# Plan's CCCD Approach

Country Study Plan-Bangladesh

Part of Strategic Evaluation Study on CCCD

Gerrit-Jan van Uffelen

Wageningen International

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Gerrit-Jan van Uffelen

Capacity Development & Institutional Change Programme
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Photo cover: Mirjam Schaap

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# Acknowledgements

Comments and suggestions are most welcome and can be mailed to GJvanUffelen@yahoo.co.uk


The views and opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of Plan-Bangladesh, Plan-NLNO or Plan-IH.

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| APPR | Annual Participatory Programme Review |
| ASD | Assistance for Slum Dwellers |
| CBO | Community Based Organisation |
| CCCD | Child Centred Community Development |
| CDF/C | Community Development Forum/Committee |
| CDP | Community Development Plan |
| CHP | Community Health Care Programme |
| CLP | Community Learning Program |
| CLTS | Community Led Total sanitation |
| CPME | Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System |
| CSP | Country Strategic Plan |
| EEP | Enabling Environment Program |
| FES | Family Economic Security Program |
| PALS | Programme Accountability and Learning System |
| PEF | Programme Effectiveness Framework |
| PF | Programme Framework |
| Plan-IH | Plan International Headquarters |
| Plan-NLNO | Plan Netherlands National Organisation |
| Plan-RO | Plan Regional Office |
| PU | Programme Unit |
| WI | Wageningen International |

# Executive Summary

## Aim and Methodology

PLAN Netherlands National Organisation has in co-ordination with PLAN International Headquarters commissioned an independent formative evaluation study to get systematic insight in the preconditions for appropriate functionality of Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) and to strengthen common understanding on CCCD.

To review the general findings of the study (presented in the synthesis report), which are based on an extensive literature review of the materials available within Plan and within other organisations on child centred development and consultations with CCCD champions at various organisational levels within Plan, country studies were carried out in Kenya and Bangladesh.

This report presents the findings of the country study in Bangladesh and forms an integral part of the synthesis report. Perspectives on CCCD and CCCD practise were looked at from four interrelated levels: Plan Bangladesh's Country Office (exploring overall strategic outlook); one urban and one rural Programme Unit (looking at application of CCCD strategies in their particular settings); Plan partners (level of understanding and role of both NGO and government partners in developing and implementing CCCD, and; beneficiaries (CCCD practise and focus on understanding and effect of CCCD.

Findings are based on a review of Plan Bangladesh documents, groupwork, semi structured interviews and key informant interviews of Plan and partner staff at various organisational levels as well as field visits and discussions with CBOs and project beneficiaries. The findings are of a general nature and to some degree dependent on the sites visited and people met as a full depth analysis of CCCD would require more time than the weeklong visit to Bangladesh allowed for.

## Plan Bangladesh

Plan Bangladesh has been piloting CCCD in 1998 and 1999 and has adopted CCCD as the key approach in its programmes. Child Centred Community Development is defined as a

> 'rights based approach in which children, families and communities are active and leading participants in their own development. It enhances their capacity and opportunity to work together with others to address structural causes and consequences of child poverty at all levels'.

Four operational programs have been identified by Plan Bangladesh to meet its strategic objective and country goal in line with the Country Strategic Plan: Enabling Environment Program; Community Learning Programme; Community Health Programme, and; Family Economic Security Programme.

## On Plan Bangladesh and CCCD

### CCCD Constitutes a Paradigm Shift

Prior to the 1998/99 CCCD pilot programme Plan Bangladesh used to be a service oriented organisation working in almost complete isolation of other NGOs and local government.

Fundamental in the successful adoption of CCCD as its operational approach have been a number of factors including a change in mindset at all organisational levels, effective organisational learning, strong commitment of staff and openness to try and adopt new ideas and methodologies, good human resource management and a change in organisational culture. A key factor has been visionary leadership by senior management.

### CCCD Requires Organisational Change

It is evident that CCCD has been operationalised in Bangladesh based on the old institutional and logistical framework which was geared towards individual child sponsorship.

The adoption of CCCD demands a more flexible approach coupled with the need for scaling up of activities. This may require a review of Plan's organisational structure in terms of internal systems as well as organisational hardware and infrastructure.

> ➤ There is a need for Plan-Bangladesh to seriously reflect on its future role and direction in Bangladesh. This no doubt will have major consequences for the organisation.

### Perception of CCCD

There is a good understanding of what CCCD stands for at all organisational levels within Plan Bangladesh. The NGO and government partners visited as part of the assessment demonstrated a good understanding of CCCD as well. Understanding about CCCD by the CBOs (Community Development Fora/Committees) is excellent and good amongst the wider community, both from a theoretical perspective and in terms of its practical relevance.

Child rights and child participation are seen as crucial elements of CCCD by all stakeholders.

### Operationalising CCCD

The CCCD approach promoted by Plan has been well received by Plan's partner agencies as well as the beneficiaries as visited during the country study.. Major changes have taken place and it is evident that CCCD has played an important role in most of these.

### Results of CCCD

Results of CCCD have been very encouraging in both urban and rural programme units and include increased awareness of child rights and issues amongst various stakeholders, active participation of children in the design and implementation of programmes, enhanced leadership qualities and capacity of CBOs and stronger linkages between CBOs at one hand and NGOs and local government at the other hand.

## *On Enablers and Disablers of CCCD*

### Enablers and Disablers

Important enablers for the operationalisation of CCCD were identified at conceptual, methodological and operational level.

CCCD offers a flexible approach to programme to local context and, as a holistic approach, reflects the daily life experience of communities resulting in a wide range of interventions on the ground. Observing quality standards is an issue though.

> ➤ The challenge for Plan Bangladesh is to build in an accountability mechanism to make sure interventions adhere to national as well as international quality standards (including technical standards).

CCCD is piloted in Bangladesh and the organisation has developed appropriate training modules and resource materials.

> ➤ Plan-Bangladesh has good experience with CCCD and has developed well tested resource materials making Plan-Bangladesh well placed to support/advise other Plan countries on the CCCD approach and how to put this into practise.

> ➤ Lessons learned and best practise are being captured though it is felt that this to be done in far more systematic way and to make it accessible to other agencies both in Bangladesh as well as to the wider Plan family.

An important disabler is that various organisations are operational at local level and implement projects predominantly by subcontracting local NGOs for direct service delivery.

> ➤ Plan should consider broadening up their sensitisation on CCCD by including non-partner organisations (sharing good practise and lessons learned being an essential element).

At operational level a number of disablers present Plan with serious challenges which should be addressed.

> ➤ Plan's logistical set-up still reflects old style service delivery (heavy investment in terms of support buildings/offices) making cost-effectiveness and the issue of appropriateness important issues for organisational reflection.

> ➤ With CCCD the new paradigm it requires creativity and innovations to redesign Plan's 'product' (Plan continues struggling to meet on concrete 'old-style' child sponsorship expectations).

> ➤ Plan could much better exploit opportunities to tap into institutional donor funding which demands a chance regarding Plan's role and a strategic repositioning of child donor support structures.

> ➤ Plan staff was found to be somewhat inward looking with little exposure and knowledge regarding child development work being practised by organisations such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Alliance.

A key disabler over which Plan Bangladesh is having little control is continuity of government policy and related practise as with government change policies may be changed overnight.

- ➢ Plan should more strongly build on national as well as international conventions and treaties to which the Bangladeshi government is a signatory. This to promote continuity of policy and practise beyond short-term political agendas and aspirations.

Some traditionalist donors are not ready to invest in community mobilisation and capacity building as a prerequisite for sustainable child centred community development. Interestingly some of Plan's partner agencies are successful in winning donor grants by capitalising on the CCCD approach.

- ➢ Plan need to present itself better to the donor community as an organisation strong on community mobilisation and capacity building in delivering sustainable child oriented community development initiatives.

Using the disabler-enabler matrix (see page 4-3) to generate further discussion a number of pertinent issues were drawn out which were validated as part of the field visits and interviews with stakeholders.

## Plan Bangladesh has Gained Valuable Experience with CCCD and Demonstrated Results

It is clear that Plan Bangladesh in putting CCCD to practise has gained valuable experience on all major aspects of CCCD and has demonstrated encouraging results.

## Sustainability of Behavioural Change Not Taken for Granted

During the assessment it more than once was claimed that CCCD has resulted in behavioural change in a number of programme areas. However it is know that for genuine behavioural change to take place needs a concerted effort.

- ➢ Plan is advised to develop appropriate indicators to establish the degree to which behavioural change takes place and why (e.g. by developing contextualised Knowledge/Attitude/Practise assessments).

## Communities: Harmonious Entities or Conflict Ridden?

In discussions with Plan staff it was striking to note that communities were perceived as rather harmonious entities. In most communities strong individual or group category agendas exist reflected by control and power structures that are often not easy to distinguish.

- ➢ There is thus a need for the application of instruments like power analysis for a more critical view at the community as entity of work. Insight in processes that engender marginalisation and poverty and the role power and control structures protecting the interests of the elite may well be at the root of poverty and marginalisation (and are core to a rights based approach to child development).

## Inclusion of the Marginalised and Discriminated Against

Though CBOs demonstrated a pro-poor focus active participation and inclusion of the poorest and most vulnerable household in CCCD is a serious challenge. There is a shared concern across the organisation that this issue needs to be addressed.

## Need to Seek Stronger Engagement with the Government and Strengthen their capacity as a Duty-Bearer

Though Plan Bangladesh is engaging with local government structures there is a recognised need for strengthening the capacity of the government as a duty bearer and means of scaling up CCCD.

## Lack of Appropriate PM&E System has Jeopardised Institutional Learning

Representing a paradigm shift in thinking, with far reaching conceptual, methodological and operational consequences, the lack of a corporate system to monitor CCCD progress and evaluate impact in individual country programmes such as in Plan Bangladesh, and across the wider organisation, has hampered organisational learning as well as proper documentation of good practise and lessons learned.

PALS is recently introduced to redress this issue but to date little experience has been gained with the system.

## Child Sponsorship

With the introduction of CCCD child sponsorship has positively changed form direct resource transfers aimed at individual children towards a more inclusive and community based approach. With child sponsorship still of fundamental importance to Plan Bangladesh new sponsorship initiatives and approaches are being developed by Plan-Bangladesh with the involvement of Plan-RO (focusing on group based funding strategies).

## Need for Scaling Up

One of the key challenges for Plan-Bangladesh, one not readily being identified by Plan staff, is the need for scaling up. Having modelled successful CCCD pilots in its traditional areas of operation the task is now to see these models adopted in government policy and promoted in terms of NGO and government practice.

> ➢ With Plan having developed tested CCCD models and the importance and practical value of this increasingly being realised by other national and international actors there is opportunity to attract grant funding for scaling up the models and inform practical CCCD work.

## Sustainability of the Approach

As part of the CCCD approach Plan and its partners have focused on strengthening the capacity of CBOs which is believed central to the sustainability of the CCCD approach. The longer term sustainability of the CBOs (Community Development Fora or Committees) should not be taken for granted and Plan should address this issue.

## *On CCCD as a Rights Based Approach*

Plan Bangladesh has gained significant experience and valuable insights in the most salient elements of CCCD. This provides a very good starting point to work on 'CCCD-2009' which puts emphasize to CCCD as a rights based approach.

Plan International's recent Programme Framework and Programme Effectiveness Framework underline the importance of CCCD as a rights based approach providing the opportunity and momentum for Plan Bangladesh to strengthen CCCD as a Rights Based Approach.

The recent introduction of PALS underlines the importance of a child rights situational assessment covering multiple levels and actors/stakeholders which is of fundamental importance to inform and direct CCCD in Bangladesh as rights based approach.

## *On Partners and Partnering Policy*

Plan has engaged with a variety of partners ranging from small local NGOs for direct project implementation to more long-term strategic partnerships with established national NGOs or NGOs having the interest and potential to mature in the area of CCCD. This has resulted in the adoption of CCCD by some of its strategic partners. Increased awareness on child rights and the importance of child participation in the development arena has resulted in several partner NGO developing child-sensitive operational guidelines and child protection policies.

Recommendation:

> ➤ There is a need for Plan Bangladesh to develop an elaborate partnership policy distinguishing between operational partnerships, strategic alliances and networks in furthering the CCCD for which there is undoubtedly a need in Bangladesh.

Prior to the 1998/99 CCCD pilot in Bangladesh Plan-Bangladesh did not structurally engage with neither NGO nor government partners. The assessment found that Plan has made major progress in establishing partnerships with both NGOs and local government proving that CCCD has the ability to foster meaningful relationships between rights holders and duty bearers. Plan has been instrumental in the adoption of Universal Birth Registration, Community Led Total Sanitation, Early Childhood Development and Community Clinics in Bangladesh official government policy.

However, in light of earlier assessment reports (e.g. by Alan Fowler in 2003) there remains a concern with regard to Plan's involvement with government stakeholders.

Recommendation:

> ➤ Plan should strengthen and expand its engagement with local government authorities to strengthen their performance as duty bearers.

Plan has developed good child oriented resource materials, which have been tested in various settings in Bangladesh. This is a highly valuable resource which given some further attention can be further utilised in promoting child centred community development beyond Plan's current set of direct partners.

# 1    This Study

This chapter provides the aim and methodology of the country study and a short explanation of the organisation of the assessment report.

## Aim and Methodology

Plan Netherlands National Organisation (Plan-NLNO) has in co-ordination with Plan International Headquarters (Plan-IH) commissioned Wageningen International to carry out an independent formative evaluation study to get systematic insight in the preconditions for appropriate functionality of Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) and to strengthen common understanding on CCCD.

The main synthesis report, to which this assessment report is an annex, provides insight in the understanding of CCCD within Plan and in the institutional and field conditions acting either as enablers or disablers to CCCD implementation. The synthesis report recommends ways of improving CCCD as an approach to development and identifies the capacity development needs for realising the full potential of CCCD.

As part of the formative evaluation two country studies were undertaken to review the general findings on CCCD. General findings were based on an extensive literature review of the materials available within Plan and within other organisations on child centred development and consultations with CCCD champions at various organisational levels within Plan.  The evaluation had a clear forward-looking focus, attempting to provide strategic insight for Plan Netherlands, and possibly other offices in Plan, for identifying appropriate future strategies to strengthen partnership and collaboration in CCCD.

The countries selected for the studies were Kenya and Bangladesh. This report presents the findings of the country study in Bangladesh and forms an integral part of the synthesis report.

The consultant sought to understand perspectives on and practise in CCCD at four interrelated) levels: Plan Bangladesh's Country Office (exploring overall strategic outlook); an urban and rural Programme Unit (looking at application of CCCD strategies in their particular settings); Plan partners (level of understanding and role of both NGO and government partners in developing and implementing CCCD, and; beneficiaries (CCCD practise and focus on understanding and impact of CCCD.

The findings of the country study are of a general nature and to some degree dependent on the sites visited and people met as a full depth analysis of CCCD would require more time than the weeklong visit to Bangladesh allowed for.

The Terms of Reference for the country study can be found in annex 1 and the itinerary in annex 2.

## Organisation

The report is organised in six chapters. This chapter introduces the country study and is followed by an introduction of Plan Bangladesh to place the findings in context (chapter 2). The third chapter presents the understanding and perception of CCCD by Plan Bangladesh and presents the lessons learned and some of the results. The fourth chapter looks at the factors that have been either facilitating or presenting challenges in putting

CCCD to practice in Bangladesh. This is followed by a chapter reflecting on CCCD as a rights based approach and a final chapter on partners and partnering strategy.

# 2 Plan Bangladesh

This chapter provides some background information on Bangladesh and Plan's Bangladesh programme to be able to place the findings in context.

The first paragraph provides a general introduction to Bangladesh followed by an introduction of Plan's country programme in the second and third paragraph.

## 2.1 Country Context

Bangladesh is one of the world's most densely populated countries, with its people crammed into a delta of rivers that empties into the Bay of Bengal.

Poverty is deep and widespread; almost half of the population live on less than one dollar a day. However, Bangladesh has reduced population growth and improved health and education.

The major employer is agriculture, but it is unable to meet the demand for jobs. Thus many Bangladeshis - in common with citizens from other countries in the region - seek work abroad, sometimes illegally. The country is trying to diversify its economy, with industrial development a priority. Overseas investors have pumped money into manufacturing and the energy sector.

Formerly East Pakistan, Bangladesh came into being only in 1971, when the two parts of Pakistan split after a bitter civil war which drew in neighbouring India.

Bangladesh spent 15 years under military rule and, although democracy was restored in 1990, the political scene remains volatile.

The low-lying country is vulnerable to flooding and cyclones and it stands to be badly affected by predicted rises in sea levels.

Source: BBC Bangladesh Country Profile.

## 2.2 Plan Bangladesh

Plan started its operations in Bangladesh in 1994 working under the guiding principle that 'children are at the heart of everything we do'. Plan Bangladesh works in four districts across the country: Dinaipur, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Gazipour as well as in metropolitan Dhaka. Plan operates through seven Program Units (PUs) with the country office being located in Dhaka. (Source: leaflet of Plan Bangladesh).

### Mission and Vision

Plan Bangladesh's mission and vision are in line with that of Plan International.

Plan is an international humanitarian, child focused development organization without religious, political or government association. Child sponsorship is the foundation of the organization.

Plan's vision is of a world in which all children realize their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity.

Plan's mission is to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries, through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives, by:

- Enabling deprived children, their families and their communities to meet basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefit from societies

- Building relationships to increase understanding and unity amongst peoples of different cultures and countries, and;

- Promoting the rights and interests of the world's children.

## Operational Principles

Plan Bangladesh has been piloting CCCD in 1998 and 1999 and has adopted CCCD as the key approach in its programmes. Child Centred Community Development is defined as[1]:

> *'rights based approach in which children, families and communities are active and leading participants in their own development. It enhances their capacity and opportunity to work together with others to address structural causes and consequences of child poverty at all levels'.*

# 2.3 Plan Bangladesh Programmes

Four operational programs have been identified by Plan Bangladesh to meet its strategic objective and country goal in line with the Country Strategic Plan: Enabling Environment Program; Community Learning Programme; Community Health Programme, and; Family Economic Security Programme.

## Enabling Environment Program (EEP)

The Enabling Environment Program deals with cross cutting themes like capacity building, child rights, awareness on gender, advocacy and networking, good governance, development education, support children organization and Community Based Organisations.

The programme objectives are:

- Increase capacity of children, women and poorest to promote community solidarity for addressing their issues;

- Empower poor and marginalized to claim and achieve their basic rights, and;

- Reduce suppressive and discriminatory practices against children and women.

## Community Learning Program (CLP)

As part of the Community Learning Programme a wide range of activities have developed including parenting and care giving sessions, home based early learning centres, pre-schools, basic foundation package for grade 1 and 2 in primary schools, learning camps, school improvement plans and reading recovery campaigns.

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[1] For the purpose of this report the 2003 definition of CCCD is used. Recently with the publication of the Programme Framework a wider definition is given underling the importance of CCCD as a rights based approach.

CLP has the following program objectives:

- Increase knowledge of mothers on early childhood care for survival, growth and development

- Increase access to appropriate early childhood care, especially amongst the poor and marginalized

- Increase successful completion of primary education with retainable levels of basic learning and life skills, girls equally as boys

- Creating environment for quality education and mainstreaming poor children in education system.

### Community Health Care Programme (CHP)

Plan Bangladesh's Health Program has been working to address health issues through the Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) approach covering health, nutrition and water and sanitation issues.

Objectives of CHP:

- Enhance child survival, growth and development

- Reduce morbidity among adolescents particularly women of reproductive age

- Increase access to and use of basic sanitation facilities and practice of hygiene behaviour

- Increase capacity of communities, particularly of children, women and the poor, to participate in collective actions, for improved health and hygiene

### Family Economic Security (FES) Program

The goal of the FES Program is to ensure 'all children, especially from the poor families have improved lives and livelihoods through demand driven micro-finance and other livelihood services and institutions'.

The objectives of the program are:

- Increase income earning opportunities by promoting community based small and flexible enterprises (flexible saving and credit facility)

- Increased agriculture based household production of targeted families through building technical and management capacity of the community.

- Increase opportunities for unskilled adolescents and women to learn livelihood skills aligned with employment opportunities (vocational training)

## 2.4 NGOs in Bangladesh

There are about 1,100 NGOs in Bangladesh with almost 90% of them being Bangladeshi institutions. About 25% of foreign funds flowing into Bangladesh is funnelled through NGOs.

The main function of NGOs up to date is to act as an alternative service delivery system which is being done either independently or in collaboration with the government. NGOs are particularly involved in credit, health, education, family planning and the environment.

Reflecting on trends amongst NGOs two trends are becoming prominent (Siddiqui, 2005). The first one is that in their bid to attain self-sufficiency some of the larger NGOs have adopted a distinct profit motivated entrepreneurial activities such as setting up banks, universities, hospitals and publishing houses. The other trend is that some of the local NGOs are moving towards social mobilisation focusing on land issues, democracy education or promotion of women and child rights.

Civil Society is well established in Bangladesh as compared with other developing countries and the government is open to engage with civil society actors on rights issues.

# 3 Plan Bangladesh and CCCD

This chapter provides a reflection on the introduction of CCCD and its results as described by various stakeholders. The first paragraph provides some insights on turning Plan Bangladesh around from a direct service deliverer towards an organisation adopting CCCD and its role as a capacity builder.

The second paragraph describes the perception of and experience with CCCD by the key stakeholders followed by a paragraph on the results of CCCD according to these stakeholders. This is followed by a paragraph presenting some of the lessons learned by comparing the experience with CCCD in Plan's urban vs. its rural programme. The last paragraph presents the major findings and some recommendations.

## 3.1 From Direct Service Delivery to Capacity Building

### CCCD: a Paradigm Shift

According to Plan's senior management the organisation, prior to the 1998/99 CCCD pilot programme, **used to be a service oriented organisation working in almost complete isolation of other NGOs and local government**. Child sponsorship brought in resources that were being transferred to individual children buying them uniforms, school utensils and paying for structures such as pre-schools and primary schools.

With the adoption of Child Centred Community Development in 2003 as the corporate strategy within Plan, CCCD gained real momentum within Plan-Bangladesh.

### Turning Plan Bangladesh Around

Turning Plan-Bangladesh around from a service and handout oriented organisation towards a **capacity builder of both rights holders and duty bearers required a paradigm shift**. This has not been an easy process within Plan-Bangladesh and has created internal tensions having major consequences for the organisation. For example, when introducing CCCD the communities in which Plan worked were not supportive of the idea initially as a result of which few projects could be implemented.

Fundamental in turning Plan Bangladesh around have been the following factors:

- A **change of mindset at all organisational levels** from frontline staff in the field to senior management staff at the Dhaka office. Instrumental for this to happen were the CCCD pilot projects and the reflection on its outcomes.

- An institutionalised system established **to reflect on organisational experience and critical learning** (e.g. the Annual Participatory Programme Review);

- **Strong organisational commitment** to believe in child centred community development and using the pilots to create CCCD models for scaling up and expansion into other Plan operational areas;

- **Different backgrounds and exposure of key Plan staff members** creating an interest and openness to try and adopt new ideas and working methodologies;

- **Human resource management** as crucial component for which ample resources (recruitment as a process) were made available, and;
- **Change in organisational culture and attitudes.**

The most important factor mentioned at all levels of the organisation was said to be **visionary leadership**. Particular reference was made to Plan's former Country Director as being '*a visionary leader and not a traditional mechanical leader*'.

Staff at all levels of the organisation are committed towards CCCD '*not just because of it being a child oriented development concept but of its practical value and relevance as demonstrated in the field*'.

### Changing Role of Plan Bangladesh

It is evident that **CCCD has been put to practise in Bangladesh based on the old institutional and logistical framework which was geared towards individual child sponsorship**.

The adoption of CCCD **demands a more flexible approach coupled with the need for scaling up of activities**. This may require a review of Plan's organisational structure in terms of internal systems as well as organisational hardware and infrastructure.

The logistical set-up of PU offices and sub-offices, for example, reflect **the necessity to work intensively with 'settled' communities while CCCD requires a more flexible approach now that scaling up of CCCD is becoming a prominent issue**. This would require a review of organisational structures including systems (currently being addressed by the Programme Framework and the Programme Accountability and Learning System) as well as organisational hardware and infrastructure.

Adoption of the CCCD approach and working with rights holders and duty bearers alike will have important implications for Plan's operational presence and future role in Bangladesh. Should Plan cease to be a direct operational organisation in current PU intervention villages and support most promising partners to attract funding of their own (via other NGO partners or the government) with some pool fund from Plan to 'satisfy' child sponsorship requirements? Or should Plan's role be promoting CCCD as a knowledge organisation strategically contributing resources in existing programme areas while focusing on setting up or facilitating programmes in underserved areas? Answers to these questions will have major consequences for example in setting criteria for phasing out is direct operational presence in current target villages.

Recommendation:
➢ There is a need for Plan-Bangladesh to seriously reflect on its future role and direction in Bangladesh. This no doubt will have major consequences for the organisation.

## 3.2   Perception of and Experience with CCCD

### Good Perception of CCCD at All Organisational and Operational Levels

There Plan Bangladesh. The NGO and government partners visited as part of the assessment is a good understanding of what CCCD stands for at all organisational levels within demonstrated a good understanding of CCCD as well.

**At community level there is a good understanding of the CCCD approach**, not only from a theoretical perspective but also in terms of its practical relevance. Community Development Forum/Committee (CDF/C) members illustrated the importance of CCCD by underlining the following elements:

- CCCD is a process engaging all people for the development of children;

- It is an all inclusive approach with no-one being excluded and has helped communities to speak 'with one voice';

- Children are at the centre of the approach and child rights are an important focus, and;

- It is a process that identifies important development issues and guides the community through a sequence of activities which includes the identification of key developmental issues and the available community resources to address them, various ways of problem solving, and the identification of resources of NGO and government partners.

## Importance of CCCD widely acknowledged

The importance of CCCD is acknowledged by Plan's programme beneficiaries as well as by its partners.

At **community level** CDF/C and individual community members including children were very clear about the importance of CCCD mentioning that CCCD has promoted child protection, resulted in acquiring knowledge and skills, promoted development of leadership and the ability to plan activities in a structured and co-ordinated way and improved the ability of the community to link up with other organisations and the local government.

Plan's **partner organisations** visited as part of the country study expressed that CCCD was important mentioning a number of issues:

- With children, as well as adults, deprived of their rights **CCCD contributes to the development of a more just and fairer society**;

- CCCD's work process cycle **provides for unbiased and realistic information about the situation at grassroots level** and identifies the key priority issues as experienced by the people themselves, and;

- NGO interventions used to be top-down but **CCCD brings different stakeholders** together within one platform to address issues as identified by the communities, including children, within the framework of a Community Development Plan. Child participation was mentioned to be very important and certainly not for granted[2].

At **local government** level the Union Parishod Chairman mentioned that the government prior to Plan's work on CCCD had neither critical attitude nor a mindset with regard to child rights and child issues. Because of CCCD there is a **change of attitude emerging resulting in more child friendly practise**.

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[2] One of Plan's partners mentioned that they were involved with another child oriented project in co-operation with ILO and CARE and that participation was promoted but without any involvement of children themselves.

**Importance of Child Rights and Child Participation Underlined**

Plan Bangladesh has contributed significantly in promoting child participation by setting practical examples and creating acceptance regarding the importance of child participation and the role it plays in designing and implementing child sensitive development programmes.

At **community level** Child Centred Community Development was mentioned to be very important with child rights being regarded as a crucially important issue. For this the CDF/C gave a number of reasons:

- Children and women have been disadvantaged and not protected well, that is way particularly child and women rights are important;

- Respect to child rights is fundamental for children to become responsible parents and good citizens, and;

- For children and others to know, respect and live up to child rights contributes to a fairer society and a better Bangladesh in the future.

CDF/C members and individual community members also expressed that children **proved to be able to participate meaningful in realising their rights by articulating their needs and playing a role in informing programme design, implementation and monitoring**.

**Plan's partners** acknowledge that **child rights are central to CCCD** and rightly so as they have been neglected: '*At village level there are few literature people, there is in general lack of awareness about child rights and with even rights of adults being neglected no-one thinks about child rights*'.

Respecting child rights was also mentioned to be important from a generational development perspective. Respecting child rights results in a reduction of child labour and child trafficking, less discrimination of the vulnerable child and with issues as child marriage and the unfair dowry system being addressed. Literacy rates would be up and this would have an overall positive developmental impact on communities.


## 3.3    Results of CCCD

**General Results**

Reflecting on the experience with CCCD Plan staff underlined that major achievements have been realised since Plan-Bangladesh has adopted CCCD:

- In 1998-99 child participation was not on the agenda as agencies were very sceptical that children could participate and play a constructive role in informing project design and in project implementation. Plan and its key partners demonstrated that **children can participate** and that this has **enhanced project design and outcome**. Local government officials in both the urban and rural Programme Unit advise slum dwellers and community members to contact Plan for developing child friendly projects;

- Back in 1998/99 child rights were not acknowledged but now there is a **general understanding emerging that children do have rights and that these need to be respected,** and;

- Child protection is emerging on the agenda with awareness being created on four important dimensions (sexual, mental, physical, by-neglect) and dialogue promoted in target communities and amongst partners. Plan-Bangladesh realises that in order to address these issues effectively requires time. Traditional norms have gone un-questioned for a long time and will not change overnight.

## CDF/C - Urban

As part of the assessment a meeting with a Community Development Forum/Committee was organised by Plan and Plan's partner Radda in one of the sub areas of the Urban Programme Unit.

The CDF/C reflected on the results of CCCD as compared with Plan's old service delivery approach by highlighting a number of important achievements:

- People have come to see the importance of education for their children resulting in **almost all children going to school with low drop out rates in the lower grades**;

- **Leadership qualities and capabilities of community representatives** in the CDF/C have been enhanced;

- **Increased awareness about children's issues and rights** as a result of which child marriage has been greatly reduced;

- Before people had been very ignorant about personal hygiene and immunisation, **hygiene has improved and immunisation rates are up**;

- **Women and children now have a voice in important matters**, before CCCD they were not allowed to have a voice nor a say in public meetings;

- Increased sense of **community coherence** with people now coming together to share and discuss initiatives – people feel empowered;

- The **voice of adolescent children** are being heard by the community at large, their concerns are taken serious and are used to inform project activities;

- Before CCCD people did not **know how to plan** now they do;

- Slum dwellers felt uneasy to go outside the slum now they perform drama outside the slum area and take part in courses, and;

- Before people were not aware of problems, now, for example, with the Traditional Birth Attendants appropriately being trained **people are aware** of the 'five dangerous signs of antenatal and postnatal problems' and will consult the clinic.

During the meeting VDC members placed a lot of value on the importance of community mobilisation which is an important element in Plan-Bangladesh's CCCD approach (see box 3.1 and 3.2).

## CDF/C Rural

Around ten people of the rural CDF/C participated in a semi-structured interview discussing the changes in their community brought about by child centred community development.

Box 3.1.   Excerpts from an interview with a CDF/C in one of the slums in Dhaka.

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'*Before the introduction of CCCD we were very much internally divided but as a result of Plan and Radda's support we have become united[3]*.

'*When we became united we started to reflect on our situation and analysing it we were able with Plan and Radda's help to develop a community development plan. The input of children in this has been very important and actually they took the first step in analysing their situation and thinking hard what could be done about it*.

When asked whether people would prefer Plan to deliver services or build their capacity they voiced unanimously for capacity building as '*this would enable us to plan for ourselves and seek assistance from other agencies including the government*'.

They mentioned that because of CCCD '*we now are unified, have strong leadership and know how to plan and be in contact with government authorities*'.  They also mentioned that because of their unity they were '*politically on the map*' and having 'access' to a Member of Parliament. One of the results of this, so they claimed, was that the government recently has provided services such as piped water, electricity and some road infrastructure '*because we as a community took action*'.

The CDF/C members mentioned that good relationships were entertained with the local government representatives (male and female officials of the ward council) and that they came to consult them on matters.

Overall the CDF/C acknowledged that there has been a marked improvement in their situation over the last ten years. Ten years ago over 90% of the slum dwellers were daily labourers (much lower now), people struggled to have sufficient food (now most have access to food most of the time). Most people were highly vulnerable ten years ago but now those who are vulnerable are being assisted by the community themselves as well as being helped with resources from Radda's support fund and support from the government.

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The following changes were highlighted and these were validated when visiting the various projects and interviewing people on the spot:

- **Birth registration** has been commonly accepted as a rights and is now common practise;
- Major improvement in **personal hygiene and sanitation** has been realised both in coverage as well as in practise;
- **Child marriage** has been reduced (Child Marriage Free Village) and CDF/C and authorities work together on avoiding early child marriage;

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[3] The High Court of Bangladesh presented a ruling to the government in that the government must not evict slump dwellers. As a result of this ruling slump dweller populations are stabilising and bondage is increasing. Together with the increased capacity of its partner agencies in the field of CCCD Plan staff has observed improved room for CCCD as a development approach in support of the well being of children.

- **Rights of children** are made known and are increasingly being observed;

- Increased and **stronger linkages between CBOs and the local government;**

- Space has been created for **children voices to be heard** and children do speak out in front of adults;

- The **quality of education** is up and school drop out rates have been greatly reduced, and;

- Early Child Hood Development Centres have been established with children of poor households having access.

Box 3.2. Developing and following up on the Community Development Plan

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The CDF/C develops a Community Development Plan for a period of 3 to 5 years based on which subsequent annual plans are prepared by the community. Children play an active role in situational analysis and setting priority interventions areas, adolescent children are being represented in the CDF/C.

There are monthly monitoring meetings attended by a representative of the local government, Plan and partners. Once a year the annual action plan is being evaluated and reflected upon with all stakeholders involved.

Plan has adopted an open budget policy and informs the communities about the available resources. Other financial inputs are provided by the local government with contributions by community members being decided in a forum discussion. Richer households are expected to contribute more with poor and marginal households paying a smaller contribution or not contributing at all. Apart from financial contributions community members contribute in kind, for example in making available their time to work on a particular project.

Monitoring is an important element to track progress of the annual activity plans. One of the tools used in the community reflection sessions is the Spider Diagram which visualises achievement of activities on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being full realisation of the activity).

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The perceived strengths of the CCCD approach are that it has started the 'development of children', is a community based approach and based on a participatory process seeking the involvement of all community members. Community Based Organisations are being strengthened and are increasingly recognised by the local government as accountability institutions to work with.

Weaknesses were identified as well: CCCD is all about 'volunteerism' and as the approach demands a lot of time participation of the most vulnerable households can be problematic. The community and the CDF/C expect the local government to respond which it can't always because of a lack of time or resources.

## 3.4 Urban vs. Rural Programmes - Lessons Learned

There is no fundamental difference in the CCCD concept being used in urban and rural areas. The urban context has presented Plan with particular challenges:

- **High level of population dynamics**. In some years 20 to 30% of slump dwellers move in or out because of the threat of eviction or because of internal conflicts dealing with power and authority. In rural areas communities are much more stable which makes it easier operationalising the CCCD approach.

- **Availability of time to participate in CCCD**. Slump dwellers spend long days working in order to maintain basic livelihoods. People in rural areas have more time with the men predominantly engaged in agricultural work and women focused on direct household tasks.

- **Interest to participate in CCCD**. Initially women in slum areas did not participate in CCCD while in rural areas it were predominantly women who participated in CCCD.

- **Level of child participation**. Child participation has been more difficult in slum areas as compared with rural areas. Mothers and children in slums are interested in CCCD but time is a major constraint for both women and children[4].

- It is very difficult to find opportunity in terms **space and time for child oriented initiatives** in slum areas. Child oriented activities take place in small places such as a room in a health clinic, a school building or a rented apartment. Children often do not have time during daytime hours but after five o'clock and on Fridays (when Plan staff is off).

## 3.5 Findings and Recommendations

### CCCD Constitutes a Paradigm Shift

Prior to the 1998/99 CCCD pilot programme Plan Bangladesh used to be a service oriented organisation working in almost complete isolation of other NGOs and local government.

Fundamental in the successful adoption of CCCD as its operational approach have been a number of factors including a change in mindset at all organisational levels, effective organisational learning, strong commitment of staff and openness to try and adopt new ideas and methodologies, good human resource management and a change in organisational culture. A key factor has been visionary leadership by senior management.

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[4] Bangladesh' Child Labour Policy of 2008 allows children to work as of age 16. In reality however one finds many children in their early teens working all across Dhaka. They often work in hazardous conditions such as in garbage collection, tanning and production of leather, processing of tobacco and activities such as welding. Employers pay very low allowances and often mistreat children as children are not aware of their rights. Often children have no alternative choice to raise money or contribute to household income.

## CCCD Requires Organisational Change

It is evident that CCCD has been operationalised in Bangladesh based on the old institutional and logistical framework which was geared towards individual child sponsorship.

The adoption of CCCD demands a more flexible approach coupled with the need for scaling up of activities. This may require a review of Plan's organisational structure in terms of internal systems as well as organisational hardware and infrastructure.

Recommendation:

> ➢ There is a need for Plan-Bangladesh to seriously reflect on its future role and direction in Bangladesh. This no doubt will have major consequences for the organisation.

## Perception of CCCD

There is a very good understanding of what CCCD stands for at all organisational levels within Plan Bangladesh. The NGO and government partners visited as part of the assessment demonstrated a good understanding of CCCD as well. At community level there is an excellent understanding of the CCCD approach, not only from a theoretical perspective but also in terms of its practical relevance. Understanding about CCCD by the CBOs Community Development Fora/Committees is excellent and good amongst the wider community both from a theoretical perspective and in terms of its practical relevance.

 Child rights and child participation are seen as crucial elements of CCCD by all stakeholders.

## Operationalising CCCD

The CCCD approach promoted by Plan has been very well received by Plan's partner agencies as well as the beneficiaries as visited during the country study. Major changes have taken place and it is evident that CCCD has played an important role in most of these.

## Results of CCCD

Results of CCCD have been very encouraging in both urban and rural programme units and include increased awareness of child rights and issues amongst various stakeholders, active participation of children in the design and implementation of programmes, enhanced leadership qualities and capacity of CBOs and stronger linkages between CBOs at one hand and NGOs and local government at the other hand.

# 4  Enablers and Disablers of CCCD in Bangladesh

During the assessment particular attention was given to factors specific to Plan Bangladesh's context which either act as enablers or disablers with regard to CCCD. Group work at Plan's Country Office (such as the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats analysis with senior Plan management staff as presented in annex 3) and PU levels drew out particular issues which were subsequently validated during the field visits and in meeting with Plan's frontline staff, CBOs and NGO and government partners.

To improve on its descriptive use a distinction was made between enablers and disablers at three levels being conceptual, methodological and operational. A further distinction was made between these factors over which Plan has direct control (paragraph 5.1 and 5.2) and those beyond its direct control (paragraph 5.3 and 5.4).

## *4.1 Internal Enablers*

### Conceptual Level

One of the strongest enablers is that CCCD offers a flexible approach within Plan as a relative large organisation with bureaucratic tendencies (as always associated with large organisations). This is a very positive finding as flexibility is needed to develop local programmes that are sensitive and adapted to local context and dynamics. Plan has certainly managed to programme to local context (though taking into account local dynamics is more of challenge).

CCCD as a holistic approach reflects daily life experience of communities. Laudable by itself it does present Plan with important challenges. Community set priority intervention areas are likely to result in broad programmes for which appropriate expertise is required by Plan and its partners. Technical components of such programs should meet both national and international standards.

Observing such standards can be an issue as was demonstrated in Plan's model village where it promotes work on Community Led Total Sanitation. A critical evaluation of WatSan in such villages (though not as such the core component of the CLTS approach itself) would definitely be critical. For example with regard to locating water points and pit latrines at a very short distance from each other and poor fencing of water points to keep domestic animals out.

Recommendation:

> ➢ The challenge for Plan is to build in an accountability mechanism to make sure interventions adhere to national as well as international quality standards (including technical standards).

### Methodological level

Key enablers are Plan Bangladesh's strong focus on organisational development and the adoption of CCCD as the corporate approach within Plan worldwide (for which Bangladesh has been a pilot country).

Within Plan-Bangladesh a good and well tested Handbook on CCCD is available presenting a tested methodology (Plan Bangladesh, September 2006). Appropriate training materials for Plan staff and partners have been developed and are used in awareness raising and capacity building on CCCD and related issues. Community set priorities and experience in programme facilitation and implementation are captured by Plan-Bangladesh's Country Strategic Plan (and not the other way round with the CSP prescribing the thematic intervention areas of target communities.

Recommendations:

➢ Plan-Bangladesh has good experience with CCCD and has developed well tested resource materials making Plan-Bangladesh well placed to support/advise other Plan countries on the CCCD approach and how to put this into practise.

➢ Lessons learned and best practise are being captured though it is felt that this to be done in far more systematic way and to make it accessible to other agencies both in Bangladesh as well as to the wider Plan family.

## Operational Level

Key enablers are Plan-Bangladesh having adopted CCCD organizational wide; senior staff in support of the CCCD approach; well experienced knowledge persons assigned at all organizational levels (easy to access by field staff if and when needed), and; a good Human Resource Management to make sure staff are committed and interested in CCCD as the approach to child development work.

## 4.2 Internal Disablers

### Conceptual Level

Turning Plan Bangladesh around from a service-oriented organisation towards an organisation with a strong focus on capacity building has required a paradigm shift in corporate thinking. The process has been very demanding and not easy.

At PU level it was mentioned that conceptually it has been difficult to demonstrate impact. This partly relates to the fact that following the CCCD pilot in 1998/99 and adoption of CCCD in 2003 it took till until 2009 for PALS to be introduced. PALS was designed to monitor CCCD progress and evaluate its impact. Plan's Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation system (CPME), used till 2009, dates back to the time that Plan was a service oriented organisation but lacked sensitivity with regard to CCCD.

At community level Plan-Bangladesh has piloted an effective and workable method for project monitoring (monthly meetings to discuss progress against the Annual Activity Plan as derived from the longer term Community Development Plan) and evaluation (Annual Participatory Programme Review and Joined Partner Evaluation visits).

One of the challenges for Plan-Bangladesh is to set appropriate sets of indicators and threshold values for measuring progress and impact at least three interrelated levels. That is community based indicators and threshold values, Plan based indicator sets and government/international standard sets (for example to measure progress towards international obligations such as MDGs and Conventions such the Rights of children.

## Table 4.1. Enablers and Disablers of CCCD Specific to Plan Bangladesh' Context

| | Enablers | Disablers |
|---|---|---|
| **Plan Internal** | **Conceptual** | |
| | CCCD is not time bound and has been practised for a number of years now and proved its value | Very difficult in turning around Plan in line with a paradigm shift from a direct service deliverer to an organisation focusing on capacity building and connecting rights holders with duty bearers. <u>Plan NLNO struggling to turn around</u> - <u>if they made extra resources available ....</u> |
| | With large organisations like Plan tending to operate as bureaucracy CCCD offers a flexible approach resulting in programmes respecting local context and dynamics | Difficult to demonstrate impact to management |
| | Holistic approach reflects daily life experience of communities in terms of programming (Plan's programmes address key priority issues and are not limited to a prescribed intervention area). | |
| | **Methodological** | |
| | Strong focus on organisational development which is essential as Plan as a former service delivery organisation requires organisation sensitivity and capacity to manage CCCD | It is a very demanding approach to manage (attitudinal mind shift) |
| | CCCD has been adopted as the approach by Plan IH and as a corporate strategy supports what Plan-B does. | At sub-district and lower levels other organisations predominantly continue to subcontract local organisations - need for a co-ordinated effort |
| | A good handbook is available which has been updated reflecting lessons learned and best practise | |
| | Good staff training materials are available | |
| | Community set priorities result in programmes captured by the Country Strategic Plan (and not the other way round with the strategic Plan dictating thematic programme intervention areas. | |
| | **Operational** | |
| | Plan B has adopted CCCD organisational wide and operates as a team with regard to CCCD | Demands big investment in terms of staff time (but have now the confidence it produces rights based outcomes |
| | CCCD and working method well accepted and supported by management (and CD see Dhaka level)!) | Takes time to produce 'concrete' outcomes, that is a 6 to 12 months period. |
| | Assigned persons for CCCD at all levels of the organisation | Relative small level of operation 'due to lack of donor money' |
| | Access to CCCD resource persons if and when needed | |
| | Competent and committed staff | |
| | Sound HRM management including recruitment (role plays, sensitivity towards child rights, personality) | |
| | Good staff commitment | |
| **Plan External** | **Conceptual** | |
| | Bangladesh has a culture of hospitality and communities are friendly and accommodating to organisations. | A mentality of service delivery has been created in Bangladesh and is difficult to turn around. |
| | Community participation is part of the cultural background (though child participation is a new theme). | Different approaches are being promoted by different organisations |
| | There is a 'heritage' in Bangladesh by which people start initiatives and the government adopting successful ones in government policy. | Political stability and continuity of current government policy (e.g. Community clinics were adopted by the government and then dropped when another party came into power (but recently re-adopted again). |
| | **Methodological** | |
| | Before 1998 Plan Bangladesh operated on its own and did not work with partner NGOs nor with the government. Partner NGOs are found to be very receptive about CCCD and the local government has come to adopt important elements | High staffing costs in moderating CCCD with substantial time spend on community mobilisation and building capacity of CBOs and volunteers. |
| | Proper CCCD facilitation leads to increased transparency and accountability (e.g. open budget practise so that community knows what type and how much resources are available so they can make an informed choice with regard to activities to address priority needs). | |
| | As an approach CCCD has enhanced cohesiveness of communities. | |
| | **Operational** | |
| | Government has identified priority intervention areas which are in line with most of Plan's interventions (so the government is interested in what Plan does and how it does it). | Quality of implementation has become an issue as Plan is not in direct control of partner organisations. |
| | GJ Government is very open as demands are placed on them but relative little knowledge/skill /capacity to deliver. | Quality of partner staff |
| | | High transfer rate of government staff necessitating regular sensitisation sessions and demonstration of best practise. |

## Methodological level

CCCD has proved to be a demanding approach requiring significant skills and determination to manage. As mentioned before it does constitute a fundamental mind shift.

Other organisations continue to subcontract their partners for direct service delivery activities at sub-district level and lower levels which presents a challenge to Plan Bangladesh.

Recommendation:

> ➢ Plan should consider broadening up their sensitisation on CCCD by including non-partner organisations (sharing good practise and lessons learned being an essential element).

## Operational Level

Employing the CCCD approach demands considerable staff time and takes time to 'produce' outcomes (it requires a six to twelve months period before action oriented interventions take place), and; Plan's volume of operations are relatively limited due to a lack of funding.

Recommendations:

> ➢ Plan's logistical set-up still reflects old style service delivery (heavy investment in terms of support buildings/offices) making cost-effectiveness and the issue of appropriateness important issues for organisational reflection.

> ➢ With CCCD the new paradigm it requires creativity and innovations to redesign Plan's 'product' (Plan continues struggling to meet on concrete 'old-style' child sponsorship expectations).

> ➢ Plan could much better exploit opportunities to tap into institutional donor funding which demands a chance regarding Plan's role and a strategic repositioning of child donor support structures.

> ➢ Plan staff was found to be somewhat inward looking with little exposure and knowledge regarding child development work being practised by organisations such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Alliance. Shared learning and disseminating good practise across like-minded child development organisations is important. Plan is part of a network of like-minded social mobilisation organisations focussing on lobby and advocacy. However this network needs revitalising and strengthening.

## 4.3  External Enablers

### Conceptual Level

Key enablers include the traditional hospitality of communities to be open and accommodating towards 'external' organisations; community participation being part of Bangladesh's legacy, and; a 'heritage' by which people start initiatives and the government adopting 'tested' initiatives in relevant policies.

**Methodological level**

The main external enablers are: the receptiveness and interest of partner NGOs as well as the local government in CCCD to promoting child rights and seeking child participation in informing programme design and implementation; increased transparency and accountability of programme interventions5, and; as an approach CCCD has enhanced the cohesiveness of the communities within which Plan works

An unforeseen but important enabler has been the 'self-directive nature' of CCCD. A very good example of this is Plan's focus on the local government as a duty bearer. This has not been by design but by the interest of communities to build good relationships with the local government and awareness regarding the need for an accountable Community Based organisation to directly link and engage with the local government structure.

**Operational Level**

The strongest enablers for CCCD are both within the government domain. Firstly, at operational level the Bangladeshi government has identified priority intervention areas that are in line with the key programmatic areas of Plan (for example quality of education and improved health care). Secondly, the government is very interested in participatory approaches and working modalities as government services are being decentralized but lack the skill and capacity to deliver such services.

## 4.4    External Disablers

**Conceptual Level**

There are a number of disablers at conceptual level. One is that a mentality of service delivery has been established which has created dependency in Plan's (potential) target communities. This is one of the factors explaining why CCCD is not easy to practise and takes time to deliver 'results'.

Different approaches are being promoted by different agencies while for maximum impact such approaches should be well co-ordinated and in line with sound development principles.

Continuity of government policies and strategies is a key concern as changes in government often result in discontinuity of policies and related practise. A good example of this is that the Bangladeshi government in the past adopted the concept of Community Clinics but dropped its support for it when a new government came in. Recently, the new government has re-adopted the Community Clinic as an integral part of its health system. Plan has played a key role in this.

Recommendation:

> ➢ Plan should more strongly build on national as well as international conventions and treaties to which the Bangladeshi government is a signatory. This to promote continuity of policy and practise beyond short-term political agendas and aspirations.

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5 Plan's open budget policy has enabled communities to make an informed choice on how best to utilise available resources in addressing priority issues – the open budget policy has been adopted by the local government.

## Methodological level

CCCD requires substantial time both in terms of community mobilisation and capacity building of CBOs and volunteers. Donors might be very traditional or have requirements which may be difficult to harmonise with a CCCD approach. For example, donors like the EC may require a maximum percentage the budget to be spend on staff costs and other direct support costs.

Recommendation:

> ➢ Plan might need to present itself better to the key donor community as an organisation strong on community mobilisation in delivering sustainable child oriented community development initiatives. It is interesting to see how partner organisations of Plan capitalise on CCCD as a decisive element in winning donor grants.

## Operational Level

At operational level there are a number of potential disablers. An important one is the quality of technical programme implementation. Plan depends on its operational partners for technical programme implementation. In those cases where they do not perform up to the required standard Plan has found it difficult to demand minimum standards with Plan lacking adequate quality control over its partners. In those cases where it is difficult to find an appropriate partner who is willing to provide the desired services quality may be compromised.

Another one is the high turnover over government staff requiring regular but expensive sensitisation sessions and continues demonstration of good practice.

The poorest household categories have limited time to actively participate in the process lacking the time to do so.

A last major disabler is that being requested by communities and local government to start working in new areas Plan lacks the financial resources to do so.

## 4.5   General Findings and Recommendations

### Enablers and Disablers

Important enablers for the operationalisation of CCCD were identified at conceptual, methodological and operational level.

CCCD offers a flexible approach to programme to local context and as a holistic approach reflects the daily life experience of communities resulting in a wide range of interventions on the ground. Observing quality standards is an issue though.

> ➢ The challenge for Plan Bangladesh is to build in an accountability mechanism to make sure interventions adhere to national as well as international quality standards (including technical standards).

CCCD is piloted in Bangladesh and the organisation has developed appropriate training modules and resource materials.

> ➢ Plan-Bangladesh has good experience with CCCD and has developed well tested resource materials making Plan-Bangladesh well placed to

support/advise other Plan countries on the CCCD approach and how to put this into practise.

- ➢ Lessons learned and best practise are being captured though it is felt that this to be done in far more systematic way and to make it accessible to other agencies both in Bangladesh as well as to the wider Plan family.

An important disabler is that various organisations are operational at local level and implement projects predominantly by subcontracting local NGOs for direct service delivery.

- ➢ Plan should consider broadening up their sensitisation on CCCD by including non-partner organisations (sharing good practise and lessons learned being an essential element).

At operational level a number of disablers present Plan with serious challenges which should be addressed.

- ➢ Plan's logistical set-up still reflects old style service delivery (heavy investment in terms of support buildings/offices) making cost-effectiveness and the issue of appropriateness important issues for organisational reflection.

- ➢ With CCCD the new paradigm it requires creativity and innovations to redesign Plan's 'product' (Plan continues struggling to meet on concrete 'old-style' child sponsorship expectations).

- ➢ Plan could much better exploit opportunities to tap into institutional donor funding which demands a chance regarding Plan's role and a strategic repositioning of child donor support structures.

- ➢ Plan staff was found to be somewhat inward looking with little exposure and knowledge regarding child development work being practised by organisations such as Oxfam and the Save the Children Alliance.

A key disabler over which Plan Bangladesh is having little control is continuity of government policy and related practice as with government change policies may be changed overnight.

- ➢ Plan should more strongly build on national as well as international conventions and treaties to which the Bangladeshi government is a signatory. This to promote continuity of policy and practise beyond short-term political agendas and aspirations.

Some traditionalist donors are not ready to invest in community mobilisation and capacity building as a prerequisite for sustainable child centred community development. Interestingly some of Plan's partner agencies are successful in winning donor grants by capitalising on the CCCD approach.

- ➢ Plan need to present itself better to the donor community as an organisation strong on community mobilisation and capacity building in delivering sustainable child oriented community development initiatives.

Using the disabler-enabler matrix to generate further discussion a number of pertinent issues were drawn out which were validated as part of the field visits and interviews with stakeholders.

## Plan Bangladesh has Gained Valuable Experience with CCCD and Demonstrated Results

It is clear that Plan Bangladesh in putting CCCD to practise has gained valuable experience on all major aspects of CCCD and has demonstrated encouraging results.

## Sustainability of Behavioural Change Not Taken for Granted

During the assessment it more than once was claimed that CCCD has resulted in behavioural change in a number of programme areas. However it is know that for genuine behavioural change to take place needs a concerted effort.

> ➢ Plan is advised to develop appropriate indicators to establish the degree to which behavioural change takes place and why (e.g. by developing contextualised Knowledge/Attitude/Practise assessments).

## Communities are often Conflict Ridden

In discussions with Plan staff it was striking to note that communities were perceived as rather harmonious entities. In most communities strong individual or group category agendas exist reflected by control and power structures which are often not easy to distinguish.

> ➢ There is thus a need for the application of instruments like power analysis for a more critical view at the community as entity of work. Insight in processes that engender marginalisation and poverty and the role power and control structures protecting the interests of the elite may well be at the root of poverty and marginalisation (and are core to a rights based approach to child development).

## Inclusion of the Marginalised and Discriminated Against

Though CBOs demonstrated a pro-poor focus active participation and inclusion of the poorest and most vulnerable household in CCCD is a serious challenge. There is a shared concern across the organisation that this issue needs to be addressed.

## Need to Seek Stronger Engagement with the Government and Strengthen their capacity as a Duty-Bearer

Though Plan Bangladesh is engaging with local government structures there is a recognised need for strengthening the capacity of the government as a duty bearer and means of scaling up CCCD.

## PM&E has Jeopardised Institutional Learning

Representing a paradigm shift in thinking, with far reaching conceptual, methodological and operational consequences, the lack of a corporate system to monitor CCCD progress and evaluate impact in individual country programmes such as in Plan Bangladesh, and across the wider organisation, has hampered organisational learning as well as proper documentation of good practise and lessons learned.

PALS is recently introduced to redress this issue but to date little experience has been gained with the system.

## Child Sponsorship

With the introduction of CCCD child sponsorship has positively changed form direct resource transfers aimed at individual children towards a more inclusive and community based approach. With child sponsorship still of fundamental importance to Plan Bangladesh new sponsorship initiatives and approaches are being developed by Plan-Bangladesh with the involvement of Plan-RO (focusing on group based funding strategies).

## Need for Scaling Up

One of the key challenges for Plan-Bangladesh, one not readily being identified by Plan staff, is the need for scaling up. Having modelled successful CCCD pilots in its traditional areas of operation the task is now to see these models adopted in government policy and promoted in terms of NGO and government practice.

> ➤ With Plan having developed tested CCCD models and the importance and practical value of this increasingly being realised by other national and international actors there is opportunity to attract grant funding for scaling up the models and inform practical CCCD work.

## Sustainability of the Approach

As part of the CCCD approach Plan and its partners have focused on strengthening the capacity of CBOs which is believed central to the sustainability of the CCCD approach. The longer term sustainability of the CBOs (Community Development Fora or Committees) should not be taken for granted and Plan should address this issue.

# 5 CCCD as a Rights Based Approach

This chapter reflects on the impressions of CCCD as a Rights based Approach. This is being done by reflecting on the eight essential elements rights based approaches as suggested by Care and Oxfam in their 2002/3 partnership pilot on Rights based Approaches. The discussion in paragraph is based on Plan Bangladesh documents, the two field visits as part of the country study and discussions with Plan and counterpart staff members.

The second paragraph presents some general impressions only as it would require a more thorough analysis of CCCD as a rights based approach in Bangladesh for the findings to be more specific and concrete.

## 5.1 Essential Elements of CCCD as a Rights Based Approach

### Poverty Analysis and Analysis of Power, Gender and Risk

The underlying causes of poverty and child related issues are the result of a constant process of struggle over power and access to resources. In order to be empowered one needs capacity exercise choice in the face of power relations and structures.

- Plan staff at Programme Unit level acknowledge that there are 'hidden and unidentified' power and control structures. They base this, amongst others, on their experience that it is relatively easy to work with the 'middle class' in the target villages but that inclusion of the richer households at the one and poor households at the other hand is a challenge. Staff indicated that they lack the tools to explore power structures as well as poverty in itself in a structured manner.

➢ As part of the CCCD approach Plan Bangladesh's front line staff facilitates a situational analysis at community level. This does fall short of poverty analysis as little attention is paid to power analysis and vulnerability. No questions are asked why it is that people are poor and marginalized in the village and by what processes marginalisation is generated.

- There is no doubt that Plan in the communities in which it works is addressing the consequences of child poverty. Root causes are being touched upon but need a more comprehensive approach. Plan has rightly identified the crucial importance of child rights and the need for sensitisation and awareness raising coupled with practical action at local and national level.

- Gender is a particular relevant issue in the Bangladeshi context. All stakeholders are clear that CCCD has played an important role giving children and women a voice. Women are now being represented at the CDF/C's and in various management committees. They are being listened to when they speak out. CCCD is also credited to having raised critical issues such as child marriage and the unfair dowry system. Because of awareness raising and sensitisation child marriage in some villages has now been voluntarily 'condemned' with communities and local government mediating when a child marriage is about to be arranged.

## Community Centred Development

Community empowerment is central to rights based approaches, which view people as lead actors in their own development. Community-centred development within a rights based approach seeks to build community capacity to claim rights and to drive decision-making.

- Community development is a key component of CCCD and was observed to work well in the communities visited. It does take time to develop the capacity of communities to plan for their own development and take practical action. In all villages visited important projects have been realised with the CDF/Cs clearly playing a key role in its achievement.

- A very strong point of Plan's approach is that it builds the capacity of communities to define priority intervention areas and to monitor progress as well as the performance of Plan's partners. It is encouraging to have observed the local government seeking community participation in local decision-making. Plan Bangladesh should grasp the momentum for the community to monitor the performance of the government as a duty bearer.

- Requests are being made by communities and local government for Plan to expand its work to other villages and areas but Plan had to turn this down as '*we don't have the resources*'.

- Plan has very much acted in line with its CCCD guidelines as laid down in the handbook (see box 5.1) underlining child participation as a crucially important element (box 5.2).

➢ There is a need for developing a set of indicators to measure 'community development' and in particular so for getting insight in the sustainability of 'community development'.

Box 5.1.   Developing key capacities of communities (Plan Bangladesh's Handbook on CCCD)

| Key Capacities: |
|---|
| - Organised action for collaborative response for identified issues |
| - Mobilisation of people including marginalized segments of the community for collective action |
| - Promotion and advocacy for proactive human and child rights interests |
| - Resource mobilisation (both by community, Plan partners and government) and its transparent management (open budget principle) |
| - Alliance building for joint investment in a common future for children. |

Box 5.2  The Importance of Child Participation

| |
|---|
| With the paradigm of participation commonly being accepted NGOs have adopted the use of PRA techniques in their work with communities. However, there are few NGOs that seek active participation of children in the design and implementation of their programmes. |
| Plan's experience is that even NGOs missioned to work with children do not practise child participation primarily as they have no experience with child participation.  Plan's experience has been that they need to be sensitised about the ability of children to participate and that once their awareness and knowledge has been increased they are open and enthusiastic to practise child participation in their programmes. |
| Plan's CCCD training package has been instrumental to interest organisations in child participation and to incorporate as work principle in their policy and practise. |

## Engaging and Strengthening Duty Bearers and holding these Accountable

Projects using rights based approaches emphasise not only concrete problems and people's needs and rights, but also responsibilities in particular the government's legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfil people's rights.

- Plan has traditionally worked with what it now refers to as 'rights holders' and with the introduction of CCCD underlined the importance to engage with duty bearers.

- For Plan the government is seen as the ultimate duty bearer in ensuring that rights are being respected and practically being fulfilled. At Programme Unit level the local government is being engaged and Plan has learned that awareness about child rights is a crucial first step.

- ➢ Plan is strengthening the local government, particular at Union Parishod level, for example by providing some support in organisational management as well as CCCD working principles. Plan staff realise that more should be done for the local government to act and deliver on its role as duty bearer and for Plan to focus more on strengthening the system in order to hold the (local) government accountable.

## Advocacy for Sustainable Change in Policy and Practise

Rights based approaches focus on making lasting changes in systemic policy and governance environment.

- In working with local governments and having direct contact with the National Institute for Local Governance Plan Bangladesh has been able to advocate and lobby for changes in national policies and good practise. Together with other NGO partners and UNICEF Plan has played an instrumental role, for example with regard the inclusion of preschools in the national education policy and the inclusion of the concept of Community Clinics6 in the national health policy. .

- ➢ Plan Bangladesh, together with other actors, is active in advocating for the government to mainstream child rights and child protection. It is felt that Plan can be more effective in this by developing a comprehensive policy on advocacy and making the resources available for a more co-ordinated effort.

- ➢ Based on its experience in working with the more marginalized community categories Plan is considering to advocate for the need for more flexible micro-finance programmes.

## Alliance Building

Alliance building as part of a rights based approach emphasises the creation of space for duty bearers and rights-holders to engage in constructive dialogue for sustainable change.

- Plan is active in various alliances both at a national, district and local level. In some of these Plan and other partners have been very successful (see box 5.3).

- ➢ Some of the networks in which Plan operates are rather weak such as for example Bangladesh's Civil Society Forum. Plan may want to consider playing a more active and leading role in the more strategic alliances to further the issues of child rights and protection.

- There is a need for interlinking some of the networks in which Plan is active. Plan Bangladesh should consider to pro-actively seek the combined strength of like minded organisations in Bangladesh having a strong background in child centred development work such as the Save the Children Alliance and Care.

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[6] Instrumental in this has been to invite local government staff and politicians to model projects such as the Member of Parliament who visited a model Community Clinic.

Box 5.3   Networks on the Urban Poor.

Plan Bangladesh has been part of the **Coalition for the Urban Poor  (CUP)** which is a network organisation of around fifty NGOs working in slums and squatter areas in Bangladesh' urban areas. One of its aims is to advocate for the recognition of the urban poor to have a legitimate share and role in the process of urban development. CUP has contributed in its campaign to achieve voting rights of the slum dwellers for the mayoral elections, has had significant role in informing the National Housing Policy in 1993, succeeded with the aid of renowned lawyers to stop the indiscriminate eviction of slums as per a High Court Verdict and has been active in raising key challenges with regard to the settlement of the urban poor at all levels of policy making.

As an active member organisation of the Bangladesh Urban Round Table[7] (**BURT**) Plan Bangladesh has contributed to bringing the issue of urban poverty and slum dwellers at the policy level with the aim to inform policy and for the government, development organisations and donors to work jointly together to improve the livelihoods of the urban poor and vulnerable.

A 2004/5 Position Paper underlines the importance of rights and the government's pledges and commitments to support such rights. The Paper refers to the Bangladesh's Constitution, the MDGS to which Bangladesh is a signatory, commitment in a line with the World Summit on Sustainable Development as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1996 Habitat Agenda to which Bangladesh is a signatory.

Priority issues which have been defined during the Round Table include urban poverty as a focus area for Bangladesh' PRSPs, security of tenure, a pro-poor housing policy, government planned improvement of slums and squatter settlements, access to basic services for slum dwellers, support to the informal sector, improving gender inequality and making the government accountable with regard to its legal commitments.

BURT is working on these priority issues by targeted policy advocacy, working towards improved synergy for scaling up services to the urban poor, strengthening of CBOs in urban poor settlements to give the urban poor a voice, investment for the poor (in line with international commitments e.g. the MDGs) and by setting up demonstration projects to highlight positive initiatives that can be scaled up and inform policy changes to encourage replication of such initiatives/models on a larger scale.

## Working at Multiple Levels

Duty bearers and other actors are found at various levels and therefore effective interventions address root causes of poverty and child issues from various fronts and at multiple levels (local, national and international).

- Plan's CCCD situational analysis at village level risks to be limited by addressing consequences of child issues rather than root problems. For example Plan has successfully managed for the concept of community clinic to be adopted in national policy (a direct 'service' oriented felt issue at community level) while it has been much less active on promoting mainstreaming of child rights and child protection at national policy level (addressing a root cause of child issues).

- Plan is very well positioned to empower communities while at the same time strengthening local government (and NGO partners) and advocate for national policy reform. However it is felt that a more comprehensive situational analysis, both at country and local level, will inform a more comprehensive and integrated strategy to work at various levels in working towards prioritised goals.

- Plan Bangladesh has introduced the new corporate PM&E system PALS which requires a more comprehensive situational analysis of child related issues at both national as well as local level thus facilitating a more comprehensive intervention at multiple levels.

## Focus on Marginalised Groups

Adoption of CCCD as a rights based approach requires that problem analysis focuses more on specifically on marginalized and discriminated groups and that intervention seek to address the conditions that lead to social exclusion.

- Direct child sponsorship requirements have resulted in Plan Bangladesh working with 'stable' communities in both rural and urban areas. A direct consequence of child sponsorship requirements is that Plan Bangladesh has opted to work with 'stable' communities in rural and urban areas. These are not necessarily the most marginalized communities or discriminate groups. For this Plan has to work in slum areas were people risk to be evicted or in parts of the country were communities have been marginalized such as in the Hill Tracts.

- Plan's experience is that it is difficult to engage the most vulnerable in decision-making and in addressing issues that lead to their marginalisation and exclusion.

## Problems framed as Rights Issues and Linkage to National/International Standards

Rights based projects explicitly link development objectives to fundamental human rights as enshrined within international and national rights standards.

- Plan Bangladesh has acknowledged the importance of framing problems in terms of rights and calling upon the government to respects it pledges and commitments in support of such rights. For example, in calling for a non-eviction clause for slum dwellers in Dhaka and the provision of basics services in slums.

- However, it is felt that Plan Bangladesh should more strongly use relevant international conventions (particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child) and other international treaties or goals (particularly the MDGs) to which the Bangladeshi government is a signatory.

## 5.2 Findings and Recommendations

Plan Bangladesh has gained significant experience and valuable insights in the most salient elements of CCCD. This provides a very good starting point to work on 'CCCD-2009' which puts emphasize to CCCD as a rights based approach.

Plan International's recent Programme Framework and Programme Effectiveness Framework underline the importance of CCCD as a rights based approach providing the opportunity and momentum for Plan Bangladesh to strengthen CCCD as a Rights Based Approach.

The recent introduction of PALS underlines the importance of a child rights situational assessment covering multiple levels and actors/stakeholders which is of fundamental importance to inform and direct CCCD in Bangladesh as rights based approach.

# 6    Partners and Partnering Strategy

This chapter focuses on Plan-Bangladesh's partners and its partnering strategy. The first paragraph deals with Plans NGO partners followed by the government partners in the second paragraph.

Based on the discussions with various partners in Plan's urban and rural Programme Unit and complemented by a self-reporting structured interview (filled out by selected partners and Plan staff) the outcome of a brief partnership assessment is given in the third paragraph. The last paragraph presents the key findings and recommendations.

## 6.1   NGO Partners

Plan works with a large number of NGO partners with **partnerships ranging from strategic partnerships to partnerships focused on subcontracting particular project activities**. Plan's strategic partners comprise both established organisations, such as Radda, as well as relative young but promising NGOs such as the Assistance for Slum Dwellers (ASD).

**In principle all partners are sensitised with regard to the importance of CCCD**. Some of Plan's strategic partners have adopted the approach as a practical way of working in the field (in line with Plan's CCCD handbook) as well as adopting parts of the internal systems (for example M&E and financial procedures and administration). Partnerships with smaller local NGOs may take the form of subcontracting arrangements and such NGOs do not necessarily adopt CCCD. Work with national NGOs receiving multi-donor funding is seen as posing a challenge by Plan as the often have little interest and time to seriously look at adopting CCCD as their working approach.

Plan's approach in promoting the adoption of CCCD by its key partners has had some success. It comprises of various elements:

- **Awaring and sensitising partners** about CCCD as a valuable approach in child oriented development work;

- Providing an **inclusive CCCD training** covering all levels of the organisation (from senior management staff to front line staff);

- **Share important documents on putting CCCD to practise**[8] [9] [10] which includes the 2006 manual for CCCD, field operation manuals, financial guidelines as well as HR policies;

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[8] The 2006 manual provides a lot of information and could be of good use for other country programmes by making it more accessible both as a 'standing' work document as well as providing more examples to illustrate the main stages of CCCD and CCCD as a process.

[9] It will be good to make these available in English to make them accessible for other Plan countries since these manuals are based on field realities and have been tested and informed over time by Plan staff, partners and beneficiaries (including children). As such the manuals should be made available on a broader basis amongst Plan countries as good working examples of Plan-Bangladesh. Respecting Plan-Bangladesh staff such manuals are just tools (and not a prescribed recipe or blueprints) and the methods and procedures to come to local resource and training manuals should be underlined.

[10] Manuals are developed jointly by Plan, its partners and beneficiary communities. Practical field manuals including recommended tools for situational analysis are so far developed over the course of a project to pay respect to the thematic intervention area and the context within which partners work. Plan staff indicated that they were sceptical about handing out manuals at the beginning of a project as '*manuals are just tools to guide the project and therefore are best developed over the course of such a project*').

- Setting **pilot or demonstration projects** for joint learning to demonstrate the practical value of CCCD, and;

- Providing **technical support** on key CCCD themes as per request of the partner agency.

## Effects of CCCD on Plan's Partners

Meetings were organised with various partners in Plan's urban as well as in its rural Program Units. It was found that the adoption of the CCCD approach and attention for child rights and child participation has had a marked effect on the performance of Plan's partners. This is illustrated by the following examples:

- Prior to the introduction of CCCD some of Plan's current partners implemented programmes for other agencies involving child labour. With the introduction of CCCD questions were raised within the organisation about depriving children in their programmes which has led to **policy changes** and **adoption of child-sensitive operational guidelines**;

- Before adopting the CCCD approach Plan's partners in developing their strategic plans did not seek any interaction or **participation of the children** and adults in their target groups;

- Project monitoring used to be done by agency staff themselves. Adopting CCCD **participatory monitoring is now being practised with direct inputs and feedback by communities** themselves. Monthly monitoring meetings are being organised at community level with the CDF/Cs playing a key role (monitoring of targets set for a variety of activities in annual action plans) while monitoring is also taking place in children clubs and the various management committees established by the community (e.g. the school or clinic management committee). The Annual Participatory Programme Review, in which all stakeholders participate, was mentioned to be very instrumental and informative, and;

- New staff members of Plan's partner agencies are given a thorough introduction and sensitisation on CCCD. Even the executive committees within Plan's partners have been sensitised on child rights and children's ability and importance of participating in programme design. Training on child rights has been provided and some partner organisations have developed their own **Child Protection Policy**.

## Exchange of Information and Programme Networking

Information is regularly exchanged at sub-district level between Plan's partners, community representatives and the local government:

- A quarterly Partners Co-ordination Meeting is organised by Plan in which partners share information with each other, discuss progress and reflect on lessons learned;

- Monthly meetings are being organised by the local government at Sub-District level in which all NGOs and respective local governments are present and NGOs share their monthly progress and share their plan for the following month, and;

- Monthly meetings at Union Parishod/Council level (representing up to six villages) in which Standing Committees in various thematic areas (e.g. health or agriculture) share their progress and discuss issues. These Standing Committees represent the local government bodies (by four members) and beneficiary groups (by three elected members).

## 6.2    Government Partners

Prior to the adoption of CCCD Plan Bangladesh did practically not engage with national and local level government. This has been one of the fundamental changes brought about by the introduction of CCCD and its interest to seek functional relationships with the government as a duty bearer.

It is clear that Plan has built very good relations with government officials at the sub-district, Union Parishod and lower levels. It appears that this as such has not been the result of a deliberate effort of Plan guided by its Country Strategic Plan but has grown rather 'organically' with Plan staff increasingly realising the importance of the government as the ultimate duty bearer and an important avenue to scale up the scope of Plan's work. Increased focus on local government institutions has also been promoted by the wish of the target communities themselves to seek better and more accountable representation at local government level (see also paragraph 4.3). This is an important indication that **CCCD has the ability to foster meaning relationships between rights holders and duty bearers**.

### Effects of CCCD on Government Partners

Local government authorities were found to be highly appreciative of the work of Plan and the engagement between Plan and themselves. They expressed that CCCD has had a clear impact on their work:

- Being sensitised and aware about child rights and the importance of child participation in development work they have become convinced of **the importance of CCCD in development work**;

- **Resources are made available** in direct support of Plan's activities and in line with expressed community priority needs[11];

- At sub-district and Union Parishod level the local government has **adopted CCCD elements** both in their way of working (adopting **participatory child oriented processes**) as well as in their **internal systems** (e.g. generating five year development plans based on requirements by the central government as well as being informed by communities themselves), and;

- Keen interest in the **models** piloted by Plan.

### Lobby and Advocacy

Government officials at all levels were found to be very supportive of the work of Plan and very interested in the way 'results' were generated. By engaging with local government institutions and entertaining functional relationships with the National Institute for Local Governance at Dhaka level Plan has highlighted the relevance of its models. As a result of this senior government officials, including Members of Parliament, have visited project sites to inform themselves first hand about the relevance and appropriateness of these models.

Plan together with partner agencies have been instrumental with regard to the adoption of the following models in official government policy:

- Universal Birth Registration (promoted by Plan and UNICEF);

- Community Led Total Sanitation (Plan and other NGOs);

- Early Childhood Development (Plan and BRAC), and;

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[11] Commands particular resources to be able to support poor and most vulnerable households for example in the form of direct support for the elderly, relief aid packages for the most poor and marginalized households as well as the ability to command Food For Work activities for a period of up to 100 days for a vulnerable household.

- Community Clinics (Plan and other NGOs).

Plan is currently working on child rights mainstreaming, child protection and quality of education as important models to be adopted by the Bangladeshi government.

## 6.3  Partnership Assessment

Plan's partnerships in Bangladesh are important as a vehicle to promote CCCD and as a means to improve service delivery for children, their families and the communities they live in. Plan Bangladesh works with a number of partner agencies at various levels of program implementation including lobby and advocacy work.

As part of the country study a structured approach was adopted in the form of a self-assessment fool for partnerships as provided by the Child Care Partnership Project (1998). Ten principles which are central to effective partnerships are being reviewed each based on a small sub-sample of questions with a scoring range between one (disagree) to five (agree).

In total five individuals (three senior Plan staff and two strategic partners) filled out the questionnaires with the responses being sent to the consultant in sealed envelopes. Findings were aggregated and discussed with senior management staff dealing with partnerships or at least having good insight in those partnerships.

Interestingly Plan's partners scored consistently higher in evaluating the level to which the partnership lived up to the principles. Outcomes were generally positive with the more critical findings being presented and briefly discussed below.

### Clear goals

**At times partnerships lack clear goals and a shared vision**. This is particularly so in cases where Plan attracts ad hoc funding from national or international donor agencies for pre-defined purposes. In such cases Plan is being subcontracted with little room for negotiation regarding programme design and implementation (though Plan tries to maximise focus on child related community development work). A good example is funding made available for Plan's relief and rehabilitation work in coastal areas of Bangladesh. It is felt that such partnerships contribute relative little to Plan's overall strategic CCCD objective and focus.

Partnerships with national NGOs are typically signed for a two to three year project implementation period and evaluated in terms of vision and goals by Plan and partner at the end of this period. Mid term evaluations do not take place. **Plan has a large number of partners but limited capacity to provide regular input and support**.  Regarding Plan's more strategic partners (often operating nation wide or focused on particular thematic areas such as slum dwellers) more attention is paid to reviewing vision and goals but this is not done on a regular basis. Partner agencies operate their own internal M&E systems.

### Achieving results and measuring progress

In some cases partnerships have not collaboratively identified desired results. This is because Plan facilitates communities in undertaking a situational assessment and setting priority needs for action as part of the CCCD process. Partner agencies are then **selected based on their ability to address such priority issues**. However, at the initially stages of the partnership such agencies do not take part themselves in identifying desired results and required activities. Plan's longer term more strategic partners, for example Radda and Assistance for Slum Dwellers, have **adopted the CCCD approach**. Their staff do take part in situational assessments and support communities in setting priority

intervention areas and developing plans to address those (part of the CCCD process). Plan values these longer term more strategic partnerships for having adopted CCCD and having developed experience and expertise in CCCD ('*they have become as proficient in CCCD as we are*').

Partnerships **do not develop timetables nor a process for measuring changes in indicators and performance measures**. In most cases partners operate their own M&E system while communities themselves report their progress by means of monthly meetings against yearly activity plans (in line with objectives set in the Village Development Plan). However, yearly programme visits are being carried out by Plan and partner staff to review progress.

As such Plan does not operate a **method for measuring partnership results**. Plan does carry out an assessment of its partners based on which support is provided such as technical support to build partner capacity (for example in project proposal development). All partners are trained on CCCD (including situational analysis). Plan acknowledges that some of its partners are not '*up to the mark*', though a clear defined set of objective indicators to establish this is not available.

Plan pays partners for M&E but **performance tracking of the partnership is done on an ad hoc basis '*if and when needed*'**. Programme reflection sections with partner and Plan staff at community level are undertaken annually and provides good insight how the partnership evolves.

## Involving children and their parents/caretakers in developing programmes and services.

Plan and its partners (particularly its longer term strategic partners) are strong about sensitisation regarding the importance of child participation and **inclusion of the views and opinions of children in setting priority needs and how to address them**. However, the community based organisations at village level and both Plan and partner staff expressed that it is **difficult to engage with the most vulnerable community categories** (D and E[12]). There is thus a risk that partnerships do not reflect the diversity in Plan's target communities. This is being realised by Plan and its partners (at least those met during the assessment) and special attention is given to the Community Development Forums/Committees to take into account the interests of the poor and marginalized.

## Partnerships are broad based and include key stakeholders right from the beginning

In general partnerships include key stakeholders right from the beginning. Plan's partners work with CBOs and different Management Committees (e.g. School Management or Clinic Management Committees). They also relate to and involve government stakeholders, though it is recently being realised by Plan that they should **strengthen and expand its engagement with local government authorities to strengthen their performance as a duty bearer**.

Partnerships provide opportunities for the major partners and key stakeholders to meet and reflect on project progress and challenges. The Annual Participatory Programme Review provide Plan and its partners for joint learning opportunities: all major stakeholders at community level including members of the Union Parishod are engaged.

## *Involving powerful champions and making initiatives visible to the wider public*

**A strategic communications plan to seek regular contact with media or engage with high profile leaders is not part of the partnership 'agreement'**. This appears to happen on an ad hoc basis though it constitutes a crucially important element for the adoption of the working models developed by Plan and its partners in national policies. High profile leaders do visit Plan operational

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[12] Community wealth ranking exercises are done with five wealth groups being established: 'A' is the richest wealth category and 'E' the poorest.

areas with Plan playing a crucial role in establishing the necessary contacts (most often directly via the Union Parishod and National Institute for Local Governance).

Lobby and advocacy is an important aspect of the partnerships. For example, the Assistance for Slum Dwellers actively seeks to get its work acknowledged by the press in local newspapers. Not necessarily is Plan acknowledged as an important partner in such endeavours as Plan does not have a policy for its local partners to acknowledge Plan's support to make the work of its partners possible.

Plan and its partners do **invite individuals having the authority to make decisions, commit resources, and influence public policy** but Plan staff felt this could be done in more systemically way and not on a ad hoc basis. Partners make use of their own networks in connecting to influential people.

## Clear governance structures defining partner roles and responsibilities

Partnerships do not have a designated chairperson to move the joint agenda forward. Plan enters into agreements with its partners by signing **a standard MoU defining partner roles and responsibilities**. PU Managers and the director of partner agencies are central in keeping the joint agenda.

Compared with established relationships with the more strategic partners partnerships with smaller NGOs that operate locally can present a challenge as often they need organisational support and expertise in community mobilisation to perform their roles and responsibilities.

## Adherence to a set of ground rules guiding the partnership

**Ground rules are defined in the MoU** signed between Plan and its partner and **includes financial procedures, monitoring and important thematic issues such as child protection**. MoUs are developed by Plan based on prior experience with working in partnerships, they are not informed by the partner organisations themselves.

Living up to the ground rules does present serious challenges particularly for smaller NGOs and those NGOs receiving funding from multiple donors making it difficult for them to live up to Plan's expectations as laid down in the MoU.

## Partnerships are flexible and adapt to conditions and resources

Partnerships do not subscribe to a continues improvement process in assessing their work effectiveness and in adapting to changing conditions and resources. Partnerships are based on clearly defined goals and outputs by adopting a CCCD approach.

Plan's more strategic partners have started to adopt CCCD which has enabled them to employ participatory child oriented approaches while the annual programme review is instrumental to adapt to changing conditions. Partners seek active community contribution in operating their programmes and can be pro-active in sourcing additional financial resources (e.g. Radda and ASD).

**Programmes of smaller partners can be almost completely dependent on Plan's financial support**. Withdrawing its financial support the partner will cease its activities. For example, Plan provides support to a local organisation in its rural PU to develop and perform child theatre to raise awareness about child rights and issues such as child marriage and the unjust dowry system. When such a partner phases out sensitisation and awareness raising issues become dependent on the interest and capacity of the communities themselves and in particular on the Community Development Fora/Committees.

Therefore **sustainability of particular interventions should not be taken for granted**. Reportedly this also counts for the much-appraised CLTS model with serious questions being raised about its

sustainability by a joint Plan Bangladesh/University of Sussex study (shortly to be released by Plan Bangladesh).

## Enable all partners to benefit by drawing on their strength and contributions

One of the key concerns voiced by Plan staff is that **most of Plan's partners do not invest resources (whether in kind or financial) in the projects raising serious doubts about the sustainability of some projects**. Plan has trained its partners in seeking additional resources from alternative sources including other NGOs/donor agencies and the government.

It is important to note that as part of the CCCD process the community makes an inventory of the resources it commands. Whatever activity Plan supports, either directly or via its partners, there is a **significant community contribution** (either in monetary form or in kind or a combination of both).

## Maintain momentum and sustain work over time

**Most partnerships have not developed a multi-year revenue strategy**. This is surprising as Plan's strategy is to link rights holders with duty bearers in such a way that this relationship does not (entirely) depends on Plan's resources.

Again there is a big difference across the wide range of partnerships which Plan entertains. An agency like RADDA has managed to raise a considerable financial contribution from its target communities with beneficiaries paying for services up to their capability (as such Radda now generates most of its own income to cover operational expenses). On the other hand ASD, in operating the child drop in centres, has very little opportunity to raise income from its activities. These are service oriented and one can't expect street children or their parents to make a financial contribution for running the drop in centres and providing services in those (such as health related services and counselling).

Community Development Fora/Committees, with which most of Plan's partners work closely together, are very aware regarding the dependence on outside resources for continuation of programme activities. Programme beneficiaries make available in kind as well as financial contributions according to what they can afford. They do raise substantial 'local income' but will remain dependent on either the local government or local organisations for major investments such as for example infrastructure.


## 6.4   Findings and Recommendations

Plan has engaged with a variety of partners ranging from small local NGOs for direct project implementation to more long-term strategic partnerships with established national NGOs or NGOs having the interest and potential to mature in the area of CCCD. This has resulted in the adoption of CCCD by some of its strategic partners. Increased awareness on child rights and the importance of child participation in the development arena has resulted in several partner NGO developing child-sensitive operational guidelines and child protection policies.

Recommendation:

> ➢ There is a need for Plan Bangladesh to develop an elaborate partnership policy distinguishing between operational partnerships, strategic alliances and networks in furthering the CCCD for which there is undoubtedly a need in Bangladesh.


Prior to the 1998/99 CCCD pilot in Bangladesh Plan-Bangladesh did not structurally engage with neither NGO nor government partners. The assessment found that Plan has made major progress in establishing partnerships with both NGOs and local government proving that CCCD has the ability to

foster meaningful relationships between rights holders and duty bearers. Plan has been instrumental in the adoption of Universal Birth Registration, Community Led Total Sanitation, Early Childhood Development and Community Clinics in Bangladesh official government policy.

However, in light of earlier assessment reports (e.g. by Alan Fowler in 2003) there remains a concern with regard to Plan's involvement with government stakeholders.

Recommendation:

> Plan should strengthen and expand its engagement with local government authorities to strengthen their performance as duty bearers.

Plan has developed good child oriented resource materials, which have been tested in various settings in Bangladesh. This is a highly valuable resource which given some further attention can be further utilised in promoting child centred community development beyond Plan's current set of direct partners.

# 7   References

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# Annexes

# Annex 1   Terms of Reference

## *Introduction*

PLAN NLNO has in co-ordination with PLAN IH commissioned Wageningen International to carry out an independent formative evaluation study to get systematic insight in the preconditions for appropriate functionality of CCCD and strengthen common understanding. As part of the evaluation two field validation exercises will be implemented. For more information reference is made to the ToR of the strategic evaluation mission.  One of the countries selected for the field validation exercise is Bangladesh.

The evaluation has a clear forward-looking focus, attempting to provide strategic insights that Plan Netherlands, and possibly other offices in Plan, can use to identify appropriate future strategies to strengthen partnership and collaboration in CCCD.

The validation exercise will take place at four levels:

- The Country Office – overall strategic outlook

- The Programme Unit (one or two to be chosen) – application of CCCD strategies in particular settings

- Plan partners – understanding role of partners in developing and implementing CCCD (part. partnership and ownership)

- Beneficiaries/clients/community partners – understanding of CCCD and impact of CCCD ('the difference CCCD makes for them as compared with 'former' Plan projects).

The consultant will seek to understand perspectives on and practice in CCCD at those four levels. At the country level, the focus will be on the overall strategic outlook at programme unit level at the application of CCCD strategies in a particular setting, and at Plan partner level, the focus will be on understanding the role of partners in developing and implementing CCCD (including partnership/ownership issues). The understanding of CCCD and its impact will be the focus as beneficiary level.

## *Key themes to be explored*

### 1. The Understanding and Perception of the CCCD approach

a.   What is the perception of CCCD?

b.   How has CCCD changed Plan's programme and what is the importance of this?

c.   What have been the main CCCD events/stepping stones in the organisation (tracking the general development of introducing/operationalising CCCD)

d.   Capturing CCCD enablers/disablers

### 2. Strengths and Weaknesses of the CCCD approach

a.   What has been working particularly well? What is that people are proud of? How could the wider PLAN organisation benefit of this experience?

b. What have been the challenges? How have these been addressed and what has been the level of success of these efforts?

### 3. CCCD as an approach to development

a. stocktaking of what CCCD has brought to the programme

b. Documentation of lessons learned

c. Documentation of good practise

d. Capturing CCCD enablers/disablers ~ PLAN internal/external matrix

### 4. CCCD capacity development needs

a. These will partly come out of the strengths/weaknesses analysis

b. Issues will be explored that have come out of the strengths/weaknesses expressed by staff at IH, NLNO, RO, CO

### 5. Exploration of particular issues (in line with key challenges identified in discussions with Plan IH, NLNO, Regional staff)

a. CCCD as a rights based approach. Mapping out concept, framing of operational response and practise.

b. Partnerships at various levels: regional (at the level of the Regional Office); national or in-country; locally. Coherence of these partnerships in terms, for example, lobby and advocacy.

c. Participation and child rights.

d. Pre-PALS and PALS PM&E system to monitor programme implementation and critical aspects of CCCD (such as nature/level of participation, capacity building, partnerships, lobby & advocacy) as well as to measure impact (both outcome and process).

e. Inclusion and focus on vulnerable groups.

f. Need for capacity building for applying RbA – how is this being done/operationalised?

g. How is the role of NLNO perceived? What are the strong points? What about 'partnering' and 'building capacity of CSOs?

These themes will be explored mainly through semi-structured interviews, sometimes with individuals, sometimes as group discussions.

## *Draft agenda for the visit*

1. Meetings at the Country Office with key staff involved in the development of, strategizing for and M&E of CCCD – two days

2. Visit to one or two representative programme units (bearing in mind time limitations) and meetings with same kind of staff as met at country level, but now at programme unit level – two days

3. Meeting a number of key partners that Plan works with, preferably different in nature of partnership/length of partnership to discuss CCCD-related matters – one day (possibly part of PU visit)

4. Meeting with senior staff when back from the field, to discuss tentative findings for cross-check and complementation – one day

One reserve day to allow for flexibility.

## *Collection of relevant materials*

To allow for focused discussions and further exploration after leaving Bangladesh, it would be helpful if the following types of documents would be available. If they (or part of them) could be sent by email before the visit, that would be wonderful!

At Country level:

- Country Strategy Paper and policy docs
- CCCD strategy and operational docs/guidelines/training materials
- Lessons learned, best practise (if such docs are available)
- Organogram and reporting structures (role of CO in PM&E)
- Assessments and project documents
- Lists of partners/partnerships (if possible with brief description of partner)
- Recent and current innovations related to CCCD

At PU level:

- Project proposals, evaluations
- Organogram and reporting structures (role of CO in PM&E)
- CCCD operationalisation-related documentation

## *Evaluator*

Mr. Jan-Gerrit van Uffelen will represent Wageningen International as consultant in this mission.

# Annex 2   Itinerary and Key Persons Interviewed

| Date | Time | Component |
|---|---|---|
| Wednesday August 5 | | |
| | 14.00-14.45 | Meeting with Syed Matlubar Rashid (Organisational Development Advisor) and Sabber Ahmed (Organisation Development Specialist) |
| | 14.45-15.00 | Meeting MD Anwar Hossain Shikder, Acting Country Representative |
| | 15.00-16.45 | FGD CCCD champions |
| | 17.00-17.30 | Meeting |
| Thursday 6th | | |
| | 9.00-9.45 | Introductionary meeting with senior staff Dhaka urban PU |
| | 10.30-11.15 | Visit Clinic (Plan/Radda) at block C of Bawniabad slum |
| | 11.30-12.15 | Visit vocational education centre (Plan UCEP) in Bawniabad |
| | 12.15-12.30 | Visit primary school (Plan – Surovi) at Block D of Bawniabad slum |
| | 12.30-13.45 | Meeting with Bawniabad Community Development Forum |
| | 14.00-14.20 | Lunch at Radda |
| | 14.20-15.00 | Meeting with Director and senior management staff of Radda |
| | 15.30-16.30 | Visiting Drop In Centre (Plan –ASD) |
| | 16.30-18.00 | Discussions in car |
| Friday 7th | | |
| | | Reporting |
| Saturday 8th | | |
| | 7.00-16.30 | Travel from Dhaka to Saidpur |
| | 18.00-19.45 | Meeting senior management Plan Partner's Dinajpur Program Unit (Mozaffar Hossain and Meraz Uddin Talukdar of SUPK and Ziaul Alammilton, MD Jakir Hossen and MD Mosnuz Parvaz of Bohubrihy) |
| Sunday 9th | | |
| | 8.30-12.30 | Visiting pre-school and discussing early childhood development |
| | | Meeting with the Communcity Development Committee in Ranipur |
| | | Interview UNO Administrator |
| | 13.30-18.00 | Meeting with Union Parishod officials and meeting with child organisation and performance |
| Monday 10th | | |
| | 8.30-13.30 | Visiting Community Clinic and Safe Delivery unit, homeopathic programme and visit to Baladangi environment friendly model village |
| | 14.30-16.30 | Meeting frontline staff (around 8 people) |
| | 16.30-17.30 | Meeting senior management staff and frontline staff (around 20 people) |
| | 17.30-18.00 | Meeting selected senior management and frontline staff (around 8 people) |
| Tuesday 11th | | |
| | 7.00-16.00 | Travel Saidpur to Dhaka |
| | 16.30-18.00 | Preparing for discussions and debrief |
| Wednesday 12th | | |
| | 9.00-17.00 | Debriefing meetings at Plan's Dhaka Office |
| | 21.00 | Departure for Dubai |

## Key Persons Interviewed

### Plan Bangladesh

| | |
|---|---|
| Sabber Ahmed | Organization Development Specialist - CCCD |
| Syed Matlubar Rashid | Organisation Development Advisor |
| Mohammed Masud | Program Unit Manager Dhaka North |
| Md. Abdul Mannan | Program Unit Manager Khansama |
| Farukh Ahmed | Program Co-ordinator Enabling Environment |
| Mohammed Mohsin | Regional ECCD Advisor Plan Asia Region – 'ECCD' volgens zijn business kaart, weet niet waar het voor staat! Wellicht is CCCD korrekt! |
| Debashish Saha | Human Resource Manager |
| Tushar Quader Haq | Sponsorship & Grants Support Manager |
| Area Co-ordinators | Various |

### NGO Partners – PU's

| | |
|---|---|
| Hassan Imam Khandaker | Project Manager Assistance for Slum Dwellers |
| Dr. Mohiuddin Kamal | Executive Director Radda |
| Dr. Iqbal Jillul Majid | Director Community Health Programme Radda |
| Representatives and various staff members | Surovi (quality basic education for urban children) and UCEP (technical school project). |
| Representatives and various staff members | Rural PU |

### Local Government

| | |
|---|---|
| At sub-district and Union Parishod level | Various |

### Community/CBO level

| | |
|---|---|
| CBO | Various |

# Annex 3. Strength-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Constraints (SWOC) Analysis Plan Bangladesh Staff

As part of the country study a first workshop was organized upon arrival in Plan's Dhaka office bringing together a small group of around six management staff with about half of them being labelled as CCCD champions by Plan's Asia-RO. A Strength-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Constraints (SWOC) analysis was carried out with findings being discussed, reflected upon and documented.

These insights were validated by visiting the urban and rural Programme Units both in discussions with Plan staff, partner agencies and beneficiary groups. The findings therefore represent the understanding of CCCD in general by both Plan staff and its partners.

## Strengths

The following strengths were identified:

1. CCCD is **a rights based approach** and as such is not addressing symptoms but addresses root causes (resulting in more sustainable outcomes);

2. CCCD represents an **important and necessary step within Plan-Bangladesh** to move away from direct resource transfers targeted to selected individual beneficiaries to a more holistic approach benefiting groups of people/communities;

3. **Children are key stakeholders and do participate in programme design and implementation**, as such CCCD creates opportunities for children to participate in development initiatives;

4. Has **enabled Plan to adopt a pro-poor focus** (the poor are not covered well by other agencies) to facilitate them in identifying their needs and informing their development agenda;

5. Plan used to be the driving force behind projects ('*Plan basically telling people: your need is water*') but now that **communities have been sensitised and have learned to analyse their situation they are in the driving seat themselves**.

6. **Engaging with both rights holders and duty bearers** (Union Parishod, children and their caregivers/parents and civil society sub-providers) and creating functional linkages;

7. Is **primarily process oriented** (capacity building of people and institutions) and not action oriented;

8. CCCD has **facilitated ownership by communities** ('*we have done this by ourselves*') and with increased ownership there are indications that sustainability of project results has been enhanced, and;

9. It is a **long term development approach** well away form the traditional 2 to 3 year project cycles focusing on direct inputs and individual outcomes;

10. There has been a **shift from beneficiary groups from claiming inputs of material recourses towards requesting technical support**;

11. **Has provided room and space for particular the girl child and women to express their opinions and to be heard**. It is because of the '*uniqueness of CCCD that women are no longer ignored, children participate in programme design and implementation with Plan's focus on the entire community*'; and;

12. CCCD has **opened up the way for piloting entirely new programme approaches** such as the Community Led Total Sanitation Project.

It is clear that **CCCD in Bangladesh lives up to the expectations when it was adopted in 2003**. All key components of the CCCD 'definition' are positively associated with the perceived strengths of the CCCD.

CCCD is a rights based approach (see statement 1 above) in which children, families and communities (statement 2) are active and leading participants in their own development (statement 3 to 5). It enhances their capacity and opportunity to work together with others (statements 6 to 10) to address structural causes and consequences of child poverty at all levels (statements 11 and 12).

## Weaknesses

The following weaknesses were identified (not being presented in any particular order of importance):

- **CCCD is a time consuming process and it is difficult to demonstrate impact** as, for example, building people's capacity is difficult to make visible and (behavioural) changes hard to measure and quantify.

- Initially the CCCD process at community level was very lengthy which forced Plan to minimise the process. A more compact process has served both donors (wanting to see impact) and enhanced opportunities for the most poor and vulnerable to participate (they have little time to commit to the process spending most time on securing basic livelihoods).

- **Most donors are still traditionalist in that their funding time frames**, typically in the order of two to three years, are too short for CCCD as it takes time for tangible impacts to be demonstrated.

- **CCCD has not been adopted by all of Plan's partner NGOs** particularly the local ones as they employ a project approach focusing on the delivery of services and limited by nature in time.

- Plan in **employing CCCD concentrates on NGOs and local communities as partners and much less so on governmental bodies**. There is a general understanding with Plan-Bangladesh that work with local government structures should be strengthened and broadened.

## Opportunities

The following opportunities were identified:

- Plan's institutionalised annual reflection process (Most Significant Change tool and case studies) has managed to **capture/measure behavioural change and has further potential to document good practise and lessons learned**.

- In working with local government structures and implementing its CCCD approach Plan has the opportunity to **lobby for incorporation of participatory rights based approaches via the National Institute for Local Governance**. This can be further exploited as a strategy to scale up Plan's work.

- One of the key donors to the Bangladeshi government, **the World Bank, promotes further decentralisation of government structures** and is, partly due to lobby and advocacy work

by Plan, aware of the need for local governance to adopt participatory approaches for which resources will be made available.

## Challenges

Challenges were identified as well, the main ones being:

- **Inclusion of the ultra poor in the Plan programmes is difficult** due to serious time constraints as the ultra poor commit all their time ins struggling to secure basic livelihoods.

- Though Plan strives to work with entire communities **the well off** in such communities **are often not on board due to a lack of interest**.

- As Plan is often not the only organisation working with particular communities the experience has been that **other NGOs are not so much interested in participatory approaches** which can have a negative impact on Plan's approach.

- **Local government structures** do exist at local level but are in practise difficult to work with because of very **limited capacity**.

- Literate and conscious people will be supportive of the CCCD approach and by raising their voices via local government structures and MPs contribute to the creation of an accountability mechanism. Though in itself this is a positive development there is an inherent risk for the government to view such developments as **potentially challenging government authority** and political interests.

- Though Plan trains communities – via the CBOs it is setting up - in exploring to mobilise resources from other institutions the experience is that **communities tend to rely on Plan**

- **Are duty bearers able and ready to respect their obligations**?

- Plan is getting many requests from the government, other NGOs and communities to get involved – **how to meet those expectations**?