diagram for sample selection



⁵ In some project documents this survey will be referred to as a census since it was initially planned to be a census of whole sub-UP areas.

3.3.2. Sampling of UP officials and administrative data

In addition to households the UP chair, the UP secretary and one (out of nine) ordinary UP member as well as one (out of three) female UP member were interviewed in each UP surveyed.⁶ These UP officials were then interviewed to know their knowledge about VC and its function, their attitude and perception about VC. Section 5 contains statistics and analysis of the data collected from the UP representatives and officials.

In addition to interviewing the UP officials, the survey team also reviewed administrative data on dispute resolution in each UP. The review of the administrative data was done by asking the UP officials if they kept any record of the cases they had resolved through the VC. If they had such records, they were asked to show the type of records they kept. Among the records the number of forms that were kept according to the official regulations were counted. After this the forms and registers were reviewed and all the cases recorded were typed into a pre-programmed tablet. Section 7 contains summary statistics of the data collected from the review of administrative data.

3.3.3. Implementation of data collection

The baseline data collection process took place between January 31 and May 15, 2017. Overall the data collection was relatively smooth without any major problems or delays. In total, approximately 15,000 households were surveyed in the short targeting survey and approximately 5,000 in the full household survey. One person was interviewed per household: the household head was the preferred respondent; if the household head was not available, the survey would be conducted with the next most knowledgeable person in the household regarding disputes, above 18 years of age. A total of **787** UP officials were interviewed and the administrative records of **197** UPs reviewed. Endline data collection took place between January 7 and February 26, 2021. Due to budget constraints, random subset unions were selected from the RCT area. Overall, **3,435** households and **432** KAP respondents were successfully tracked and surveyed. For detailed summary statistics of the survey, please see the table **A1 under Annex 1**. Similarly, for a detailed description of the quality control mechanism, please see **2.5.3 under section 2.5**.

A beneficiary survey was added to the endline data collection, for the purpose of collecting more reliable data on the perception and experience of using village courts. Since beneficiary samples were randomly drawn from the recent users of the village courts as recorded in the village court register, minimum recall bias was expected on some experiential indicators, for example time and cost invested to resolve a case using the VC. Beneficiary samples have been randomly drawn from a list of most recent 10 cases that have been resolved in the village courts within the last 12 months. The case data has been collected from the administrative records of the village courts. This data has been collected from the project area only as administrative data are well recorded and preserved in the project area due to the AVCB program. Two beneficiaries were surveyed – two applicants and two defendants – from each UP. In total, surveyed **452** beneficiaries were surveyed.

3.3.4. Weighting of observations and representativeness of the data

Since the sampling strategy differs between the different divisions and since weighted random sampling is used at several stages of the sampling process, the sample will be weighted according to the

⁶ Each UP has 12 members. 9 of them are “ordinary” members elected by and representing one ward each, although these members can be either male or female they are almost exclusively male. In addition to the 9 ordinary members there are 3 female member positions that are reserved exclusively for women, referred to as “female members”.

probability that any individual observation is observed. This will be done for the household survey, the UP officials' survey and the administrative data.

The weighting of the sample is done using sampling weights which are the inverse of the probability that any given observation is observed in the whole project population. This means that observations that were observed with a higher probability will have a lower weight in the generation of summary statistics and analysis output.⁷ The result is that estimates will be representative of the population of households in the whole project area in case of the household survey data or all of the UPs in the project area in the case of the UP survey data and the administrative data.

3.4. Limitations of the evaluation

- 1) Due to logistical and project administrative limitations, it was not possible to randomise all UPs that the program will be implemented in; instead of the RCT was carried out in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions. The RCT areas in Dhaka and Chattogram were more intensively surveyed. Henceforth this report refers “the project area” as all the 1,080 UPs where the program is being implemented, “the RCT area” as both the treatment and control UPs in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions and the “control area” as the randomly selected UPs in Chattogram and Dhaka divisions where the program was not implemented. Since the project area is spread across all of Bangladesh's eight divisions while the control area is concentrated in Dhaka and Chattogram divisions, these areas are not expected to be similar in the way that the treatment and control area will be. However, for the difference-in-difference analysis, the project area and control area are assumed to have had similar trends in the absence of the AVCB program.
- 2) Endline data collection took place between January 7 and February 26, 2021. Due to budget constraints, random subset unions were selected from the RCT area. Overall, 3,435 households and 432 KAP respondents were successfully tracked and surveyed. For detailed summary statistics of the survey, please refer to table A1 under Annex 1.
- 3) The results of the Endline Evaluation should be viewed in the context of the following information:
 - a) Village Courts impact a very small share of the total disputes in the country due to their limited jurisdiction.
 - b) Shalish has a long history of work in Bangladesh and is a part of deep-rooted social norms.
 - c) We did not have admin data from UP chairs on time spent on Village court work- it is possible that UP chairs have multiple priorities and do not have additional capacity to work more hours as judge. This review was outside the scope of the evaluation.
 - d) Due to the timing of data collection for the Endline Survey (Jan to March 2021) in the midst of the covid-19 crisis, the current evaluation has the following limitations – (a) we had to reduce the scope of the Endline survey to 197 UPs (b) The number of cases brought to village courts themselves were limited due to mobility restrictions.

⁷ Standard errors are obtained using a heteroskedasticity robust (Huber-White) estimator taking into account the inverse probability weights.

4. Results/Findings

4.1. Household and beneficiary survey

4.1.1. Overview of the household and beneficiary survey

The purpose of the household survey was to get a citizen perspective on disputes and dispute resolution in the project and control area as well as the citizen's perspective on the VCs themselves. Since there is no way to verify a household's experience with village courts, a beneficiary survey was added in the endline to measure perceptions and experiences from beneficiaries (both the applicants and the defendants) to reduce recall and social desirability bias.

4.1.2. Profile of the respondents

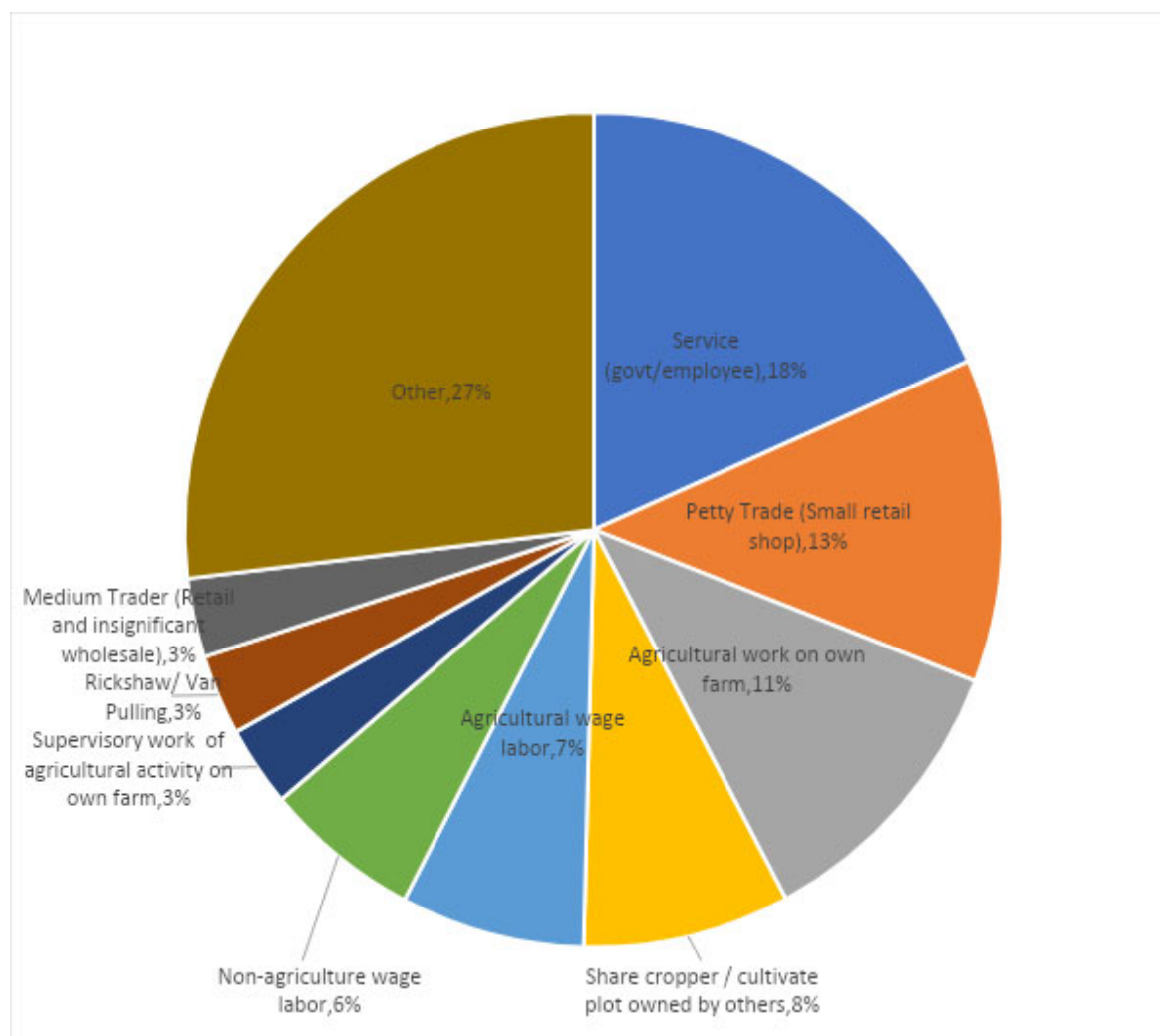
The following table shows the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the respondents in the household survey in the project and control areas.

Table 1.2: Statistical overview of demographic and economic conditions of the respondents and their households

	Project Area	Control area	Overall
Mean Household size (No. of persons)	4.8	5.2	4.9
Mean Respondent Age (in years)	27.4	27.7	27.5
% of female among respondents	49%	49%	49%
Respondent Education level			
Illiterate	35%	33%	34%
Primary or below	31%	30%	31%
Secondary or below	28%	30%	28%
Higher Secondary or below	4%	4%	4%
Above higher Secondary	3%	3%	3%
Household Per capita expenditure (in taka)	3194	3768	3343
% of HHs below WB poverty line ⁸	28%	14%	24%

⁸ US\$ 1.90 in PPP constant 2011 USD.

Figure 3: Occupations of respondents



As can be seen in the statistics above, the project area is mainly an agrarian economy with agriculture related work being the most common source of income. While it is the largest category in the pie chart above, only 18% of the labour force are salaried employees in government positions or private firms. Small and retail shops are also sizable sources of occupation with 12% of the respondents involved in this occupation.

Compared to the representative sample, the households of the beneficiary sample are a little less educated but slightly better-off economically.

Table 1.3: Statistical overview of demographic and economic conditions of the beneficiary respondents and their households

	Project Area
Mean Household size (no. of persons)	4.9
Mean Respondent Age (in years)	30
% of female among respondents	49%

Respondent Education level	
Illiterate	31%
Primary or below	54%
Secondary or below	5%
Higher Secondary or below	5%
Above higher Secondary	4%
Household Per capita expenditure (in taka)	4286
% of HHs below WB poverty line ⁹	24%

4.1.3. Experience of Disputes

Disputes are common in rural Bangladesh. Sixteen percent of the households in the sample had an ongoing dispute and thirteen percent had resolved at least one dispute within the past 2 years in the baseline. The rate of unresolved disputes decreased from sixteen to fourteen percent and the rate of resolving at least one dispute in the past 2 years increased from thirteen to twenty-seven percent in the endline. Across all survey rounds, half of the households reported having at least one dispute. This makes access to an affordable dispute resolution method, let alone the village courts, an important public policy problem.

Eighty percent of the households with a dispute claimed to be or have been the plaintiff in the baseline which reduced to sixty-six percent in the endline.

More than eighty percent of the disputes tended to have a specific monetary value attached to them and among these disputes the average such value was very high, approximately BDT 2,72,000 in the baseline. The rate of disputes with a monetary value reduced to fifty percent and average value of the dispute reduced to BDT 1,83,000 in the endline. This is indicative of the fact that a large portion of the disputes may not be resolved in VCs due to the highest case value limit of BDT 75,000.

Table 2.1: Experience with dispute

	Project area		Control		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
% of households with at least one unresolved dispute	16%	13%	13%	18%	16%	14%
% of households with at least one dispute that was resolved in the past 2 years	13%	25%	14%	34%	13%	27%
% of disputes where the respondent claimed to be the plaintiff	79%	66%	82%	66%	80%	66%
% of conflicts with a specific monetary value	83%	52%	82%	46%	82%	50% (N=359)
Among these: Monetary value of dispute (in taka)	166,449	169,000	552,276	209,000	272,177	183,000
Minimum value (taka)	100	0	100	0	100	0
Maximum value (taka)	9,200,000	8,030,000	9,500,000	6,930,000	9,500,000	8,030,000

In the baseline, information on 2777 disputes were collected. Of these, 1569 disputes (56%) met the monetary value and the types of civil and criminal disputes that fall within VC's jurisdiction. In the

⁹ US\$ 1.90 in PPP constant 2011 USD.

endline, information on 1611 disputes were collected and 1065 of these (66%) meet VC criteria, which indicates the relevance of VC as an affordable DRM. While only 3% of these eligible cases eventually came to village courts in the baseline, this increased to 21% in the endline.

Table 2.2: Experience with disputes

	Project area		Control		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Number of total disputes (N)	1944	1043	833	568	2777	1611
Number of disputes that fall within the VC jurisdiction (N1)	1206 (62% of N)	685 (66% of N)	363 (44% of N)	380 (67% of N)	1569 (56% of N)	1065 (66% of N)
Number of disputes that used village court at any stage (N2)	25 (2% of N1)	172 (25% of N1)	14 (4% of N1)	50 (13% of N1)	39 (3% of N1)	222 (21% of N1)

Moreover, the rate of eligible cases eventually coming to VCs is 25% of the total eligible cases in the treatment areas, compared to 13% in the control area, perhaps indicating the success of the AVCB program in increasing demand for VC as an affordable and credible DRM.

The table below provides information on the frequency of different types of disputes. Disputes have been categorized as those that are within the VC's jurisdiction and those that are outside the VC's jurisdiction. Given that this is a rural population; it is also expected that their disputes are of agrarian nature. As can be seen in the table below, the most common type of disputes within the VC's jurisdiction are land disputes followed by verbal fight.

In all, the proportion of people experiencing disputes who received services from VCs increased from 1% at baseline to 14% at endline. This number increased in both control and project areas but was more pronounced in project areas, which saw an increase from 1% (baseline) to 16% (endline).

Table 3: Types of disputes within and outside VC's jurisdiction

Type of dispute	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Disputes within VC's jurisdiction						
Dispute about non-agricultural land (or compensation for it)	38%	2%	33%	2%	37%	2%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	22%	7%	14%	8%	21%	7%
Verbal Fight	15%	52%	9%	55%	14%	53%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	7%	7%	17%	9%	8%	8%
Fraud	5%	2%	9%	0%	6%	2%
Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	4%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%
Dispute about credit/loan	2%	4%	2%	0%	2%	2%
Theft	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Other	10%	6%	16%	1%	12%	6%

Disputes outside of VC's jurisdiction						
Dispute about non-agricultural land (or compensation for it)	24%	2%	38%	4%	29%	3%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	22%	11%	10%	9%	18%	11%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	14%	25%	20%	24%	16%	25%
Verbal Fight	8%	2%	8%	1%	8%	1%
Fraud	5%	3%	4%	1%	4%	2%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	3%	9%	4%	4%	3%	7%
Divorce	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	2%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Alimony	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Dowry	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Kidnapping	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Murder	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Sexual harassment (by someone outside the household)	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
% of people who have experience of disputes related to village courts received services from village courts	1%	16%	2%	9%	1%	14%
Other	8%	8%	4%	6%	6%	7%

4.1.4. Determinants of disputes

The regression analysis below shows what household characteristics are related to the probability of having at least one dispute from the baseline to the endline. Among the “standard” household characteristics, (per capita expenditure, age of household head, sex of household head), only the age of the household head is significantly associated with the probability of dispute. However, this association is relatively weak, and one additional year of the household head's age is associated with only a 0.1 percentage point increase in the probability of dispute. Household head's age and household's per capita expenditure appears to be positively and significantly related to having disputes.

Table 4: Household Characteristics and the probability of dispute

	(1) Dispute	(2) Dispute	(3) Dispute	(4) Dispute	(5) Dispute
Land owned (hundreds of decimals)		0.000 (0.000)			
Household Expenditure Per Capita, BDT 1,000	0.000* (0.000)	0.000* (0.000)			0.000* (0.000)
Age of household head	0.002*** (0.001)	0.002*** (0.001)			0.002** (0.001)

Female household head (dummy)	-0.045 (0.045)	-0.044 (0.044)			-0.043 (0.044)
Any cultivable land owned			0.004 (0.030)	0.007 (0.033)	0.001 (0.033)
Area of cultivable land owned (hundreds of decimals)			-0.086 (0.102)	-0.099 (0.104)	-0.104 (0.107)
Any homestead land owned			-0.022 (0.035)	0.051 (0.043)	0.051 (0.043)
Area of homestead land owned (hundreds of decimals)			0.027 (0.033)	0.038 (0.036)	0.033 (0.036)
Any pond owned				0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Area of pond owned (hundreds of decimals)				0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)
Any other land owned				-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Area of other land owned (hundreds of decimals)				0.000 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)
Constant	0.510*** (0.050)	0.512*** (0.050)	0.693*** (0.103)	0.690*** (0.103)	0.598*** (0.116)
Observations	1,752	1,752	3,435	1,752	1,752
R-squared	0.006	0.006	0.001	0.005	0.009

Robust standard errors, clustered at the UP level, in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Another interesting question is the household and dispute characteristics that are associated with whether a dispute is resolved and if a dispute is resolved, in what DRM it was resolved. Age of the head of the household and the relationship with the UP member/councillor is significantly associated with disputes being resolved.

Columns 2-4 in the table below shows the probability that a dispute was resolved by a specific DRM conditional on the dispute being resolved. Column 2, shows that female-headed households are 21 percentage points less likely to resolve dispute in *Shalish*. Also, households with any relationship with the UP chair are less likely to resolve cases in *Shalish* and relatively richer households are more likely to use *Shalish* for disputes. Land related disputes are also less likely to be resolved in *Shalish*. Column 3 and 4 show that relatively poorer households are more likely to use village courts and district courts.

Table 5: Factors affecting whether a dispute is resolved and where it is resolved (Endline survey data)

	(1) Dispute resolved	(2) Dispute resolved in Shalish	(3) Dispute resolved in DC	(4) Dispute resolved in VC
Head of household's age	-0.00314* (0.00181)	-0.00209 (0.00276)	0.00214 (0.00244)	0.00088 (0.00230)
Female Head of Household	0.02648 (0.09325)	-0.21139** (0.10018)	0.03610 (0.11549)	0.14924 (0.14860)
Per capita expenditure, 1,000 BDT	0.00013 (0.00180)	0.00279* (0.00145)	- 0.00181** (0.00084)	-0.00119* (0.00067)
Any type of relationship with UP Chair	0.00654 (0.01010)	-0.03185*** (0.00937)	-0.01174 (0.00954)	-0.00 procedure (0.00867)
Any type of relationship with UP member	0.01173* (0.00703)	0.00431 (0.00926)	-0.00445 (0.00906)	0.00186 (0.00629)
Land dispute	-0.10755 (0.12568)	-0.23265* (0.13219)	-0.04999 (0.17395)	-0.00445 (0.11107)
Value of dispute, 1,000 BDT	-0.00007 (0.00004)	-0.00005 (0.00003)	0.00004 (0.00005)	0.00000 (0.00003)
Dispute within VC's jurisdiction	0.05568 (0.05339)	0.08880 (0.06578)	-0.02181 (0.07929)	-0.03084 (0.05151)
Constant	0.59481*** (0.10755)	0.50237*** (0.16691)	0.21108 (0.16513)	0.06330 (0.10744)
Observations	407	202	202	202
R-squared	0.04354	0.09346	0.02459	0.02769

Robust standard errors, clustered at the UP level, in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

4.1.5. Demand, efficiency, cost and quality of DRMs

In the baseline, *Shalish* was the method used in the vast majority (85%) of the cases. The formal district courts were used for 13% of resolved cases. VCs were rarely used as a mere 2% of the resolved cases were resolved by a VC. However, the use of *Shalish* has been significantly reduced in the project area since the baseline, with a drop from 85% to 64%. On the other hand, the use of VCs among all resolved cases increased from 2% to **19%** in the project area. The use of *Shalish* is still as high as 81% in the control area. The use of village courts also increased in the control area, perhaps suggesting some spill over effect of the AVCB program. It appears that the AVCB program has been successful in increasing the demand for VCs.

Except for district courts, the speed of dispute resolution improved in both *Shalish* and VCs in the project area. While the average time from case file to judgement was 4.8 months for *Shalish* in the baseline, it reduced to 1.1 months in the endline. For VCs, it was 3.4 months (102 days) in the baseline and 1.6 months (48 days) in the endline. The average time in the district courts went up from 34 months from baseline to 45 months in the endline. It can be argued that the capacity building component of the AVCB program and other forms of support improved the capacity of the usual members of the judges' panel to delivery justice quickly. Since members who usually play the role of judges in the VCs also

act as the mediators in *Shalish*, AVCB program perhaps also increased their capacity to resolve cases in *Shalish* quickly. This is further evident from the fact that average time to resolve a case in *Shalish* in the control group is 3.4 months and in VCs it is 4 months. More than 90% of the cases in *Shalish* and VCs are resolved within 6 weeks of filing the case by the endline in the project areas. This was 64% for *Shalish* and 22% for VCs in the baseline.

Cases resolved in district courts tend to be very expensive to solve. The costs are partly due to fees paid to the court and to lawyers but also in terms of transportation and the opportunity cost of time spent. When totalling up these costs, the average cost of resolving a dispute in *Shalish* stated in the endline survey was BDT 713 and BDT 570 in VCs in the project area. The cost is BDT 1,168 for *Shalish* and BDT 2,713 in VCs in the control area. This is compared to the baseline, in which the average cost was more than BDT 3,000 for both *Shalish* and VCs. It appears that the AVCB program indeed made access to justice more affordable by not only reducing the cost of VCs but also by reducing the cost of *Shalish* in the project area. District courts remain the most expensive with average costs is more than BDT 70,000. More than 50% of the users of VCs live below the World Bank poverty line which also indicates that AVCB program helps increase affordable access to the poor.

Table 6.1: Efficiency and effectiveness of DRM (Baseline Survey Data)

Indicators	Project areas				Control areas			
	Shalish or other mediation (N=503)	VC (N=9)	District Court (N=95)	Overall (N=607)	Shalish or other mediation (N=219)	VC (N=5)	District Court (N=55)	Overall (N=279)
% of reported disputes resolved by mechanism	54%	1%	13%	41%	72%	2%	18%	33%
Average time taken (in days) from case file to judgement	144	102	1011	231	288	18	2130	642
% of cases resolved within 6 weeks	64%	22%	17%	58%	65%	94%	9%	54%
% of decisions of resolved cases which are fully enforced/implemented	72%	80%	75%	73%	63%	78%	56%	62%
Average monetary cost of resolution, in BDT (court fees, lawyer fees and transportation costs)	1400	1329	39294	5242	2282	4747	85313	18439
% of users below WB poverty line	18%	66%	15%	18%	17%	0%	16%	17%

Note: N in this table indicates the number of the resolved disputes.

Table 6.2: Efficiency and effectiveness of DRM (Endline Survey Data)

Indicators	Project areas				Control areas			
	Shalish or other mediation (N=354)	VC (N=108)	District Court (N=65)	Overall (N=554)	Shalish or other mediation (N=233)	VC (N=23)	District Court (N=26)	Overall (N=289)
% of reported disputes resolved by mechanism	64%	19%	12%	95%	81%	8%	9%	98%
Average time taken (in days) from case file to judgement	33	48	1344	189	102	120	1845	258
% of cases resolved within 6 weeks	91%	78%	12%	79%	82%	65%	0%	74%
% of decisions of resolved cases which are fully enforced/implemented	97%	93%	98%	95%	96%	100%	96%	96%
Average monetary cost of resolution, in BDT (court fees, lawyer fees and transportation costs)	713	569	62724	6902	1168	2713	108916	10489
% of users below WB poverty line	47%	50%	45%	53%	49%	51%	46%	49%

Note: N in this table indicates the number of the resolved disputes.

An important indicator for the quality of a DRM is how satisfied the users are. The table below compares the different DRM in terms of subjective satisfaction levels among the users with the decision and resolution process. The different DRMs perform very similarly with average responses relatively close to moderate satisfaction. This is surprising, especially given the long processing times and high costs of the District Courts, but it is possible that since people expect these long resolution times and high costs, they do not feel particularly dissatisfied when facing them in the District Court. Overall, the percentage of VC users reporting satisfaction with the VC's services they received increased slightly from baseline (83%) to endline (91%). This increase was slightly higher for control areas (78% to 91%) compared to project areas (85% to 91%).

Table 7.1: Satisfaction level by DRM (Baseline survey data)

Indicators	Project Area				Control area			
	Shalish or other mediation (N=503)	VC (N=9)	District Court (N=95)	Overall	Shalish or other mediation (N=219)	VC (N=5)	District Court (N=55)	Overall
Frequency of satisfaction levels with decisions								
Very satisfied	11%	0%	18%	12%	15%	7%	12%	14%
Satisfied	68%	89%	61%	68%	50%	93%	50%	51%
Middle	10%	2%	11%	10%	13%	0%	9%	12%
Dissatisfied	8%	9%	8%	8%	19%	0%	19%	18%
Very dissatisfied	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%	0%	10%	4%

Frequency of satisfaction levels resolution process								
Very satisfied	9%	3%	8%	8%	9%	22%	12%	10%
Satisfied	72%	85%	71%	72%	61%	78%	48%	58%
Middle	10%	9%	12%	10%	13%	0%	17%	14%
Dissatisfied	7%	3%	7%	7%	13%	0%	14%	13%
Very dissatisfied	2%	0%	2%	2%	4%	0%	9%	5%
Average satisfaction levels								
Average satisfaction level with resolution process (1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.4	1.9	2.7	2.5
Average satisfaction level with decision (1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.4	1.8	2.6	2.4
	Project Area			Control area			Overall	
% of VC users who are satisfied with VC services	85%			78%			83%	

Table 7.2: Satisfaction level by DRM (Endline survey data)

Indicators	Project Area				Control area			
	Shalish or other mediation (N=354)	VC (N=108)	District Court (N=65)	Over all	Shalish or other mediation (N=179)	VC (N=23)	District Court (N=26)	Overall
Frequency of satisfaction levels with decisions								
Very satisfied	38%	47%	26%	39%	31%	50%	36%	33%
Satisfied	49%	42%	64%	49%	45%	45%	36%	45%
Middle	6%	5%	6%	6%	19%	0%	0%	16%
Dissatisfied	6%	6%	4%	5%	3%	5%	27%	5%
Very dissatisfied	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Frequency of satisfaction levels resolution process								
Very satisfied	37%	49%	28%	39%	40%	50%	36%	40%
Satisfied	49%	42%	55%	48%	37%	45%	36%	38%
Middle	6%	3%	6%	5%	19%	0%	0%	15%
Dissatisfied	5%	7%	11%	6%	3%	5%	27%	5%
Very dissatisfied	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Average satisfaction levels								
Average satisfaction level with resolution process (1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)	1.9	1.7	2	2.2	1.9	1.5	2.2	1.9
Average satisfaction level with decision	1.8	1.7	1.9	2.2	2	1.5	2.2	1.9

(1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)								
	Project Area			Control area			Overall	
% of VC users who are satisfied with VC services	91%			91%			91%	

Beneficiary respondents reported slightly higher satisfaction than the general households with 53% beneficiary households reported that they are very satisfied with the VC decision.

Table 7.3: Satisfaction level by DRM (Beneficiary endline survey data)

Indicators	Project Area	
	VC(N=348)	Overall
Frequency of satisfaction levels with decisions		
Very satisfied	53%	52%
Satisfied	38%	38%
Middle	2%	3%
Dissatisfied	4%	4%
Very dissatisfied	3%	3%
Average satisfaction level with decision (1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)	1.7	1.7
% of VC users who are satisfied with VC services	91%	91%

4.1.6. Potential future mechanisms

The previous section was concerned with how actual disputes were resolved in the past. It is also important to understand how households in the project area (including those that did not have a dispute recently) imagine resolving future hypothetical disputes. They were therefore asked how they would resolve four common disputes that are all within the VC jurisdiction. Below are the answers to these four questions.

Table 8.1: Choice of DRM for hypothetical future disputes

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Credit dispute of BDT 10,000						
Shalish or other mediation	81%	66%	44%	84%	71%	71%
District Court	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Village Court	18%	25%	54%	6%	27%	20%
Others	0%	9%	1%	9%	1%	9%
Assault of Family member						
Shalish or other mediation	84%	54%	52%	62%	75%	56%
District Court	1%	4%	1%	10%	1%	6%
Village Court	14%	36%	46%	24%	23%	33%
Others	1%	6%	1%	4%	1%	5%
Land disputes						
Shalish or other mediation	82%	38%	55%	48%	75%	40%
District Court	4%	13%	2%	23%	3%	15%

Village Court	14%	47%	42%	27%	21%	41%
Others	0%	3%	0%	3%	0%	3%
Resolve dispute related to crops damage						
Shalish or other mediation	85%	51%	54%	65%	77%	55%
District Court	1%	5%	2%	12%	1%	7%
Village Court	14%	40%	43%	16%	21%	33%
Others	0%	5%	1%	6%	0%	5%

As can be seen in the table above, overall, *Shalish* was the preferred choice for respondents in the baseline but lost its prominence in the endline in favour of VCs and district courts for assault cases, land disputes, and crop damage cases. In project areas, more than 80% preferred *Shalish* as the DRM to go with for all hypothetical disputes at baseline. At the endline, *Shalish* was preferred by slightly more than 50% respondents in the project area. By contrast, *Shalish* was still very dominant in the control area at the endline, actually increasing in all hypothetical dispute categories except for land disputes. One interesting observation is that the hypothetical demand for district courts and other DRMs has slightly increased in the project area but slightly decreased in the control area. This could be an unintended externality of the AVCB program whereas willingness to use *Shalish* has been partially replaced with willingness to use district courts and other DRMs. However, Table 6.1 earlier demonstrated that households actually did not use districts courts more for resolved cases in the project area from the baseline. The use of village courts and other DRMs has increased from the baseline and the use of *Shalish* has dropped.

Table 8.2: Choice of DRM for hypothetical future disputes (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
Credit dispute of BDT 10,000	
Shalish or other mediation	45%
District Court	1%
Village Court	48%
Others	5%
Assault of Family member	
Shalish or other mediation	34%
District Court	2%
Village Court	60%
Others	3%
Land disputes	
Shalish or other mediation	19%
District Court	7%
Village Court	72%
Others	2%
Resolve dispute related to crops damage	
Shalish or other mediation	27%
District Court	2%
Village Court	67%
Others	3%

4.1.7. General perception of crime, community harmony and DRMs

In general, the population of the project area think that crime is a serious problem in their village. However, they also record good relationships with the closest five neighbours. The perception slightly changed between the baseline and endline surveys. People perceived crime as a slightly bigger problem compared to the baseline. Besides, people also ranked their relationship as slightly better than the baseline. The changes are similar across the project and the control area.

Table 9: Perception on crime and community harmony

Indicators	Project area		Control		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
How big of a problem is crime in your village? (1=not at all, 5=very serious problem)	3.9	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.9	4
How much harmony or conflict exists between you and your 5 closest neighbours? (1=a lot of harmony, 5=a lot of dispute)	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.4

4.1.8. People's perception of different DRMs

The table below describes people's perceptions of the different DRMs. Note that the respondents may or may not have actual experience with the particular DRMs they speak about (for actual experiences, please refer to the section on "Experience of Disputes"). People's perception of the DRMs are important since they determine to what DRMs people may turn when a dispute occurs.

In terms of fairness, the three DRMs seem to be relatively similarly viewed by the population. The vast majority of the people perceive VCs, *Shalish* and district courts as completely fair or somewhat fair. However, the percentage of respondents finding village courts completely fair increased from 48% at the baseline to 59% at the endline. This proportion actually decreased slightly in the control area implying that the AVCB program perhaps contributed to improve people's perception regarding fairness of the village courts. This becomes clearer given that perceptions about *Shalish* and districts' complete fairness have not been changed.

People seem to have a realistic view of how long it takes to resolve a case in *Shalish* and district courts. The average response to how many days it takes to resolve a dispute in *Shalish* is 16 days while for district courts this number is 909 at the baseline and 61 days and 1,507 days respectively at the endline. These numbers are relatively similar to the actual time it took for people to resolve cases discussed above. For VCs, the perception is that it takes approximately 33 days to resolve a case at the baseline, which increased to 61 days at the endline. Interestingly, people's perceptions in the project area are closer to the actual experience. At endline, respondents in the project area estimated a much lower number of days to resolve a case in *Shalish* and VCs compared to respondents in the control area at the endline. Respondents estimated 49 days to resolve a case in VCs in the project area compared to that of 122 days in the control area. Respondents also correctly estimated 33 days to resolve a case in *Shalish* in the project area compared to that of 105 days in the control area. Table 6.1 shows that months spent to resolve a case in *Shalish* and VCs for actual disputes are very similar to these perceived estimates. This implies that the AVCB program has been successful not only in improving faster dispute resolution in VCs but also in spreading accurate information among the people.

Overall, the average amount of money required to resolve a dispute in the VCs decreased considerably, from BDT 5,780 at baseline to 915 at endline. Both project and control areas contributed to this decrease; average resolution amounts decreased from BDT 3,064 to BDT 569 in project areas and from BDT 10,669 to BDT 2,713 in control areas.

Table 10.1: Perception about the fairness, speed, enforcement power and cost of different DRMs

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
How fair is Village Court?						
Not fair at all	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%
Not fair	4%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%
Neutral	26%	15%	29%	15%	27%	15%
Somewhat Fair	19%	16%	19%	43%	19%	22%
Completely fair	50%	64%	44%	38%	48%	59%
How fair is District Court?						
Not fair at all	2%	4%	4%	6%	3%	4%
Not fair	7%	11%	9%	11%	7%	11%
Neutral	26%	21%	22%	25%	25%	22%
Somewhat Fair	23%	18%	21%	26%	23%	20%
Completely fair	42%	46%	45%	33%	42%	43%
How fair is Shalish?						
Not fair at all	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Not fair	4%	7%	6%	11%	4%	8%
Neutral	16%	15%	21%	19%	17%	16%
Somewhat Fair	17%	15%	23%	17%	18%	16%
Completely fair	62%	62%	49%	51%	59%	59%
Days required to resolve dispute through VC	31	49	39	122	33	61
Days required to resolve dispute through DC	942	1362	768	1868	909	1507
Days required to resolve dispute through Shalish	16	33	16	105	16	61
Average money required in BDT to resolve a dispute in VC	3064	569	10669	2713	5780	915

Beneficiaries rated VCs highly with 71% beneficiaries thinking that VCs are completely fair. Beneficiaries also found VCs more efficient as they reported that VCs take on average 30 days to resolve cases compared to 74 days taken in *Shalish* and approximately two years in district courts. An average amount of BDT 233 was required for beneficiaries to resolve disputes in the VCs.

Table 10.2: Perception about the fairness, speed, enforcement power and cost of different DRMs (Beneficiary endline survey data)

Indicators	Project area
How fair is Village Court?	
Not fair at all	1%
Not fair	2%

Neutral	16%
Somewhat Fair	10%
Completely fair	71%
How fair is District Court?	
Not fair at all	5%
Not fair	17%
Neutral	25%
Somewhat Fair	17%
Completely fair	36%
How fair is Shalish?	
Not fair at all	3%
Not fair	8%
Neutral	18%
Somewhat Fair	15%
Completely fair	56%
Days required to resolve dispute through VC	30
Days required to resolve dispute through DC	731
Days required to resolve dispute through Shalish	74
Average money required in BDT to resolve a dispute in VC	233

4.1.9. Experiences from VCs

Directly below is a table of what types of cases were resolved by VCs. There is a shift in the pattern of disputes resolved in VCs between the baseline and the endline. Fraud and land related disputes were dominant at the baseline and verbal fights and land related disputes became dominant at the endline.

Table 11: Types of cases resolved by VCs (Household survey data)

Types of disputes solved by VC	Baseline			Endline		
	Project area	Control area	Overall	Project area	Control area	Overall
Fraud	17%	0%	8%	4%	0%	3%
Dispute about homestead land (or compensation for it)	0%	17%	8%	19%	35%	22%
Dispute about other kinds of land (or compensation for it)	17%	0%	8%	3%	0%	2%
Claiming compensation for deliberately damage to livestock	17%	0%	8%	0%	4%	1%
Compensation for cattle trespassing	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	17%	17%	17%	12%	13%	12%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	33%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	0%	17%	8%	4%	0%	4%
Dispute about credit/loan	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Verbal Fight	17%	0%	8%	25%	17%	24%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	0%	17%	8%	15%	22%	16%
Theft	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Row/riot/Illegal gathering	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%

Threat/intimidation	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	2%
Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Sexual harassment (by someone inside the household)	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Teasing	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Dispute about payment of due wages	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Rape	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Denmohor (dowry)	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Claiming compensation for accidentally damage to movable assets or livestock	17%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%

4.1.10. People's Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of VCs

The AVCB program helped increase the level of knowledge about VCs among the study population. Overall, respondents who spontaneously mentioned that they had heard about VCs increased from 3% at baseline to 59% at endline. In the project area only, this value increased from 3% to 64% - a 61 percentage point positive change. The knowledge also increased in the control group by 41 percentage points. Overall, the proportion of people who had never heard of VCs decreased from 91% at baseline to 17% at endline. In the project area, this increase was even more pronounced; from 91% to 10%.

The higher proportion of the study population expressing that VCs have helped to reduce petty crime increased from 29% at baseline to 64% at endline. This increase was much greater in project areas (31% to 75%) than in control areas (26% to 34%). However, this positive perception of VCs did not translate to the population expressing a first preference for VCs to resolve petty disputes. This proportion actually decreased from 17% at baseline to 14% at endline. The decline similar for both project areas (19% to 17%) and control areas (11% to 7%).

Table 12: Frequency of having heard about VC (Awareness)

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Frequency of having heard about VC (Spontaneously or after given a hint)						
Spontaneously said yes	3%	64%	4%	45%	3%	59%
After given a hint	6%	26%	7%	18%	6%	24%
Never heard	91%	10%	89%	37%	91%	17%
Frequency of having heard about VC (Spontaneously or after given a hint) by sex						
Male	12%	91%	15%	64%	12%	84%
Female	7%	89%	9%	63%	7%	82%
Frequency of having heard about VC (Spontaneously or after given a hint) by poverty status¹⁰						
Non-Poor	11%	92%	12%	63%	11%	84%
Poor	4%	88%	5%	64%	4%	82%
% of people who say VC has reduced petty crime	31%	75%	26%	34%	29%	64%

¹⁰ Poverty line used is the World bank's official poverty line of US\$ 1.90 in PPP constant 2011 USD.

% of people who say they would first approach the VC to resolve petty disputes	19%	17%	11%	7%	17%	14%
% of people in the project areas able to correctly answer that VC deals with minor conflicts and disputes	1%	59%	2%	35%	1%	52%

There was not a large difference VC knowledge by sex, though women were generally less aware. Overall, the proportion of men aware of VCs increased from 12% to 84% from baseline to endline, and the proportion of women from 7% to 82%. In the project area, a total of 91% of the male respondents had heard about VCs and 89% of the females heard about it at the endline. However, this is yet better than the control area where 64% of male respondents and 63% of the female respondents had heard about VCs at endline. The AVCB program fared well in informing about VCs to the poor as there is no large difference in hearing about VCs between the non-poor and the poor respondents at the endline. In fact, the non-poor had heard about VCs at a proportion only two percentage points more than the poor at the endline overall. Among those who heard of a VC, most of them said that a VC was active in their UP, especially in the project areas where almost all of them said that the VC was active in their union.

On the other hand, the beneficiary sample as expected were found more aware of VCs than the general sample with 96% could tell about VCs. Beneficiaries who live below the poverty line are less likely to be knowledgeable about VCs compared to those above the poverty line.

In the beneficiary sample, 37% of respondents reported that they would first approach the VC to resolve petty disputes. 22% of the beneficiary sample are considered poor or extreme poor.

Table 13: Frequency of having heard about VC (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
Spontaneously said yes	86%
After given a hint	10%
Never heard	3%
Frequency of having heard about VC by poverty status	
Non-Poor	99%
Poor	91%
% of people who say they would first approach the VC to resolve petty disputes	37%
% of VC complainants who are poor or extreme poor	22%

4.1.11. Knowledge about VC's financial jurisdiction

Respondents were asked if they knew what the maximum value of a case could be in the VC system. If they responded that they knew and then could state that the maximum value was BDT 75,000, they were classified as having correct knowledge about the financial jurisdiction of the VC system. As can be seen in the table below, only 1% of the population knew the financial jurisdiction of the VC at the baseline, which increased to 11% in the endline. The improvement was more pronounced in the project area (12%) than in the control area (5%). Overall, this improvement was slightly greater for men (increase from 1% at baseline to 12% and endline) than for women (1% to 10%). It was also slightly greater for the non-poor (1% to 12%) than for the poor (0% to 9%).

Table 14.1: Knowledge about financial jurisdiction of VCs

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
% of respondents with correct knowledge	1%	12%	1%	5%	1%	11%
By sex						
Male	1%	13%	1%	5%	1%	12%
Female	1%	12%	1%	4%	1%	10%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	1%	14%	1%	5%	1%	12%
Poor	0%	11%	0%	4%	0%	9%

While beneficiaries are more knowledgeable about the financial jurisdiction, poor beneficiaries are equally knowledgeable as the non-poor beneficiaries.

Table 14.2: Knowledge about financial jurisdiction of VCs (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	36%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	36%
Poor	36%

4.1.12. Knowledge about type of cases dealt with by VCs

Respondents were asked if they knew what type of cases the VC could deal with. If they responded that they knew, they were then presented with six types of cases and were asked to classify which of these cases that could be dealt within the VC, if they could correctly classify the six cases they were classified as having correct knowledge about what type of cases the VC could deal with. As can be seen in the table below, almost no one had correct knowledge about what cases the VC system could deal with in the baseline. However, the level of knowledge in all areas increased significantly at the endline to 65%. Interestingly, this increase was more pronounced in the control area, where 75% of the respondents had correct knowledge at endline in comparison to 63% in the treatment area. Again, there is no significant difference in the knowledge level by poverty nor sex.

Table 15.1: Knowledge about type of cases dealt by VCs

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	1%	63%	2%	75%	1%	65%
By sex						
Male	1%	63%	2%	79%	1%	66%
Female	0%	63%	1%	73%	1%	65%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	1%	63%	2%	75%	1%	66%
Poor	0%	63%	1%	75%	0%	65%

A similar pattern is observed in knowledge about VC's jurisdiction whereby the poor beneficiaries were found considerably less knowledgeable.

Table 15.2: Knowledge about type of cases dealt by VCs (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	69%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	71%
Poor	65%

4.1.13. Knowledge about formation of VCs

Respondents were asked if they knew how the VC was formed. If they responded that they knew, they were then asked about a few details about the formation such as how the VC is formed or how many people of each position (UP member, local elite etc.) that should be appointed to the VC. As can be seen in the table below, almost no one had correct knowledge about how the VC is formed at the baseline, but this value increased to 19% at the endline. This increase was higher in the project area by 4 percentage points.

Table 16.1: Knowledge about the formation of VC

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	0%	20%	0%	16%	0%	19%
By sex						
Male	0%	19%	0%	17%	0%	19%
Female	0%	21%	1%	15%	0%	20%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	0%	23%	0%	16%	0%	21%
Poor	0%	18%	0%	15%	0%	18%

Table 16.2: Knowledge about the formation of VC (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	37%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	37%
Poor	38%

4.1.14. Knowledge about VC fees

Respondents were asked if they knew the fees for submitting a case to a VC. If they responded that they knew, they were asked about how large one of the fees was. As can be seen in the table below, no one had correct knowledge about the size of VC fees at the baseline. Overall, this proportion increased to 11% at endline. 13% in the project area correctly mentioned the fees compared to only 2% in the control area.

Table 17.1: Knowledge about VC fees

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	0%	13%	0%	2%	0%	11%
By sex						
Male	0%	13%	0%	2%	0%	11%
Female	0%	13%	0%	2%	0%	11%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	0%	14%	0%	3%	0%	11%
Poor	0%	12%	0%	1%	0%	10%

Table 17.2: Knowledge about VC fees (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	28%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	31%
Poor	17%

4.1.15. Knowledge about the Chair of VC

Respondents were asked if they knew who the chair of the VC was. If they responded that they knew, they were asked about who the chair was, if a person responded that it was the UP chair that respondent was classified as knowledgeable. As can be seen in the table below, the proportion of respondents who knew the chair of the VC increased significantly at endline, with increases similar in project and control areas.

Table 18.1: Knowledge about the chair of the VC by sex and poverty level

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	6%	88%	8%	89%	6%	88%
By sex						
Male	9%	89%	11%	92%	9%	90%
Female	4%	87%	6%	87%	5%	87%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	8%	88%	9%	90%	8%	88%
Poor	3%	87%	5%	89%	3%	88%

Table 18.2: Knowledge about the chair of the VC by sex and poverty level (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	94%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	95%
Poor	92%

4.1.16. Knowledge about decision making process of VC

Respondents were asked if they knew how the VC makes decisions. If they responded that they knew, they were asked to describe a specific part of the process and the surveyor classified the response as being correct or not. As can be seen in the table below, knowledge about VCs' decision-making processes increased slightly from 1% to 9% overall, with a similar increase in both project and control areas. Overall, the knowledge in this aspect is low.

Table 19.1: Knowledge about VC decision making process by sex and poverty level

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	1%	9%	1%	10%	1%	9%
By sex						
Male	1%	8%	1%	8%	1%	8%
Female	0%	10%	1%	11%	1%	10%
By poverty						
Non-Poor	1%	11%	1%	11%	1%	11%
Poor	0%	8%	0%	8%	0%	8%

Table 19.2: Knowledge about VC decision making process by sex and poverty level (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	17%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	18%
Poor	13%

4.1.17. Knowledge about appeal against VC's decisions

Respondents were asked if they knew about how to appeal a VC decision. If they responded that they knew, they were asked to determine in what cases an appeal could be made. Almost all respondents were unable to respond correctly at baseline, but this proportion increased to 16% overall at endline. A greater increase was observed in the project area (0% to 17%) compared to the control area (1% to 12%).

Table 20.1: Knowledge about how to appeal against VC's decisions

	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	0%	17%	1%	12%	1%	16%
By sex						
Male	1%	15%	2%	11%	1%	14%
Female	0%	18%	1%	13%	0%	17%
By poverty status						
Non-Poor	0%	17%	2%	15%	1%	17%
Poor	0%	16%	2%	10%	0%	15%

Table 20.2: Knowledge about how to appeal against VC's decisions (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	24%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	24%
Poor	23%

4.1.18. Knowledge about engagement of lawyer in VCs

Respondents were asked if lawyers could be used in the VC or not. While this knowledge was very limited at the baseline, it increased from 6% at baseline to 84% at endline in all areas; 5% to 82% in project areas and 7% to 88% in control areas.

Table 21.1: Knowledge about engagement of lawyers in VCs

Engagement of lawyer						
	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Correct knowledge	5%	82%	7%	88%	6%	84%
By sex						
Male	8%	83%	9%	91%	8%	84%
Female	3%	82%	5%	87%	4%	83%
By poverty status						
Non-Poor	7%	82%	8%	87%	7%	83%
Poor	2%	83%	2%	89%	2%	84%

Table 21.2: Knowledge about engagement of lawyers in VCs (Beneficiary endline survey data)

	Project area
% of respondents with correct knowledge	85%
By poverty status	
Non-Poor	83%
Poor	90%

4.2. UP representatives Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of VCs from KAP Survey

4.2.1. Profile of UP officials and representatives

UP officials and representatives are older and have more education than the population they represent. Although the sample includes 27% females, this is because one female UP member was interviewed per UP together with 3 other UP members. Except for the 3 UP member seats per UP that are reserved for women, positions within the Ups are almost exclusively occupied by men. Average age, percentage of women UP officials and average years in the current position slightly increased between the baseline and endline whereas the average education declined. The same respondents from the baseline were tracked with modest attrition.

Table 22: Personal characteristics of the UP officials and representatives interviewed

Variable name	Project area		Control area	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
Average age	43.4	43.9	44.1	45.8
Average years of education	12.3	12	12.7	11.9
% women	27%	29%	26%	29.8%
Average number of years in current position	3.8	5.6	4.9	5.8

4.2.2. Engagement of UP representatives and officials in dispute resolution activities

According to their own estimates, UP representatives and officials spend a lot of time resolving disputes. At the baseline, UP chairs spent on average 22 hours per week resolving, on average, 36 disputes in a 3-month period. That time UP chairs mainly use *Shalish* to resolve disputes (78%). By the endline, UP chairs' effort in VCs and *Shalish* Parishad increased while it decreased for *Shalish*. On average they resolved 43 cases in the last 3-month period and spent 28 hours per week in dispute resolutions – a big jump from the baseline. Average number of *Shalish* conducted in the past three months decreased from 28 to 23 but average number of village court cases increased from 6 to 12. Average number of *Shalish* Parishad cases increased from 2 to 9.

A similar pattern was observed for “Ordinary UP members”, i.e. those positions not reserved for women. The average individual UP member reports spending 13 hours per week resolving 13 disputes over 3 months at the baseline. UP members use *Shalish* even more as a percentage of total disputes resolved with 87% of disputes resolved by *Shalish* and only 10% of disputes resolved by VC in the baseline. However, their effort in dispute resolution considerably increased at the endline when they reported to resolve 19 cases in the last 3 months and spent 20 hours per week. Similar to the UP chairs, their effort decreased for *Shalish* from 12 hours per week to 11 hours and increased for VC from 1.4 hour to 4 hours, and for *Shalish* Parishad from 0.3 hour to 5.6 hours. The number of cases resolved in the last 3 months also reduced for *Shalish* from 11 to 10, and increased for village courts from 1.4 to 4.6, and for *Shalish* Parishad from .4 to 4.4.

Female UP members were much less engaged in the dispute resolution process in the baseline. On average they were engaged in 6 cases and 5 of those were *Shalish*. They spent 7 hours per week in dispute resolution of which 6 hours spent in *Shalish*. Their engagement in dispute resolution significantly improved at the endline. On average, female UP members spent 12 hours per week and resolved 14 cases in the last three months. Compared to one case resolved using VC at the baseline, they resolved 4 cases and hours spent increased from 1 hour to 3 hours in VCs at the endline.

Table 23: UP officials and representatives' engagement with VCs

	Village Court			Shalish Parishad			Shalish		
	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL
UP chair									
Number of disputes resolved in the past 3 months	6.2	7.5	12.1	1.8	3.1	8.5	27.8	23.9	22.5
Hours spent on dispute resolution in a typical week	3.8	4.3	6.4	1.4	1.8	7.3	17.3	16.5	14.7
Ordinary UP member									
Number of disputes resolved in the past 3 months	1.4	2	4.6	0.4	0.9	4.4	11.2	11.1	10
Hours spent on dispute resolution in a typical week	1.4	1.8	4	0.3	0.8	5.6	11.5	10.1	10.5

Female UP member									
Number of disputes resolved in the past 3 months	1.0	1.6	3.7	0.2	0.5	3.4	4.8	5.6	6.8
Hours spent on dispute resolution in a typical week	0.9	1.8	3.1	0.1	0.6	4.3	5.9	6.6	6.4

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

It appears that the AVCB program increased efforts of the UP officials to resolve cases in VCs. Overall, the average number of disputes resolved in the past three months increased from 3.8 at baseline to 6.5 at endline, and the number of hours spent on dispute resolution in a typical week increased from 2.7 at baseline to 4.4 at endline. While the effort invested in the control group remained roughly the same between the baseline and endline, effort in terms of number of cases resolved and hours spent in VCs almost doubled in the project area.

Table 24: UP officials and representatives' engagement with VCs by treatment

	Village Court								
	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL
Number of disputes resolved in the past 3 months	3.7	7.6	7.2	3.9	1.4	3.9	3.8	5	6.5
Hours spent on dispute resolution in a typical week	2	7.1	4.9	3.3	1.3	2.8	2.7	4.6	4.4

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

4.2.3. Knowledge of UP representatives and official about VCs

UP representatives and officials are, as expected, more knowledgeable about the VCs than the general population. However, only 58% of the representatives and officials could spontaneously say they knew what a VC was at baseline, and 80% said so at follow-up. However, this proportion increased to 91% overall at endline.

The lack of knowledge was concentrated among the UP members and more specifically among the female UP members. In the project areas, while only 6% of the UP chairs did not know what a VC was, 18% of ordinary UP members and 53% of female UP members did not even know what a VC was and did therefore not take the full knowledge test. Note that both groups improved significantly from baseline to endline, though the effect was more pronounced in project areas. Specifically, in project areas, this proportion decreased from 18% to 0% for ordinary members and 55% to 0% for female UP members. In control areas, the proportion decreased from 20% to 4% for members and 20% to 7% for female members.

Table 25: Knowledge of UP representatives and officials about VCs by official type

		Project area				Control area				Over all
		UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	
Could say spontaneously/easily	Baseline	80%	45%	16%	45%	80%	47%	47%	91%	58%
	Follow-up	99%	84%	83%	91%	81%	60%	44%	87%	80%
	Endline	98%	89%	88%	98%	100%	88%	86%	94%	91%
Could say after giving some idea	Baseline	14%	37%	29%	37%	15%	33%	33%	9%	22%
	Follow-up	1%	16%	17%	9%	16%	35%	45%	13%	18%
	Endline	1%	11%	12%	2%	0%	8%	7%	6%	5%

Could say nothing about Village Court	Baseline	6%	18%	55%	18%	6%	20%	20%	0%	20%
	Follow-up	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	5%	12%	0%	2%
	Endline	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	7%	0%	3%
When have heard										
Less than 1 month	Baseline	1%	3%	4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	Follow-up	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0%
2-5 months	Baseline	4%	7%	12%	7%	2%	2%	2%	0%	5%
	Follow-up	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0%
6-12 months	Baseline	5%	12%	22%	12%	4%	10%	10%	6%	9%
	Follow-up	0%	1%	0%	3%	2%	5%	1%	0%	2%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		0%
13-24 months	Baseline	6%	8%	2%	8%	4%	5%	5%	2%	5%
	Follow-up	0%	1%	6%	5%	2%	2%	8%	3%	4%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%		2%
More than 2 years	Baseline	84%	70%	60%	70%	90%	83%	83%	93%	80%
	Follow-up	100%	98%	93%	92%	93%	90%	88%	97%	92%
	Endline	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	96%	100%	99%

4.2.4. Quiz to test knowledge on VC system among UP representatives and official

In order to assess the UP officials' knowledge about how a VC should be conducted, but not necessarily how it *is* conducted in practise, a knowledge quiz was administered to all UP officials and representatives. Two slightly different quizzes were administered so that in the endline survey respondents will not respond to exactly the same quiz as the baseline survey. Both quizzes had the same 9 categories of knowledge about the VC rules and regulation: VC formation, the VC chair, fines that the VC can impose, VC jurisdiction, VC fees, decision making process of the VC, the process for appeal of VC decision, the use of lawyers in the VC and the process for issuing a summon.

The figures for the knowledge test are only for the UP officials and representatives that stated that they knew what a VC was. It is clear from the knowledge test that the general knowledge about how the VC is supposed to function is low, although not insignificant. Overall, the average percentage of knowledge areas where the respondents had correct knowledge was 46% in the baseline, which improved to 76% in the endline. At endline, UP officials from all four categories from the project areas had better knowledge than those of the control area. UP chairs in the project area had correct knowledge in 83% of the knowledge areas at endline, in comparison to 74% had the correct knowledge in the control area. Similarly, ordinary UP members in the project area had correct knowledge in 78% of the knowledge areas whereas the proportion is 62% in the control area. On average, female UP members in the project area also possess more correct knowledge than their counterparts in the control area by 16 percentage points.

Table 26.1: Knowledge about functioning of VCs by UP representatives and officials

		Project area				Control area				Over all
		UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	
Average % of knowledge areas where respondent had correct knowledge	Baseline	51%	36%	31%	36%	45%	34%	34%	52%	46%
	Follow-up	83%	74%	69%	81%	65%	50%	39%	72%	69%
	Endline	83%	78%	72%	82%	74%	62%	56%	78%	76%

Frequency of correct knowledge in individual knowledge areas										
VC formation	Baseline	78%	47%	41%	47%	61%	41%	41%	81%	66%
	Follow-up	98%	93%	86%	95%	77%	61%	40%	91%	82%
	Endline	99%	94%	88%	100%	93%	76%	64%	100%	92%
Fees for both civil and criminal cases	Baseline	17%	4%	6%	4%	12%	2%	2%	15%	13%
	Follow-up	99%	98%	94%	99%	56%	38%	35%	88%	79%
	Endline	100%	98%	97%	100%	90%	60%	50%	100%	93%
Fees for criminal case	Baseline	25%	10%	6%	10%	14%	2%	2%	19%	18%
	Follow-up	96%	92%	86%	92%	38%	14%	11%	64%	66%
	Endline	98%	92%	87%	93%	53%	44%	35%	88%	84%
Fees for civil cases	Baseline	19%	6%	7%	6%	14%	5%	5%	22%	16%
	Follow-up	95%	92%	86%	94%	34%	19%	15%	61%	66%
	Endline	98%	90%	89%	93%	63%	44%	35%	88%	84%
VC jurisdiction	Baseline	85%	51%	41%	51%	69%	49%	49%	81%	70%
	Follow-up	99%	91%	88%	96%	80%	52%	36%	96%	23%
	Endline	99%	96%	93%	100%	95%	84%	65%	100%	94%
VC Chair	Baseline	99%	96%	90%	96%	98%	90%	90%	100%	97%
	Follow-up	97%	94%	88%	97%	93%	84%	72%	96%	69%
	Endline	96%	92%	87%	94%	95%	94%	83%	91%	92%
VC Fines	Baseline	14%	10%	9%	10%	24%	5%	5%	28%	17%
	Follow-up	71%	59%	50%	65%	45%	40%	30%	57%	17%
	Endline	78%	71%	62%	76%	55%	44%	35%	53%	66%
Decision making process	Baseline	30%	18%	3%	18%	18%	10%	10%	24%	22%
	Follow-up	67%	57%	52%	65%	55%	37%	27%	58%	11%
	Endline	67%	63%	59%	71%	67%	54%	54%	69%	63%
Appeal process	Baseline	7%	3%	5%	3%	12%	2%	2%	13%	8%
	Follow-up	74%	61%	59%	74%	60%	49%	39%	63%	6%
	Endline	76%	73%	63%	68%	67%	59%	53%	72%	68%
Use of lawyers in VC	Baseline	71%	58%	47%	58%	63%	71%	71%	69%	66%
	Follow-up	97%	82%	82%	94%	79%	69%	65%	90%	84%
	Endline	99%	91%	89%	95%	84%	84%	77%	94%	91%
Issuing a summon	Baseline	60%	38%	40%	38%	51%	41%	41%	61%	52%
	Follow-up	77%	59%	58%	77%	75%	64%	47%	81%	67%
	Endline	31%	18%	21%	39%	58%	28%	27%	41%	28%

Except for the issuance of summons, knowledge increased significantly between the baseline and the endline in all categories. UP officials of all categories in the project area demonstrated considerably higher level of knowledge than the UP officials of the control area. This is more so for ordinary UP members and female UP members. It appears that the training provided by the AVCB program made a difference.

Table 26.2: Overall knowledge of VCs among UP representatives and officials (by quiz)

Quiz results						
	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	BL	EL	BL	EL	BL	EL
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 1 key question	72%	99%	76%	90%	74%	97%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 2 key questions	57%	74%	62%	81%	60%	76%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 3 key questions	45%	72%	45%	72%	45%	72%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 4 key questions	27%	70%	28%	55%	27%	67%

% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 5 key questions	11%	59%	10%	33%	10%	54%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 6 key questions	3%	41%	5%	14%	4%	36%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 7 key questions	1%	16%	1%	5%	1%	14%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 8 key questions	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%
% of respondents who gave correct answer to at least 9 key questions	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

Table 26.2 demonstrates improvement from baseline to endline. Overall, the percentage of respondents who answered n questions correctly increased for every n , except for 9 questions, which remained the same. The most pronounced difference between the project and the control area is in the middle of the distribution. For example, in the project area, the number of respondents able to answer at least five questions correctly increased from 11% to **59%**. This increase was only from 10% to 33% in the control area.

4.2.5. Sources of knowledge about the VC

It appears that a significant majority of the UP officials in the project area expectedly learned about VC processes through training. Overall, this proportion increased from 38% at baseline to 81% at endline. Unexpectedly, however, many UP officials in the control area also reported receiving training, though this proportion was far smaller than in the project area. Perhaps there are other NGOs or government programs offering training on VC processes. A good number of UP officials in the control area also reported workshops as the source of their knowledge at endline.

Table 27: Source of knowledge about VCs among UP representatives and officials

		Project area				Control area				Overall
		UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secretary	UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secretary	
Training	Baseline	29%	26%	28%	26%	35%	37%	37%	57%	38%
	Follow-up	84%	78%	78%	78%	31%	21%	24%	43%	59%
	Endline	91%	88%	82%	86%	74%	60%	38%	65%	81%
Workshop	Baseline	17%	10%	12%	10%	10%	2%	2%	11%	15%
	Follow-up	14%	12%	8%	10%	2%	1%	3%	12%	8%
	Endline	8%	4%	6%	16%	32%	28%	35%	35%	13%
Read village court act myself	Baseline	53%	10%	26%	10%	51%	22%	22%	52%	41%
	Follow-up	32%	16%	15%	32%	38%	11%	8%	35%	24%
	Endline	7%	2%	1%	12%	5%	4%	12%	24%	6%
UNO	Baseline	25%	23%	13%	23%	27%	7%	7%	20%	22%
	Follow-up	34%	20%	22%	24%	48%	13%	15%	13%	22%
	Endline	1%	2%	4%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	2%
UP Chairman	Baseline	39%	68%	79%	68%	35%	68%	68%	44%	54%
	Follow-up	8%	34%	35%	33%	92%	61%	52%	26%	33%
	Endline	1%	3%	3%	0%	0%	8%	8%	0%	3%
NGO	Baseline	26%	33%	37%	33%	16%	12%	12%	20%	28%
	Follow-up	18%	11%	16%	17%	5%	7%	9%	4%	13%
	Endline	3%	3%	2%	5%	11%	12%	0%	12%	4%
Government letter	Baseline	26%	6%	10%	6%	20%	5%	5%	39%	24%
	Follow-up	22%	7%	1%	23%	21%	4%	4%	17%	12%

	Endline	3%	0%	1%	5%	16%	0%	4%	12%	3%
Courtyard meeting	Baseline	7%	9%	14%	9%	2%	10%	10%	7%	8%
	Follow-up	3%	6%	7%	5%	0%	1%	5%	1%	4%
	Endline	1%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Poster/sticker	Baseline	12%	6%	8%	6%	12%	0%	0%	13%	11%
	Follow-up	18%	15%	13%	17%	11%	12%	4%	14%	16%
	Endline	1%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Others	Baseline	13%	14%	12%	14%	4%	7%	7%	11%	10%
	Follow-up	3%	3%	1%	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%
	Endline	2%	6%	6%	4%	0%	4%	8%	0%	4%

4.2.6. Knowledge about quarterly return

Each UP should send a quarterly return regarding the activities of the VC in their union to the UNO. The quarterly return should be signed by the UP chair. In the survey, UP chairs and UP secretaries were asked about their knowledge about this process to see if they know about their responsibilities. As can be seen below, knowledge about this responsibility was relatively high with 78% of respondents in all areas knowing about the quarterly return at baseline, which increased to 9% at endline. This increase was driven by project areas, as the proportion increased from 77% at baseline to 99% at endline, while actual decreasing in control areas from 85% to 81%.

Among those knowing about the return, 90% of the respondents knew who the return should be sent to the UNO at baseline while only 48% know that it should be signed by the UP chair. By the endline, almost everyone (99%) knew that the return has to be sent to the UNOs. In the project area, knowledge that the return has to be signed by the UP chair increased from 48% at baseline to **83%** at endline in project areas, and from 49% to 68% in control areas.

Table 28: Knowledge about the return submission

	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL
Have you heard of the quarterly return of VC?	77%	93%	99%	85%	65%	81%	78%	79%	95%
Who signs the quarterly return?									
UP member	1%	0%	2%	3%	0%	12%	1%	0%	4%
UP Secretary	50%	15%	8%	48%	31%	16%	50%	19%	9%
UP Chair	48%	84%	83%	49%	69%	68%	48%	80%	81%
CBO Officer	0%	1%	6%	0%	0%	4%	0%	1%	5%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
To whom it is sent?									
UNO	90%	99%	99%	90%	95%	100%	90%	97%	99%
DC	2%	0%	0%	4%	1%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Magistrate	5%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	4%	0%	1%
Other (Specify)	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	2%	1%	0%	4%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

4.2.7. Preference of DRM

While *Shalish* was the preferred way for the UP officials to resolve petty disputes in the baseline, village courts became most popular in the project area. Overall, 72% of the UP respondents preferred *Shalish* and **26%** preferred VC at the baseline, and 32% preferred *Shalish* and **65%** preferred VC at the endline. In the project area, more than 75% UP respondents preferred VC at endline, compared to approximately 32% in the control area. Most popular reasons for preferring VC are its easy application, it is bound by law, it does not require a lawyer and disputes can be solved in a short period of time.

Table 29: Preferred methods of dispute resolution by UP representatives and officials

		Project area				Control area				Overall
		UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secretary	UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secretary	
Village Court	Baseline	28%	18%	20%	18%	29%	20%	20%	39%	26%
	Follow-up	77%	61%	64%	79%	31%	21%	19%	45%	55%
	Endline	70%	77%	72%	77%	37%	20%	35%	35%	65%
Shalish	Baseline	71%	80%	80%	80%	67%	80%	80%	56%	72%
	Follow-up	23%	38%	35%	21%	62%	75%	77%	45%	43%
	Endline	26%	21%	28%	16%	53%	72%	65%	53%	32%
Shalish Parishad	Baseline	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%	0%	0%	6%	1%
	Follow-up	0%	1%	1%	0%	7%	4%	4%	9%	3%
	Endline	3%	2%	0%	7%	11%	8%	0%	12%	4%
Reasons for why VC is preferred										
Easy application process	Baseline	87%	91%	80%	91%	87%	63%	63%	76%	85%
	Follow-up	80%	83%	77%	77%	63%	56%	71%	66%	78%
	Endline	69%	82%	74%	80%	71%	80%	89%	67%	77%
Bound by law	Baseline	67%	54%	50%	54%	60%	75%	75%	52%	60%
	Follow-up	80%	74%	61%	74%	79%	56%	50%	60%	70%
	Endline	79%	73%	66%	82%	86%	60%	78%	100%	75%
No need of lawyers	Baseline	50%	34%	13%	34%	33%	25%	25%	29%	38%
	Follow-up	59%	39%	39%	52%	37%	44%	36%	51%	49%
	Endline	87%	77%	71%	80%	71%	100%	100%	83%	80%
Final decision is taken along with representatives by petitioner and defendant	Baseline	56%	51%	36%	51%	47%	38%	38%	62%	52%
	Follow-up	71%	56%	45%	50%	68%	50%	57%	60%	59%
	Endline	66%	56%	56%	66%	86%	80%	78%	83%	63%
Final decision is taken considering social and financial status	Baseline	22%	20%	21%	20%	33%	25%	25%	38%	31%
	Follow-up	45%	33%	36%	45%	47%	28%	43%	31%	39%
	Endline	52%	48%	40%	59%	71%	60%	67%	83%	51%
Disputes can be resolved in a short period of time	Baseline	72%	66%	62%	66%	60%	38%	38%	76%	72%
	Follow-up	64%	44%	61%	73%	74%	33%	50%	69%	61%
	Endline	73%	75%	78%	73%	71%	100%	67%	83%	76%
Disputes are resolved following law	Baseline	30%	2%	38%	2%	20%	38%	38%	33%	24%
	Follow-up	32%	19%	18%	21%	37%	6%	0%	14%	21%
	Endline	23%	18%	24%	16%	43%	40%	33%	33%	23%
Documentation is preserved	Baseline	5%	0%	3%	0%	13%	25%	25%	19%	5%
	Follow-up	21%	19%	18%	23%	32%	28%	21%	23%	21%
	Endline	15%	14%	16%	14%	29%	0%	0%	33%	15%
Possible to appeal against the final decision	Baseline	5%	0%	0%	0%	20%	13%	13%	10%	4%
	Follow-up	18%	9%	9%	15%	16%	28%	14%	29%	16%
	Endline	8%	4%	7%	11%	14%	0%	0%	33%	8%

Existence of law for implementation of final decision	Baseline	9%	10%	0%	10%	7%	13%	13%	5%	9%
	Follow-up	14%	13%	5%	13%	21%	11%	14%	11%	13%
	Endline	8%	3%	7%	5%	14%	0%	0%	33%	6%
No need to follow rules in resolving disputes	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Follow-up	4%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	Endline	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Documentation is not preserved	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Follow-up	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Poor, distressed people, and women can come to resolve their disputes	Baseline	17%	10%	8%	10%	0%	0%	0%	10%	12%
	Follow-up	7%	2%	9%	10%	11%	17%	14%	14%	10%
	Endline	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
All kind of disputes can be resolved here	Baseline	4%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	10%	3%
	Follow-up	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	7%	0%	1%
	Endline	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Others	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Follow-up	2%	4%	2%	0%	5%	6%	7%	6%	2%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

4.2.8. Perception about ability to enforce of decisions

One important aspect of any DRM efficiency is whether it can enforce its decisions or not. UP officials and representatives were asked to which degree they thought that VC, *Shalish* and Shalish Parishad can enforce their decisions on a five-point scale where 1 was not capable at and 5 fully capable.

Very few UP officials and representatives think there are severe problems of enforcement for either the VC or *Shalish*. At the baseline, 37% UP officials perceived that VCs are fully capable of enforcement, which increased to 64% at the endline. In the project area, this proportion was 68%, compared to 46% of those in the control area. On the other hand, perception of the enforcement capacity of *Shalish* decreased. At baseline, 43% of UP officials said that *Shalish* is fully capable of enforcement, which decreased to 28% at the endline. In the project areas, this proportion was only 21% UP officials, compared to 46% in the control area.

Table 30: Perception about effectiveness DRMs among UP representatives and officials

		Project area				Control area				Over all
		UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	UP Chair	Ordinary UP member	UP female member	UP secret ary	
Ability of VC to enforce decisions										
1 (Not capable at all)	Baseline	3%	3%	2%	3%	10%	2%	2%	4%	3%
	Follow-up	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	5%	4%	1%
	Endline	8%	9%	10%	9%	5%	4%	0%	6%	8%
2	Baseline	6%	1%	0%	1%	2%	5%	5%	4%	4%
	Follow-up	1%	1%	0%	0%	7%	0%	7%	3%	2%
	Endline	2%	0%	0%	4%	5%	0%	8%	0%	2%
3	Baseline	21%	30%	23%	30%	24%	24%	24%	26%	25%
	Follow-up	10%	10%	10%	15%	3%	25%	20%	18%	13%
	Endline	7%	2%	2%	5%	16%	12%	15%	18%	7%
4	Baseline	29%	34%	30%	34%	37%	34%	34%	35%	30%

	Follow-up	34%	28%	22%	31%	28%	24%	24%	26%	28%
	Endline	19%	17%	14%	19%	16%	40%	31%	41%	20%
5 (Fully capable)	Baseline	41%	32%	45%	32%	27%	34%	34%	31%	37%
	Follow-up	55%	60%	67%	54%	61%	51%	44%	49%	56%
	Endline	64%	72%	74%	63%	58%	44%	46%	35%	64%
Ability of Shalish to enforce decisions										
1 (Not capable at all)	Baseline	3%	0%	2%	0%	4%	0%	0%	4%	2%
	Follow-up	16%	11%	13%	14%	3%	5%	4%	6%	11%
	Endline	20%	26%	26%	30%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%
2	Baseline	5%	1%	2%	1%	8%	5%	5%	6%	5%
	Follow-up	3%	3%	7%	6%	3%	6%	5%	9%	6%
	Endline	10%	7%	13%	4%	0%	4%	0%	12%	8%
3	Baseline	16%	22%	10%	22%	18%	27%	27%	22%	20%
	Follow-up	29%	24%	26%	33%	18%	15%	17%	25%	25%
	Endline	26%	29%	32%	30%	21%	24%	31%	18%	28%
4	Baseline	29%	30%	34%	30%	37%	27%	27%	39%	30%
	Follow-up	23%	23%	23%	24%	28%	36%	31%	27%	26%
	Endline	18%	17%	11%	16%	15%	20%	19%	29%	17%
5 (Fully capable)	Baseline	48%	48%	52%	48%	37%	41%	41%	30%	43%
	Follow-up	29%	39%	32%	22%	48%	38%	43%	32%	33%
	Endline	25%	20%	19%	21%	42%	52%	50%	41%	28%
Ability of Shalish Parishad to enforce decisions										
1 (Not capable at all)	Baseline	13%	14%	7%	14%	12%	10%	10%	9%	12%
	Follow-up	22%	24%	24%	26%	16%	19%	23%	18%	24%
	Endline	14%	21%	18%	26%	0%	4%	0%	0%	15%
2	Baseline	9%	9%	12%	9%	10%	15%	15%	15%	10%
	Follow-up	11%	10%	10%	14%	10%	11%	12%	12%	12%
	Endline	14%	15%	12%	7%	0%	4%	0%	6%	10%
3	Baseline	34%	39%	33%	39%	27%	34%	34%	33%	36%
	Follow-up	27%	28%	28%	28%	30%	28%	20%	26%	27%
	Endline	38%	29%	39%	30%	21%	16%	42%	18%	32%
4	Baseline	19%	17%	6%	17%	24%	27%	27%	24%	18%
	Follow-up	18%	16%	16%	22%	18%	19%	25%	22%	18%
	Endline	17%	14%	16%	18%	37%	20%	19%	41%	18%
5 (Fully capable)	Baseline	25%	21%	42%	21%	27%	15%	15%	19%	24%
	Follow-up	22%	22%	22%	10%	26%	24%	20%	22%	20%
	Endline	18%	21%	15%	19%	42%	56%	38%	35%	25%

4.2.9. Strengths and weakness of VCs according to UP officials

The table below contains the answers from UP officials and representatives when asked to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the VC. Easy access to justice, easy process, legal binding, and absence of lawyers were cited as the greatest strengths of VCs across the project and the control area at the endline. At the baseline, that disputes can be resolved in a short period of time and that VCs are inexpensive are the main perceived strengths of the VC. The main weaknesses are perceived to be shortage of manpower, inadequate training facilities and lack of awareness about VC among local people. Specifically, a quick resolution was a popular selection for a strength at baseline (67%), but this proportion decreased to 60% at endline overall.

Table 31: Strengths and weaknesses of VCs according to UP representatives and officials

		Project area				Control area				Over all
		UP Chair	Ordinar y UP member	UP female member	UP secretar y	UP Chair	Ordinar y UP member	UP female member	UP secretar y	
Strengths of village courts										
Easy access to justice	Baseline	70%	69%	53%	69%	71%	58%	58%	67%	67%
	Follow-up	84%	77%	78%	76%	69%	62%	60%	69%	74%
	Endline	85%	85%	82%	86%	95%	92%	88%	76%	85%
Easy process	Baseline	66%	60%	47%	60%	59%	52%	52%	50%	59%
	Follow-up	78%	59%	59%	71%	56%	54%	44%	66%	62%
	Endline	89%	81%	79%	84%	84%	84%	88%	82%	83%
Bound by law	Baseline	57%	40%	28%	40%	56%	39%	39%	33%	46%
	Follow-up	75%	60%	60%	64%	56%	38%	39%	52%	57%
	Endline	80%	67%	71%	74%	74%	92%	77%	76%	75%
Lawyer is not needed	Baseline	43%	30%	29%	30%	29%	33%	33%	23%	34%
	Follow-up	66%	47%	51%	51%	51%	31%	32%	44%	49%
	Endline	78%	67%	70%	82%	84%	68%	54%	71%	73%
Final decision is taken along with representatives by petitioner and defendant	Baseline	36%	35%	25%	35%	41%	30%	30%	33%	35%
	Follow-up	56%	48%	43%	50%	49%	28%	28%	44%	45%
	Endline	42%	54%	44%	68%	79%	56%	50%	82%	54%
Final decision is taken considering social and financial status	Baseline	24%	32%	32%	32%	24%	18%	18%	20%	30%
	Follow-up	40%	32%	25%	38%	26%	24%	20%	29%	31%
	Endline	25%	36%	30%	46%	68%	52%	27%	53%	37%
Disputes can be resolved in a short period of time	Baseline	66%	64%	64%	64%	71%	73%	73%	77%	67%
	Follow-up	58%	53%	48%	60%	59%	52%	43%	62%	57%
	Endline	59%	62%	56%	58%	58%	52%	58%	88%	60%
Lower cost	Baseline	66%	60%	58%	60%	56%	61%	61%	63%	61%
	Follow-up	58%	49%	45%	54%	57%	48%	39%	60%	52%
	Endline	55%	55%	45%	51%	58%	48%	42%	65%	52%
Within the locality	Baseline	39%	31%	36%	31%	26%	30%	30%	40%	38%
	Follow-up	41%	41%	30%	36%	34%	39%	23%	42%	36%
	Endline	33%	23%	21%	23%	47%	28%	35%	53%	29%
Disputes are resolved following law	Baseline	9%	4%	1%	4%	9%	3%	3%	13%	6%
	Follow-up	18%	9%	10%	17%	15%	4%	1%	10%	11%
	Endline	8%	3%	5%	9%	16%	4%	12%	24%	8%
Documentation is preserved	Baseline	6%	0%	2%	0%	9%	0%	0%	3%	3%
	Follow-up	12%	7%	3%	12%	10%	8%	4%	13%	10%
	Endline	9%	5%	5%	12%	21%	12%	12%	24%	10%
Possible to appeal against the final decision	Baseline	9%	2%	0%	2%	9%	0%	0%	3%	3%
	Follow-up	10%	6%	3%	13%	5%	7%	4%	13%	8%
	Endline	7%	2%	5%	7%	16%	4%	12%	18%	6%
Easy to implement the decision	Baseline	9%	1%	10%	1%	3%	9%	9%	0%	6%
	Follow-up	18%	8%	6%	13%	8%	7%	4%	19%	11%
	Endline	9%	6%	13%	9%	16%	4%	8%	12%	9%
Existence of law for implementation of final decision.	Baseline	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%
	Follow-up	8%	5%	3%	6%	3%	1%	3%	4%	4%
	Endline	7%	2%	3%	7%	16%	0%	4%	6%	5%

No need to follow rules in resolving disputes.	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	3%	0%	0%
	Follow-up	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Documentation is not preserved.	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Follow-up	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Poor, distressed people, mainly women come to resolve disputes.	Baseline	9%	5%	0%	5%	12%	6%	6%	7%	7%
	Follow-up	11%	8%	9%	8%	5%	2%	3%	4%	7%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
All kind of disputes can be resolved here.	Baseline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	0%	1%
	Follow-up	0%	2%	3%	3%	0%	2%	5%	3%	2%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Neutral / fair trial is guaranteed	Baseline	9%	8%	0%	8%	9%	6%	6%	7%	8%
	Follow-up	8%	5%	8%	9%	11%	6%	9%	14%	8%
	Endline	3%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Others	Baseline	1%	3%	8%	3%	0%	3%	3%	0%	3%
	Follow-up	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	2%	5%	3%	2%
	Endline	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Weakness of VC										
Influenced by political pressure	Baseline	30%	34%	31%	34%	18%	27%	27%	30%	34%
	Follow-up	21%	22%	25%	35%	31%	29%	24%	34%	27%
	Endline	22%	22%	26%	35%	53%	40%	31%	59%	29%
Discrepancy/ Disparity between rich and Poor	Baseline	11%	19%	15%	19%	6%	0%	0%	17%	13%
	Follow-up	4%	10%	7%	12%	3%	9%	7%	12%	8%
	Endline	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	0%	0%	6%	4%
Limited Power of judges	Baseline	41%	39%	24%	39%	56%	30%	30%	37%	39%
	Follow-up	78%	65%	57%	64%	67%	47%	40%	75%	62%
	Endline	53%	48%	39%	60%	47%	48%	38%	53%	48%
Shortage of Manpower	Baseline	73%	52%	40%	52%	56%	52%	52%	67%	59%
	Follow-up	42%	33%	25%	47%	49%	39%	37%	60%	40%
	Endline	36%	33%	30%	42%	37%	48%	27%	41%	36%
Compared to the need inadequate training facilities	Baseline	63%	47%	45%	47%	47%	55%	55%	57%	54%
	Follow-up	52%	45%	41%	58%	44%	44%	32%	48%	46%
	Endline	41%	39%	38%	47%	58%	48%	58%	59%	44%
Lack of awareness about Village Court of local people	Baseline	58%	50%	48%	50%	41%	42%	42%	50%	50%
	Follow-up	53%	42%	43%	49%	48%	36%	49%	38%	45%
	Endline	31%	24%	24%	33%	37%	28%	54%	41%	30%
Others	Baseline	7%	7%	15%	7%	9%	15%	15%	7%	12%
	Follow-up	11%	10%	9%	10%	13%	16%	8%	13%	11%
	Endline	6%	2%	2%	7%	11%	0%	0%	0%	4%

On the other hand, shortage of manpower, limited power of the judges, inadequate training and lack of awareness of the people were cited as the major weaknesses of VCs at the baseline. Limited power of the judges, inadequate training and shortage of manpower were cited as the worst weaknesses at the endline.

4.3. Review of administrative records of Ups

4.3.1. Functioning of VC: Equipment, forms and AACO

In order to assess the functioning of the VC, data was collected on whether the UP complex (the main building of the UP administration) had any *Ejlas* (the Bengali word for the court bench covered in red cloth by which the VC hearings are held), if there was a designated day of the week when hearing was held and if the UP has appointed and employed an Assistant Accountant-cum-Computer Operator (AACO). There are relatively few (39%) of Ups with *Ejlas* at the baseline, but this increased to 89% at the endline. By endline, 98% of Ups in the project area had *ejlas*, compared to 55% Ups in the control area. 91% Ups had a designated day in a week for VC hearing at the endline, an increase from the 79% at the baseline. At endline, 100% of Ups in the project area had a designated day, compared to 55% in the control area. No Ups had AACOs at the baseline, but 39% Ups reported having one at the endline. At endline, this proportion was 43% of Ups in the project area and 24% of Ups in the control area.

A VC is considered to be self-sustaining if there is 1) an appointed assistant accountant cum computer operator (AACO), 2) hearings are carried out weekly on designated hearing days, and 3) compliance with VC Act and Rules. Overall, the proportion of Ups with self-sustaining VCs increased from 0% at baseline to 38% at endline. This increase was driven by project areas (0% to 38%); no increase was observed in control areas (remained at 0%) outside of a temporary increase at follow-up of 20%.

Table 32: The presence of physical facilities of VCs in UP complex

	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL
Are there any <i>Ejlas</i>	37%	100%	98%	56%	50%	55%	39%	75%	89%
Is there a designated day(s) of VC hearing	78%	100%	100%	88%	62%	55%	79%	81%	91%
UP has an AACO (Assistant Accountant-cum-Computer Operator)	0%	34%	43%	0%	28%	24%	0%	31%	39%
% of Union Parishads that have fully self-sustaining village courts ('Self-sustaining' is measured by three components: Assistant Accountant cum Computer Operator (AACO) appointed, hearings carried out weekly on designated hearing days, and compliant with VC Act and Rules)	0%	33%	38%	0%	20%	0%	0%	32%	38%

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

In terms of documentation, about half (51%) of the Ups maintained some type of documentation in the baseline. This rate increased to an impressive 100% at the endline across all areas. The proportion maintaining all forms and registers increased from 0% at baseline to 98% at endline, and improvements were driven by project areas. In the project area at endline, **98%** of Ups maintained all forms and documents, whereas no Ups in the control areas did so. Documentation was much better in the project area; each category of register and form was found in more than 90% of Ups. In the control areas, a majority of Ups did not have most categories of forms and registers, except for form 2 (92% had), form 1 (62% had), form 3 (98% had), form 4 (94% had), form 10 (98% had), and form 17 (58% had).

Table 33: Records maintained in the VCs

	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL	BL	FU	EL
Type of form or register maintain									
Application (form 1)	8%	91%	100%	6%	80%	62%	8%	86%	96%
Register of cases (form 2)	39%	99%	92%	47%	93%	99%	40%	96%	93%
Case order form (Form 3)	15%	86%	100%	14%	72%	98%	15%	79%	100%
Summon form for the defendant (form 4)	29%	97%	100%	27%	84%	94%	29%	91%	99%
Summon form for the witness (form 5)	15%	77%	99%	6%	38%	31%	14%	58%	93%
Member nomination notice (Form 6)	7%	71%	100%	2%	26%	9%	6%	49%	91%
Member nomination form (form 7)	5%	77%	100%	0%	30%	29%	5%	54%	93%
Village court member attendance request (form 8)	4%	70%	100%	0%	15%	6%	3%	43%	91%
Mutual agreement (form 9)	6%	69%	100%	2%	34%	10%	6%	52%	92%
Case attendance form (Form 10)	5%	80%	100%	2%	52%	98%	4%	66%	100%
Case slip (Form 11)	4%	66%	100%	0%	13%	6%	3%	40%	91%
Decree or order from (form 12)	10%	85%	100%	4%	39%	22%	10%	63%	93%
Register of Decree and Order (form 12-A)	6%	76%	92%	6%	35%	22%	6%	56%	85%
Register of monetary transactions (form 13)	4%	69%	91%	2%	18%	0%	4%	44%	82%
Receipt for fine/fees (form 14)	13%	87%	96%	14%	39%	23%	13%	64%	89%
Register of Fine or Fees (form 15)	6%	85%	89%	8%	40%	10%	6%	63%	82%
Register of letters (form 16)	3%	66%	91%	6%	20%	10%	4%	44%	83%
Quarterly reports on taking and resolving of cases (form 17)	10%	77%	99%	4%	24%	58%	9%	51%	95%
Fees/fine collection (form 20)	1%	61%	97%	0%	13%	0%	1%	38%	88%
Referring case to district court (form 21)	6%	66%	92%	0%	16%	31%	6%	42%	86%
% of UPs maintaining any form or register	50%	100%	100%	59%	98%	99%	51%	99%	100%
% of UPs maintaining all forms and registers	0%	48%	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	43%	98%

(BL = Baseline, FU = Follow-up, EL = Endline)

4.3.2. Village courts performance

The table below describes the total number of cases that were reported in the UPs that kept records of their VC activities. Note that these are all the cases that were recorded in the past 12 months before the data collection, not necessarily only those that were resolved according to VC rules and regulations. In fact, less than half (41%) of the cases recorded were actually under the VC system's jurisdiction at the baseline. It should be noted that the village court's jurisdiction is limited to some specific types of criminal (approximately 68%) and civil (approximately 32%) cases and the court has the authority to adjudicate disputes valued up to BDT 75,000. Overall, the total number of cases recorded under VC jurisdiction increased from 3358 at baseline to 7397 at endline. It is evident that the number of cases recorded increased in the project area from the baseline but not in the control area. One reason could be the case that UPs in the control area are not maintaining records properly. Recording of cases that actually fall within the VC has significantly improved in the project and the control area. 41% of all recorded cases in the project area fall within VC's jurisdiction at the baseline which improved to 95% at the endline. This is also evident from the fact that the average financial value of disputes was BDT 2,23,872 in the project area at the baseline and the maximum value of a case was BDT 28,000,000. This average came down to BDT 12,460 and the maximum value was BDT 75,000 at the endline. The same is true for the control group as well.

Table 34: Type of cases in VCs the UPs reported in last 12 months from data collection

	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	Baseline (144 UP)	Follow-up (88 UP)	Endline (115 UP)	Baseline (53 UP)	Follow-up (86 UP)	Endline (30 UP)	Baseline (197 UP)	Follow-up (174 UP)	Endline (145 UP)
No. of Total cases	5849	6209	7188	2396	5851	737	8245	12060	7925
No. of Average cases registered per year per UP	41	71	63	45	68	25	42	69	55
No. of Total cases under VC jurisdiction	2370	5160	6859	988	3377	538	3358	8537	7397
No. of Average cases registered per year per UP under VC jurisdiction	17	59	60	19	39	18	17	49	51
Among the cases under VC jurisdiction:									
% of cases among total reported cases were referred by district court ¹¹	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Average Financial value	223872	14616	12460	181367	8437	1240	217906	12735	11522
Median	50000	2000	1000	70000	0	0	50000	0	600
Minimum	200	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
Maximum	28000000	75000	75000	3600000	75000	62000	28000000	75000	75000
Type of cases reported									
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	27%	11%	12%	19%	16%	31%	26%	13%	13%
Dispute about other kinds of land (or compensation for it)	17%	2%	1%	18%	3%	1%	17%	2%	1%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	9%	4%	2%	10%	10%	6%	9%	7%	2%
Dispute about credit/loan	8%	12%	10%	7%	7%	6%	8%	%	10%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	6%	20%	28%	10%	9%	6%	7%	14%	26%
Fraud	4%	7%	4%	10%	6%	6%	5%	7%	4%
Dispute about due payment as per written/verbal contract	5%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	5%	1%	2%
Verbal Fight	4%	10%	13%	3%	4%	9%	3%	%	13%
Dispute about possession of movable asset (or compensation for damage)	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Threat/intimidation	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%
Dowry	2%	2%	0%	5%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Theft	1%	2%	4%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%
Alimony	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%

¹¹ The '% of cases referred by district court' data is taken from the outcome of the question 'Is that case refereed from District court?' under the case register in the administrative questionnaire.

Violence of women (by someone inside the household)	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Others	3%	4%	7%	4%	4%	1%	5%	4%	5%

There was a shift in the pattern of cases resolved in VCs between the baseline and the endline in the project area. Where land disputes constituted 44% of the disputes in the project area at the baseline, these were 13% of all cases at the endline. Physical fight without bloodshed, verbal fight, and loan dispute became the most common disputes at the endline in the project area.

The table below describes how the admin data from the VC describes how and how fast cases were resolved. A shift in the pattern of how cases are solved can be observed. At the baseline, 61% cases were solved by forming the full VC. At the endline, only 21% cases were solved this way. This decrease was more pronounced in the control area (88% at baseline to 0% at endline) compared to the project area (56% to 22%).

In all, the proportion of cases resolved through the VCs increase from 41% at baseline to 87% at endline. The direction of the change was opposite for project areas (41% to 93%), compared to control areas (41% to 1%). Among cases falling under VC jurisdiction, 100% of recorded cases were resolved by endline, a large increase from the 6% at baseline. This increase was shared by project areas (increased from 7%) and control areas (increased from 3%). 100% of resolved cases were enforced at both baseline and endline.

Table 35: Efficiency of village courts (Only consider the cases that were VC's jurisdiction)

	Project area			Control area			Overall		
	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline
Dispute resolution mechanism									
% of cases resolved before forming village courts (Rule-31)	5%	47%	61%	1%	12%	1%	3%	37%	57%
% of cases resolved by mutual agreement (Pre-trial)	36%	8%	11%	7%	3%	0%	31%	7%	11%
% of cases resolved by forming village courts (Complete Hearing)	56%	23%	22%	88%	13%	0%	61%	20%	21%
% of cases resolved through village courts (VCs)	41%	75%	93%	41%	26%	1%	41%	58%	87%
% of recorded resolved cases among the cases those fall under VC jurisdiction	7%	83%	100%	3%	61%	100%	6%	73%	100%
% of registered cases in village courts which are resolved within 6 weeks	94%	89%	88%	65%	92%	0% (N=0)	65%	89%	88%

% of resolved cases which are enforced/implemented	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Days require to resolve a dispute									
Days required to resolve a dispute through Rule-31									
Average	15	45	10	3	18	0	12	42	10
Minimum	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
Maximum	35	729	2193	3	25	0	35	729	2193
Days required to resolve a dispute through Pre-trial									
Average	47	63	30	10	48	0	45	61	30
Minimum	1	0	0	8	4	0	1	0	0
Maximum	277	783	387	11	185	0	277	783	387
Days required to resolve a dispute through Complete Hearing									
Average	41	64	44	45	57	0	42	63	44
Minimum	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum	154	5826	401	102	225	0	154	5826	401
Days required to resolve a dispute through Village Courts (VCs)									
Average	43	27	25	38	23	0	42	27	25
Minimum	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum	277	419	2193	102	371	0	277	419	2193

Table 36 describes the evidence in the administrative records on if the VC is operating in accordance with the VC rules and regulation. There is a big jump in complying to the rules in the project area between the baseline and the endline. Five major procedures for each recorded case were tracked: a) Petition submitted using application form (form-1); b) Final order found in the case order forms (form-3); c) Summon given to the defendants using form 4; d) Both parties nominate their representative as per law found and e) Voting ration found.

If the case is resolved through Rule-31, only the first three steps need to be followed. If the case is resolved through pre-trial, then the first four steps are followed. All the five steps are required to be followed if the case is resolved through complete hearing.

Among cases resolved through Rule-31, 82% followed all three procedures at baseline, and 100% did so at endline. Among cases resolved through pre-trial, 26% of cases followed all four procedures at baseline, increasing to 97% at endline. Lastly, among cases resolved through a complete hearing, 4% of cases followed all five procedures at baseline, increasing to 88% at endline.

It was found that 25 days were required to resolve a dispute through village courts. But separately, it was required 10 days, 30 days and 44 days through Rule-31, Pre-trial and complete hearing.

Table 36: Case resolved following VC proceedings

Indicator	Project area		Control		Overall	
	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline	Baseline	Endline
% cases resolved following VC proceedings						
Cases resolved through Rule-31						
% of cases resolved following all three procedures	82%	99%	80%	100%	81%	99%
% of cases resolved following two procedures	18%	1%	20%	0%	19%	1%
% of cases resolved following one procedures	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cases resolved through Pre-trial						
% of cases resolved following all four procedures	26%	97%	0%	0%	24%	97%
% of cases resolved following three procedures	57%	3%	65%	100%	58%	3%
% of cases resolved following two procedures	17%	0%	35%	0%	18%	0%
% of cases resolved following one procedures	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cases resolved through Complete Hearing						
% of cases resolved following all five procedures	4%	88%	0%	0%	3%	88%
% of cases resolved following four procedures	17%	12%	13%	0%	15%	12%
% of cases resolved following three procedures	66%	1%	79%	0%	71%	1%
% of cases resolved following two procedures	13%	0%	13%	0%	11%	0%
% of cases resolved following one procedures	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% of cases resolved following related all procedures	37%	95%	27%	33%	36%	95%

4.4. Women in the VC system

Of the cases recorded by the UPs 25% of all cases were reported by women while 28% of cases within the VC's jurisdiction were reported by women at the baseline. This increased to 30% and 29% respectively in the endline. On the other hand, engagement of female representatives in the judges' panel (in decision-making process) has been improved significantly from baseline (2%) to endline (15%). In the project area, **61%** cases included a female judge at the endline whereas it was 1% at the baseline. None of the cases in the control area engaged female judges, despite the fact that around 30% cases were brought by women applicants.

The proportion of female complainants registered in the VCs did not change much from baseline to endline. In project areas, this proportion increased from 20% to 29%, but decreased in control areas from 24% to 21%. The overall proportion remained the same, at 28%.

Table 37: Involvement of women in VC activities

% of cases reported by women	Project area		Control area		Overall	
	BL	EL	BL	EL	BL	EL
% of case (among all cases) reported by women	23%	30%	33%	32%	25%	30%
% of case (within VC's jurisdiction) reported by women	20%	29%	24%	28%	28%	29%
% of female complainants registered at VC	20%	29%	24%	21%	28%	28%
Women involvement in VC's decision making process						
% of cases had female representatives (among all cases)	1%	61%	1%	0%	1%	61%
% of cases had female representatives (within VC jurisdiction)	12%	61%	13%	0%	13%	61%
% of women involved as panellists in village courts' decision making process	2%	15%	3%	0%	3%	13%

(BL = Baseline, EL = Endline)

Table 38 below shows the types of cases that are reported by women to the VCs. While the most common cases brought by women were reclaiming marriage and land disputes at the baseline, physical fights without bloodshed, loan dispute, and verbal fights became more common at the endline.

Table 38: Types of cases reported by women (women's interest related)

Indicators	Project areas			Control area			Overall		
	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline	Baseline	Follow-up	Endline
Type of cases reported by women									
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	16%	8%	4%	19%	20%	16%	17%	13%	5%
Dispute about non-agricultural land (or compensation for it)	12%	1%	1%	10%	1%	1%	12%	1%	1%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	10%	5%	7%	7%	6%	24%	10%	6%	8%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	7%	25%	33%	11%	11%	7%	8%	19%	31%
Dispute about credit/loan	8%	10%	10%	5%	6%	9%	7%	8%	10%
Dowry	6%	5%	0%	15%	7%	1%	7%	6%	0%
Fraud	4%	7%	4%	8%	5%	6%	5%	6%	4%
Alimony	4%	1%	0%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	0%
Violence of women (by someone inside the household)	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
Verbal Fight	4%	12%	18%	2%	5%	13%	4%	9%	18%
Dispute about due payment as per written/verbal contract	4%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Threat/intimidation	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Divorce	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%

Dispute about possession of movable asset (or compensation for damage)	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Theft	2%	3%	4%	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	4%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Claiming ownership or value of movable asset	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Sexual harassment (by someone outside the household)	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Rioting/rampaging	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Claiming compensation for deliberately damage to livestock	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Others	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	2%

5. Impact of the Interventions

5.1. Effect of the AVCB program on VC functionality

The first important measure of the effects of the AVCB program is its effect on the functionality of the VCs. In other words, this section presents results from testing whether the AVCB program did indeed activate the VCs. This is done using four different sets of outcome variables as proxies for VC functionality:

1. UP officials' knowledge of VC rules and regulations
2. Time spent by UP officials on resolving cases using the VC system
3. The amount and quality of case documentation
4. The number of households stating that they would resolve a hypothetical dispute in a VC

5.1.1. Effects on UP officials

In order to determine the impact of the AVCB program on the knowledge of the UP officials, a quiz about VC rules and regulations was administered to surveyed officials. Two different quizzes were constructed in collaboration with the UNDP. The respondents randomly received one of the two quizzes in the baseline, and endline.

To create the outcome variable, each score was retasted as a standard deviation by subtracting the mean of the control group and dividing it by the standard deviation of the control group. Village Court Assistants are excluded from this analysis since they were only hired in the treatment areas and would therefore create a change in the sample of officials that could affect the results.

Table 40.1 presents results from the regression model, having the standard deviation of the test score away from the control mean as the outcome variable. In the below estimation, the value of the control variables is replaced by zero if the respondent was not interviewed before the treatment, and a dummy variable indicating if the UP was surveyed at baseline is also included.

Here, the β for the treatment is positive, indicating that the program increased the knowledge of the UP officials about the village court. The magnitude of the treatment effect is 0.935 standard deviations, which is significant at the 1% level. This shows that the AVCB program did indeed increase the knowledge about the VCs in accordance with the theory of change.

Table 39.1: Effect on knowledge about VC rules and regulations (Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) Test Score (standard deviations)
Treatment Union	0.935*** (0.141)
Standard test score in baseline survey	0.0139 (0.108)
Respondent type: UP Chair	0.119 (0.428)
Respondent type: UP Member	-0.0636 (0.384)
Respondent type: Female UP Member	-0.497 (0.328)
	0.266

Respondent type: UP Secretary	(0.419)
	-0.0106*
Age at baseline survey	(0.00582)
	0.0244
Respondent's year of education at baseline survey	(0.0181)
	0.0416*
Hours per week spent on dispute resolution at baseline in VC	(0.0233)
Observations	171
R-squared	0.409
Clusters	53
Control mean	-0.456
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Standard errors clustered at the UP level in parenthesis. Observations are individual UP official.	

Table 39.2: Effect on knowledge about VC rules and regulations (Midline and Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) Test Score (standard deviations)
Treatment Union	1.001***
	(0.0765)
Standard test score in baseline survey	-0.00518
	(0.0559)
	-0.219
Respondent type: UP Chair	(0.277)
	-0.510**
Respondent type: UP Member	(0.246)
	-0.897***
Respondent type: Female UP Member	(0.222)
	-0.214
Respondent type: UP Secretary	(0.285)
	-0.00307
Age at baseline survey	(0.00390)
	0.0317**
Respondent's year of education at baseline survey	(0.0130)
	0.0161
Hours per week spent on dispute resolution at baseline in VC	(0.0100)
Observations	772
R-squared	0.376
Clusters	174
Control mean	-0.104

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Standard errors clustered at the UP level in parenthesis. Observations are individual UP official.

UP officials were also asked about the number of hours they spent for VC dispute resolution in a typical week.

In the estimation below, the IHS of the hours spent is used as the outcome variable. Column (1) reports estimates on the full sample and Column (2) reports the estimate on the female-only sample. It appears that AVCB program increased effort by all members as well as by the female members. UP officials of the treatment UPs on average spent 63% (approximately 49 log points) more time in resolving cases using the village courts compared to UP officials in the control UPs. Female UP officials from the treatment UPs spent 64% (approximately 49 log points) more time on average than their counterpart in the control UPs.

Table 40.1: Number of hours UP officials spend in a typical week on resolving cases through VCs (Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) IHS(Hours)	(2) IHS(Hours)
Treatment Union	0.487** (0.187)	0.493 (0.315)
IHS(Hours spent at baseline)	0.0133 (0.0915)	-0.201 (0.154)
Respondent type: UP Chair	1.162 (0.753)	
Respondent type: UP Member	0.151 (0.631)	
Respondent type: Female UP Member	-0.144 (0.527)	
Respondent type: UP Secretary	-1.171* (0.641)	-1.312** (0.505)
Age at baseline survey	-0.0114 (0.00964)	-0.0393** (0.0174)
Education at baseline survey	0.00343 (0.0221)	0.0550 (0.0397)
Observations	171	49
R-squared	0.428	0.220
Clusters	53	47
Control mean	2.266	1.714

Standard errors clustered at the UP level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Observations are individual UP official.

Table 40.2: Number of hours UP officials spend in a typical week on resolving cases through VCs (Midline and Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) IHS(Hours)	(2) IHS(Hours)
Treatment Union	1.079*** (0.0904)	0.555* (0.294)
IHS(Hours spent at baseline)	0.0287 (0.0537)	-0.0825 (0.163)
Respondent type: UP Chair	0.809** (0.374)	
Respondent type: UP Member	0.0586 (0.299)	
Respondent type: Female UP Member	-0.131 (0.270)	
Respondent type: UP Secretary	-1.078*** (0.384)	-1.537*** (0.450)
Age at baseline survey	-0.00502 (0.00426)	-0.0207 (0.0170)
Education at baseline survey	-0.00282 (0.0165)	0.0584 (0.0377)
Observations	772	58
R-squared	0.331	0.192
Clusters	174	55
Control mean	1.453	1.548

Standard errors clustered at the UP level. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. Observations are individual UP official.

It is evident that the AVCB program increased the stated effort among UP officials in resolving cases using the VC.

5.1.2. Effects on case documentation

One important difference between the VC system and *Shalish* is that the VC system documents cases in a systematic way, therefore individuals who have had disputes resolved in a VC have documentation to prove the outcome of that resolution. It is important to test how the AVCB program changed the ways in which cases were documented.

To test the effect of the treatment on the number of cases documented by the VC, all the cases in the UP's administrative records from April 2019 to March 2020 were digitized. This data collection was done in conjunction with the survey of UP officials and representatives. The IHS of the number of documented cases is used as the outcome variable in the standard regression framework.

The regression shows that the number of documented cases from April 2019 to March 2020 is more than fifteen times higher (approximately 275 log points) in the UPs that received treatment. This results

again shows that the AVCB program was successful in activating the VCs and that the results are consistent with the first step of the theory of change.

Table 41.1: Effect on the number of documented cases¹² (Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) IHS(Documented cases)
Treatment	2.750*** (0.463)
Observations	55
R-squared	0.400
Average number of documented cases by UP (Control mean)	24.53

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Observations are individual unions. Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

Table 41.2: Effect on the number of documented cases¹³ (Midline and Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) IHS(Documented cases)
Treatment	1.545*** (0.236)
Observations	173
R-squared	0.200
Average number of documented cases by UP (Control mean)	39.39

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Observations are individual unions. Robust standard errors in parenthesis.

In addition to showing that more cases were documented as a result of the AVCB program it is also interesting to know if the cases that were recorded have more comprehensive documentation. This is tested by estimating the effect of the AVCB program on the fraction of the required forms that were both filled and filed for all cases.

There are seven forms that are required for all cases in the VC system. There are also many additional forms that are required depending on the nature of the case and resolution. Since it is possible that the AVCB program changes the nature of cases and resolution types, the focus is only on the required forms to measure the extent to which UPs are following the rules of the VC system when documenting a case. Instead of considering whether forms were filled out correctly, the focus is simply on the existence of required forms for the cases that were documented.

¹² This analysis was added since both the extensive margin (number of documented cases) and intensive margin (quality of documentation) are important outcomes when measuring the AVCB programs effect on documentation.

¹³ This analysis was added since both the extensive margin (number of documented cases) and intensive margin (quality of documentation) are important outcomes when measuring the AVCB programs effect on documentation.

Our analysis here is done at the reported case level, so there are more observations in the AVCB program UPs than in the control UPs, and there is a selection issue where different types of cases are part of the analysis for the treatment and control groups. Keeping that caveat aside, for each case the outcome variable is the fraction of required forms that existed when enumerators digitized the administrative data for the past year. Therefore, the highest attainable fraction is one, if all seven required forms were filled out and filed while the lowest attainable score is zero if none of the required forms were filled out and filed.

The estimated treatment effect is both positive and highly significant which shows that the AVCB program improved the quality of record keeping for the cases that were recorded. The magnitude of the effect is a 31 percentage points increase from the control mean.

Table 42.1: Effect on fraction of required VC documentation protocols filled out and filed (Endline RCT samples)

VARIABLES	(1) % of forms filled out and filed
Treatment	0.313*** (0.0317)
Observations	2,144
R-squared	0.308
Clusters	55
Control mean	0.371

Standard errors clustered at UP level in parenthesis. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Observations are individual cases.

Table 42.2: Effect on fraction of required VC documentation protocols filled out and filed (Midline and Endline RCT samples)

VARIABLES	(1) % of forms filled out and filed
Treatment	0.223*** (0.0254)
Observations	9,745
R-squared	0.174
Clusters	172
Control mean	0.363

Standard errors clustered at UP level in parenthesis. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 Observations are individual cases.

5.1.3. Effects on households stated propensity to use VCs

The final component of measuring VC functionality is estimating the effects that the AVCB program had on households' stated propensity to use the VCs. This section analyses the effect on the stated propensity to use the VCs; later sections discuss the effects on actual usage.

The first step in a household using a VC is that the household believes that the VC is active in the UP. This is measured by estimating the effect on the fraction of households responding that a VC is indeed active in their UP. The answer is coded as a dummy variable where 1 represents a positive answer and is used as the outcome variable in the standard regression framework. The results are shown in Columns (1) and (2) below. Including the full household sample in Column (1) gives a 47 percentage point estimate of the effect of the AVCB program on this outcome, the effect is statistically significant at the 1% level. This increase is a 124% increase above the control group mean of 38 percentage points. Column (2) restricts the sample to the households who had disputes at baseline and who are the most likely to use dispute resolution mechanisms. This does not qualitatively change the results, showing that the results are not driven by individuals who are more likely to have disputes.

Columns (1) and (2) shows that the AVCB program was not only effective in activating VC but also at increasing the awareness of the active VCs. The program almost reached complete awareness and in the treatment group more than 98 percent of the households did know that there was an active VC in their UP.

It is important to note that statements of households that the VC in their UP is not active or that they don't know if the VC is active does not mean that there is no VC active in that UP. In other words, the estimate that 74% of households responded positively to this question overall does not mean that VC were active in only 74% of the UPs. However, it does mean that even in the UPs that received or did not receive the AVCB program, 74% were aware of being an active VC in the UP which represents three-fourth of the total sample.

Table 43.1: Knowledge about VC and inclination to use VC for hypothetical disputes (Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) VC Active	(2) VC Active	(3) Hypothetical Disputes	(4) Hypothetical Disputes
Treatment	0.470*** (0.0625)	0.534*** (0.0771)	0.764*** (0.145)	0.943*** (0.158)
Observations	1,768	821	1,768	821
R-squared	0.230	0.300	0.091	0.134
Sample	Full	Households w. disputes at baseline	Full	Households w. disputes at baseline
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clusters	89	88	89	88
Control mean	0.378	0.360	0.732	0.778

Standard errors clustered at UP level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Observations are individual households. Columns 1 and 3 includes the full sample and use sampling weights. Columns 2 and 4 are restricted to households with disputes at the baseline and are unweighted.

Table 43.2: Knowledge about VC and inclination to use VC for hypothetical disputes (Midline and Endline RCT sample)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	VC Active	VC Active	Hypothetical Disputes	Hypothetical Disputes
Treatment	0.267***	0.328***	0.248***	0.396***
	(0.0367)	(0.0481)	(0.0780)	(0.112)
Observations	5,064	2,013	5,064	2,013
R-squared	0.083	0.111	0.022	0.036
Sample	Full	Households w. disputes at baseline	Full	Households w. disputes at baseline
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clusters	174	174	174	174
Control mean	0.227	0.299	0.287	0.424

Standard errors clustered at UP level. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. Observations are individual households. Columns 1 and 3 includes the full sample and use sampling weights. Columns 2 and 4 are restricted to households with disputes at the baseline and are unweighted.

The household's actual propensity to use VCs is measured by running a regression on cases that fall under village court and actually used VCs as the dependent variable to show the effect of AVCB on actual usage of VC. The magnitude of the treatment effect is 0.0800 standard deviations, which is significant at the 1% level. This shows that the AVCB program did indeed increase the actual usage of VCs in accordance with the theory of change. This result again shows that the AVCB program was successful in activating the VCs with consistent results.

Table 44.1: Effect of AVCB on actual usage of VC (Endline RCT sample)

	(1)
VARIABLES	VC Usage
Treatment	0.0800***
	(0.0289)
Observations	1,003
R-squared	0.019
Clusters	88
Control mean	0.0568

Standard errors clustered at union level *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. Observations are resolved and unresolved disputes in endline. The dependent variable indicates whether the dispute falls under the VC jurisdiction and whether the respondent actually used the VC at any stage.

Table 44.2: Effect of AVCB on actual usage of VC (Midline and Endline RCT sample)

VARIABLES	(1) VC Usage
Treatment	0.0106** (0.00480)
Observations	6,776
R-squared	0.002
Clusters	173
Control mean	0.00957

Standard errors clustered at union level *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. Observations are resolved and unresolved disputes in endline. The dependent variable indicates whether the dispute falls under the VC jurisdiction and whether the respondent actually used the VC at any stage.

5.2. Effects on Gender

One major objective of the AVCB program is to create access to justice for women as the marginalized social group and empower women in the justice seeking and delivering process. It appears that AVCB program has marginally but significantly delivered this goal. At the baseline, 20% of all applicants of village court cases were women in the project area. This increased to **29%** at the endline. On the other hand, 24% of all applicants were women in the control area at the baseline, which increased to 28% at the endline. Female judges in the judges' panel of the VCs were almost non-existent at the baseline. While there has not been evidence of progress in the control area at the endline, **61%** cases in the project area had a female judge on the judges' panel.

6. Findings focusing Evaluation Criteria

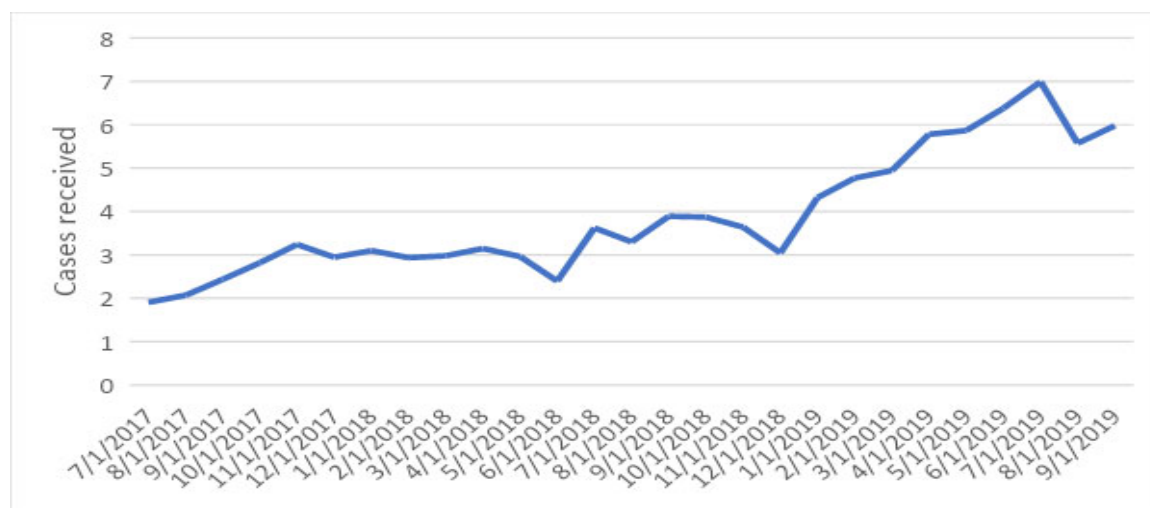
This section provides relevant evidence to assess VCs as an institution of DRM alongside four criteria—relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability.

6.1. Relevance

Relevance is defined as VCs' role in dispute resolution of the rural people. If village court is relevant, then an increasing role is expected in dispute resolution, manifested through increasing demand and usage of VCs. Between 2017 and 2021, more than 5000 households were surveyed multiple times; almost half of the households had at least one dispute (in 48 months' time period) that they wanted to resolve. This confirms that access to an affordable and credible dispute resolution mechanism is an important and relevant policy problem. This, however, does not mean that all these disputes could be resolved in VCs as these courts have specific jurisdiction. In the baseline, just 1569 of 2777 disputes (56%) could meet the monetary value and the types of civil and criminal disputes that fall within VC's jurisdiction. In the endline, 1065 of 1611 disputes (66%) meet VC criteria, which indicates the relevance of VC as an affordable DRM. Therefore, most of the disputes that arise in rural Bangladesh are petty in nature and can be tried in time by an affordable and credible DRM as VCs. If these disputes are not resolved in time, they may incrementally aggravate hostility and burst out into a larger crime that may detract communal harmony.

Are VCs providing a timely DRM? Villages in project areas had 16% households with at least one unresolved disputes in the baseline, which reduced to 13% in the endline. In villages in the control area, 13% households had at least one unresolved dispute in the baseline which increased to 18% in the endline. In other words, 11 percentage points fewer households have an unresolved dispute in the project area, compared to the control area. Perhaps functional VCs in the project area are resolving a higher number of cases that eventually resulted in a lower number of households with an unresolved dispute. To verify this hypothesis, the volume of petty disputes (which comprise the major share of all disputes) resolved in the project area was compared to the control area. While 2% of the cases that could have come to VCs were actually resolved in VCs in the baseline in the project area, this increased to 25% in the endline. While 4% such cases used VCs in the baseline in the control area, this value jumped to 13% in the endline. Overall, villages in the project area utilized VCs more by 14 percentage points. Data received from UNDP's MIS endorses increased utilization of VCs.

Figure 4: Cases received by VC per UP by month



Source: AVCB MIS

One may argue that functional VCs are encouraging more disputes to surface in two different forms- (a) households with a dispute may not want to resolve it in the absence of VCs as they may not afford or rely on other DRMs available; (b) households file more cases to VCs as it is affordable only to harass other party to the dispute. If (b) is the case, then there is a surge in households with disputes in the project area. On the contrary, almost half of the households in the project as well as in the control area had at least a dispute in the last 4 years. In fact, there is a comparatively bigger rise in the rates of households with an unresolved and a resolved dispute (resolved in the last 2 years) in the control area, suggesting (b) is implausible. If (a) is true, then a substitution effect is expected, vis, a shift of disputes from alternative DRMs to VCs. In fact, the use of *Shalish* declined from 85% of all disputes in the baseline to 64% of all disputes in the endline in the project area, while the use of *Shalish* remained the same in the control area. Perhaps this reveals that functional VCs are becoming increasingly relevant DRM for petty disputes to resolve.

Another important aspect for VCs being relevant is to cater to the needs of the poor who otherwise had to use *Shalish* or the very expensive district courts. In the endline, more than **50%** of the users of VCs across the project and the control area live below the poverty line as defined by the World Bank.

The conclusion is thus that functional VCs are becoming increasingly relevant in resolving petty disputes in the rural areas.

Village Court is one of the prominent quasi-formal judicial services of the Union Parishad to uphold justice at the rural level, especially for the underprivileged section of the society. As the formal justice sector is burdensome at all stages of the justice delivery, people are reluctant to demand justice for petty disputes through the formal justice system; instead, they trust traditional justice forums like *Shalish*, local elite's intervention, etc. However, all the conventional systems are not legally delimited and have some other barriers. The "Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (Phase II) project's intervention is highly relevant in terms of local and national context and to the government that is stressed to manage a large backlog of cases in the formal judicial system while also bringing opportunities to allow access justice to its poorest and hardest-to-reach rural communities. The GoB vows to captivate the project's lessons and infrastructure, which is apparent in its readiness to invest additional resources in UPs outside the project area. Also, several cross-cutting issues like gender were addressed through this project that showed a significant involvement of women in justice delivery and seeking side increased.

The project's objective is to improve access to justice for marginalized people that help the nation achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The project is aligned with the SDG target 16.3: "promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all" under goal 16 to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. It is linked with several indicators in the same goal: reduce corruption and bribery; develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions; ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels; and promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

The project has provided support to review the legal framework resulting in an amendment proposal of the VC Act, 2006 submitted to the concerned ministry. This policy-level effort addressed the requirement of the CPD Output 2.2 "The Government has the capacity to carry out formal or quasi-formal, demand-driven and gender-sensitive reforms of the justice sector to provide equal access to justice to women and men, especially those from marginalized groups" under CPD Outcome-2. The project has tracked the indicator "percentage of Union Parishads with access to a local village court" and found 32% UPs have access to a local Village Court. UNDAF Outcome-1 "Develop and implement improved social policies and programmes that focus on good governance, reduction of structural inequalities and advancement of vulnerable individuals and groups". Moreover, it provides the technical and physical inputs to UP machinery and other local government institutions to strengthen

their service delivery capacity. The project has contributed to UNDP Strategic Plan (SP) Outcome 2 “Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development”, particularly SP Output 2.2.3 (Governance) “Capacities, functions and financing of rule of law and national human rights institutions and systems strengthened to expand access to justice and combat discrimination, with a focus on women and other marginalised groups”. The project has tracked the SP indicator “Number of people who have access to justice, disaggregated by sex and marginalized” and found more than 400 thousand people accessed the justice where 29% were female.

The outcome statement of the National Priority Areas of the 8th Five Year Plan (FYP) is “Promoting inclusive, transparent, accountable and effective democratic governance system and ensuring justice for all”. This development objective has been drawn aligning with SDG 16, Vision 2021, National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) of Bangladesh. Approaching that direction, this local level justice delivery mechanism (VC) is established where Union Parishad works as a local level justice delivery hub. Aiming to establish this local justice framework by the stipulated period with the goal that no indigent justice seeker is left behind in accessing justice services. In the FYP, the government focused on encouraging the local agencies to increase the awareness amongst citizens in rural communities for them to use the village court mechanism to resolve disputes without resorting to formal judicial institutions so that the problem of case backlogs in the formal Judiciary is reduced over time. The project has worked affluently in this context, aiming to touch that focus suitably.

The Village Court system is unique in terms of its service and modality. It has observed a shallow coherence with other interventions both internally and externally due to its uniqueness. However, the project collaborated with other projects/interventions that led to achieving the targeted results suitably.

Internal Coherence: AVCB II extended its effort in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area in 2019 to strengthen the traditional justice system and conduct action research in 15 UPs to see the feasibility of the VC operation. This effort was implemented through the Strengthening Inclusive Development in Chittagong Hill Tracts (SID-CHT) project of UNDP that helped execute the operation in that hardest to reach and critical area. Besides, four partner NGOs were deployed in the plain land area of the project to operate VC operations and build community awareness through different awareness-raising events.

External Coherence: The project established collaboration with Local Government Support Project III (LGSP III) funded by the Bangladesh Government and the World Bank to pilot the Village Court Management Information System (VCMIS) in 100 UPs out of the 1,080 project UPs. As per the collaboration approach, LGSP III was supposed to provide hardware (Laptop/desktop, printer, etc.) support to all UPs. However, the project could pilot the VCMIS system in 57 UPs out of the targeted 100 UPs due to delay in timely hardware support.

Besides, the project established an outreach strategy to mobilize the community to create Village Court’s demand to the service seeker. All Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO) issued a letter to the implementing NGO in their working area to deliver the Village Court messages within their program or activities. This issuance of the letter excelled the demand in the community to get VC services in UPs.

6.2. Efficiency

The project has helped LGD in setting up village courts in 1,080 UPs; capacity-building of VC’s service providers (UP representatives and officials); reviewing legal framework; increasing awareness on the role and function of village courts; and strengthening GoB’s monitoring capacity. The project has also extended its support in three CHT districts in 2019 covering a further 121 UPs and initiated its interventions, with the aim to strengthen the traditional justice system in three CHT districts and explore the possibility of village courts in CHT areas doing an action research. As baseline study conducted in

2017 and intervention in CHT areas was started in 2019, the project did not consider CHT under this study.

The total budget of plainland for activation of village courts in 1080 UPs are USD 33.22 million where donor contribution is USD 27.82 million, and GOB is USD 5.4 million. The costs described here come from the UNDP's master budget for the project and the classification of items in the budget has been decided on in collaboration with UNDP.

Internal management and monitoring arrangements are very good. As a result, no audit observation was reported by the HACT audit conducted in 2021.

As of September 2021, the project has spent an overall 91% budget. Activities fully implemented in 1080 UPs of Bangladesh and the project is successful in activating the VCs in 1080 UPs. In areas with the AVCB program, UP officials were more knowledgeable about the VCs and they spent more time on resolving disputes through the VC system. More records were also kept regarding disputes resolved in the VC system and the records kept were of a higher quality. The project has met most of the targets set out in the logical framework and the project has addressed almost all recommendations made by MTR mission conducted in November 2018.

Table 45: Costs of Program Implementation at Endline

Activity	Component/Activity	Budget (In \$)	Expenditure 2016 - September 2021 (In \$)	% of Expenditure
Activity Result 1.1	Capacity of relevant stakeholders	2,11,05,722	2,03,26,252	96%
Activity Result 1.2	Legal and policy framework	5,01,921	2,49,671	50%
Activity Result 1.3	GoB monitoring capacity	7,88,104	4,04,313	51%
Activity Result 2.1	Awareness raising of beneficiaries in project areas	50,23,617	44,51,196	89%
Activity Result 2.2	Evidence-base and knowledge-management	12,96,750	7,87,952	61%
Activity Result 3.0	Technical Assistance and Management	45,01,236	39,30,305	87%
Grand Total		3,32,17,351	3,01,49,690	91%

Monitoring System of the AVCB (Phase II) Project

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (Phase II) project has embedded a rigorous monitoring system to ensure effective and efficient interventions. The project followed a multi-dimensional approach to monitoring the quality and quantity of the tasks. This system was built following the UNDP's Result Based Monitoring (RBM) system, where all the activities run to produce the SMART results. However, as the project followed the National Implementation Modality (NIM), the government has oversight

through Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Implementation Committee (PIC). Meanwhile, six PSC and eight PIC meetings were held to review the project progress and provide tactical guidance.

The study reveals that the project has a specific Results Framework following the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) to measure the achievements. Most of the output and outcome logically fit in this LFM. However, all the indicators fit its result without specific indicators to measure the overall objective and specific objectives that are not fully aligned with the SMART criteria. For instance, the project fixed a clear indicator such as “*Union Parishads (UPs) have fully self-sustaining village courts*”. This indicator refers to three criteria a) Assistant Accountant cum Computer Operator (AACO) appointed, b) hearings carried out weekly on designated hearing days, and c) compliant with VC Act and Rules; those cannot be measurable criteria to get the status of access to justice ideally. Nevertheless, the project figured out the gender-disaggregated indicators to measure the gender sensitivity accordingly.

The project set out some data sources for routine monitoring data. Those are a) Field Data through Partner NGOs and DFs; b) VC performance data through PMIS; c) Program data through components; d) Different internal studies, e.g., Court User Survey, etc.

The project introduced a monthly program reporting format. The partner non-government organizations (PNGOs) regularly send the program information to Project Management Unit (PMU) using that format. M&E and Knowledge Management Unit compiled it in a database, reviewed and finalized it for further use of data. Besides, DFs send the district-level program data to the PMU. Also, PMU components shared the central level events data. Moreover, a detailed VC performance report format was used to collect VC-related data from Union Parishad. The NGOs share the VC performance report with the PMU. An online-based MIS system (Project MIS) was established to ensure the remote monitoring of the progress from different project corners. DCo/DFs ensure the data is entered into the MIS.

The project carried out field monitoring by PMU staff to oversee the documentation of the VC, different registers, forms, and VC hearing, ensuring the quality of the VC deliverables. Besides, field missions reviewed the quality of programs like Courtyard Meeting, Community Sharing Meeting, etc. These missions ensured the program's quality and submitted the monitoring report for the next course of action. Besides, it carried out various small-scale in-house formative studies that led to rectification within the project. Those are a) Court user surveys, b) Study on appeal case, c) Study on case referral, d) Lessons learning study beyond the project area, e) Lessons learning study in the pilot phase area, etc. Also, the project established a Management Information System titled VCMIS to strengthen the government monitoring system. This system has different user interface layers that help review the data and advise the respective officials to enhance the VC's performance. This pilot initiative runs in 57 UPs in the project area.

The Project MIS embedded different logical validation rules to ensure VC performance in terms of data quality. Each layer of the data flow (VCA, UC, DCo, MRC/PC, PMU) checked the logical validity of the VC performance data. Besides, frequent field monitoring visits were being carried out to triangulate VC performance and program data. Also, an online-based Court User Survey (CUS) was conducted on focusing the data validity besides survey.

The project commissioned several assessments to measure the impact and outcome, make strategic decisions, and create evidence based. The evaluation and studies lists are given below:

Table 46: Evaluation and studies lists

SL No	Name of the Evaluation & Study	Evaluator/Researcher	Evaluation/ study period
1	Baseline study	Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA)	2017
2	Mid-term Review	Adam Stapleton and Prof. Mobassher Monem	2018
3	Impact Evaluation titled “Rural institutional innovation Can village courts in Bangladesh accelerate access to justice and improve socio-economic outcomes?”	Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA)	2020
4	Lessons Learned Study	Ms. Nasrin Khan and Dr. Asif Shahan	2019
5	Measuring Impact in Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment	Shamima Pervin	2019
6	End-line evaluation	Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA)	2021

It has evident that the project has a unique M&E system, though the evaluation team reveals some drawbacks. The project did not follow the monitoring norms properly as most of the data was collected by the program people to measure the achievement. There were fewer knowledge-sharing opportunities for routine monitoring findings with the relevant stakeholders. This hindered taking strategic decisions to transform the action modality.

6.3. Effectiveness

The project has produced effective results as per the described results framework in the project document. The updated status of the Logical Framework Matrix depicts that the project has contributed to effective fallouts despite having some improvement areas. The study shows that all the VCs are operational with *Ejlas*, VC forms, and Formats accordingly. 91% of UPs have designated hearing days while 98% of UPs met compliance. The Village Courts resolved 93% of reported cases taking only 25 days and the enforcement rate of VC’s decision is high 95%. Court users have spent on average 233 takas (US\$ 2.27) as courts fees, conveyance, and food/snacks cost an average to get service where the cost in non-project areas is BDT 2,713. It has been found that 91% of service recipients expressed their satisfaction with VC services and its decisions. More than 11,000 cases have been referred from district courts to VCs demonstrating that this system has huge potential to reduce the case backlogs of the district courts. With the support of the project, the VCs have recovered more than USD 20 million as compensation from the respondents and provided to the applicants. Besides, women are increasingly participating in VCs. The project initiatives encouraged petitioners and respondents to nominate women as VC panel members. representation of women in the village court’s decision-making process has been increased from 2% (Baseline) to **15%**. Also, women's justice seeker has increased from 20% (Baseline) to **29%**.

In terms of policy efforts, the project submitted the Village Court Act amendment proposal to the ministry apart from other initiatives. The project is working on the amendment of relevant provisions

of CrPC and other related rules so that Police and District Court can refer the cases directly to VC which fall under VC jurisdiction.

The project has built the capacity of the VC service providers, especially the UP Chair, Panel chair, AACO, UP secretary, and others through the District Training Pools (DTP). Besides, the project has expedited the effort to include the District Legal Aid Officers and senior assistant judges to join the DTP. This inclusion has strengthened to mainstream the capacity-building initiative on Village Court.

The decentralized Monitoring, Inspection, and Evaluation (DMIE) system was approved by the government and implemented within the project area. All districts provided the quarterly return to the ministry following the Government Order (GO). Also, the Village Court Management Committee was formed at the district and upazila level. VCMCs meet quarterly following the government direction to review the Village Court performance.

6.4. Sustainability

Results of the AVCB (phase II) project are sustainable and meet community requirements; however, a few sustainability elements need to be addressed to ensure it as expected during the project design.

The government has confirmed its possession over the intervention by amending the Village Court Act and disbursing BDT 152.2 million (EUR 1.52 million) to set up Village Courts in 1,267 Union Parishads. The Local Government Division (LGD) allocates assets in Annual Development Programme (ADP) for village courts (for *Ejlas* and paperwork and formats). The approval of the training manual for AVCBII by the National Institute of Local Government (NILG) is a much-appreciated development, and their engagement in staff and UP representative training will help with the integration of the VC system as they will serve as Village Courts service provider across the country. Besides, USD 4.2 million have been allotted between 2015 and 2020 to establish VCs in 2,891 UPs. LGD aims to deliver all UP's with *Ejlas* (Court Bench) and published forms and formats. This paradigm shift made by the unprecedented efforts of the project especially capacity building at the project areas and policy level advocacy.

The GoB has additionally issued directives to neighbourhood administrations concerning the control and tracking of villages courts. However, one of the tremendous demanding situations to sustainability is the lack of human sources within the Union Parishads to manage the village courts when they have phased out of the project.

VCAs were supposed to be phased out after the recruitment of the Assistant Accountant cum Computer Operator (AACOs) following the project design. However, the VCAs and NGOs were withdrawn, and the VC function has been entrusted to the UP officials, especially AACO and UP Secretary. The district facilitators provided continuous interim on-the-job support until June 2021, and all DFs were withdrawn as of July 1, 2021, negatively affecting the human and financial resources of the government to ensure the continuation of the activities.

The delay in providing the required staff is related to the process of decentralizing the Account Assistant and Computer Operator (AACO) hiring process to expedite it. However, while the district administration started the process, the Union Digital Centre (UDC) entrepreneurs filed multiple writ petitions to the court. As a result, AACO's hiring process has been delayed. Mitigation of these negative consequences is beyond the control of the project. Once the writ petitions have been resolved, the competent authority will probably complete the remaining hiring within a few months. Because the recruiting process is decentralized at the district level, the project cannot set a precise schedule. There are no other obstacles in this regard.

The monitoring of the village courts' performance with the involvement of the local administration (UNO, DDLG, DC) through Village Courts Management Committee (VCMC) and the Decentralized Monitoring Inspection and Evaluation System (DMIE) developed in this project must be properly taken over by the DDLG. In addition, this branch of administration must be clearly defined in the institutional strategy of the DDLG and its fundamental role in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of leveraged VC monitoring.

Women, the poor, the vulnerable, and the hard to reach are key target groups of the project. Since VCs are a provider of community justice, opportunities for anecdotal feedback based on experience should be built into the VC system. User participation in the development of the service will help to shape it in the future and ensure that it does not become another top-down system. Local communities themselves will take on the role of awareness-raising. It would generate a reciprocal effect within the community. The satisfaction of the beneficiaries will influence the awareness-raising as quality service delivery will enhance the demand to the other justice seekers as well as mass people.

Deputy Commissioner (DC), Deputy Director, Local Government (DDLG) and Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) are key administrators at local administration. These key personnel have specific responsibilities under the Terms of References. They should have distinct roles in their terms of reference, and the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) should be prepared while maintaining VC's performance and evaluated accordingly. This will ensure the GoB monitoring and augment the Village Court's performance.

In practice, the Magistrates' Courts and Assistant Judges are currently referring cases to the Union Parishads VC. However, this practice is not sufficiently supported, and judges do not receive feedback from the VC on the outcome of the referred cases. The senior assistant judges acted as members of the district training pool in their respective districts. These activities made it possible to connect the judiciary with the providers of VC services. However, there are no regulations that permit the district judiciary to monitor the quality of the VC decision-making process or to assess the effectiveness of the training course. Implementing and development partners should be aware that the Village Courts Act 2006 has not yet been properly and on time harmonised with standard international access to justice regulations. The Criminal Law Ordinance 2009, which is kept by the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, needs major changes to strengthen and balance the accountability and reporting mechanism between village courts and formal courts. There should be specific provisions in the laws governing these two branches of the state, defining the process of handling cases between the district court and the village court. Thus, the system would be significantly sustainable.

Sustainability is defined as the persistence of relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness that AVCB program has created after it exits. The AVCB has been successful in making VCs relevant for petty dispute resolution, made DRM more affordable and reliable, and made VCs functional. Will these effects last in the absence of the program? This question is answered from two angles: (a) hardware or the infrastructure angle and (b) software or the human angle.

No one can deny that infrastructure, such as provision of all relevant forms, a designated village court assistant, a designated courtroom with an *ejlas* are important to continue VC activities properly. 98% of the UPs in the project area had a designated courtroom and an *ejlas* whereas 73% UPs in the control area had so. The study shows that all of the 98% of VCs are operational with *Ejlas*, VC forms, and Formats accordingly. A total of 100% UPs have designated hearing days while 98% of UPs met compliance. A total of 42% of the UPs in the project area already hired an Assistant Account-cum-Computer Operator (ACCO) whereas 34% UPs in the control area did so. UPs of the project area maintain most of the forms and registers and manage administrative records significantly better than the UPs of the control area. It therefore seems that the AVCB program expedited the process of sustainability from infrastructural perspective. However, 49% UPs have fully self-sustaining village courts in the project area.

The software or the human angle is perhaps all the more important to make VCs sustainable. And the fundamental to this process is the knowledge about VCs that people and UP officials hold. If justice seekers and justice providers are not aware of VC and its processes, then there is no way VCs will remain functional. A quiz assessing knowledge about the VC and its processes was administered to both households, beneficiary households and UP officials. While at the baseline, 93% of the respondents could not give correct answer to a single quiz, the rate dropped to a mere 13% in the project area and 40% in the control area. 79% of the respondents could correctly answer at least one question and as many as 6 questions in the project area. 2% correctly answered all nine questions. In contrast, 55% respondents in the control area correctly answered at least one and as many as 6 questions but nobody correctly answered all 9 questions. Beneficiaries slightly outperformed the general households in the quiz establishing the fact that knowledge and awareness of VCs and satisfaction with the VC process depends on its actual use. Only 5% of beneficiaries could not give a single correct answer. 4% correctly answered all 9 questions.

UP officials from all four categories from the project areas had better knowledge than those of the control area. UP chairs in the project area have correct knowledge in 83% of the knowledge areas in comparison to 74% had the correct knowledge in the control area. Similarly, regular UP members in the project area had correct knowledge in 78% of the knowledge areas whereas the rate is 62% in the control area. Female UP members in the project area also possess more correct knowledge from their counterparts in the control area by 16 percentage points.

Another important aspect of sustainability is the intention of UP officials in using VCs for resolving petty disputes. While *Shalish* was the preferred way for the UP officials to resolve petty disputes in the baseline, VCs became most popular both in the project and the control area. When 72% of the UP respondents preferred *Shalish* and 26% preferred VC at the baseline, 32% preferred *Shalish* and 65% preferred VC at the endline. In the project area, more than 75% UP respondents preferred VC, while it was approximately 32% in the control area.

6.5. Risk assumption analysis

Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh (Phase II) project identified several probable risks to achieve its stipulated objectives during its inception. The project planned its preventive mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects of those risks. However, a few potential risks like political unrest could not hamper the implementation as the situation was stable in the last couple of years. On the other hand, some new risks, especially an unexpected nCOVID-19, popped in 2020 that barred significantly from implementing a series of activities resulting in a delay in reaching the targeted outcomes. The risks and mitigation measures are evaluated as follows.

Table 47: Potential risks that the AVCB project identified and managed

#	Risk Description	Type	Probability	Impact	Comments on Mitigation Strategy
1	Turbulent political situation, marked by frequent <i>hartal</i> , violence and civil unrest.	Political	P=3	I=3	Low intensity on impact was seen as the political stability remained calm though the project assumed a bar in day-to-day operations. That could impact VCs' ability to conduct hearings, PMU's ability to monitor projects, field awareness activities, and advocacy initiatives.
2	Reduced political buy-in by GoB.	Political	P=1	I=4	Low-level impact was perceived as the prime minister publicly stressed her commitment to VCs, and political engagement was high. GoB pledged USD 5M to the project. Thus, reverse action was observed against this assumed risk. Besides, the project continued engaging the

					senior decision-makers and sensitizing them to the pathway of successful VC.
3	Full-fledged DDLG not in place in all districts by end of project inception phase.	Strategic	P=4	I=4	This risk influenced the project implementation moderately, as all DDLG posts are filled on paper. In some cases, some positions were vacant, some of them were taken extended responsibilities with their regular duty. Thus, they could not provide full attention to project interventions. However, the project did advocacy with LGD to ensure DDLGs to be in place in all project districts.
4	Lengthy delay in holding local UP elections (due in 2016) leading to negative impacts on activities and resource planning.	Political	P=2	I=4	A moderate impact was placed as the project faced two times of local UP elections. UP representatives were engaged with the canvassing and election campaign that made less effort to the Village Court. Moreover, after the schedule declaration, UP representative could not play their role as per the rules. However, the project reviewed and revised the alternative plan on activation (result 1.1) and outreach (result 2.1).
5	Fluctuations in exchange rates lead to continuing decrease in project budget.	Financial	P=3	I=4	The project did not face significant fluctuation during its implementation, though it was assumed in the inception phase. Thus, low intensity on impact was seen due to the currency exchange rate.
6	Project design & implementation highly dependent on government personnel.	Strategic	P=2	I=5	The project was less hampered (low impact) by this risk. Officials from all levels of local government, from LGD to UPs, were positive for the success of Specific Objective 1 As the project got the strong political support of GoB, the management was influenced to perform. Also, the project provided Upazila and District level support (Upazila/District Coordinator and District Facilitator), who facilitated and sensitized UNOs and DDLGs, and DCs accordingly. Moreover, the Decentralized, Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation system made the government personnel accountable and responsive to the VC success.
7	UP Chair and others see VC as a competitor to the <i>Shalish</i> and refuse or hamper activation.	Strategic	P=2	I=3	As <i>shalish</i> is unregulated and local elites can levy fees from disputants, VCs were an unwelcome competitor. Without UP Chair cooperation, VC activation could be complicated. However, the project worked with LGD to ensure a strong message to UPs that the GoB support VCs and implement DMIE system and accountability mechanisms (Upazila and District VC Management Committees) to allow corrective action for poor performance. Moreover, outreach and awareness activities will create demand for and knowledge about, proper operation of VCs from constituents. Thus, the project experienced a minimal affect compared to expectations (moderate) in this risk.
8	Appointment of AACO to take over responsibility from VCAs delayed.	Strategic	P=2	I=4	LGD planned to deploy AACOs yearly, so all UPs in Bangladesh should have an AACO by 2019. The project continued engagement with LGD and GoB decision-makers to ensure the deployment of AACOs. However, due to the writ petition in the formal court, the recruitment process was slowed down, which affected the project's exit strategy to hand over the VC operation responsibilities accordingly.

9	The period and amount of outreach by dedicated PNGOs has been reduced compared to the pilot Phase.	Strategic	P=2	I=4	<p>This risk hampered the project at a minimum intensity on impact as an outstanding communication and outreach strategy was taken in place.</p> <p>The project maximized its efforts through delivering VC messages in the cable TV networks, telecasting Radio Commercial, delivering the messages by other local NGOs working in the project area, sharing bulk SMS with VC messages through Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (BRTA) besides its planned awareness activities (Court Yard Meeting, Multimedia Dram Show, Youth Workshop, Community Sharing Meeting, Rally etc.).</p>
10	District courts still accept appeals against village courts' absolute decisions even where no right to appeal is granted in Village Courts Act.	Operational	P=2	I=1	<p>A very few VC cases went to appeal during the project period. The project advocated to involve Assistant District Judge in each District Training Pool and issued a practice Note from the CJ about VC referrals and appeals. Moreover, several sensitization workshops were held with the judiciary about VCs. Thus, a minimum impact was being seen against this risk.</p>
11	Legislative framework not clarified.	Strategic	P=3	I=3	<p>The impact on failure to amend CrPC and thus ensuring Police referrals to UPs has been moderate. Cases registered with the Police station involving disputes triable by VC are sent to magistrate courts, and later these cases are sent to UPs from the magistrate courts. This causes delay, hardship, and expenditures for litigants.</p> <p>Though the amendment proposal is in place of VC Act, 2006 but this amendment will not expedite case referral from Police to Ups. Unless CrPC and other relevant Acts are amended, police will have legal impediments to refer cases to UPs. A national consultant (who was recruited by the project) is on board to prepare the proposal for amendment of relevant statutes, which, if accepted by the government, will pave the way for case referral from Police to UPs.</p>
12	Lack of cooperation from police in referring cases to VCs.	Operational	P=3	I=2	<p>The impact of not getting the directive from the IGP and thus failed to get a referral in an official capacity from the Police to Union Parishads is moderate.</p> <p>The initiative was taken from LGD to get the directive from IGP. But due to legal constraints, such a directive was not obtainable. At present, a national consultant (who was recruited by the project) is working to prepare the necessary amendment proposal for amending the relevant Acts so that there will be no legal bar and police will be able to refer cases to Ups.</p>
13	Absent Chairs of UP refuse/fail to delegate VC functions to the Panel Chair.	Operational	P=2	I=4	<p>This is a significant cause of delays to case hearings, exacerbated by the current political situation, which has led some UP Chairs to go into hiding. Without a delegation of function, the alternate Chair usually refuses to sit, making the VC inactive. The risk affects the project at a minimum level through the UP Chairmen are motivated by the project to hand over the responsibilities to the panel chair during his/her absence.</p>
14	Hardware to support for VCMIS system not provided by GoB	Operational	P=1	I=2	<p>The project managed hardware support from Local Government Support Project III (LGSP III) for 57 UPs and implemented the VCMIS for those UPs instead of targeting 100 UPs. This indicates that the risk hampered the work moderately.</p>

15	VC Chair or panel members unwilling to participate without incentives	Operational	P=2	I=3	Due to the continuous monitoring and advocacy with the LGD, this risk was seen as less dangerous to achieve the project results.
16	Delays in appointing the PMU and NGOs	Operational	P=4	I=4	It observed that the project appointment could not negatively affect the achievement as necessary staff and partner NGOs were deployed within the expected timeframe. All parties (Government, EU, DANIDA, and UNDP) were agreed to work together to ensure expediting the progress to approve the project and recruit the core PMU staff soon.
17	Lack of confidence by the Chief Justice (CJ) in the capacity of Village Courts	Strategic	P=4	I=2	Several workshops with the district judiciary for expediting case referrals from district courts to UP have taken place. Due to these workshops expediting case referrals have increased to a great extent in project areas. To organize these workshops, permission was sought from the Supreme Court, which was duly given. This indicates that due to the activities and result generated in the Project areas, Chief Justice didn't resist and showed his confidence in this system.
18	Covid-19 pandemic across the country	Other (Health outbreak)	P=4	I=5	The Covid-19 pandemic had a great impact on the implementation of the project activities. Thus, the project extended twice for two years to execute its operation accordingly. The lockdown imposed by the government, social distance, and other rules hindered the events that required the human gatherings. Thus, the project took extension to achieve the stipulated results
19	Delay in implementing activities due to delay disbursement of GOB fund.	Operational	P=3	I=4	The project struggled significantly to implement the GoB funded activities. Necessary follow-up with relevant stakeholders was made to narrow this challenge. Even some of the activities were deferred to next quarter those supposed to conduct earlier.

6.6. Lessons Learned

The project provided Village Court Assistants (VCAs) has reinforced the effort to activate the Village Court in the rural setting. They played a significant role in receiving complaints, completing the necessary registers and forms, recording proceedings, and providing the data required for M&E as well as outreach and awareness in the local community. As the UP secretary is the only one responsible at the UP level except for a few Assistant Accountants cum Computer Operator (AACO), the VCA had a persuasive role to lead the VC activities.

Involvement of women in the decision-making process of VC is still minimal though the VC has demonstrated significant value for women in terms of access to justice rather than the formal system. It is evident that relatively a few women are nominated to be members of the VC, and even when they are (owing to the legal need that one female needs to be present in instances involving children or women), their presence and participation are limited.

The financial jurisdiction of the Village Court makes a bar to take a significant number of applications from the applicants. A gap in policy framework hindered the case referral as Police cannot refer the case to the Village Court directly. Also, regularizing the Village Court is challenging as there is no reward and/or penalty option. Family issues are the most common disputes in rural areas which are not considered in VC.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The study has learned that the AVCB II project has realised significant results and provided justice for its envisioned primary and final recipients. The major findings of the study are:

1. Awareness among rural people in project areas of the Village Courts and its function has gone up from 9% in 2017 [Baseline] to 90% in 2021
2. Village courts comply with VC procedures and UPs maintain all VC forms and register with high quality [Baseline (2017):0; Final Evaluation (2021-Project areas): 98%; Final Evaluation (2021-non project areas: 0%)]
3. UP officials were more knowledgeable about the VCs and they spent more time on resolving disputes through the VC system
4. Village courts are efficient, fast and accessible for everyone:
 - Village courts resolved over 82% of reported case taking only 25 days [(Baseline (2017): 42 days, Final Evaluation (2021): 25 days.
 - Enforcement rate of VC's decision is over 95% [Baseline (2017): 80%; Final Evaluation, 2021: 95%.
 - Court users spent 233 takas (US\$ 2.7) as courts fees, conveyance and food/snacks cost on an average to get service [(Baseline (2017): BDT 3,064; Final Evaluation, 2021: BDT 233]
 - 91% service recipients expressed their satisfaction with VC services and its decisions
5. Women are increasingly participating in VC's. The project initiatives encouraged petitioners and respondents to nominate women as VC panel members.
 - Representation of women in village court's decision -making process has been increased from 2% [Baseline] to 15% [2021].
 - Women justice seeker has increased from 20% [Baseline] to 29% [Final Evaluation,2021].
6. More than 50% of the users of VCs live below the World Bank poverty line which also indicates that AVCB program helps increase affordable access to the poor.
7. UP representatives perceived that shortage of manpower, inadequate training facilities and lack of awareness about VC among local people are the main weakness of village courts.
8. The rate of disputes with a monetary value reduced to fifty percent and average value of the dispute reduced to BDT 1,83,000 in the endline from BDT 2,72,000 in the Baseline. This is indicative of the fact that a large portion of the disputes may not be resolved in VCs due to a case value limit of BDT 75,000.

Recommendations:

- A country-wide scale-up can be initiated to uplift the justice situation and sustainable VC.
- The VC Act 2006 need to be amended based on the consultation with different stakeholder.
- To keep continue the village court service after the end of the project, human resources need to be ensured at UP level to assist UP to run village courts with proper documentations; and
- Capacity building and awareness raising activities need to be strengthened to increase the use of village courts.

8. Annex 1: Detailed description of survey

A self-sustaining VC has three components: an AACO, weekly hearings, and VC compliance. Evidence suggests that the AVCB program increased self-sustainability, as these components were fulfilled at a much higher rate after the AVCB program in treatment areas, with AACO increasing from 2% of UPs to 43%, weekly hearings from 75% of UPs to 100%, and VC compliance from 0% of UPs to **98%**. In all, treatment VCs increased from 0% self-sustaining at baseline to **38%** at endline. By comparison, in the control area, only AACO increased (from 0% to 24%), while designated hearings declined from 69% to 55% and VC compliance remained at 0%.

Based on administrative data, evidence also indicates that the AVCB program was successful in activating the VCs, consistent with the theory of change, as the average number of VC cases registered per year per UP increased from 16.46 to 62.50 in treatment UPs, while only increasing from 18.64 to 24.57 in control areas. The percentage of cases resolved through VCs also increased from 41 to 93 in treatment UPs, while decreasing from 41 to 1 in control UPs. On the other hand, the overall percentage of cases resolved within six weeks in endline UPs declined from 94 to 88. The same pattern held for cases that went through Rule 31 (100% at baseline to 98% at endline), pre-trial (100 to 87), and complete hearing before formation of VCs (90 to 74).

Enforcement of resolved cases was complete regardless of the AVCB program, remaining at 100% for both treatment and control UPs.

The AVCB program had a pronounced effect correcting procedural compliance and ensuring proper VC jurisdictional oversight, increasing this proportion from 0% to 98% in treatment UPs (the rate remained an unchanged 0% in control UPs) based on administrative data.

Household surveys also suggest that the program has a deterrent effect on petty crimes, with the proportion of people responding that VCs have reduced petty crime increasing from 31% at baseline to **75%** at endline in treatment UPs but only 26% to 34% in control areas.

The KAP survey was used to assess the ability and practices of UP officials important in making VCs functional. As mentioned previously, these encompassed nine categories of knowledge: VC formation, VC fees, VC jurisdiction, the VC chair, use of lawyers in the VC, fines that the VC can impose, the process for appealing VC decisions, the VC decision-making process, and the process for issuing a summons. The AVCB program was successful in improving UP representatives' ability to answer these questions, with the correct response rate to all of the first five questions increasing from 2% to 56% in treatment UPs, compared to 1% to 19% in control UPs. The correct response rate to all of the first seven questions increased from 0% to 13% in treatment UPs, while remaining unchanged at 0% in control UPs. In general, knowledge of these categories improved, as the percentage of UP representatives who were able to give a correct response to at least one question increased from 72 to 99 among treatment UPs and from 76 to 90 in control UPs. Increases were also observed by UP role – specifically, for chairmen, secretaries, and female members.

The program in general increased awareness of VCs and their function, with the proportion of respondents responding in the affirmative increasing in treatment areas from 9% to 90%, compared to 11% to 63% in control groups. Divided by gender, men who had heard about VCs in treatment UPs increased from 12% to 91%, and women from 7% to 89%. By comparison, men who had heard about VCs in control UPs increased from 15% to 64% and women from 9% to 63%. Scored on knowledge of VCs, respondents improved from 0.20 on average at baseline in treatment RCT areas to 3.62 at endline, compared to 0.26 at baseline in control RCT areas to 2.17 at endline. For women, this score increased from 0.11 at baseline in treatment RCT areas to 3.71 at endline, compared to 0.21 at baseline in control areas to 2.12 at endline. Said another way, the knowledge gender gap not only closed in treatment RCT UPs but favoured women by endline (0.21 to -0.221).

Table A1: Statistical description of the survey (data collection)

Baseline Survey					
Area	Survey	Time period of survey	Unit of survey	Sample size	Average time (in minutes)
Baseline Survey					
Non-RCT area	Targeting Survey	January 31, 2017 – February 10, 2017	Household	5400	15
	Household survey	February 23, 2017 – March 10, 2017	Household	1800	57
	UP official survey	February 23, 2017 – March 16, 2017	Individual	359	180
	Review of administrative data	February 23, 2017 – March 16, 2017	Union	90	860
RCT area	Targeting Survey	March 28, 2017 – April 14, 2017	Household	9630	8
	Household survey	April 25, 2017 – May 15, 2017	Household	3210	130
	UP official survey	March 28, 2017 – April 14, 2017	Individual	428	195
	Review of administrative data	April 25, 2017 – May 15, 2017	Union	107	769
Endline Survey					
Non-RCT area	Household survey	January 7, 2021 – February 26, 2021	Household	1667	43
	UP official survey	January 7, 2021 – February 11, 2021	Individual	261	47
	Review of administrative data	January 9, 2021 – February 17, 2021	Union	90	459
	Beneficiary survey	January 9, 2021 – February 8, 2021	Individual	353	37
RCT area	Household survey	January 7, 2021 – February 26, 2021	Household	1768	39
	UP official survey	January 7, 2021 – February 11, 2021	Individual	171	42
	Review of administrative data	January 9, 2021 – February 17, 2021	Union	55	281
	Beneficiary survey	January 9, 2021 – February 4, 2021	Individual	353	35

Statistical description of the survey (data collection)

Baseline Survey (January 31, 2017- May 16, 2017)				
Survey	Unit of survey	Non-RCT Area	RCT	Total Size
		Sample size	Sample size	
Targeting Survey	Household	5400	9630	15030
Household survey	Household	1800	3210	5010
UP official survey	Individual	359	428	787
Review of administrative data	Union	90	107	197
Endline Survey (January 07, 2021- February 26, 2022)				
Household survey	Household	1667	1768	3435
UP official survey	Individual	261	171	432
Review of administrative data	Union	90	55	145
Beneficiary survey	Individual	353	353	706

Table A2: Endline indicators according to AVCB log-frame

SI	Indicators		Requirement	Baseline Status			Endline Status		
				Treatment Area	Control Area	Overall	Treatment Area	Control Area	Overall
1	% of Union Parishads that have fully self-sustaining ¹⁴ village courts	Total	RCT and non RCT	0%	0%	0%	38%	0%	38%
		AACO		2%	0%	1%	43%	24%	39%
		A designated day(s) for VC hearing		75%	69%	72%	100%	55%	91%
		Compliance		0%	0%	0%	98%	0%	98%
2	Average number of VC cases registered per year per UP (Source: Administrative data)		RCT and non RCT	17	19	17	60	18	51
3	% of female complainants registered at VC (Source: Administrative data)		RCT and non RCT	20%	24%	28%	29%	28%	29%
4	% of cases resolved through village courts (Source: Administrative data)		RCT and non RCT	41%	41%	41%	93%	1%	87%
5	% of resolved cases among the cases those fall under VC jurisdiction (Source: Administrative data)		RCT and non RCT	7%	3%	6%	100% (N=5426)	100% (N=3)	100% (N=5429)
6	% of registered cases in village courts which are resolved within 6 weeks (Source: Administrative data)	Total cases	RCT and non RCT	94%	65%	65%	88%	0% (N=0)	88%
		Rule 31		100%	100%	100%	98%	0% (N=0)	98%
		Pre-trial		100%	100%	62%	87%	0% (N=0)	87%
		Complete hearing		90%	56%	63%	74%	0% (N=0)	74%
7	Average days required to resolve a dispute (Source: Administrative data)	Total cases	RCT and non RCT	43	38	42	25	0 (N=0)	25
		Rule 31		15	3	12	10	0 (N=0)	10
		Pre-trial		47	10	45	30	0 (N=0)	30
		Complete hearing		41	45	42	44	0 (N=0)	44
8	Average money required in BDT to resolve a dispute in VC (Source: HH data)		RCT and non RCT	3064	10669	5780	569	2713	915
9	Average money required in BDT to resolve a dispute in VC (Source: Beneficiary data)		RCT and non RCT	N/A	N/A	N/A	233	N/A	233
10	% of women involved as panellists in village courts' decision making process (Source: Administrative data)		RCT and non RCT	2%	3%	3%	15%	0%	13%

¹⁴ 'Self-sustaining' is measured by three components: Assistant Accountant cum Computer Operator (AACO) appointed, hearings carried out weekly on designated hearing days, and compliant with VC Act and Rules)-source: administrative data.

11	% of UPs which correctly maintain all VC forms and registers. (Source: Administrative data)	RCT and non RCT	0%	0%	0%	98%	0%	98%
	% of resolved cases which are enforced (Source: HH data)	RCT and non RCT	80%	78%	79%	95%	96%	95%
12	% of resolved cases which are enforced (Source: Administrative data)	RCT and non RCT	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
13	% of cases in AVCB area which are within the VCs jurisdiction and in compliance with the correct procedure (Source: Administrative data)	RCT and non RCT	0%	0%	0%	98%	0%	98%
14	% of UPs which submitted last quarterly report to UNO (Source: Administrative data)	RCT and non RCT	4%	4%	4%	83%	10%	68%
15	% of VC users who are satisfied with VC services (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	85%	78%	83%	91%	91%	91%
16	% of VC users who are satisfied with VC services (Source: Beneficiary data)	RCT and non RCT	N/A	N/A	N/A	91%	N/A	91%
17	% of VC users who are satisfied with VC's decisions (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	89%	93%	90%	88%	91%	89%
18	% of VC users who are satisfied with VC's decisions (Source: Beneficiary data)	RCT and non RCT	N/A	N/A	N/A	90%	N/A	90%
19	% of VC complainants who are poor or extreme poor (using World Bank definition). (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	66%	0%	42%	50%	51%	49%
20	% of VC complainants who are poor or extreme poor (using World Bank definition). (Source: Beneficiary data)	RCT and non RCT	N/A	N/A	N/A	22%	N/A	22%
21	% of people who have experience of disputes related to village courts and received services from village courts (Source: HH data)	RCT and non RCT	1%	2%	1%	16%	9%	14%
22	% of people who say VC has reduced petty crime (Source: HH data)	RCT and non RCT	31%	26%	29%	75%	34%	64%
23	% of people who say they would first approach to the VC to resolve petty disputes (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	19%	11%	17%	17%	7%	14%
24	% of people who say they would first approach to the VC to resolve petty disputes (Source: Beneficiary Data)	RCT and non RCT	N/A	N/A	N/A	37%	N/A	37%
25	% of UP representatives and officials who gave correct response to 5 key knowledge questions (VC formation, VC fees, VC jurisdiction, VC	RCT and non RCT	2%	1%	1%	56%	19%	48%

	Chair, Use of lawyers in VC) (Source: KAP)							
26	% of People who say they are aware of VCs and its functions. (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	9%	11%	9%	90%	63%	83%
27	% of people in the project areas able to correctly answer that VC deals with minor conflicts and disputes (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	1%	2%	1%	59%	35%	52%
28	% of male respondents who heard about VC (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	12%	15%	12%	91%	64%	84%
29	% of female respondents who are aware about VC (Source: HH)	RCT and non RCT	7%	9%	7%	89%	63%	82%
30	Knowledge on VCs compared to baseline (Average knowledge score) (Source: HH)	RCT	0.20	0.26	0.23	3.62	2.17	2.85
		Non RCT	0.30	0	.30	2.93	0	2.93
31	Knowledge gap on VCs between men and women narrowed compared to baseline (Source: HH)	Combine dly	0.12 (12%)	0.07 (7%)	0.10 (10%)	0.01 (1%)	0.07 (7%)	0.11 (11%)
		RCT	0.21	0.14	0.17	-0.221	0.14	-0.012
		Non RCT	0.026	0	0.026	0.24	0	0.24

9. Annex 2: Data annex

Annex Table: Household Survey

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Demographic summery statistics								
Age	27.7	26.9	27.1	29.4	30.6	26.6	26.5	28.7
% female	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5
Education level								
Illiterate	33%	40%	44%	34%	22%	29%	34%	30%
Primary or below	37%	30%	27%	34%	36%	31%	31%	31%
Secondary or below	23%	23%	24%	25%	33%	32%	31%	31%
Higher Secondary or below	3.9%	5.0%	3.2%	2.4%	5.3%	4.7%	3.1%	4.7%
Above higher Secondary	3.2%	2.4%	2.1%	4.0%	3.6%	3.0%	1.9%	3.2%
Respondent occupation composition								
Agricultural work on own farm	11%	18%	6%	29%	10%	7%	4%	12%
Supervisory work of agricultural activity on own farm	2%	3%	2%	6%	6%	2%	2%	2%
Share cropper / cultivate plot owned by others	10%	9%	3%	11%	11%	10%	9%	6%
Agricultural wage labour	5%	17%	26%	8%	8%	9%	5%	4%
Fisherman (Fishing)	8%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	5%	0%
Fish culture	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Look after live stocks	0%	2%	23%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%
Look after Poultry (Duck, Chicken, Pigeons)	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%
Agricultural wage labour (Off Farm)	2%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%
Family labour in Enterprise	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	4%	1%	0%
Family labour in Tailoring	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Carpenter	3%	1%	4%	1%	1%	16%	2%	1%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Non-agriculture wage labour	3%	3%	3%	6%	5%	2%	8%	5%
Petty Trade (Small retail shop)	17%	15%	9%	10%	19%	16%	12%	16%
Medium Trader (Retail and insignificant wholesale)	3%	0%	2%	1%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Wholesale Trader	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Rickshaw/ Van Pulling	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	0%	3%	4%
Wage labour in transport	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Driver (motorized vehicle)	5%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%	2%	4%
Mason	6%	0%	2%	0%	1%	3%	3%	3%
Helper (Construction helper)	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Earthen work	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
House Repairing (fixing)	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Barber	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Kutir Shilpi (Handicrafts)	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Others self employment	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Service (govt/employee)	15%	19%	5%	12%	9%	9%	21%	23%
Service worker in NGO	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%	1%
Servant in house	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%
Disputes within VC's jurisdiction								
Theft	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Verbal Fight	12%	9%	18%	6%	4%	6%	17%	7%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	5%	6%	12%	3%	31%	4%	6%	4%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	6%	10%	6%	2%	2%	4%	4%	2%
Rioting/rampaging	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Fraud	2%	0%	0%	24%	5%	3%	6%	8%
Threat/intimidation	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	1%	0%	8%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Teasing	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Illegal imprisonment	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%	0%
Claiming compensation for deliberately damage to livestock	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Dispute about due payment as per written/verbal contract	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Claiming ownership or value of movable asset	0%	12%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	45%	13%	21%	26%	14%	18%	11%	17%
Dispute about other kinds of land (or compensation for it)	20%	12%	26%	34%	27%	44%	34%	40%
Dispute about possession of movable asset	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Compensation for cattle trespassing	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Multiple marriage	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Divorce	0%	3%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Alimony	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	0%	10%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Dowry	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Dispute about credit/loan	0%	17%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Disputes outside of VC's jurisdiction								
Theft	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Verbal Fight	12%	9%	18%	6%	4%	6%	17%	8%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	5%	6%	12%	3%	31%	4%	6%	4%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	6%	10%	6%	2%	2%	4%	4%	2%
Rioting/rampaging	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Fraud	2%	0%	0%	23%	5%	3%	6%	8%
Threat/intimidation	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	1%	0%	8%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Illegal imprisonment	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%	0%
Claiming compensation for deliberately damage to livestock	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Dispute about due payment as per written/verbal contract	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Claiming ownership or value of movable asset	0%	12%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	45%	13%	21%	26%	14%	18%	11%	17%
Dispute about other kinds of land (or compensation for it)	20%	12%	26%	33%	27%	43%	34%	40%
Dispute about possession of movable asset	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Multiple marriage	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Divorce	0%	3%	3%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Alimony	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	0%	10%	0%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Dowry	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Dispute about credit/loan	0%	17%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Experience with dispute								
% of HH members had disputes in past year	13%	20%	16%	18%	24%	17%	15%	13%
% of HH members had Unresolved disputes	15%	9%	10%	13%	30%	16%	12%	11%
% of HH members had resolved disputes	8%	12%	13%	8%	19%	19%	12%	7%
Knowledge on Village court								
% that has heard of VC	0%	6%	1%	9%	3%	0%	4%	2%
% that say they have heard of VC after given a hint	3%	4%	3%	5%	25%	6%	6%	5%
% that has not heard of VC	97%	90%	96%	87%	72%	94%	90%	93%
Among the people knowing who has heard about VC								
% saying VC is active in UP	91%	67%	37%	66%	95%	80%	93%	95%
% believing that VC hears and attend to people's needs?	99%	60%	72%	77%	93%	100%	90%	81%
% of people think there is change in social problems and crimes in locality due to VC	100%	64%	77%	86%	92%	92%	89%	91%
% believing that VC can enforce its decision	92%	63%	100%	97%	78%	100%	97%	94%
Dispute summary								
Solved by Shalish	30%	56%	40%	36%	41%	47%	41%	29%
Solved by VC	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Solved by DC	4%	5%	3%	1%	3%	6%	7%	8%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
% of disputed solved	35%	61%	42%	36%	44%	54%	52%	37%
Efficiency and Effectiveness of DRM								
Time from start of dispute until resolution was sought (months)	3.7	11.0	1.7	3.6	4.2	5.2	5.0	6.9
Number of months spent in other DRM before seeking resolution in the final DRM	3.0	0.0	1.2	0.2	2.6	2.1	2.6	3.2
Time taken (in months) from case file to judgment	2.8	2.7	1.1	0.8	4.1	4.2	5.8	2.7
% of cases resolved within 6 weeks	89%	85%	95%	91%	66%	69%	81%	82%
% of decisions fully implemented	25%	48%	34%	15%	36%	38%	37%	21%
If implemented, average months taken	0.10	0.61	0.58	0.05	3.41	0.50	2.09	0.29
Total cost of resolution (court and lawyer fees, transportation costs and opportunity cost of time)	4630	1742	3766	1146	1452	7422	8034	3379
Of which is a monetary cost (court and lawyer fees, transportation costs)	3554	772	1545	528	950	5394	3471	2520
% of trials resulting in some type of compensation	0.25	0.26	0.20	0.29	0.09	0.25	0.26	0.25
Average compensation as a result of the trial	30762	32193	21713	55893	18379	46914	37222	111466
Will go through same process again	57%	76%	52%	69%	53%	64%	62%	61%
% of users below WB poverty line	20%	13%	33%	22%	24%	28%	17%	15%
% of female	20%	19%	11%	9%	23%	20%	23%	12%
Satisfaction level by DRM								
Level of satisfaction with decisions	2.29	2.11	2.02	2.32	2.10	2.26	2.33	2.41
Very satisfied	7%	12%	13%	11%	7%	12%	17%	6%
Satisfied	75%	71%	78%	61%	81%	66%	52%	68%
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	6%	11%	4%	18%	6%	8%	15%	10%
Unsatisfied	6%	6%	5%	8%	4%	13%	11%	12%
Very unsatisfied	6%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%	5%	4%
Satisfaction with services	2.91	2.33	2.61	2.49	2.51	2.78	2.80	2.75
Very satisfied	4%	4%	2%	7%	2%	4%	12%	4%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Satisfied	50%	71%	56%	50%	62%	49%	37%	48%
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	10%	16%	23%	31%	22%	12%	22%	22%
Unsatisfied	26%	8%	17%	11%	10%	33%	17%	21%
Very unsatisfied	11%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%	12%	5%
Feeling towards other party, (1=hatred, 5=good friends)	2.50	2.70	2.74	2.14	2.36	2.34	2.50	2.54
Strong dislike / Hatred	23%	9%	9%	22%	10%	24%	21%	18%
Dislike	34%	30%	31%	53%	52%	40%	27%	30%
Neither negative nor positive	14%	48%	37%	15%	32%	15%	33%	36%
Friendly	26%	10%	23%	9%	7%	21%	18%	14%
Good friends	3%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Relationship	2.50	2.54	2.61	3.03	2.91	2.80	2.87	2.76
Friendly	12%	3%	5%	2%	7%	2%	5%	1%
Cordial	29%	44%	34%	14%	11%	31%	21%	32%
We do not speak	57%	49%	57%	63%	67%	52%	55%	56%
We still argue	2%	4%	4%	21%	15%	15%	19%	11%
Choice of DRM for hypothetical future disputes								
Credit dispute of BDT 10,000								
Shalish or other mediation	99%	99%	99%	100%	89%	99%	44%	63%
District Court	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Village Court	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	0%	54%	36%
Others	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Assault of Family member								
Shalish or other mediation	96%	99%	99%	99%	90%	97%	56%	66%
District Court	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Village Court	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	41%	33%
Others	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Land disputes								
Shalish or other mediation	93%	96%	96%	97%	72%	97%	60%	68%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
District Court	6%	3%	3%	3%	11%	2%	3%	2%
Village Court	0%	1%	0%	0%	16%	0%	36%	31%
Others	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Resolve dispute related to crops damage								
Shalish or other mediation	96%	99%	99%	100%	92%	99%	59%	68%
District Court	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Village Court	0%	1%	0%	0%	8%	0%	39%	31%
Others	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Main reason for choosing resolution mechanism								
Fair	7%	5%	0%	2%	21%	10%	7%	6%
Cheap	35%	43%	46%	55%	31%	48%	41%	47%
Prompt and quick	50%	24%	24%	19%	30%	3%	20%	12%
Easy to understand process	2%	1%	7%	6%	0%	6%	6%	5%
Neutral	2%	25%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	11%
Lawyer not needed	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Can resolve case locally	4%	1%	11%	11%	12%	27%	19%	19%
Close	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Other	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Main reason for not choosing resolution mechanism								
Unfair	1%	1%	0%	1%	6%	1%	1%	5%
Costly	78%	60%	65%	73%	58%	92%	57%	67%
Takes long time	16%	15%	13%	12%	19%	2%	13%	8%
Difficult to understand process	4%	19%	9%	5%	12%	4%	12%	6%
Bias / nepotism / corruption	0%	2%	0%	2%	3%	0%	4%	3%
Lawyer needed	0%	2%	1%	6%	0%	0%	2%	3%
At the district level	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	2%
Far away	1%	1%	7%	1%	1%	0%	5%	6%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Other	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%
Perception on crime and community harmony								
How big of a problem crime is in your village? (1=not at all, 5=very serious problem)	3.39	4.15	4.36	4.25	4.55	3.45	3.42	3.94
How much harmony or conflict exists between you and your 5 closest neighbours? (1=a lot of harmony, 5=a lot of dispute)	1.75	1.55	1.47	1.47	1.91	1.29	1.71	1.56
Overall, how satisfied are you with the justice system that you have access to? (the justice system that you would turn to if something happened to you.) (1=very satisfied, 5=very dissatisfied)	2.19	2.04	2.12	2.05	2.39	2.08	2.18	2.22
How do people resolve smaller disputes in your community?								
Village Court	0%	2%	0%	1%	17%	1%	2%	1%
District Court	5%	0%	1%	11%	7%	1%	11%	5%
Shalish	98%	100%	100%	98%	97%	98%	98%	99%
Thana/Police	7%	6%	2%	24%	8%	1%	16%	12%
Other	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Perception about the fairness, speed, enforcement power and cost of different DRMs								
How fair is Village Court?								
Village Court	4.18	4.76	3.77	3.84	4.39	3.53	4.12	4.02
Not fair at all	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	1%
Not fair	2%	0%	11%	7%	1%	0%	2%	6%
Neutral	36%	7%	40%	30%	19%	70%	24%	27%
Somewhat Fair	5%	10%	10%	34%	13%	8%	21%	22%
Completely fair	57%	83%	39%	28%	66%	22%	50%	45%
How fair is District Court?								
Not fair at all	1%	4%	1%	0%	2%	4%	5%	4%
Not fair	3%	11%	6%	7%	8%	3%	9%	8%
Neutral	18%	39%	32%	18%	28%	16%	19%	19%
Somewhat Fair	46%	9%	35%	11%	7%	9%	24%	21%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Completely fair	32%	37%	25%	64%	55%	67%	44%	49%
How fair is Shalish?	3.63	4.86	4.74	4.55	3.91	4.50	4.05	3.87
Not fair at all	4%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	5%	2%
Not fair	10%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	5%	9%
Neutral	22%	2%	7%	12%	39%	16%	16%	29%
Somewhat Fair	47%	7%	8%	17%	11%	7%	24%	21%
Completely fair	17%	90%	84%	69%	44%	74%	48%	40%
Days require to resolve dispute through VC	22.2	25.8	40.3	34.8	24.5	31.8	32.6	28.2
Days require to resolve dispute through DC	1640.9	995.0	782.9	1844.3	978.8	768.1	682.5	721.5
Days require to resolve dispute through Shalish	21.4	14.2	11.4	12.2	8.7	27.6	21.2	12.1
Reason why not fair								
Biased towards those of the same political party as UP chair	21%	55%	36%	60%	44%	40%	40%	37%
Biased towards those who are rich	67%	31%	43%	58%	48%	26%	44%	35%
Biased against ethnic/religious minorities (such as tribal population or Hindus)	39%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Other	24%	25%	42%	14%	41%	37%	2%	1%
Biased towards those of the same political party as District Government	47%	52%	25%	54%	44%	59%	40%	49%
Biased towards those who are rich	76%	71%	95%	81%	81%	71%	66%	73%
Biased against ethnic/religious minorities (such as tribal population or Hindus)	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Other	9%	1%	1%	5%	14%	2%	0%	1%
Biased towards those of the same political party as District Government	55%	38%	30%	60%	46%	45%	43%	47%
Biased towards those who are rich	90%	82%	94%	74%	76%	90%	67%	77%
Other	8%	3%	1%	0%	15%	7%	2%	1%
Ability of VC to enforce decisions								
Very bad	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	6%	1%	3%
Bad	7%	0%	1%	8%	0%	0%	1%	4%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
Neutral	12%	8%	43%	41%	21%	22%	29%	31%
Good	29%	53%	38%	34%	22%	37%	30%	20%
Very good	52%	38%	17%	14%	55%	35%	38%	42%
Ability of DC to enforce decisions								
Very bad	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	4%
Bad	1%	9%	1%	2%	3%	2%	8%	5%
Neutral	23%	44%	24%	18%	31%	12%	19%	19%
Good	31%	20%	47%	22%	14%	14%	22%	20%
Very good	44%	22%	29%	58%	53%	70%	49%	53%
Ability of Shalish to enforce decisions								
Very bad	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Bad	8%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	4%	6%
Neutral	18%	9%	32%	27%	38%	20%	18%	31%
Good	55%	18%	39%	30%	17%	16%	31%	27%
Very good	16%	72%	27%	41%	43%	62%	44%	35%
How expensive is VC								
Not expensive at all	61%	26%	27%	24%	81%	51%	18%	29%
A little expensive	36%	60%	58%	69%	12%	46%	41%	31%
Neutral	3%	15%	15%	3%	4%	3%	29%	21%
Somewhat expensive	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	9%	12%
Very expensive	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	3%	6%
How expensive is DC								
Not expensive at all	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
A little expensive	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%	1%
Neutral	3%	2%	1%	6%	1%	5%	5%	6%
Somewhat expensive	24%	10%	19%	11%	7%	7%	17%	20%
Very expensive	73%	86%	80%	84%	92%	84%	78%	73%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
How expensive is Shalish								
Not expensive at all	26%	65%	43%	80%	82%	73%	47%	49%
A little expensive	66%	32%	53%	13%	16%	17%	33%	28%
Neutral	7%	2%	3%	5%	1%	7%	13%	17%
Somewhat expensive	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	4%	4%
Very expensive	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	4%	2%
Frequency of having heard about VC								
Spontaneously	0%	6%	1%	9%	3%	0%	4%	2%
After given a hint	3%	4%	3%	5%	25%	6%	6%	5%
Never heard	97%	90%	96%	87%	72%	94%	90%	93%
Knowledge about Financial Jurisdiction of village courts								
Knowledge about Financial Jurisdiction of village courts (Correct knowledge)	0%	1%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%	0%
Knowledge about type of cases dealt by village courts (Correct knowledge)	0%	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Knowledge about formation of Village courts (Correct knowledge)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Knowledge about fess (Correct knowledge)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Knowledge about Chair of Village courts (Correct knowledge)	2%	9%	2%	6%	25%	1%	7%	4%
Knowledge about decision making process of Village courts (Correct knowledge)	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	1%	0%	1%
Knowledge about appeal against VC's decision (Correct knowledge)	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Knowledge about engagement of lawyer of Village courts (Correct knowledge)	2%	5%	2%	9%	19%	1%	6%	4%
Knowledge questions								
At least one question	0%	3%	2%	5%	4%	0%	2%	2%
At least two questions	2%	3%	0%	3%	15%	0%	5%	2%
At least three questions	0%	3%	0%	2%	6%	0%	1%	1%

	Barisal	Mymensingh	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chattogram	Dhaka
At least four questions	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
At least five questions	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Annex Table: KAP and Admin Data

	Barisal	Mymensing	Rangpur	Rajshahi	Khulna	Sylhet	Chatto gram	Dhaka
Demographic summery statistics								
Age	44.59	41.28	42.10	44.18	44.92	42.75	43.37	45.89
Education	13.49	11.83	12.12	11.68	13.10	11.78	12.84	12.01
Respondent type								
UP Chair	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	24%	24%	24%
UP Member (regular UP member for one of the 9 wards)	24%	25%	24%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
Female UP Member	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
UP Secretary	25%	25%	25%	25%	24%	25%	25%	25%
Years in current position	4.34	3.70	2.86	4.15	4.22	2.41	5.18	4.85
Presence of Ejlas	57%	70%	42%	6%	18%	62%	37%	54%
Designated day(s) for VC hearing	91%	18%	97%	61%	81%	38%	89%	91%
UP has assistant accountant and computer operator	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%
Form use								
Application (form 1)	29%	0%	0%	0%	20%	13%	0%	15%
Register of cases (form 2)	43%	0%	53%	53%	40%	40%	39%	25%
Case order form (Form 3)	21%	0%	0%	20%	27%	27%	18%	15%
Summon form for the defendant (form 4)	36%	0%	47%	20%	27%	47%	15%	30%
Summon form for the witness (form 5)	0%	0%	27%	13%	27%	27%	0%	15%
Member nomination notice (Form 6)	0%	0%	0%	13%	20%	13%	0%	5%
Member nomination form (form 7)	7%	0%	0%	7%	20%	0%	3%	5%
Village court member attendance request (form 8)	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	7%	0%	5%

Mutual agreement (form 9)	0%	0%	0%	13%	20%	7%	0%	5%
Case attendance form (Form 10)	7%	0%	0%	0%	20%	7%	0%	5%
Case slip (Form 11)	14%	0%	0%	0%	13%	0%	0%	5%
Decree or order from (form 12)	7%	0%	7%	20%	27%	7%	0%	10%
Register of Decree and Order (form 12-A)	0%	0%	7%	7%	20%	0%	0%	15%
Register of monetary transactions (form 13)	0%	0%	7%	0%	20%	0%	0%	5%
Receipt for fine/fees (form 14)	0%	0%	7%	33%	27%	13%	3%	15%
Register of Fine or Fees (form 15)	0%	0%	0%	7%	20%	13%	0%	10%
Register of letters (form 16)	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	0%	0%	10%
Quarterly (or six monthly? Rule says quarterly) reports on taking and resolving of cases (form 17)	0%	0%	20%	7%	20%	7%	0%	25%
Fees/fine collection (form 20)	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Referring case to district court (form 21)	7%	0%	13%	0%	13%	7%	0%	5%
Use any of these forms	57%	0%	60%	67%	40%	73%	39%	50%
Use all of these forms	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Involvement of women in VC activities								
Case refereed from District court	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%
% of case (among all cases) reported by women	24%	25%	20%	28%	19%	21%	27%	41%
% of case (within VC's jurisdiction) reported by women	21%	0%	16%	22%	16%	36%	22%	30%
% of cases had female representatives (among all cases)	0%	4%	0%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%
% of cases had female representatives (within VC jurisdiction)	0%	0%	0%	6%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Demand, claim of loss (in Taka)	88035	61000	91278	77652	109012	120061	162645	2492653
Dispute types in VC								
Theft	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	5%	1%	1%
Verbal Fight	4%	0%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%	1%
Physical Fight (with bloodshed)	1%	4%	5%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Physical Fight (without bloodshed)	5%	2%	7%	9%	5%	6%	7%	15%
Fraud	4%	0%	2%	3%	3%	7%	6%	12%
Threat/intimidation	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	8%	2%	0%

Verbal/non-verbal act to dishonour women	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Sexual harassment (by someone outside the household)	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Sexual harassment (by someone inside the household)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-return of deposited valuables	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Claiming compensation for deliberately damage to livestock	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	54%	28%
Dispute about due payment as per written/verbal contract	6%	0%	5%	3%	8%	2%	0%	0%
Claiming ownership or value of movable asset	1%	8%	1%	2%	1%	3%	0%	0%
Dispute about agricultural land (or compensation for it)	28%	33%	34%	21%	29%	11%	0%	0%
Dispute about other kinds of land (or compensation for it)	24%	8%	9%	18%	12%	16%	0%	0%
Dispute about possession of movable asset (or compensation for damage)	2%	0%	4%	1%	4%	4%	0%	0%
Dispute about payment of due wages	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Divorce	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%
Alimony	1%	0%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%
Denmohor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Reclaiming marriage after dispute	5%	35%	7%	21%	7%	7%	0%	0%
Dowry	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Dispute about credit/loan	4%	4%	1%	3%	15%	10%	0%	0%
Illegal business	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Violence of women (by someone outside the household)	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Violence of women (by someone inside the household)	3%	0%	0%	4%	1%	2%	0%	0%
Child Marriage	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	19%
Drug abduction	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	21%	16%
Other	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Compliance								
Form 1: is form 1 available?	71%	63%	58%	36%	83%	40%	74%	76%
Form 3: Is Form 3 (Case order) available?	32%	16%	23%	37%	26%	58%	56%	12%
Form 4: Is the Form 4 available?	52%	28%	52%	30%	49%	40%	58%	36%
Vote	0%	0%	0%	5%	2%	0%	0%	2%

% of cases resolved following at least four procedures	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%
% of cases resolved following at least three procedures	26%	2%	14%	18%	19%	20%	47%	8%
% of cases resolved following at least two procedures	32%	28%	30%	20%	33%	26%	20%	30%
% of cases resolved following at least one procedures	12%	43%	33%	7%	29%	24%	8%	36%
UP chair's engagement in dispute resolution activities								
Number of disputes resolved in VC in the past 3 months	5.1	0.5	3.0	3.6	1.0	2.1	5.4	0.8
Number of disputes resolved in Shalish in the past 3 months	20.8	14.5	13.7	12.8	16.1	10.7	18.9	8.1
Number of disputes resolved in Salish Parishad in the past 3 months	0.9	0.0	0.4	1.4	0.3	0.8	1.6	0.8
Hours spent on dispute resolution in VC in a typical week	3.0	0.4	1.8	2.6	2.4	0.7	2.7	1.0
Hours spent on dispute resolution in Shalish in a typical week	15.5	10.9	8.7	14.1	11.3	7.6	12.1	9.4
Hours spent on dispute resolution in Salish Parishad in a typical week	0.1	0.0	0.2	1.6	0.3	0.5	1.3	0.5
Knowledge about VC								
Could say spontaneously/easily	71%	48%	63%	65%	46%	49%	56%	53%
Could say after giving some idea	22%	13%	20%	22%	36%	17%	27%	27%
Could say nothing about Village Court (go to the next section)	7%	38%	17%	13%	19%	34%	18%	20%
How long know VC								
Less than 1 month	0%	8%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	2%
2-5 months	0%	11%	6%	10%	4%	3%	2%	3%
6-12 months	11%	8%	2%	21%	8%	8%	10%	3%
13-24 months	9%	3%	4%	13%	2%	0%	2%	2%
More than 2 years	80%	70%	88%	56%	81%	90%	86%	90%
Can't say/Can't remember	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Correct knowledge about VC formation	69%	84%	76%	60%	54%	74%	53%	68%
Correct knowledge about fees of both cases	24%	0%	2%	25%	29%	0%	13%	8%
Correct knowledge about fees of criminal case	24%	3%	12%	27%	42%	0%	15%	14%
Correct knowledge about fees of civil case	27%	0%	4%	27%	31%	3%	19%	8%
Correct knowledge about Jurisdiction	73%	86%	86%	63%	71%	56%	60%	63%

Correct knowledge about VC Chair	98%	97%	98%	96%	98%	97%	93%	97%
Correct knowledge about Fines	15%	27%	16%	6%	15%	18%	27%	17%
Correct knowledge about Decision making process	9%	22%	22%	54%	10%	10%	19%	25%
Correct knowledge about Appeal process	0%	8%	4%	23%	6%	3%	8%	6%
Correct knowledge about Use of lawyers	71%	73%	59%	75%	65%	56%	64%	63%
Correct knowledge about Issuing a summon	51%	41%	71%	69%	33%	38%	50%	37%
Percentage of correct answers	45%	49%	48%	52%	42%	39%	43%	43%
Knowledge source								
Training	18%	43%	37%	50%	40%	21%	30%	65%
Workshop	13%	11%	8%	27%	23%	10%	12%	22%
Read village court myself	51%	57%	35%	48%	38%	26%	39%	35%
UNO	38%	11%	18%	35%	19%	15%	19%	24%
UP Chairman	71%	30%	55%	65%	54%	38%	54%	46%
NGO	25%	32%	24%	52%	27%	21%	16%	38%
Government letter	25%	22%	20%	33%	15%	33%	28%	27%
Courtyard meeting	4%	0%	8%	12%	17%	7%	5%	11%
Poster/sticker	8%	3%	13%	32%	5%	4%	11%	3%
Others	2%	16%	16%	8%	8%	13%	5%	11%
Major steps of resolving a case by Village Court (serially)								
Receive and review of application by the Chair	87%	64%	68%	53%	41%	41%	79%	63%
After acceptance, entry the case in the relevant register	91%	100%	71%	83%	88%	95%	85%	63%
Issuance of summon to the defendant	74%	64%	52%	70%	65%	55%	77%	74%
Instruct to both parties to nominate representatives	57%	57%	48%	57%	47%	50%	56%	49%
Formation of Village Court panel	61%	57%	52%	40%	24%	73%	45%	46%
Hearing of both parties and witnesses	74%	79%	68%	67%	53%	50%	79%	80%
Taking decision with majority vote and declare publicly	57%	79%	58%	43%	53%	41%	58%	40%
If the decision is not appealable, implement the decision within the given date	9%	43%	39%	27%	6%	50%	18%	17%
% who followed all steps correctly and per sequence	2%	5%	3%	10%	0%	2%	2%	0%

Training								
How many times did you get training/workshop?	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.1	2.3
When did you get the last training?								
2008	6%	0%	5%	3%	5%	0%	5%	2%
2009	0%	5%	11%	3%	0%	0%	5%	5%
2010	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	2%	0%
2011	0%	16%	0%	0%	10%	6%	0%	2%
2012	6%	5%	0%	3%	10%	0%	2%	14%
2013	6%	11%	11%	7%	0%	13%	5%	9%
2014	6%	11%	21%	0%	5%	6%	5%	23%
2015	0%	11%	0%	14%	10%	6%	24%	11%
2016	59%	11%	32%	52%	55%	31%	29%	18%
2017	6%	16%	11%	14%	0%	0%	15%	9%
Preferred methods of dispute resolution by UP representatives and officials								
Village court	40%	16%	27%	29%	31%	8%	19%	33%
Shalish	56%	81%	73%	71%	69%	92%	76%	67%
District Court	4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%
Reasons for why VC is preferred								
Easy access to justice	45%	78%	71%	92%	52%	74%	72%	65%
Easy process	40%	78%	73%	87%	50%	54%	52%	56%
Bound by law	36%	65%	53%	79%	38%	31%	35%	54%
Lawyer isn't needed	16%	32%	33%	63%	44%	18%	24%	27%
Final decision is taken along with representatives by petitioner and defendant.	9%	32%	41%	69%	40%	31%	31%	29%
Here final decision is taken considering social and financial status.	2%	43%	22%	69%	33%	23%	35%	24%
Disputes can be resolved in a short period of time.	62%	65%	67%	75%	79%	64%	57%	59%
Less expenses	67%	59%	63%	67%	75%	62%	56%	60%
Within the locality	38%	35%	41%	50%	56%	23%	41%	38%

Disputes are resolved following law.	4%	3%	10%	12%	2%	0%	6%	2%
Documentation is preserved.	0%	0%	0%	8%	2%	8%	2%	5%
Possible to appeal against the final decision.	2%	0%	4%	8%	0%	3%	1%	8%
Easy to implement the decision	2%	3%	12%	8%	0%	8%	2%	5%
Existence of law for implementation of final decision.	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	2%
Poor, distressed people, mainly women come to resolve disputes.	4%	0%	16%	17%	0%	8%	3%	3%
All kind of disputes can be resolved here.	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Neutral / fair trial is guaranteed	0%	0%	14%	13%	6%	8%	5%	5%
Other (Specify)	5%	5%	4%	0%	4%	0%	1%	2%
Reasons for why VC is not preferred								
Influenced by political pressure	44%	11%	37%	44%	48%	13%	32%	30%
Discrepancy/ Disparity between rich and Poor	11%	0%	12%	29%	15%	8%	16%	25%
Limited Power of judges	24%	41%	33%	67%	44%	46%	40%	48%
Shortage of Manpower	36%	81%	73%	69%	63%	44%	43%	49%
Compared to the need inadequate training facilities	47%	86%	67%	52%	58%	44%	44%	44%
Lack of awareness about Village Court of local people	36%	65%	61%	65%	27%	41%	47%	41%
Other (specify)	15%	5%	16%	4%	8%	38%	11%	8%
Perception about effectiveness DRMs among UP representatives and officials								
Ability of VC to enforce decisions								
1 (Not capable at all)	2%	0%	10%	0%	2%	5%	0%	0%
2	0%	5%	6%	8%	0%	3%	6%	5%
3	22%	27%	31%	15%	23%	23%	30%	35%
4	38%	8%	19%	35%	53%	26%	31%	19%
5 (Fully capable)	38%	59%	33%	42%	21%	44%	33%	41%
Ability of Shalish to enforce decisions								
1 (Not capable at all)	4%	3%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%
2	4%	3%	8%	4%	2%	3%	6%	13%
3	25%	19%	24%	16%	17%	8%	19%	21%

4	36%	11%	31%	29%	27%	36%	33%	21%
5 (Fully capable)	31%	65%	35%	51%	52%	54%	41%	44%
Ability of Salish Parishad to enforce decisions								
1 (Not capable at all)	11%	22%	16%	0%	14%	15%	6%	8%
2	11%	5%	8%	6%	21%	0%	10%	16%
3	45%	24%	43%	32%	53%	15%	35%	22%
4	18%	8%	16%	22%	7%	21%	28%	24%
5 (Fully capable)	15%	41%	16%	40%	5%	49%	20%	30%
Heard of the half yearly return of VC	85%	46%	89%	89%	78%	64%	79%	75%
Register of Cases	100%	100%	96%	91%	93%	96%	92%	96%
Register of Decrees & Orders	33%	33%	42%	55%	53%	20%	33%	44%
Register of Realizing Compensation	10%	11%	25%	14%	27%	4%	13%	33%
Register of Fines & Fees	29%	11%	25%	27%	27%	20%	19%	22%
Dispatch Register	5%	11%	29%	5%	13%	4%	15%	11%
Others	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Who signs Half yearly return?								
UP member	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%
UP Secretary	45%	45%	55%	65%	39%	33%	60%	28%
UP Chair	55%	55%	45%	35%	56%	67%	40%	60%
I don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%
To whom it is sent?								
UNO	96%	77%	88%	100%	71%	100%	90%	93%
DC	0%	0%	4%	0%	10%	0%	0%	4%
Magistrate	0%	23%	4%	0%	10%	0%	6%	4%
Other (Specify)	4%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	2%	0%
I don't know	0%	0%	4%	0%	5%	0%	2%	0%

Quiz results: Overall knowledge of VCs among UP representatives and officials (Baseline data)				
	Project area		Control area	
	UP Chair	UP secretary	UP Chair	UP secretary
% of respondents giving at least one correct answer	84%	98%	89%	100%
% of respondents giving at least two correct answers	73%	89%	80%	47%
% of respondents giving at least three correct answers	62%	77%	66%	36%
% of respondents giving at least four correct answers	36%	53%	41%	27%
% of respondents giving at least five correct answers	18%	25%	18%	12%
% of respondents giving at least six correct answers	4%	9%	11%	6%
% of respondents giving at least seven correct answers	2%	2%	0%	3%
% of respondents giving at least eight correct answers	0%	0%	0%	0%
% of respondents giving at least nine correct answers	0%	0%	0%	0%

Quiz results: Overall knowledge of VCs among UP representatives and officials (Endline data)				
	Project area		Control area	
	UP Chair	UP secretary	UP Chair	UP secretary
% of respondents giving at least one correct answer				
% of respondents giving at least two correct answers	98%	100%	95%	100%
% of respondents giving at least three correct answers	98%	100%	95%	94%
% of respondents giving at least four correct answers	96%	100%	74%	94%
% of respondents giving at least five correct answers	87%	91%	42%	53%
% of respondents giving at least six correct answers	62%	60%	26%	29%
% of respondents giving at least seven correct answers	36%	23%	16%	12%
% of respondents giving at least eight correct answers	3%	0%	5%	6%
% of respondents giving at least nine correct answers	0%	0%	0%	0%

