



Indigenous and Dalit Peoples of Bangladesh: ***Challenges and Way Forward for Inclusion in Rights and Services***

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Preface

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) works with a vision of Bangladesh where government, politics, businesses, civil society and people's lives will be free from the influence of corruption, and all government, private and non-government organisations (NGOs) will run their operations with transparency, accountability and integrity. To that end TIB has been dedicating its efforts towards building a strong and effective social movement to prevent corruption and ensure good governance in the country by undertaking research, advocacy and civic engagement initiatives.

This study on **“Indigenous and Dalit Peoples of Bangladesh: Challenges and Way Forward for Inclusion in Rights and Services”** is aimed at assessing governance challenges with respect to access of Indigenous and Dalit peoples of Bangladesh to rights and entitlements in terms of basic public services. TIB has been motivated to undertake this study by its commitment to address governance challenges having particular relevance to the disadvantaged and marginalized section of the people of Bangladesh. It is particularly prompted by Bangladesh's constitutional pledge of equal opportunity of all citizens (Art 19.1) and non-discrimination irrespective of sex, religion, race, ethnicity or any other marker of identity (Art 19.2, 28.1). Bangladesh's commitment to Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs, the main thrust of which is to ‘Leave No One Behind’ from the process and benefits of development and social change has also provided the issue further contextual relevance and importance.

This study reveals that there are various forms of discriminatory elements in the laws and practices of basic rights and public services, which are resulting in exclusion or at best limited access to rights and entitlements of the Indigenous and Dalit peoples due to their identity. Deprivation of rights and exclusion of basic public service provisions often taken place through instances of denial of services, harassment, unauthorized payments, exclusion from development schemes and access to natural resources, bias in mediation of disputes, etc. The study findings suggest that if some transformative initiatives including affirmative actions are not taken along with effective measures to address the identified challenges are enforced, reproduction of their poverty, exclusion and marginalisation will be inevitable. Thus, the main aspiration of SDGs i.e., to ‘Leave No One Behind’ will remain a far cry. TIB is hereby recommending a number of measure to be able to prevent that eventuality.

This study has made us indebted to a number of stakeholder, who provided commendable cooperation in various forms at different stages of the research, without which it would have not been possible. We are grateful to Professor Muhammad Shuaib of University of Dhaka, Professor Dr. Ainoon Naher of Jahangirnagar University, Mr. Zakir Hossain of Nagorik Uddyog, Mr. Sanjib Drong of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, and Mr. Rizwanul Karim of Manusher Jonno Foundation for their advice at the preliminary stages of the study. We are particularly grateful to Prof Muhammad Shuaib for his guidance on the research method and Prof Dr. Ainoon Naher for her contribution to strengthening our team's ethnographic data collection capacity.

Our sincere gratitude goes to the respondents of the study, especially the Indigenous and Dalit respondents whose cooperation in field data collection made the study possible. We also convey our gratitude to the public officials at national and local levels, especially the Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Social Work, Directorate of Primary Education, Department of Health, Department of Family Planning, Ministry of Land, Local Government Department, and so on, for their invaluable cooperation.

I congratulate Abu Said Md. Juel Miah, Senior Programme Manager, Md. Mostafa Kamal, Deputy Programme Manager, and Md. Khurshed Alam, Deputy Programme Manager of Research and Policy division for conducting the study, and thank other colleagues across various other divisions and units of TIB for their support including feedback and suggestions in various stages of the study. Prof. Dr. Sumaiya Khair, Advisor Executive Management, and Mohammad Rafiqul Hassan, Director Research and Policy of TIB supervised the overall research process and provided necessary guidance.

We hope that the relevant authorities and other stakeholders would find this study useful. Any suggestions and feedback are warmly welcome.

Iftekharuzzaman
Executive Director

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Abbreviations

AC (Land)	Assistant Commissioner (Land)
AUEO	Assistant Upazila Education Officer
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCC	Behavioural Change Communication
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
BHSP	Bangladesh Health Sector Programme
CC	Community Clinics
CHTs	Chittagong Hill Tracts
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFID	Department for International Development
DGFP	Directorate General of Family Planning
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DSS	Department of Social Services
DRIP	Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTPP	Framework for Tribal Peoples Plan
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGD	Local Government Division
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoL	Ministry of Land
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MPO	Monthly Payment Order
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
REB	Rural Electrification Board

SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMC	School Management Committee
SSN	Social Safety Net
SSS	Social Security System
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
TR	Test Relief
UDC	Union Digital Centre
UEO	Upazila Education Officer
UHC	Upazila Health Complex
UN	United Nations
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UP	Union Parishad
USSO	Upazila Social Service Officer
VGD	Vulnerability Group Development
VGf	Vulnerability Group Feeding

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background

A situation of inequality, discrimination, exclusion, and deprivation prevails in Bangladesh, in their diverse forms, which impacts on a significant portion of population due to their historical identities and marginalised positions in society (Roy, 2002; Shafie & Kilby, 2003; Goswami, 2004; Dyrhagen & Islam, 2006; Foley & Chowdhury, 2007; Ahsan & Burnip, 2007; Sarker & Davey, 2007; Nasreen & Tate, 2007; Bal, 2007; Zohir *et al*, 2008; Ali, 2013; Ali, 2014; MJF, 2016). This has remained as a bewildering scenario, although the Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees some concrete directives to establish social and economic justice in every spheres of society. The directives provide that all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law (Article 27); State shall endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens (Article 19.1); State shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality and to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens, and of opportunities (Article 19.2); State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities (Article 23A); State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Article 28.1).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United States provides that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Article 1). The Agenda 2030 i.e. the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reiterates the spirit of establishing dignity of individuals as fundamental human right. The overarching idea of Agenda 2030 is to achieve its goals and targets equitably for all nations and people and for all segments of society. Thus, the main vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) appears as 'Leaving No One Behind'.

The member states of the United Nations (UN) are committed to reach first those who are farthest behind. The children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants are some of the vulnerable groups specified in the Agenda 2030. This list is quite larger for Bangladesh – alongside the vulnerable groups specified above, here include women, *dalits*, religious minorities, tea garden workers, sex workers, transgender persons, and so on. These marginalised people can be categorised into different groups by different heterogeneous circumstances such as occupation, minority situation, people living in extreme vulnerable or hard to reach areas, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (MJF, 2016).

A few of the above-mentioned groups experience severe forms of marginalisation and vulnerability due to their identities as minorities, determined by ethnicity and traditional caste system. Indigenous peoples (IPs) and *dalits* are two such groups in Bangladesh who are victims of various forms of exclusion, which they experience while interacting in society and getting formal institutional services. The IPs have barriers in accessing natural resources.

Moreover, their distinct languages and cultural practices appear as barriers in attaining public services. In the plain lands, the IPs are socially isolated with little access to mainstream economic and political spheres. The complexity arises from ethnic inequality, long-term discrimination, lack of education, little access to land, food, water and lack of employment, which resulted in increased poverty amongst these indigenous groups (Ali, 2013). On the other hand, *dalits* are largely economically marginalised and socially excluded groups in Bangladesh. They have been facing inadequate access to healthcare and education as well as lack of housing, employment opportunity and access to political spheres (Khan and Hossain, 2012; Dyrhagen and Islam, 2006 in Ali, 2013).

1.2 IPs and dalits in Bangladesh

1.2.1 IPs

The Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutes Act, 2010 terms the indigenous peoples as small ethnic groups, however, does not provide with a concrete definition of the IPs living in Bangladesh. The United Nations states, “Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples”¹. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday September 13, 2007 provides prominence to the collective rights of the IPs to a degree unprecedented in international human rights law².

In May 2016, the fifteenth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) affirmed that the IPs, also termed aboriginal people, native people, or autochthonous people, are distinctive groups protected in international or national legislation as having a set of specific rights based on their linguistic and historical ties to a particular territory, prior to later settlement, development, and or occupation of a region. The session affirms that since IPs are vulnerable to exploitation, marginalisation, oppression, forced assimilation, and genocide by nation states formed from colonizing populations or by politically dominant, different ethnic groups, special protection of individuals and communities maintaining ways of life indigenous to their regions, are entitled to special protection (Wikipedia, 2018³).

According to the National Population Census 2011, the country’s indigenous population is approximately 1,586,141 (BBS, 2011). However, the indigenous peoples’ forums of Bangladesh claim that their population is over three million (Roy and Chakma, 2015⁴). Through the Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutes Act, 2010, the Government of Bangladesh mentions the name of only 27 ethnic minority groups of Bangladesh. However, the indigenous peoples’ forums of Bangladesh claim that Bangladesh is home of more than 54 distinct ethnic groups who speak at least 35 languages, along with the majority of the

¹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us.html> (Last accessed on 11 October 2018)

² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us.html> (Last accessed on 11 October 2018)

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Bangladesh (Last accessed on 10 October 2018)

⁴ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_447669.pdf (Last accessed on 10 October 2018)

Bengali population (Roy and Chakma, 2015⁵). The IPs recognised through law are Oraon, Koch, Kol, Khumi, Khasi, Khyang, Garo, Chak, Chakma, Dalu, Tanchangya, Tripura, Pankhua, Paharia, Bawm, Barman, Mro, Munda, Monipuri, Marma, Rakhaine, Lusai, Santal, and Hajong. Approximately 80% of the indigenous population lives in the plain land districts of the north and southeast of the country, while the rest reside in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs)⁶. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has taken an initiative to revise the law by involving an ‘expert’ panel on IPs in Bangladesh. The Ministry has come up with a draft that proposes the inclusion of Mahato, Kondo, Gonju, Gorat/Gorait, Malo, Teli, Patro, Banai, Bagdi, Bediya, Baraik, Bhumij, Mushohor, Mahali, Rajoar, Lohar, Shabar, Hadi, Ho, Kora, Bheel, Bhumali, and Gurkha (MoHFW, 2017).

1.2.2 Dalits

The Dalit Manual 2013 of the Government of Bangladesh defines *dalits* those who are identified as *dalits* and do not make any reservation to introduce themselves as *dalits*. The Manual further states that *dalit* communities are involved in cleaning and other essential service related activities. Although the *Harijans* are regarded as the part of *dalit* people, the Manual differentiates them by stating that these communities are regarded as ‘untouchable’ and involved in cleaning activities. The Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020 of the Government of Bangladesh states that *dalit* status is historically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure. These groups of people, as imposed on them the stigma of untouchability, have limited social, economic and employment opportunities to interact with the mainstream. The Plan recognises that the *dalit* communities are some of the most economically marginalised and socially excluded groups of Bangladesh.

The number of *dalit* communities as well as their total population are not yet officially calculated. The government documents have dissimilarities in counting their numbers and population. For example, the Seventh Five Year Plan states that there are over 30 different *dalit* groups in Bangladesh, representing 4.5-5.5 million of the country’s population. However, the Department of Social Services (DSS) states that there are about 1,432,749 *dalit* people living in Bangladesh⁷. The DSS mentions some name of the *dalit* communities, which include Jele, Sanyasi, Rishi, Behara, Napit, Dhopa, Hazam, Nikari, Patni, Kaora, Teli, Patikar, Banshor, Domar, Raut, Telegu, Hela, Hari, Lalbegi, Balmiki, Dom, etc.

Most of the *dalit* communities, particularly the untouchables among the Hindus in Bangladesh, are the descendants of Indians from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh (Kanpur, Hamirbag, and Jobbalpur), Andhra Pradesh and many other parts like Gourakpur, Chapra, Uriya, Maddarpur, Baliha, Patna, Motihari, and Bhagalpur (Zaman, 2001). The major Hindu *dalits* include Bansphor, Dom, Hadi/Hela, Domer, Lalbegi/Vulmiki, Kolu, Pasi, Rishi/Muchi/Chamar, Harijon/Methor, Mala, Madiga, Sabari, Chakli, Jalodas, Bede, Sutradhar, Karmakar, Kulal/Kuar/Kumor, Jugi, Napit, Sharnakar, Goala, Dhopa, Bainna Bede, Mali, Masuwara, Tanti, Mushaheries, Dholak and so on (Chowdhury, 2009).

⁵ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_447669.pdf (Last accessed on 10 October 2018)

⁶ <https://www.iwgia.org/en/bangladesh> (last accessed on 10 October 2018)

⁷ <http://www.dss.gov.bd/site/page/909e2813-4cbf-49a8-81bf-12366bb20ee4/বেদে-ও-অনগ্রসর-জনগোষ্ঠীর-জীবনমান-উন্নয়ন> (Last accessed on 11 October 2018). However, the DSS officials informed that they asked their upazila level line office to provide numbers of dalits. They estimated the numbers based on the data received from the upazila offices. The upazila offices did not conduct any formal census on the dalit population. Rather they collected the numbers by applying informal tools and sources.

1.2 Objective and research questions

The objective of this study is to examine how much the basic public service provisions are inclusive for the marginalised people especially the IPs and *dalits* of Bangladesh. The following research questions have guided the research to meet the research objective:

- How much the relevant laws, policies and practices of basic public service delivery institutions are inclusive for IPs and *dalits* of Bangladesh?
- What are the challenges of fulfilling rights and ensuring inclusive service delivery for the IPs and *dalits* of Bangladesh?

1.3 Rationale of the study

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has commissioned this research in view of some rationales. Firstly, in line with SDGs' thrust of 'Leaving No One Behind', it has come to an understanding that there is an importance of flagging out those who are vulnerable to remaining left behind. TIB has assumed that there are some potential risks of leaving behind the marginalised communities of Bangladesh if the risks are not exposed and discussed widely. Moreover, TIB has realised that the marginalised communities like IPs and *dalits* are vulnerable to remaining left behind due to their identities. Secondly, literature indicate that there are researches on different forms of social exclusion that the IPs and *dalits* are experiencing in Bangladesh for generations. However, literature also suggest that there is dearth of research-based knowledge on the extent and nature of violation of rights and discrimination in public service delivery institutions experienced by them due to their identities. Thirdly, TIB's priority areas include different service sectors, in which the people especially the vulnerable and marginalised groups experience corruption in attaining services – through this study TIB endeavours to shed light on the discrimination, exclusion and corruption in service sectors focusing on the experiences of IPs and *dalits*. TIB also intends to propose practicable policy suggestions for attaining inclusive public service provisions.

1.4 Scope of the study

This study includes two major marginalised groups—IPs and *dalits*. In Bangladesh, there are many marginalised groups as indicated earlier. However, these two groups experience some tangible and intangible exclusion in society, economy as well as political and cultural spheres. This study also reflects on the vulnerable groups within these communities such as women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, and so on. This is to mention that this study has covered only IPs living in the plain land districts, considering that there are some contextual dissimilarities between the IPs living in the plain lands and the CHTs. For *dalits*, the study considers the communities experiencing exclusions due to their caste based lower identities. This study enquires into major laws, policies and practices of five basic service sectors—education, health, land, social safety net schemes, and Local Government Institutions (LGIs), considering their contribution in building human capabilities and social securities.

I.5 Ethical considerations

As per TIB policy, this report does not disclose any name and other identical features of the respondents, with the intention that their lives must not face any threat from corrupt officials of the public service delivery agencies and their collaborators. Moreover, this report does not indicate directly any name and designation of any officials involved in discriminatory and corrupt practices in dealing with IPs and *dalits*; rather this report tends to indicate how the IPs and *dalits* experience rights violation, discrimination, exclusion and corruption while attaining services from different public offices.

I.6 Limitations of the study

The report does not generalise the experiences of corruption that all IPs and dalits living in Bangladesh are facing in attaining basic public services. However, this report provides an indicative reality of the situation prevailing in the service sectors. The reality largely covers the policy and practices of providing services to the marginalised people especially the IPs and *dalits* based on their life experiences.

I.7 Structure of the report

The report consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background, objective, scope, rationales, ethical considerations and limitations of this research. The second section provides the ins and outs of methodological procedures that the research has followed in its every stage. The main part of the report has been delivered in third chapter, which covers the affirmative actions for the IPs and dalits, limitations and challenges in laws and policies, gaps in fulfilment of rights, discriminatory practices in service delivery, and deficits in integrity practices in providing basic public services to the IPs and dalits. An overall analysis and discussion of the research findings have been roomed in the fourth chapter, which reflects on the consequences on the lives of the IPs and dalits. The last, but not the least, chapter provides conclusions of the study alongside proposes a set of recommendations for relevant stakeholders.

Chapter 2

Methodology

2.1 Theoretical framework

Social exclusion is a multidimensional process and outcomes of unjust social relations and organisational barriers created for a portion of individuals or groups due to their social identities and locations. Social exclusion reproduces poverty and injustice (DFID, 2005). Social exclusion is one of the major structural causes of poverty. It starts with boundary marking for the powerless groups and instilled in the social processes, which eventually makes poverty and inequality durable (Mosse, 2010). Social exclusion entraps people and throws them into the similar conditions of poverty trap (Silver, 2007). However, conventional agendas for poverty eradication address those social structural issues inadequately (Sobhan, 2017).

Powerful groups in a society create social exclusion and impose it on the groups those are powerless. The excluded groups get degraded identities – their social mobility also gets restricted. Their access to and control over natural resources and public services are denied. This restriction demonstrates in social relationships, which leads to blocking participation of the excluded people in economic, social, and cultural lives – they also experience exclusion from dignified lives and livelihoods. The excluded people also experience deprivation of getting equal treatment from the social and political institutions (Silver, 2007). This situation leads to capability deprivation of the excluded people (Sen, 2000).

The theoretical framework of this study bases on these ideas of Sen (1999), DFID (2006), and Mosse (2010). The ideas state that:

- Marginalisation leads to exclusion and eventually to multiple burden of corruption.
- Lack of inclusive policy on public service delivery induces the practices of exclusion and different forms of corruption.
- Experiences of corruption lead to deprivation and eventually to incapability to fight poverty i.e. reproduction of poverty.

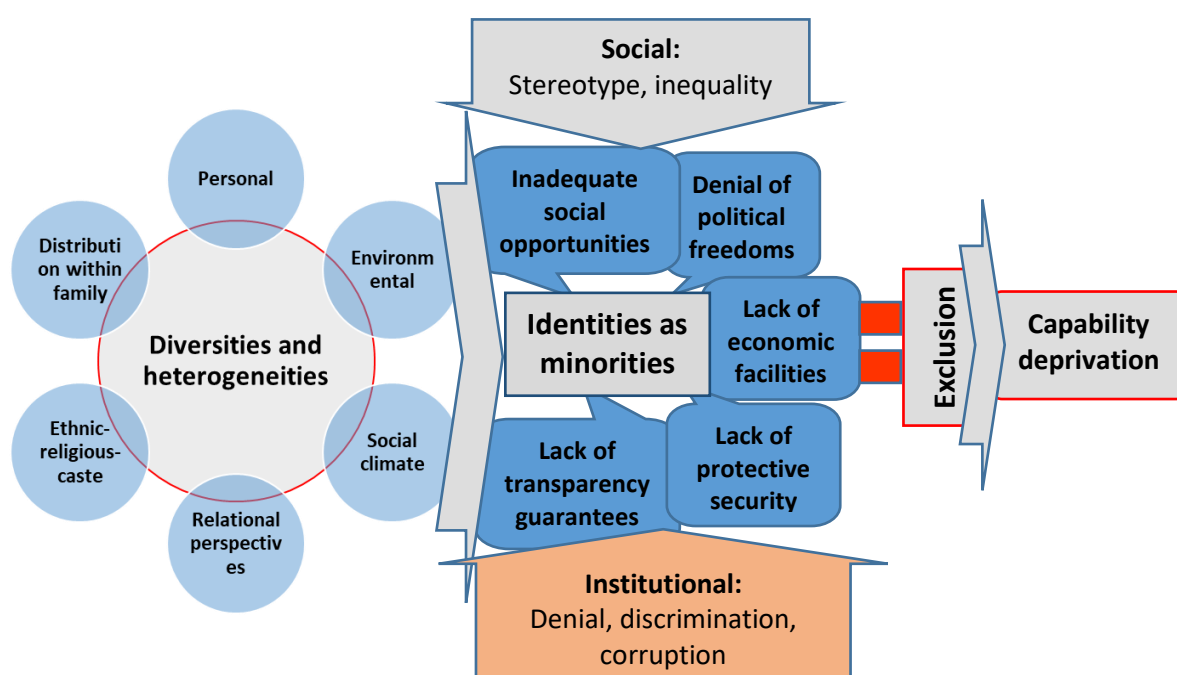


Figure 1: Theoretical framework of the study

Adapted from Sen (1999), DFID (2006), and Mosse (2010)

2.2 Selection of IP and dalit communities and study locations

According to the National Population Census 2011, IPs are mostly concentrated in 33 districts of Bangladesh (BBS, 2011), whereas the *dalits* live in every district of the country. The study covers 28 upazilas – 14 upazilas for conducting field study on the experiences of IPs and rest 14 upazilas for *dalits*. The upazilas were selected in such way that this study covers a well representation of all locations where the IPs and *dalits* are living. After selecting the upazilas i.e. the study locations, the study team selected the types of indigenous and dalit communities in consultation with local stakeholders (for example, Upazila Social Work Office, journalist, civil society members, and so on).

Table 1: Selected study locations and IPs

District	IP population ⁸	Selected upazila	Communities covered
Thakurgaon	9632	Ranishankoil	Pahan
Gaibandha	4312	Gabindaganj	Santal
Sirajganj	19772	Tarash	Oraon, Mahato
Naogaon	116736	Sapahar	Malpahari
Mymensingh	35907	Fulbaria	Garo, Barman

⁸Source: BBS National Population Census 2011

Sherpur	16231	Nalitabari	Hajong
Tangail	25584	Madhupur	Koch, Garo, Barman
Magura	8099	Mohammadpur	Munda, Rajbongshi
Satkhira	2615	Shyamnagar	Munda
Patuakhali	1399	Kalapara	Rakhaine
Sunamganj	6911	Tahirpur	Khasia, Garo
Habiganj	65802	Madhabpur	Munda
Moulvibazar	63466	Kamolganj	Monipuri
Chattagram	32165	Mirsharai	Tripura

Table 2: Selected study locations and *dalit* communities

District	Dalit population ⁹	Selected upazila	Communities covered
Thakurgaon	8465	Pirganj	Banshmali
Kurigram	30702	Ulipur	Rabidas, Harijan
Pabna	9297	Faridpur	Jele, Patni, Kumar
Sirajganj	14640	Tarash	Sing
Mymensingh	5728	Sadar	Rabidas, Banshfor, Harijan
Jamalpur	18339	Sarishabari	Pashchima, Bagdi
Manikganj	5538	Shibaloy	Jele
Narayanganj	5188	Sadar	Harijan
Shariatpur	13308	Jajira	Karmakar, Rabidas
Jhenaidah	16400	Maheshpur	Harijan
Satkhira	111371	Kaliganj	Rishi
Barguna	37918	Sadar	Harijan, Rishi
Moulvibazar	14796	Kamolganj	Nunia
Feni	3901	Sonagazi	Jalodas, Sheel

2.3 Methods of data collection

The study followed qualitative methods of data collection for collecting data from the fields. The methods include literature review, in-depth interview, life story, focus group discussion (FGD), key informant interview (KII), and observation.

Table 3: Methods and data sources

Methods	Respondents
Literature Review	Relevant laws, policies, articles, research reports, news
In-depth Interview and Life Stories	Community leaders and public service recipients from IPs and dalits including women, older persons, children, and persons with disabilities

⁹Source: Department of Social Services

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	Community leaders and service recipients from target and mainstream communities
Key Informant Interviews (KII)	Local level: Upazila Education Officers (UEOs), Upazila Health Officers (UHOs), Assistant Commissioner (Land) (AC Land), Upazila Social Service Officers (USSO), Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO), Upazila Fisheries Officers (UFO), Forest Officers, Upazila Chairmen/Councillors, Union Parishad Chairmen/Members, Municipality Mayor/Councillors, school teachers, journalists, civil society members
	National level: Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), Ministry of Land (MoL), Local Government Division (LGD), Department of Social Services (DSS), Rural Electrification Board (REB), IP and <i>dalit</i> leaders, experts
Observation	Lives of the target population and the selected public service providing institutions at local level

2.4 Data analysis

The data analysis maintains the following analytical framework. The analysis covers four major areas of inclusive public service provisions—affirmative actions, inclusive laws and policies, non-discrimination in service delivery and fulfilling rights, and integrity practices. Under the major areas, a set of indicators were applied—inclusive law and policy, non-discrimination, affirmative actions, transparency, integrity, and accountability. Under every indicator, the data analysis considers a set of assumptions, as mentioned below.

Table 4: Analytical framework of the study

Principles of inclusive services	Indicators
Affirmative actions	- Affirmative actions for IPs and dalits for helping them move out of their 'left behind' situation
Inclusive laws and policies	- Identities and rights of the IPs and dalits are recognised and included in laws and policies - Awareness of identities and rights of the IPs and dalits among the public service providing authorities
Non-discrimination in fulfilment of rights and providing services	- Responsiveness and sensitivity towards the rights of the IPs and dalits - Non-discriminatory practices to the IPs and dalits seeking basic public services
Integrity	- Transparency, integrity and accountability practices in the basic public service delivery agencies in providing services to the IPs and dalits

2.5 Timeframe

The study team began with development of concept note in February 2018 and completed the study in February 2019.

Table 5: Gantt chart of study timeframe

Tasks	Feb-Mar'18	Apr-May'18	Jun,18	Jul-Sep'18	Oct-Nov'18	Dec'18-Feb'19	Mar'19
Concept note development, in-house sharing and finalisation of concept note							
Tools development, team sharing, field test and finalisation of tools							
Recruitment of enumerators and training							
Data collection from the field							
Data editing, analysis and report writing							
In-house sharing, filling in data gaps and finalisation of report							
Final release of the report							

Chapter 3

Research Findings

3.1 Affirmative actions for the IPs and dalits

3.1.1 Allocation and distribution of special support from the Prime Minister's Office for the IPs in the plain lands

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) took an initiative in 1996 for the IPs living in the plain lands. The purpose of this initiative is to enhance their socioeconomic development. The PMO has been implementing the programme with help of the revenue funds of the Government of Bangladesh. During 2010-2013, total allocation for the programme was 44 crore BDT. During that period, the programme was implemented in 160 upazilas. The components of the programme include dairy, fisheries, computer training, sewing training, beetle leaf cultivation, handicrafts, rickshaw-van, transportation, nursery, poultry, handloom training, shoe making, shrimp culture, etc. These components aimed at enhancing income-generating activities of the beneficiaries. The programme also provided stipend to the students in indigenous communities, and support to indigenous communities to purchase cultural and sports materials, install tube wells and latrines, establish community centres, repair religious institutes, schools, cooperative offices, etc. in 180 upazilas. The programme also targeted 117 students from indigenous communities studying in college and universities and provided stipend. The programme claims that it has contributed to the socioeconomic development of 50,000 indigenous peoples living in the plain lands¹⁰. According to the concerned officials at the PMO, 30 crore Taka has been allocated for this fund during the fiscal year of 2017-2018, with an objective to cover 1-1.5 lac plain land IPs. An inter-ministerial committee coordinates the funds while the upazila and district level administrations implement the programmes at local levels. The programme targets to reach the IPs living in 280 upazilas in the plain lands. The programme includes some activities such as income generating training and donation, stipend for higher studies, and financial support and distribution of materials to schools, cooperatives and religious institutions of the IPs.

3.1.2 Allocation and distribution of special support for dalits from the Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Service (DSS) has been implementing a special programme for the dalit and harijan communities. The purpose of this programme is to enhance socioeconomic development and social inclusion of these disadvantaged communities. During the fiscal year 2017-2018, the Government of Bangladesh has allocated 27 crore Taka for this programme. The programme targets 37,932 dalit and harijan people in this year. The components of the programme include old age allowance (for those who cross 50), stipend for the students studying at four layers of education, training on income generating activities, and post

¹⁰ [https://pmo.gov.bd/site/page/0c0d429d-1c42-4a82-905b-aaccf429d192/বিশেষ-এলাকার-জন্য-উন্নয়ন-সহায়তা-\(পার্বত্য-চট্টগ্রাম-ব্যতীত\)](https://pmo.gov.bd/site/page/0c0d429d-1c42-4a82-905b-aaccf429d192/বিশেষ-এলাকার-জন্য-উন্নয়ন-সহায়তা-(পার্বত্য-চট্টগ্রাম-ব্যতীত)) (Last accessed on 11 November 2018)

training financial assistance. For the fiscal year 2018-1019, the government has allocated 50.03 crore Taka for this programme¹¹.

The DSS has also taken another initiative for the duration of 2017-2020. The total approved budget for this programme is 48.557 crore Taka¹². The objective of this programme is to enhance wellbeing of the people of disadvantaged communities especially those who are involved in traditional professions such as blacksmith, potter, barber, handicrafts makers (bamboo), shoemakers, etc. The programme targets all upazilas in selected eight districts – Kishoreganj, Cumilla, Sirajganj, Bagerhat, Sunamganj, Lalmonirhat, Barguna and Sherpur. The major components of the programme are providing training to the craft persons and financial support after completion of the training so that they can start and grow their craft trading.

3.1.3 Formulation of the Dalit Manual 2013 and inclusion of the needs of dalits

The Manual sets some goal and objectives to bring about changes in the lives of the dalits. The Manual also identifies some actions to achieve the goal and objectives. The actions include stipend for dalit students, income generating activities for dalits, and allowance for the old and disabled dalit persons.

3.1.4 Inclusion of the needs of IPs and dalits in the Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020 and the National Social Security Strategy 2015

The Seventh Five Year Plan considers the inclusion of socially marginalised population such as “dhopa (laundry man), muchhi (cobbler), napit (hair dresser), and other traditional low caste people”. The Plan mentions that the Government remains committed and highly sensitive to the needs of these marginalised groups (Section 1.4.2). The Plan identifies the strategy for ethnic population, which includes many areas of development such as socio-economic and political rights, fundamental human rights, and social security. The Plan also spells out some specific strategies for dalits and extreme poor groups stating that the vision of the Government is to erase the discrimination and exploitation faced by dalit communities in Bangladesh (Section 1.4.5). The strategies mentioned in the Plan include:

- Upholding the right to education for children from dalit communities
- Giving priority to allotting khas land to people of dalit communities
- Awareness raising to stop all kinds of discrimination and untouchability against dalits and excluded communities
- Formation of a special commission on dalits to evaluate current environment and level of discrimination and provide key recommendations on improving the socio-economic conditions of dalit communities in Bangladesh
- Review of the allotment policy of colonies under every City Corporation and municipality and ensure that marginalized groups of dalits are allotted harassment free access to electricity, gas and water supply services
- Giving preferential access to cleaning jobs in municipalities, including lease of public toilets of City Corporations to dalit sweepers
- Providing proper resettlement for evicted dalit families
- Giving dalit households preferential access to social security programmes

¹¹ <http://dss.gov.bd/site/page/909e2813-4cbf-49a8-81bf-12366bb20ee4/> (last accessed on 5 March 2019)

¹² <http://dss.gov.bd/site/page/58d7bab8-015f-4754-bd1e-8571fb78c7aa/> (last accessed on 5 March 2019)

- Combining affirmative action with capability enhancement and confidence building, to empower these groups to have a voice and make claims, and an effective grievance mechanism
- Promoting massive public education against discrimination and towards equity-inclusion.

The National Social Security Strategy 2015 identifies the socially excluded people who are excluded due to social identity such as race, ethnicity, caste, religion, gender and age. As it states, the excluded people include dalits, tea garden workers, river gypsies, people living with HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities, transgender, homeless, beggar, etc. The Strategy also mentions that the ethnic minority communities, almost 45 communities consisting of 1.1% of the total population of Bangladesh living in both hilly areas and plain lands, are one of the excluded people of Bangladesh (Section 2.3.2). The Strategy also identifies some programmes for dalits stating that dalit households have similar eligibility for the social security programmes as non-dalit households. This is mention-worthy that the Strategy sets its long-term vision for social security, which states, “Build an inclusive Social Security System (SSS) for all deserving Bangladeshis that effectively tackles and prevents poverty and inequality and contributes to broader human development, employment and economic growth (Section 4.2)”. The Strategy further mentions that the government will tailor to the needs of the excluded people including dalits and implement special programmes for them (Section 4.4).

3.1.5 Inclusion of the needs of IP students in the National Education Policy 2010 and printing text books in five indigenous languages at pre-school level

The Policy mentions that the State would ensure primary education of the children of indigenous peoples and all small ethnic groups through their mother tongues (Section 2.b). The Policy further mentions that the State will provide indigenous teachers and books to ensure that the children of indigenous communities learn through their mother tongues (Section 2.18). The Policy also provides that the State will provide assistance to the children of marginalised indigenous peoples (Section 2.19). Schools will be established in the areas the indigenous people are living around (Section 2.20). The State is also instructed to provide lodging support to the teachers and students from indigenous communities if there is a communication problem (Section 2.14). The Policy also mentions that all students will be provided with religious education based on their own religions – the religions of the indigenous peoples have been mentioned in this connection (Section 7.a). For higher education, the Policy provides that the State shall take initiative to provide lodging and stipend support to the students from indigenous and disadvantaged communities (Section 8.2). The Policy states that all are equally entitled to realisation of human rights irrespective of their sex, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and physical and psychological impairments, which should be enshrined in all stages of education (Section 22). The Policy further mentions that the teachers’ training will be useful to ensure that teachers can attain the techniques of providing learning services to students in line with demands of the students of disadvantaged communities including the small ethnic groups (Section 24). As part of the Policy, the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) has printed scripts for pre-school

students in the languages of five indigenous communities, which include Chakma, Marma, Mandi (for Garo), Sadri (for Santal and Oraon), and Kakborok (for Tripura).

3.1.6 Inclusion of the special needs of the IPs in the National Health policy 2011 and formulation of framework for Tribal Peoples Plan (FTPP) 2017 under the Bangladesh Health Sector Support Programme (HSSP)

The National Health Policy 2011 envisions to ensuring equality, gender parity, and inclusion of the persons with disabilities and other marginalised peoples in providing health services. The Policy recognises that the poor, socially deprived people, illiterate, marginalised people, people living in hard to reach areas, indigenous peoples, women especially pregnant and lactating mothers, children, elderly and factory workers are deprived of health care services. It further recognises that although some programmes are being implemented for them, the programmes hardly can reach out to their social and cultural horizons (Section Propositions: Equality based services). The Policy provides importance to establishing community clinics – a clinic for every 6000 people. It further states that a community clinic can even be established for those who are living in tough geophysical locations such as char, haor, and hilly areas (Action Strategy 4). The Policy also considers reaching out to the marginalised communities living in both rural and urban areas with general healthcare and reproductive healthcare services (Action Strategy 12). The Policy further considers providing free healthcare services to the hard-core poor and deprived people by providing health card (Action Strategy 20).

Under the Bangladesh Health Sector Support Programme (HSSP), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) prepared a framework for tribal people's health services. The Plan chalks out some measures to strengthen activities relating to the tribal people communities. The measures include recognition of social, economic, cultural and linguistic differences of the tribal people, behaviour change communication (BCC) plan addressing the needs of small ethnic communities, capacity enhancement, leveraging the roles of traditional leaders, systems development for social management, information disclosure and stakeholder consultation. As part of the Plan, the MoHFW has been implementing a programme for the IPs in 69 upazilas under 15 districts since 2017.

3.1.7 Quota system in government job

The Bangladesh Civil Service Rules 2014 provides that some marginalised people will get facilities such as extended age bar (32 years) for application, though it is limited to general education, technical education and health cadres, and quota system (Section 14.3). The Rules includes the IP candidates. The IP candidates are also entitled to getting 5% quota in accessing third and fourth class government jobs. The Model Recruitment Rules 2017 provides that cleaners can be recruited directly, where the harijans will get 80% quota.

3.1.8 Initiative to formulate an act to eliminate discrimination

The Elimination of Discrimination Act has been drafted by the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh, which has been referred to the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare for review and carrying forward to the next step.

3.2 Limitations and challenges in laws and policies

3.2.1 The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh provides that State shall not discriminate any citizen due to his/her religion, caste, group, sex and birthplace (Article 28.1). It further provides that the State shall not impose any embargo, conditions, or obligations to any citizen in accessing any place for recreation and rest as well as in getting enrolment in any educational institution due to their religion, caste, group, sex and birthplace (Article 28.3). The Constitution also provides, "The State shall take steps to protect and develop the unique local culture and tradition of the tribes, minor races, ethnic sects and communities" (Article 23A). However, it does not identify and recognise the names and separate ethnic identities of IPs. Moreover, the Constitution does not recognise the identities of dalit communities.

3.2.2 International laws and covenants

The Government of Bangladesh ratified the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) in 1972. Bangladesh also ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) in 2000, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) in 1998, and the ILO Conventions No. 107 on Indigenous & Tribal Populations (1957) in 1972. However, Bangladesh has not yet ratified the ILO Conventions No. 169 on Indigenous & Tribal Populations (1989). Moreover, Bangladesh was in abstention during adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). In spite of its position Bangladesh is bound to implement the Declaration as it was adopted through a voting where majority of the member states were in favour. However, many states including Bangladesh still maintain some reservation to expressly distinguish the presence of indigenous peoples¹³. Nonetheless, this position has impacted critically on the government's efforts to fulfil the rights of the indigenous peoples as stated in the international conventions.

3.2.3 The Small Ethnic Groups Cultural Institutions Act, 2010

This Act provides that the indigenous peoples will be termed as small ethnic groups, which is contradictory with the definition provided by the United Nations (Article 2.2). The United Nations states, "Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples"¹⁴. The Act provides a list of 27 ethnic groups, of which three names do not exist as separate ethnic groups or similar with some other ethnic groups. On the other hand, the

¹³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_447669.pdf (Last accessed on 10 October 2018)

¹⁴ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/about-us.html> (Last accessed on 11 October 2018)

forums of indigenous peoples of Bangladesh argue that the number of indigenous peoples are more than 54 (Roy and Chakma, 2015¹⁵).

3.2.4 The Dalit Manual 2013

The Manual provides distinctive identities of dalits – dalit and harijan. However, the definitions of these terms as provided in the Manual seem alike. The way the Manual has defined them appears that both types of people are involved in cleaning. However, literature suggest that harijans can also be termed as dalits. Moreover, the dalits are not only those groups who are involved in cleaning professions, but also those communities that are historically marginalised and excluded from society, as mentioned in the first chapter. Moreover, the Manual provides some figures of the dalit population living in Bangladesh, which are not authentic. There is no official data about how many dalit groups and population are living in Bangladesh.

3.2.4 The National Education Policy 2010

The Policy mentions that the goal of education is to bring all deprived children under education coverage (Section 1.22). However, it does not mention the discriminated and deprived groups especially the dalits. Moreover, the Policy does not mention any strategies for reaching out to the dalit children living in poorer conditions and hard-to-reach areas.

3.2.5 The National Health Policy 2011

The Policy considers providing free healthcare services to the hard-core poor and deprived people by providing health card (Action Strategy 20). However, the Policy does not make it specific whether the deprived people include dalit communities.

3.2.6 The National Social Security Strategy 2015

The National Social Security Strategy 2015 does not mention any programmes developed for the IPs living in the plain lands. The Strategy also identifies some programmes for dalits stating that dalit households have similar eligibility for the social security programmes as non-dalit households. The Strategy mentions only the special programme titled "Construction of Sweeper Colony at Districts" (Section 2.8.2).

3.2.7 The Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020

The Seventh Five Year Plan does not mention the ethnic minorities living in the plain lands. The Plan states in a way that all attentions have been given to the ethnic communities of the CHTs. The Plan also states that a Perspective Plan will be formulated for the development of the CHTs through consultation with key stakeholders. However, the Plan does not provide any specific directions for the development of the indigenous peoples living in the plain lands (Section 14.5).

3.2.8 The National Land Use Policy 2001

¹⁵ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-dhaka/documents/publication/wcms_447669.pdf (Last accessed on 10 October 2018)

This Policy instructs to resume the unused acquired land as khas land (Section 14.2). The Policy also mentions that the Policy will aim at ensuring proper utilisation of khas land in rehabilitating landless poor people (Section 2). The Policy also mentions that the interest of the small and marginalised farmers will be preserved during decision making on the land use (Section 5.4). However, the Policy does not indicate the marginalisation and landlessness of the IPs and dalits as well as how the right to khasland of the IPs and dalits living in the khasland would be ensured. Moreover, the Policy does not recognise the traditional systems and processes of land ownership and use prevailing in the indigenous communities. The Policy also indicates that the reserve forests and other forests need to be taken under proper restoration (Section 7). However, the Policy does not mention about how the traditional living of the indigenous peoples in forests will be preserved and taken care of.

3.2.9 The National Public Wetland (Jalmohal) Management Policy 2009

The Policy defines the real fishers who fish from the natural sources and sell the fishes to lead their livelihoods (Section 2). The Policy provides that associations of such real fishers will be entitled to get lease of the public wetlands. However, the Policy does not mention about the traditional fisher communities such as Jalodas, Malo, Koibarto and so on who belong to dalit fisher communities. A gazette as of 15 March 2012 provides some amendments, one of which provides that if any association of real fishers is not found for leasing, association of some other groups such as unemployed youth, freedom fighters, young and widowed women, poor people and so on will be entitled for (Section 2). Through this amendment, a chance has appeared to deprive the real traditional fishers belonging to IPs and dalits. Moreover, the gazette has also deleted the word 'real' from real fishers, which intensifies the risk of depriving real traditional fishers.

3.2.10 The National Biodiversity Act 2017

The Act provides that the Government of Bangladesh reserves the right to declare any place or area as symbol of heritage and rich biodiversity and acquire the place or area for conservation of biodiversity and heritage. It further provides that if the efforts of reservation damage any person or institution, government will compensate the loss and rehabilitate the people in case of eviction. Through this Act, a potential risk may arise in protecting the right of the IPs living traditionally in forest areas and having huge dependency on forest resources.

3.2.11 The Bangladesh Civil Service Rules 2014

The Rules provides that some marginalised people will get some facilities such as extended age bar (32 years) for application, though limited to general education, technical education and health cadres, and quota system (Section 14.3). However, the Rules includes only the indigenous peoples; not the dalits in spite of their severe marginalisation in society. As a result, in some cases the dalit communities have been found to get their identities as IPs. Moreover, the 5% quota system for the ethnic minorities in accessing first and second-class government job has been abolished through a circular in 2018 because of student movements for quota reforms. However, the students did not claim the abolition but reform, which was not taken into account.

3.2.12 The Model Recruitment Rules 2017

The Rules provides that cleaners can be recruited directly, where the harijans will get 80% quota. However, it provides that if 80% harijans are not available, they can be replaced from general candidates. This has created a scope to exclude harijans and recruit more than 20% from general candidates by means of corruption.

3.2.13 The National Women Development Policy 2011

The Women Development Policy 2011 includes the importance of taking special steps for the development of indigenous and disadvantaged women. However, the Policy does not mention whether the disadvantaged women also include those who are belonging to the dalit communities.

3.3 Knowledge and attitudes of local service providers about the identities and rights of the IPs and dalits

3.3.1 Local education offices and schools

Negative perception about dalit and indigenous students: An upazila level education officer argued that teachers are regular to make home visits of the students but the students from Harijan communities do not attend school on time. His assumption was that Harijan children drink alcohol at night and hence they do not get up early to catch the school time, which is wrong in the real sense. In many cases, the teachers from mainstream communities do not have positive attitudes towards dalits and indigenous communities. They make some reservation in getting their posting in the schools where majority students get admission from dalit communities. This type of posting is perceived as punishment posting for the mainstream teachers. For example, the teachers at a primary school in a city corporation located beside a “Sweeper Colony” expressed their discomfort to continue their job in such a school. The head teacher of that school belonging to ‘higher caste’ Hindu expressed:

I cried all night when I was posted in this school. It was even better if I was posted in another school even as an assistant teacher.

In some cases, teachers from mainstream communities wrongly perceive that the IPs and dalit people do not maintain cleanliness. From this perception, they show disrespect and negligence to the students belonging to those communities. For example, some Harijan students of a study location complained that their teachers do not receive notebooks directly from their hands. Some teachers ask them to leave the notebook on the table. Then they check the exercises keeping the notebook on the table; but not by touching or holding the book in hand. Some students and their guardians alleged that a few teachers even throw abusive comments by disrespecting their identities – such as ‘bunor bachcha’ (child of Mundas), ‘jaular bachcha’ (child of fishers), etc. A group of people of Jalodas community in a study location expressed:

Our children complain that their teachers call them Jaular Bachcha (child of fishers). I shows neglect and disrespect to our community.

3.3.2 Local health centres

Lack of orientation among medical staff: Field data suggest that most of the service providers in public hospitals are not well aware of the cultural practices and needs of the IPs

and dalit communities. A major part of the service providers of government hospitals consider that most of the dalits and IPs are, in one hand, passive, shy and unwilling to receive healthcare from government hospitals and, on the other hand, they feel more confident and comfortable to get services from missionary hospitals. However, they do not think of why these marginalised groups are unwilling to visit government hospitals to receive services. The medical officers of a number of study locations shared that there exists no special provision of healthcare services for the dalits and IPs. As mentioned earlier, the Department of Health took up a component on tribal health in 2017, though not in all upazilas of Bangladesh. However, the local level medical officials were found to be unaware of that initiative.

3.3.3 Social safety net providers and selection committees

Lack of understanding about dalit and indigenous communities: Field data suggest that the government officials have lack of understanding about the concept of dalit and indigenous peoples. They are not fully oriented on how to identify those who belong to dalit and indigenous communities. They sometimes forget that these communities are not homogenous in terms of socio-economic conditions. This creates difficulties in selecting beneficiaries of social safety net schemes. Some social work officials in the selected upazilas were found that they never visited dalit communities to ensure right selection of beneficiaries. However, they deal with allocating safety net support for this community. There are selection committees at upazila level that finalise the beneficiary list. However, the committees mostly depend on the information and pre-selection of people's representatives in their concerned union parishads and upazila parishads. Field data suggest that people's representatives take this opportunity and recommend

Box 1: Mistrust towards indigenous and dalit peoples

The dalits and IPs experience mistrust from the safety net scheme providers and selection committees. For example, an UNO of a selected upazila informed that he wanted to provide some support from the PMO fund. The UNO decided to purchase cows for some selected Tripura families. The UNO claimed that he himself went to market to buy the cows. He bought the cows at the rate of 40,000 Taka on an average. The cows were not bought to provide free of cost. The Tripura families those who received the cows were imposed with conditions to repay the money through instalments in two years. Some selected families disagreed to receive the cows considering the higher cost and amount of monthly instalment they were required to pay. Some families also raised questions on how all the cows costed at the same price as they saw that those were not similar in size. They also complained that there were some irregularities in purchasing the cows. Moreover, the families were not consulted before deciding over purchasing the cows. They were not even involved in purchasing. The UNO also instructed his staff not to select those who consume alcohol, although this was part of their traditional practices mainly consumed during festivals. The selected families were not happy with this decision and many families denied taking the burden of 40,000 Taka. Seeing the dilemma in the Tripura families, the UNO expressed his utmost dissatisfaction. The dissatisfied UNO expressed:

I had a good intention to do something for them. I mobilised some extra money from the PMO fund to really help them. I thought that they are simple and easy-going. After seeing this, my perception has changed. I found myself wrong. I found that these people are full of complexities.

for those who are even better off in their communities – this is completely made based on personal relations and in some cases, by means of taking unauthorised money. Thus, the real poor in dalit and indigenous families those who deserve the most are left out of coverage of the social safety net schemes.

Deficits of knowledge of inclusive and religion sensitive social safety net provisions:

Field data reveal that safety net allowances were distributed among the poor families irrespective of religions, however, during the Eid festivals; not during the festivals of other religions. Rice was distributed among the poor during two Eid festivals under the VGF scheme. Some Banshmali families in a study location informed that they received 10-kilogram rice each during an Eid festival. Two dalit women in another study location also informed that each of their families received about five-kilogram rice before an Eid festival. Some Garo families in a study location also informed that they received rice before Eid festival. However, this did not happen in every location under the study areas. Furthermore, this is worth mentioning that this kind of family level support was not provided during the festivals of other religions. The Christian and Hindu respondents from both indigenous and dalit communities informed that their religious institutions such as Church and Temples were given some allowances during Christmas Day and Durgapuja to celebrate the festivals; but the allowances were not provided to the family level.

3.3.4 Local Government Institutions (LGIs)

Negative attitudes towards dalits and IPs: In some cases, the LGI representatives expressed that they give first priority to the mainstream people. The dalit and IPs also provided evidences in favour of negative attitudes of the LGI representatives. They argued that the mainstream people could expose their support for a particular candidate during any election, which is not possible for the IPs and dalits as the mainstream candidates most often threaten them with the confusion that they might have support for their opponent candidates. In view of the security concern, they tend to hide their support and in some cases, they do not even go to the centres for voting. From this self-exclusion, the mainstream candidates and winner LGI representatives do not trust the dalit and IPs. However, some LGI representatives think that the dalit and IPs are of their vote banks due to their attachment with some particular political parties. From this perception, some LGI representatives do not care about giving priorities to the dalits and IPs during their planning and implementation of any development initiatives. However, some LGI representatives expressed that they do not show any negative attitudes towards dalits and IPs. They argued that all are same in their eyes. However, in some study locations, the dalits and IPs informed that their LGI representatives just visit them during election and give promises, which they never implement after the election is over.

Lack of knowledge about traditional cultural practices of dalits and IPs: In some cases, the LGI representatives are alleged of disrespecting traditional cultural practices of dalits and IPs. For example, in a study location, some Malpahari respondents informed that they are required to take permission from UP chairman for drinking their traditional homemade alcohol, which they usually drink during their traditional festivals as part of their cultural practices. They also informed that they were even harassed by law enforcement agencies during the drive against illegal drugs.

3.3.5 Local land offices

Lack of knowledge about traditional land ownership systems of IPs: Field data reveal that government officials including those who deal with land related issues have lack of knowledge about customary land ownership systems of the IPs. Due to this knowledge gap, some officials even deny the right to living in lands where the IPs have been living for generations. For example, the forest officers of a study location argued:

The government owns the forest. Therefore, nobody is allowed to live in there. They (indigenous communities) are living here to destroy the forest.

The forest officials do not even understand that the indigenous communities (Garo, Barman and Koch) had started living in the forests before the government converted the status of that concerned forest into reserved forest. The forest officials also bear wrong perception about indigenous communities, although it is widely recognised that the IPs are the protector of nature and treat themselves as part of nature. The Garo, Barman and Koch communities living in forests are no of exception. The forest officials argued that the indigenous people living in the forest are responsible for the destruction of the forest. However, the traditional inhabitant i.e. the IPs living in the forest argued:

We are not even allowed to sell the trees that we plant in our homestead. The outsiders are involved in cutting the trees. The forest officers know everything and they get share of stolen trees. However, they file false cases against us and harass us.

Lack of knowledge about strong community feeling of dalits and IPs: Field data reveal that the land offices do not have proper understanding about strong community bonding prevailing in dalit and indigenous communities. For example, the khas land allocation strategy does not consider that both dalit and indigenous communities maintain strong commune system and stay together under a leadership of their heads, which is still a common practice in most of the cases. If a single family out of the entire community is allocated with a piece of khasland and is expected that that family will migrate there, it will be quite impractical. It happened in some study locations where some landless dalit and indigenous families got allocation of khasland in separate locations, which they did not finally accept. In some cases, they found that their new place would create difficulties to earn their bread. For example, some families of Harijan communities in a study location were allocated with khasland in a char area, outside the municipality. The families worked in the municipality as cleaner. From their old living place, they needed no travel cost. However, they found that it costed much if they would travel to work from the new place. As a result, the allocation of khasland and rehabilitation initiative did not work at all.

3.4 Gaps in the fulfilment of rights of the IPs and dalits

3.4.1 Right to education of dalit and indigenous students

Right to basic education not fulfilled: The Education Policy states that all children irrespective of their identities will be taken under education coverage. It also states that schools will be established nearby the living places of indigenous communities. However, the field level staff are not well aware of this provision. They argue that they deal with the demands where there are proactive initiatives from community to establish schools. However, the education officials are not aware that the IPs and dalits are such the passive

communities that they seldom raise their demand for schools. Although they are aware that the students of dalits and indigenous communities have high dropout rate, they do not know the underlying reasons for it. Rather they argue that the students from dalit and indigenous communities fail to continue their education due to poverty and ignorance of their parents. This might be one of the causes but not all. Reality says that the education officials do not feel the needs to discover the underlying causes of high dropout rate among dalit and indigenous children due to lack of proper orientation on inclusive education. However, some government primary school teachers in a study location were found to argue that language barrier and tough communication for the indigenous children living in hard to reach areas contribute to their high dropout rate. This realisation was missing among some upazila level officials. For example, an education officer at a study location expressed:

We received some demands for schools from mainstream communities and submitted those to our directorate. However, we have not yet received any from Tripura community. Therefore, we have not made any plan for them.

Field data suggest that the education officials of this area do not have proper understanding about the communities that are vulnerable to exclusion due to their different ethnic identities. Field data further suggest that the education officers do not maintain any record of their visit to the areas where there are needs for schools but the people living in the areas are passive to raise a demand.

Scarcity of religious teachers to teach religious studies of IPs and dalits: The Government schools under the study areas lack desired number of religious teachers for the students coming from IPs and dalits as they mostly belong to the religious minorities. This has made some difficulties and challenges for the students of dalits and IPs in studying their own religions. For example, in a study location, the Santal students informed that they were taught Islamic Studies in their school instead of teaching from their own religions. The students, though they were from other religions, especially Christianity and Hinduism, they were compelled to sit for classes and examinations on Islamic Studies. In some cases, the parents of indigenous peoples especially those who are belonging to Christianity prefer to send their children to missionary schools to confirm that their children get the scope of studying from their own religious scripts. For example, in some study locations, the Garo communities follow Christianity. A very few Garo students were found to study in the government primary schools. A head teacher of a primary school in that location argued that Garo families prefer to send their children to missionary schools. However, they did not know the underlying causes of such a preference of the parents. Nonetheless, the Garo parents had the answers of why they prefer missionary schools. A parent informed:

The quality of education is better in missionary schools. Another advantage is that missionary schools have teachers to teach from Christianity, which we do not see in the government schools.

Some Garo parents in a study location also argued that they prefer missionary schools as they find them less expensive, providing religious education, and teachers are caring. However, for dalit students, their parents do not have any alternative options to ensure their children's religious education.

Education not provided in mother tongue to the students from indigenous communities and non-Bengali dalits:

This is remarkable that the DPE printed textbook for pre-school students in the languages of five indigenous communities, which include Chakma, Marma, Mandi (for Garo), Sadri (for Santal and Oraon), and Kakborok (for Tripura). However, many of the teachers and even education officials were found to be unaware of this initiative. For example, in a study location, the schools where a many Tripura students were studying were not provided with the textbook written in Kakborok language. The upazila primary education officers could not even recall whether they distributed the books or not. An education officer in another study location informed that they distributed the books when some informed Garo leaders reminded them to do so. An Oraon teacher of government primary school in another study location informed that they received the textbooks; however, she was not allowed to teach the Oraon textbook since she had some other particular subjects to teach. Thus, the initiative was not found useful at all.

Language barrier at school: The students from indigenous communities face the language problem most. The students from indigenous communities informed that the mainstream students laugh at them when they speak their own language and speak Bangla having a jumble of their own dialect. This problem is acute at the primary level. This problem is also common for the students from non-Bengali dalits. The parents and students of the study locations argued that it sometimes gets difficult to understand the lessons and even the questions during the examinations and thus they face tough situation to upgrade their class. In a study location, a Rakhaine parent informed that her son was struggling to adapt with Bangla language at school. They finally decided to send him to Myanmar for education in Rakhaine language. One Mahato parent in another study location argued that if their children were taught in their own language then they would have achieved better result. A good number of Santal, Munda, Oraon, and Mahato parents in some study locations informed that they got the sense that their children would get in trouble if they were not good in Bengali. They, therefore, initiated to teach their children to speak Bengali at home as well as speak all time so that their children can adapt well in school with the mainstream language. However, this is risking the existence of their own language. The parents also expressed with frustration that if it continues, their language would not survive in future.

The parents from some dalit communities also argued that language is a severe barrier to continue education of their children. Some dalit community people speak in other languages as they originated in some parts of India. Some dalit parents argued that their children do not understand Bengali well. Therefore, their children do not feel the keenness for continuing their schooling. This language barrier leads to a high dropout rate in dalit and indigenous communities.

3.4.2 Right to healthcare in government hospitals

Denial of providing quality services: The indigenous persons in some study locations argued that they prefer missionary hospitals as they get better services there. In some areas where there are no missionary hospitals, the IPs and dalit people prefer to get services from village quacks. They choose this option for two reasons. Firstly, they can save transport cost, and secondly, they want to avoid bitter experience that they had faced before in the government hospitals. For example, the Koch community people in a study location

informed that they usually avoid government hospitals. Unlike the explanation of service providers, their stories of avoidance shed light on unhealthy realities in healthcare system of government hospitals. A respondent of this community expressed:

I don't go to government hospital since it's not possible to get better service from there. Furthermore, they prescribe few common medicines for all sorts of diseases. Only locally influential people or the people who can bargain might get medicine. We, the Koch people, cannot bargain to get any medicine. So, we are not given any medicine.

A Garo respondent in a study location informed that they sometimes go to government hospitals. However, they do not get better services and even welcoming attitude. She expressed:

The doctors even tell us why you have come here. You have missionary hospitals to go and take treatment from there.

Field data suggest that the unwelcoming attitude is more evident in community clinics as the staff know the service recipients' identities and socioeconomic status. They know it very well who are dalits and IPs and what their status in society is. Some respondents of Santal community in a study location informed that they usually do not take necessary services from community clinic. Most of the time they find the clinic closed. Even if the clinic remained open, they would not find any service provider to whom they might approach for services. Some respondents of Sing and Mahato communities in some study locations shared their experiences of getting rude behaviour from the service providers of community clinics.

Denial of providing community level services: About 29 types of different medicines are distributed free of cost from the community clinics. Some Santal women in a study location informed that the community clinic staff do not behave well with them. They complained:

When there are Bengali patients coming at a time for services, they get priority. Santal patients are attended later.

The Mahato and Sing women in some study locations informed that they do not experience normal behaviour in the community clinics. A Sing woman expressed:

They do not want to even talk to us when we go for advices and medicines. However, they behave well with other people.

A Mahato woman also shared her bitter experience of accessing services from community clinics. She expressed:

We went there earlier. We did not get any medicine. Now we have stopped going there.

Negligence to covering the localities of IPs and dalits with family welfare services is evident. A Munda woman working in a tea garden in a study location stated that when she visited the family welfare centre outside the garden she faced serious negligence to her. The staff of the centre gave more priority and attention to the mainstream Bengali community. Field data suggest that this is a common

Box 2: Out of EPI coverage and death of children

In some locations of Chattagram district, a number of Tripura children died of polio in last few years (widely reported in the newspapers). It was found that the Tripura communities were totally out of immunisation vaccine coverage for many years, though it is widely claimed that every child in Bangladesh is covered under EPI vaccination programme. Field data suggest that the health and family planning workers used to avoid setting up vaccination camps in the localities of Tripura communities. They did not even circulate the information to Tripura communities to cover them under the vaccination even when they set the camps in mainstream community areas nearby Tripura villages.

practice in the areas inhabited by the IPs and dalits. This is even acute in the hard to reach areas. Some IP and dalit respondents in the study locations argued that the home visit of the family welfare assistant decreases largely. The Tripura women in a study location informed that the family welfare assistants do not visit their homes even when they remain in a critical situation during pregnancy. The pregnant women rather have to step down from their hilly abode to get health check-up support during pregnancy. A family welfare official at the DFW argued that the home visit has lessened as the assistants have been instructed to sit in the community clinics in three days a week.

Field data suggest that there is a discrimination in providing antenatal care card and maternity allowances for the poor dalit and indigenous mothers. It was found that huge number of deserving dalit and indigenous mothers were not enlisted for maternity allowance in spite of their poor economic conditions. For example, some lactating mothers in Tripura communities in a study location informed that they were not enlisted for maternity allowance. Some mothers in other areas who had been able to get the allowance complained that the process of being enlisted for maternity allowance was painful. A mother from a Rishi community in a study location shared her experience that she had to visit a long distance from her residence to meet UP chairman and ward member several times on foot bearing her pregnant and sick condition.

There are examples of IP and dalit pregnant mothers who told that they are not provided with basic immunisation vaccines and healthcare support during pregnancy. Field data suggest that in many cases immunisation camps are not set up in the localities of IPs and dalits. This is notable that in Chattagram district a many children died of polio, as they were not provided with the basic immunisation vaccines.

3.4.3 Leaving out of social safety net coverage

A large portion of poor IP and dalits eligible for different social safety net schemes are found to be left out of coverage. Many old aged IP and dalit persons including widowed complained that they went to their respective LGI representatives several times, but failed to be enlisted for any scheme. An elderly woman of Banshmali community in a study location shared her experience of how poor dalit women are left out of coverage. The woman told that she was born in 1956. Her husband died about 20 years ago. She has two daughters and one son – all are married and separated from her. The poor landless woman living on her neighbour's land, has been suffering from old age complications and skin diseases. In

Box 3: Difference between expressing and upholding

In a study location, the researchers interviewed a union parishad member. The member gave his interview in a shop owned by himself. During the interview, he argued that the local IPs respect him for his good work and special attention paid to them. He further argued that likewise he also feels the same for the indigenous communities living in his village as they vote for him. The member gave some examples of how he provided support to some of the needy indigenous families. However, when the researchers came just out of his sight after the interview, it was heard the member saying with rude voice:

Muslims have so many problems – these guys don't have any concern at those! They have come with indigenous people's problems!

spite of her extreme poverty and old age complications, she failed to draw attention of the union parishad to get her included in any of the social safety net schemes provided by the government. She met the UP chairman and member several times to place her demand. However, the chairman refused her every time. The poor elderly woman also tried to get rice at 10 Taka/kilogram under the subsidised rice for the poor but failed. She even failed to get any help during winter season when she even saw that the chairman was distributing free blankets. Hearing the researcher's voice at her house, the poor elderly woman replied with a surprising look:

Who calls me? I am a ghost of brinjal cropland. Nobody knows me.

The poor Banshmali woman later clarified to the researcher why she termed herself a ghost. She tried to make the researcher understand that the chairman and members cannot see her, so, they do not consider her for any social safety net scheme. Field data suggest a many examples of eligible dalit and IP persons who are left uncovered from any safety net scheme.

3.4.4 Mistrust towards the IPs and dalits and violation of right to vote and take part in elections

Field data suggest that the LGI representatives take into serious consideration whether the dalits and indigenous peoples vote for them during election. A many dalit and indigenous respondents argued that the LGI representatives hardly believe their communities during elections. They suspect these communities as they notice that they do not express their direct support for any particular candidate. Some candidates, having affiliation with some particular political parties, suspect that these communities always bear weakness for a particular political party other than theirs. From that doubt, they put pressure on the voters of these communities not to go to the centres for voting. A many dalit people in some study locations expressed that they have abstained their direct participation in any election for more than two decades, by which they intend to show that they are not blind supporter for any particular party, for which they could be charged for. They have been continuing this self-withdrawal for two decades for the sake of their safety and security. A dalit person expressed, "During election different groups threaten us. That's why we have not cast our vote in any election for about 20 years." An IP person in another study location also expressed, "I wanted to run as a candidate for the union parishad election. They killed my cattle, destroyed my crops and threatened me. Later I did not run for the election."

3.4.5 Not keeping under particular authority with due emphasis

The rights and interests of the IPs of plain lands and dalits are not taken under any special ministry or authority with due emphasis. For this reason, their demands get neglected in many cases. The IPs living in the plain lands claim that there is a separate ministry for the IPs living in the CHTs. They argued that the number of plain land IPs is more than double of those living in the CHTs, however, there is no separate ministry for them. This is to mention that the PMO has a fund the plain land IPs, however, the IP forums argued that there should be a separate authority for the plain land IPs so that their rights and entitlements could be fulfilled with due importance. On the other hand, it is viewed that the DSS looks after the rights and entitlements of dalit communities. However, it does cover a little of the issues of dalit communities, as it also deals with so many groups and their issues

at a time. The number of dalit population and their historical deprivation and deeply rooted exclusion deserve more attention from the government.

3.4.6 Right to traditional land ownership systems of IPs

Customary land ownership systems of IPs not taken care of: Field data reveal that government officials including those who deal with land related issues have lack of knowledge about customary land ownership systems of IPs. Due to this knowledge gap, some officials even deny the right to living in lands where the IPs have been living for

Box 4: Violation of right to traditional living of indigenous communities

Historically the Garo and Barman communities in Madhupur areas of Tangail were engaged in agriculture and they had the dependency on Madhupur forests for fuel and woods. They used to use the land of Zamindars for cultivation and also paid taxes for the used land. Few Garo and Barman families have still those tax documents. Based on the documents the Garo families claim their legal occupation of lands. They cultivate the lands and lease out the land to meet financial crisis. However, the forest authority opines that as per laws they have no right to live or cultivate in the forest areas. The authority does not recognise their right to their traditional living as indigenous people. They have taken some initiatives in several times to jeopardise their existence in the forests in the name of protection of forests. The initiatives include declaration of the forests as reserved areas, establishing eco-park, artificial lake, setting boundaries and gate to limit the movement of the indigenous peoples.

Both the Garo and Barman communities protested the initiatives of forest authority finding that the initiatives would be creating vulnerability for their existence and traditional living in the forest areas. They informed that the authority took some repressive attempts to evict the indigenous peoples. The communities alleged that the authority lodged some fake cases against the indigenous leaders to stop their movements for right to living. They further alleged that their livelihood options have been restricted. For example, they are not allowed to sell even the trees that they plant in their homesteads.

Field data suggest that the forest authority has taken an initiative of social forestry in the name of reforestation. However, it was found that the leasing out of forest lands as social forestry have been allocated for money, which the indigenous families do not afford to manage. The rich mainstream people have taken the opportunity and they have got the allocation. After getting the allocation, the leaseholders are cultivating pineapples and a few have planted some tress, which will be cut after 10 years. It means that this initiative is not likely to help reforest the areas but to provide economic benefits to the rich mainstream people. This has also created a scope of corruption. According to traditional inhabitants of the forests, this has appeared as a risk to jeopardise the living and existence of the indigenous Garo and Barman communities.

generations.

Right to land and living ignored: The right of the dalits and IPs to live on their own land where they have been living for more than centuries is being violated enormously. For example, since the British period 50 Pashchima dalit families of in a study location have been living in the land of a government owned laid off Jute Mill. About three years ago, they came to know that a developer bought the land. Claiming the ownership of the land the person is creating continuous pressure on the families to leave the land. Moreover, the Munda community in a southern study location has a similar story like Pashchimas. They are living in an isolated land on a riverbank just beside the Sundarbans. About 50 years ago, a rich man

brought the Mundas to this land. The rich man assured them to provide land ownership of five Bighas (165 decimals) land to each family, which he did not make at all. This situation of violating of right to land and living took place against the Garo and Barman communities in Tangail and Mymensingh areas, the Tripura community in Chattagram area, the Santal community in Gaibandha area.

Box 5: Encroachment of indigenous peoples' land and leasing out to mainstream

The Santal communities in Sapmara Union under Gabindaganj upazila of Gaibandha district had the possession of lands recorded under CS Record 1940. In 1955-56, Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) acquired the land for sugarcane cultivation. Upon a movement of the Santal communities, PIDC declared that the owners of the land would get back the lands, if they stopped cultivating sugarcane. The movement continued. The then central government signed a memorandum of agreement in 1962 that stated that the land would never be used for other cultivations except sugarcane and the authority would not be allowed to change the nature of lands. If the landowners would raise any complains, the authority must handover the lands with compensation. The PIDC stopped its operation in 1970 and the Bangladesh Sugar Industry Corporation took the control of the lands and handed over to Rangpur Sugar Mill. Because of substantial loss, the Mill stopped its operation in 2003-04. The Mill authority was supposed to handover the lands to the real owners. However, instead of handing over the authority leased out the land to the local powerful elites for cultivation.

In 2014, the real landowners created a mass movement to get their lands back. Local MP advised them to place an appeal to Gaibandha district administration. The administration verified their documents against their claims of ownership and found that land ownership and possessions should get back to the real owners; but not to others through leasing mechanism. The administration cancelled the allocation of leased out lands. Upon the decision, the Santal communities occupied their lands and built houses alongside started cultivating crops. When the harvesting period appeared, the local people's representatives changed their mind and stopped supporting the Santal communities. In 2016, some other people, with support from those local people's representatives, came to cut the crops. The Santal communities protested against it. The outsiders i.e. the supporter of the local people's representatives attacked on the Santal farmers. Local Police appeared and fired on the Santal farmers as instructed by people's representatives. Three Santal farmers died in the incident. The houses of Santal communities were also set fire and around 2500 Santal people were evicted through this massacre.

Some other vested interest groups with support from the local people's representatives filed false cases against 500-600 Santal farmers. Police arrested many Santal farmers. On the other hand, when the evicted Santal farmers and family members of the victim Santal farmers went to the police station, it was denied to file any case. Following a Suomato rule of the High Court of Bangladesh, the police station filed a case on 26 November 2016. However, two years have passed, no charge sheets have been issued. The local people's representatives the Mill authority have occupied the land (Total 1842.30 acre). The poor Santal farmers have been claiming their right to their own lands but seeing no permanent solutions from the authority.

Unlike the IPs, dalit communities in different locations have also been placed in a vulnerable situation. For example, a few dalit families engaged in city cleaning lived in a land owned by the city corporation. In 2012-2013, the city corporation authority evicted them from that place in the name of city beautification. The City Mayor promised them to arrange a

rehabilitation support. However, the evicted families found no solutions from the side of City Corporation in spite of their continuous communication with city authority. Field data also reveal that this kind of violation of right to living took place in different areas against dalits and IPs. For example, about 30 years ago a Munda person in a southern district sold his 33 decimals land to a Bengali person. However, the buyer grabbed five times more than the purchased land from that Munda person. To establish his strong position on the grabbed land he built a Madrasa. The cheated Munda person lodged a case. Even though the court declared him as the owner of the land, the Bengali person neither took away the shops and nor relocated the Madrasa. Another case says that about 45 Pahan families have been living in a village of a northern district. They got nine acres land from some Santal families that migrated to India during the partition of India in 1947. Since then the Pahan families have been living on this land. Recently, some local powerful Muslim families prepared fake documents of the lands to sell the land. However, during the crosscheck it was found that the local administration are not aware of this crisis of Pahan community.

Right to khas pond ignored: Some indigenous communities such as Malpahari and Oraon live on the bank of big khas ponds. They also take lease of the ponds and cultivate fish. In a study location, the Oraon community cultivated fish in a khas pond and for that, they paid taxes to the government on regular basis. One day their mainstream neighbours robbed their fishes. They placed their complaints to the local administration. However, they did not get justice. Instead of sending back the right to the Oraon families, the local administrative advised them to include the rich mainstream neighbours as beneficiaries. In another location, 14 Malpahari families live on the bank of a khas pond. 11 Muslim families also live on the same condition. After taking lease from the government, they together with the Muslim families invested in the pond for culturing fish. When they went to sell the fish in market a part of the mainstream Muslim community living far from there demanded share of the fish. They demanded to distribute the money into 80 families, though only 25 families (14 Malpahari and 11 Muslim) had invested in it. They complained to the UP chairman and upazila chairman for a solution. However, both of the chairmen advised them to include those who claimed the share. Besides, a Muslim powerful neighbour also poisoned the water to kill the fish. The Malpahari community complained again to the chairmen but did not get any justice.

3.5 Discriminatory practices in providing services to the IPs and dalits

3.5.1 Education

‘Untouchability’ deep rooted in society and reflected in the schools: Dalit students experience some barriers in schools where the teachers practice some discriminatory behaviours. For example, it was found in a government primary school in the middle of the

Box 6: Engaging dalit students in cleaning at school

In a school under the study locations, a student from cleaner community was appearing examination and her examination ended up 15 minutes before the allotted time. Finding the girl free her teacher made her wash a curtain of the school. Another student from the same community informed that she was engaged in cleaning school toilet.

“Sweeper Colony” that since its establishment in 1964, only two Muslim students enrolled in this school, and these two students were no one but the children of one of the teachers of this school. The only reason this teacher enrolled them was that it was convenient for her to look after her daughters. The school does not have any record that ‘higher caste’ Hindu parents took their children to this school for admission. The teachers informed that there are Muslim students in the catchment area, but the Muslim parents do not allow their children for getting admission in this school. The students from dalit communities sometimes do not feel comfortable when they see that their mainstream neighbours tease them by throwing undignified and abusive words. To save themselves from such experience, some dalit children informed that they try to hide their identity when they keep walking for schools. They take unusual roads to get to schools so other people cannot understand their identity.

Negligence by peers not addressed: A head teacher of a government primary school claimed that both Bengali and Tripura students interact with each other and sit together. However, the observation in classes nullified his claim. It was found in every classroom that Tripura students were sitting together being separated from Bengali students and mostly on the last benches. This was observed in many other schools under the study locations. Field data suggest some causes of this self-exclusion. In a school under the study locations, some Munda students informed that their peers belonging the mainstream community avoid sitting with them. A student expressed:

They said, “You carry bad smell. Get away from here.”

One dalit student in another location expressed:

“Muslim classmates do not want to sit with us. They tell us to sit in the back. They use

Box 7: The concept of 'untouchability' practised in schools

There is a primary school in the middle of a “Sweeper Colony” of a city. The school had the word “Sweeper” in its name, which was changed later. However, in the government documents, it is still having the word “Sweeper”. The children from Dom and Domar communities usually get admission in this school. One of the teachers of this school belonging to mainstream community was transferred to this school. which she did not take easy. She expressed:

When I went for viva voce, I heard from a support staff that the recruitment will be made for this particular school. I strongly felt that it would not be a sad thing, if I were not even selected. When I was selected for the job, my husband’s family did not want me to join the school.

Another teacher of this school who also belongs to mainstream community also expressed in the same way. The head teacher of this school is a ‘higher caste’ Hindu. She was promoted as head teacher and transferred to this school. She informed that she cried all night after hearing her transfer order to this school. She expressed:

It would have been better if I still had an assistant teacher’s position, rather than getting a promotion and transfer order for this school.

While discussing the issue with a concerned education officer, it was found that the official was sympathetic to the teachers of that school on their concerns. He replied:

Who wants to go there? Do you want to go? Those people still defecate in open space. Their filthy clothes hanging besides the road may touch your body – would you feel comfort with that?

abusive words. Our teachers do not listen to this kind of problem”.

In another location, some Harijan students experienced misbehaviour of the students from mainstream communities. Some students informed that they were not allowed to drink water by using school glasses. They further informed that the mainstream students do not want to sit with them. In another study location, some Koch students informed that they always face abusive words from mainstream communities. In another location, a Monipuri female student informed:

During our school hours, our Muslim classmates throw abusive words to us. We complained to our teachers but they did not take this kind of complaints seriously.

Negligence in establishing schools nearby indigenous community areas: One of the main characteristics of the IPs is that they mostly live in the remotest areas. Government is committed to establish schools in every village. However, there is a gap in implementing the commitment. Field data suggest that the children of indigenous communities face difficulties in attending schools due to long distance and bad communications. In a study location in Chattagram, two different Tripura populated hilly villages were visited, where there is no government primary school. The students from these villages have to walk hilly paths, streams, and long distance to reach a government school. They have to suffer a lot during the rainy season. A head teacher of a school where some Tripura students are studying pointed out that due to bad communication Tripura students’ dropout rate is high. This is higher for the female students. This was also evident in some other locations where the schools are far from the localities of the IPs and dalit communities and hence, they have less attendance in classes compared to the mainstream students.

Finding no alternative, some dalit and indigenous parents send their children to non-formal schools. For example, the Munda communities working in tea gardens send their children to either tea garden schools or NGO schools. It was found that the primary school completion rate of Munda children is good but they drop out from education when time comes to enroll in high school, as the high schools are located outside and far from their locality. It takes time and costs which they cannot afford. However, the government do not take initiative on its own to establish schools unless the communities take any. Some officials of DPE argued:

We do not proactively look for places to build a school unless the community demands for. If a local community and their member-chairman come up with a demand for a school, then we can proceed on.

3.5.2 Health

Discrimination in getting an appointment of doctor: A dalit female group in a study location informed that most of the time they have to stay in long queue to get a serial for doctor’s visit, whereas the people belonging to mainstream community do not require staying in the queue to meet a doctor. The discussion with some cobbler community people in another study location reveals that the violation of queue to meet the doctor is common in the government hospitals and practised by the local powerful elites and mainstream people. They do not even follow the queue and rather enter in doctors’ room without seeking a permission. Field data suggest that in government hospitals doctors have the tendency to compel the patients to visit them in private clinics where they serve in their

personal time. Most of the poor indigenous people and dalits cannot meet the expenses of private healthcare. Thus, they fall into a double discrimination in accessing healthcare services.

Discrimination in providing services to out-patients: A Garo woman in a study location informed that she went to a government medical college hospital in Dhaka. She bought a ticket at 200 Taka to meet an outdoor doctor. However, she failed to see a doctor when her serial came up. A Garo person in another location experienced another kind of discrimination while seeking services in a government hospital. The doctor he visited told him:

Why have you come here? You have missionary hospitals. Go there.

A Munda person in another study location informed that he went to a government hospital to visit a doctor. The doctor prescribed him without making any primary check-up. He took those medicines accordingly but did not find any improvement. Moreover, his physical condition deteriorated. The fishers' community males in another study location shared that the doctors of an upazila health complex do not pay much attention to them. One of them expressed:

They do not allow us to receive any test facility from the hospital and force us to go to the private diagnostic centres. Moreover, the doctors, nurses, ward boys, cleaners everybody behaves rudely with us.

Discrimination and negligence in providing services to in-patients: A Garo child in a study location was admitted in a government medical college hospital at its childcare unit. Another child of an influential person was also admitted at the same time. A nurse of the unit removed the oxygen connection given to the Garo child patient and set to other child patient, without taking any alternative measure. In another study location, a Rabidas patient was not provided with bed in an upazila health complex, though she was a serious diarrheal patient. The patient's mother was also forced to clean the floor of the hospital as her son put dirt on it. A Rabidas woman in another location informed that her husband was admitted in an upazila health complex but did not get good care. She expressed:

He was admitted there for two days. Doctors did not give proper time to my husband. They did not even touch his body to check up his situation. They showed hatred and negligence. Hospital staff also behaved rudely with us.

Box 8: Providing no bed to dalit in-patients

A 50 years old cobbler person in a study location shared his bitter experience of receiving healthcare services from a government hospital. He took his wife to a district hospital with severe stomach pain. She was admitted there for two days and but the hospital authority did not provide with a bed. While lying on the floor they noticed that there was an unoccupied bed. They requested the duty nurse to allot her the bed. The nurse replied that a VIP would be admitted there soon. Therefore, they would not allow her to use the bed. With a deep breath, the person expressed:

It might be due to my cobbler identity my wife was refused to allot a bed.

Denial and negligence in providing services to emergency patients: The dalits respondents in some places expressed that they experienced serious negligence and discrimination in government hospitals when they went to seek emergency support. A dalit boy in a study location faced a severe road accident and he was taken to a divisional hospital. However, he was denied to admit in the hospital. He was later taken to a private hospital, which created a burden of 30,000 Taka for

treatment. In another study location, a Garo person was taken to a government medical college hospital's emergency department as he got a serious injury and bleeding. His relatives were worried about him seeing the non-stop bleeding. They called upon a doctor who came angrily and made a harsh comment:

All will die. Why are you so worried?

A dalit person in another study location informed that he took a dog bitten patient to an upazila health complex. No one of the hospital touched the wounded patient because of his dalit identity. Observing the negligence, the person himself

Box 9: Negligence to serious dalit in-patient

bought a soap from outside and cleaned up the wounded place. He expressed that this happened for their Harijan identity. A dalit person in another location was taken to an emergency department of a government hospital with an injury in his leg. The ward boy claimed extra money from his relative stating that he would need special cleaning of his hands as he would make a bandage for a dalit patient.

A 45 years old widow of Harijan community in a study location argued that the quality of treatment in government hospitals is extremely poor since she experienced all the odds during the treatment of her husband. She admitted her husband with severe breathing problem. Although the oxygen support was urgently required to ease his breath, it was provided to him after one day of his admission. Nonetheless, the support was taken off by the nurse for several times and used for another patient. The poor woman lamented:

The nurse did not even notice his severe breathing problem after that removal of the connection. The doctors did not even check-up my husband's problem properly during our stay. In the fourth day, I lost my husband in the hospital.

Negligence in providing maternity

care: In a study location, a Santal

woman informed that she was not provided with bed in an upazila health complex when she was admitted with her labour pain. She reported that there was beds available in the hospital but she was not given and she argued that it happened as she was from Santal community. She recalled that a doctor replied her upon her request:

You are Santal, you can stay on floor. You do not need a bed.

In another study location, a dalit pregnant woman went to an upazila health complex with serious labour pain. The hospital refused to admit her and a doctor advised to get admitted in a private clinic where that doctor provides private services. The woman was finally bound to be admitted in the clinic. However, the baby was died in the womb as she failed to get the care on time.

Discrimination in providing free medicines: A 50 years old cobbler of a study location shared his experience of receiving health services from a government hospital. He expressed:

We do not get the prescribed medicines from the hospital dispensary properly.

A Sing woman in a study location informed that they are not provided with free medicines from the community clinics whereas given properly to the Muslims. A member of Rabidas community in another location informed that the medicines usually given to them are limited to paracetamol and gastric tablets, however, are given to those who are lucky and powerful people. A dalit woman in another location shared her experience about a community clinic:

Chairman's daughter was given medicine in front of me. When I approached for medicine, the attendant yelled at me and forced me to get out of the clinic.

3.5.3 Social safety net schemes

Discrimination in selection of beneficiaries: Field data suggest that there is a huge discrimination made against the IPs and dalits in the selection of beneficiaries for the social safety net schemes. For example, in a study location, 5-6 Bagdi persons informed that they got old age allowance but they were forced to bribe. They informed that their three Muslim neighbours also got the allowances but they did not need to pay any bribe.

Poorest people in dalit and indigenous communities are doubly discriminated: In a study location, a well off Banshmali family got two old age allowance cards against two family members at a time. The family was also successful to receive some other supports such as rice at 10 Taka/kg. In spite of their well off condition in their communities, the other Banshmali families who were poor did not get any allowance though they deserved badly. It was found that the well-off family maintained a good relation with UP member, by which they managed to get more than one card. It was observed that two most deserving widows of that community failed to draw attention to get any support. They do not have their own land, and live in poor conditions. They went to the chairman several times but was neglected. A widow expressed that the chairman shouted at her when she asked for a card. In another location, some dalit persons informed that there were huge irregularities in distributing rice at 10 Taka/kg. One dalit person complained that a Muslim family got more than one card at a time whereas they were totally deprived of getting any.

The persons with disabilities in the indigenous communities and dalits are doubly discriminated: In a study location, a dalit mother of a child with disability and thalassemia patient contacted an upazila social service officer for allowance but she was denied. The officer even made a bad comment to the mother:

Your child will die. So, why do you try for her? And why do you think that the government has to pay the money for your child's blood?"

A Santal woman in a study location informed that she has a daughter who is a child with disability since last 13 years. For last eight years, the mother continuously contacted an upazila social service office for an allowance for this daughter but failed to draw attention of the officials. In another location, there are some persons with disabilities in the dalit Pashchima community but none of them is provided with any allowance. In another location, two Munda women were enlisted for widow allowances for two times but they were not provided with any support at all.

Poorest indigenous and dalit women are triply discriminated: In a study location, a poor woman of Banshmali community informed that a UP member claimed bribe for providing her maternity allowance. As she failed to manage the money to bribe, she was not enlisted for allowance though she was eligible for getting an allowance for two years during her pregnancy and lactating time. A many indigenous and dalit women in the study areas informed that they were not given any allowance during their pregnancy and lactating period. In some cases, it was found that the UP members seldom visit the localities of IPs and dalit except the election period. Therefore, the women do not get the chance to inform the members about their eligibility.

3.5.4 Local Government Institutions (LGIs)

Discrimination in development activities: In a study location, a City Corporation tactfully evicted the Dom communities from their houses. To evict the Dom families, the City Corporation dumped wastage around the houses with a dirty plan to make the place unpleasant to live. In another location, some Sing people informed that their local MP, chairman, and member gave them promises during election that they would repair the approach roads to their locality. However, they never found that the promises were fulfilled at all. Like the approach road to Sing community, maximum of the roads to both indigenous and dalit communities under the study areas were found that they are much neglected. Since they do not have voice and not important factor for election, they are hardly considered for any development intervention. In a City Corporation area, the living condition of the sweeper colony's people was found very poor. The people involved in keeping the city clean have been settled beside the place by which the city's open sewage flows through a canal. A Harijan woman of that colony expressed:

Last rainy season the canal overflowed and sewage ran into our houses. We had almost knee height water standing in our rooms for a few days. We couldn't cook food; our children couldn't study during these days. We suffered skin diseases. You may come and visit us in the coming rainy season to see the real situation. We have informed the issue several times to the city corporation, but nothing happened.

Not equal treatment in accessing services: In a study location, some Khasia participants informed that they went to UP for collecting their birth certificate. They faced delay and rude behaviour from the UP. Some other dalit and indigenous people also complained that they went to the UP chairmen and members to get services but experienced humiliation in most of the times. A dalit poor old aged woman in another location complained that she went to the chairman to pursue for an allowance. However, she was insulted gravely. Some Bagdi women in another location informed that they experienced harsh comments from their Ward Councillor when they went to seek a safety net support. They further informed that when they even go to the Council office for getting birth certificate, they were not treated well. A Bagdi woman expressed:

They delay our work but give quick service to the powerful people. They do not even behave well with us.

Lack of support for the religious institutions of the IPs and dalits: In a study location, the Santal Lutheran Christian does not have their own Church for worship. In some other locations, the Malpahari and Pahan communities do not have their own temples for worship. They placed their demands for support several times but failed to get any to build their worship place. Field data reveal that most of the Hindu dalits and indigenous communities have trouble in their funeral time. In a study location, the dalit communities do not feel protected when they burn dead bodies as part of their funeral customs. They experience objection from mainstream community of creating ashes, smoke and bad smells. Some dalit people also complained that they do not get any support from people's representatives to repair their funeral places. In a study location, the Jalodas community complained that their funeral place is being eroded in river. They drew attention to the UP chairman for several times but did not get any support.

3.5.5 Land

Discrimination and improper planning in khasland distribution: A significant part of the dalits and indigenous families are living on the government owned khasland. However, they are not getting any ownership, although there are practices that government is allocating khasland to the landless people. Field data suggest that there is a gap in the khasland distribution process. The field officials under the Ministry of Land informed that they have no provision to find out deserving landless people for allocating khasland. If the landless people apply on their own, the land office then take it into account for an allocation. The instructions used for allocating khasland do not provide that as marginalised people landless dalit and indigenous families would get priority in the allocation of khasland.

Discrimination in accessing land services: Local land officials informed that the indigenous families are required to take permission from district administration if they want to sell their lands, which is not a normal practice for the mainstream people. Field data reveal that it create extra burden of harassment to the IPs. The Pashchima communities in a study location informed that they went to land office for several times to seek information on their rehabilitation plan. However, they replied that the officials were not responsive to them. A Rakhaine woman informed that they rented out a shop to a Bengali person. After three years, the person started claiming the ownership of the shop alongside the land. Her husband died in the meantime. She went to the upazila land office for several times to get a solution to the problem. However, the land official did not cooperate her well.

3.5.6 Other offices

Denial of providing services: In a study location, a dalit girl was abducted by some mainstream young persons from a cultural programme. After a few days, the girl was returned to her family. The victim family did not get any justice. Another dalit girl of the same community was raped by some mainstream persons. Her guardian went to the police station to lodge a case, however, the station denied to file the case.

Discrimination in recruitments: Both indigenous and dalit people informed that they faced discrimination when they appeared for recruitment tests. In a study location, an Oraon boy informed that he applied for a job in a high school. He did well in the examination. However, the local MP was involved with the recruitment process who recommended the job for a Bengali candidate. A woman in Jele community in another location informed that her son applied for a government job. After the viva voce, police even visited their place for verification. However, after the verification her son was not finally offered for that job. A higher educated school teacher from Sheel community in another location informed that he did well in different government job tests including BCS examinations, however, was not finally selected. He expressed:

I have finally chosen a job in a primary school, though I never thought of it. I was even discriminated when I appeared for the job of assistant education officer. I was first in the examination. I was only one candidate from my upazila. However, I failed to get the job.

A guardian in a Harijan community in a city area informed that his son was graduated in computer science from India. However, he failed to get a job in Bangladesh. He expressed:

My son was selected for a temporary job in a high school. However, he failed to sustain there. The headmaster of that school misbehaved with him. At one stage, he was forced to

resign from his position. The headmaster intentionally did it to replace someone he liked. The headmaster could have because of our identity.

The Harijan community people working as cleaner in the city corporations and municipalities are not allowed to enjoy any leave. If they get sick seriously and cannot attend office, 100 Taka per day is deducted from their salary. They always face threat of firing by the Jamadar. Jamadar always threatens the cleaners if they are absent in office for any reason. In a City Corporation, a Dom man worked in a hospital. He was sick for two months and unable to attend office. For his absence even in a valid reason, he was terminated from his job.

Discrimination in getting electricity connection: Field data suggest that the dalit and indigenous communities are discriminated in getting electricity connection.

For example, 20 families in a Rabidas community in a study location informed that they paid connection fees alongside some undue money to the electrification officials in 2002. However, they have not yet got the connection. They informed that their mainstream neighbours also applied for connection at the

Box 10: Double barrier in getting electricity connection

The Santal communities in a study location paid extra money for electricity connection three years ago. Some people from the community went to local electricity office to seek an update. After hearing the news, the local MP became angry and threatened them for why they did not take his help. The MP stopped the electricity office to provide electricity connection to the Santal community.

same time but they got the connection after one year of the application. The Rishi communities in a study location also experienced huge delays compared to their mainstream neighbours. Field data reveal that a clear double discrimination is imposed on the dalit and IPs. For example, each family of Rabidas communities of a study location had to spend more money than that of the money required for the mainstream communities to get electricity connection. On the other hand, in many cases the locations where the indigenous communities and dalits are living are not getting much attention for electricity connection. For example, the Tripura communities living in a study location are remaining out of electricity connection, though the entire mainstream localities are ahead of getting electricity connection. In a study location, Munda communities have not yet got any electricity connection. Many Garo families living in haor and forest areas do not have electricity connections. Forest department does not allow getting the connection.

The Pahan communities in a study location had to submit their land documents to get an electricity connection. The Pahan families those who did not have land documents were not provided with the connection. The Malpahari communities in a study area and the Harijan communities in another area those who are living in municipality areas had to pay extra money for electricity connection. They were told that extra payment was required as they did not have land documents. However, the REB official in Dhaka office did not inform about any written policy that provides that it be required to collect extra money from the landless IPs and dalit for an electricity connection.

Discrimination in providing security services: The dalit communities of a study location informed that they did not get any protection from police station during Kali Puja, which they consider their biggest religious festival for their caste. The dalit communities in another location informed that they were not provided with police protection during the last Durgapuja. They shared that some young mainstream scoundrels bullied their women due to lack of the police protection. They also experienced that sometimes their Muslim neighbours complained them to turn off the musical instruments during religious festivals, even though it was not their prayer time. The dalit communities also face some other security problems. For example, in a study location, some Munda families informed that they are not allowed to burn dead bodies on the land they used to use for generations. A Madrasa built beside the place and the nearby Muslim community that takes care of the Madrasa set the obstacle to carry out this religious custom.

3.6 Transparency gaps in service provisions for the IPs and dalits

3.6.1 Education

Information on special stipend under PMO funds and DSS not well circulated: Field data suggest that the dalits and indigenous communities are not well aware of the education supports provisioned from the PMO and the DSS.

Some guardians from indigenous communities and dalits ignorant of why some of their children are out of stipend: Some students from dalit and indigenous communities studying in government or registered (MPO) schools informed that they face some interruptions in getting stipends, although their peers get smoothly. However, their teachers did not let them know why this interruption takes place. Some teachers argued that it might happen if the students are not irregular in classes and do not do well in the final examinations. Some female students informed that they used to get the stipend but it discontinued without any reason. They shared it with their teachers but did not get any solutions. One of the dalit participants in a study location argued:

Our children do not get stipend on regular basis due to our identity. School teachers know that we won't be able to protest as we are lower caste Hindu.

3.6.2 Health

Lack of awareness about tribal health programme: DGHS initiated a programme for the IPs in 2017. However, they are yet unaware of the number and types of the IPs living in Bangladesh. A concerned official of the programme at the head office informed that they are depending on the civil surgeons stationed at district level to estimate and locate the IPs. Based on the estimate, they have expanded the programme to 69 upazilas in 15 districts. Under the programme, they have a work plan for 2017-2022. This programme has begun with awareness raising among the IPs to overcome their superstitious beliefs and practices. However, still the doctors at upazila level as well as the indigenous communities do not know about the special services under this programme provisioned for the IPs.

Service hour and doctors' schedule at community clinics and upazila health

complexes not transparent: A Santal person in a study location shared his experience about an upazila health complex:

I went there for my treatment and found the rooms of doctors closed before the office closing time. Then I searched and got the information that most of the doctors were absent on that day.

The research team visited a number of community clinics in the study locations and found in some cases that the clinics were closed during office hour. A Santal woman in a study location shared her experience of visiting a community clinic in her area:

One day I went to the nearby community clinic and found it closed. It was Tuesday and not even a government holiday. On another day, I went there again and I found a doctor. However, they did not give me any medicine. Actually, we do not have any information about the schedule of doctors.

List of free medicines not transparent in most of the cases: A dalit woman in a study location informed that after prescribing the medicines the doctor of the upazila health complex told her that she would get only one kind of medicine free out of all prescribed medicines from the hospital dispensary, which the doctor even marked on. However, the staff of the dispensary told her that they did not have any medicine as listed in the prescription. When she argued that the doctor told her that the marked one was available there, then the staff finally gave her five tablets.

3.6.3 Social safety net schemes

Special support for IPs and dalits not widely circulated: As stated earlier, there are some allowances for IPs and dalits provided by the PMO and DSS respectively. The UNOs play a key role in distributing the allowances for plain land IPs whereas the Upazila Social Service Offices deal with the allowance for dalits. Field data suggest that the dalit and indigenous communities in the study locations are not well aware of the supports and processes of accessing those, though the officials claimed that the selection process is transparent in both cases. For example, a social service officer in a study location claimed that they arranged public announcement to inform all dalit people about the allowance through UP chairmen and members in entire upazila. Based on a given date the deserving dalit people were asked to gather at UNO office. The UNO himself facilitated the selection process by maintaining an open process. However, it was found in reality that the UP chairmen and members took the dalit persons with whom they had good relations. From the picked up dalit persons, the UNO selected the beneficiaries.

Beneficiary selection not transparent to the dalit and indigenous communities: The UP chairmen and members play a key role in the beneficiary selection, though the social safety net schemes are dealt from different departments. Field data suggest that the beneficiary selection process is not transparent. The UP chairmen and members do not maintain any participatory process in order to ensure the selection of most deserving beneficiaries. The respondents in both dalit and indigenous communities informed that they seldom know the time of when the chairmen and members carry out the selection process. However, some dalit and indigenous persons informed that they get to know when they see that some mainstream neighbours are getting the allowances. After getting the news, some of them went to chairmen and members of UP and came back after getting rude behaviour.

Lack of information about who are providing what: A many of the dalit and indigenous respondents were found to be passive about getting information on their rights and entitlements to public services. They are not even well aware of the social safety net provisions allocated for those who are left behind. For example, some Tripura women in a study location failed to state whether they are entitled to maternity allowance during their pregnancy and post-delivery. When they were asked they could not give any answer of who are the contact points to get the information and support. Some indigenous and dalit respondents also informed that there are some persons with disabilities in their communities those deserve badly some support from social safety net schemes. A poor Santal woman in a study location informed that she learnt about the contact authority and contacted as well to get a support for her daughter in disability but failed to get her enlisted. However, some Pashchima people in a study location informed that they have a number of severe persons with a disability in their families who require social supports badly but they failed to understand about the contact authority. This means that the information on the social safety net schemes are not reached out to the IPs and dalits properly.

3.6.4 Local Government Institutions (LGIs)

Lack of knowledge about fees for getting certificates: Field data suggest huge illiteracy prevail among the older persons in both dalit and indigenous communities. They do not understand what are written on the billboard that they find in the premises of LGI offices. In many cases, the respondents did not provide any answer on the exact figures of fees determined by the government to provide services through digital centres and LGIs. In most cases, they collected birth certificates of their kids. However, they stated that the digital centres provide them different figures while informing them about fees.

Transparency gaps in providing support to the religious institutions: Religious institutions such as churches and temples of dalits and IPs get some allocations from the government during their main religious festivals such as Christmas Day and Durgapuja. Most of the respondents of these communities who are associated with the management of the institutions and festivals informed that they received some money. However, the figure of allocations varied by different study locations. The representatives of upazila parishads informed that one ton rice is allocated for every church or temple. However, many leaders of church and temple committees got to know that money is allocated for their institutions to help them celebrate their festivals. On the contrary, some leaders informed that rice is allocated and the LGI representatives and local administration sell the rice and hand over the money; but not the full money against the sale value.

3.6.5 Land

Lack of awareness among landless dalit and indigenous communities about their entitlements to khasland and jalmohals: The land officials at the upazila level informed that they do not find out who are entitled for khasland; they just verify the applications and allocate land when someone applies for khasland. Field data suggest, although the landless dalits and IPs are struggling for their right to living, they are mostly unaware of the process of getting the khasland. This means that the information on khasland distribution have not reached out to the dalit and indigenous communities properly.

Lack of transparency in decision-making process in protecting land and forests: The government especially the forest department takes some decisions in the name of protecting forests and lands where the IPs have their abodes for generations. In some cases, some powerful elites grabbed government owned lands where some IPs and dalits had lived for generations. The powerful elites told them that they bought the land. However, the indigenous and dalit communities cleared their lands and let the grabbers take possession. They did not even protest against the grabbing. For example, in a study location, a powerful local elite grabbed land of a government owned laid off jute mill and evicted Pashchima communities living there. Same thing happened in another location inhabited by Tripura communities, where a powerful elite claimed ownership of a land owned by the forest department and evicted a many Tripura families.

Transparency gaps in land offices: This is to mention that the dalits and IPs in the study locations did not have much land related issues that required them to make frequent visit to land offices for service. However, many of the illiterate dalits and IPs who had the experience of getting land related services informed that they are not well aware of any service fees needed for getting land related services. Therefore, they had to depend on some intermediaries to solve their problems and spend extra money.

3.7 Corruption experiences of the IPs and dalits

3.7.1 Education

Denial and negligence by teachers: Some students from both indigenous and dalit communities experienced denial and negligence during the admission and in classes. In a study location, a Monipuri person informed

that a head teacher of a school belonging to mainstream community denied getting two Monipuri students admitted, without showing any reason. In another location, a government school denied to allow admission of students from “Sweeper Colony”. To justify the denial, the schoolteachers took unscheduled test for the kids and showed that they were not qualified for admission. In another location, a dalit parent informed that his son was allowed to get admission at school at the very last, after completing admission of all other children. The parent claimed that it happened due his cobbler identity. The parent further expressed:

Box 1 I: Negligence in school enrolment

In a study location, a dalit parent shared his experience of her daughter’s admission in a government college. The parent expressed:

The principal of the college knew my profession. I found him unwilling to allow my daughter for admission. I was asking him for some information for several times, but he was not giving me any answer. I failed to get any help from the principal. I went to the UNO office to inform the matter. The UNO suggested me to go to the principal again and wait in his office. I went there and tried to talk to the principal but still he showed his reluctance. After a long waiting, I was in a state to start leaving the principal’s office with saddened face. When I was about to make it, I found that the principal received a phone call. After finishing the call, the principal called me and helped me for my daughter’s admission.

Teachers used to misbehave with my son and me. In addition, I had never got the chance to sit with other parents at any school meeting.

Schools show negligence in publishing examination result if dalit and indigenous students do better: A dalit participant in a study location informed that the teachers of his son's school insulted him when he went to them to collect his son's result. He found that his son obtained a good result. He expressed:

A teacher told me with insulting attitude, "How come a boy from slum scores A+ result?" Some parents from other communities also expressed their doubt over my son's result.

An indigenous parent in another location argued that the school teachers have a tendency to neglect their kids. He further argued:

The guardians from mainstream communities do not take it easy if our children score a good result. In this situation, the teachers make delays in publishing results.

A Koch student in a study location informed that they had a Brahmin Hindu teacher who used to tease him when he was found that he scored a better result. The teacher delayed to provide a certificate to him; as a result, he failed to get admission in a high school on time. This negligence is also evident in sports. For example, in a study location, some Hajong students informed that they were deprived of prizes in spite of their winning in the sports.

Negligence of teachers to communicate with dalit SMC member: The guardians of dalit and indigenous communities also experience negligence of teachers, even though they are empowered through school management committee (SMC). A woman from Jalodas community in a study location was selected as an SMC member. However, she experienced much negligence from teachers and other SMC members. She expressed:

Most of the time they do not inform me about meeting. They hold meeting without calling me. If I participate, they do not ask me for my opinion, rather they just take a decision and ask me to give my consent.

Harassment and torture: Both dalit and indigenous communities shared their experiences of being harassed in school for their identity. For example, a student from Rishi community in a study location informed that he experienced huge torture of a teacher. He was beaten mercilessly by the teacher as he with some of his friends went to watch a cricket match. However, for the same misconduct the teacher did not beat the mainstream students. The student further told that his Hindu teachers usually treated him unwell due to his lower caste identity.

Irregularities in beneficiary selection for the stipend from PMO and DSS: This is to mention that the size of the fund from the PMO and DSS is not huge to cover all deserving students from dalit and indigenous communities. However, the policy states that the poorest of the poor dalit and indigenous families will get priority. It further states that the children those receive regular stipend provided by the school will not be eligible for the special stipend allocated for dalits and indigenous students. Field data reveal some examples of breaching the selection criteria. For example, in a study location, 15 primary school going students from dalit communities receive a special stipend provided from DSS. The researchers visited Jalodas communities living in three different locations with poor

conditions. It was found that some of their children receive regular stipend from school and some are left out of this support. However, no one among those who are not enlisted for regular stipend, are also out of the special stipend. The researcher also visited a Sheel community comprising of around 40 families. It was found that the economic condition of Sheel community is better than the Jalodas communities. Five students living in this community and studying in same school were found enlisted for the special stipend. Their parents informed that they also receive regular stipend from school.

The most interesting fact is that one of the stipend recipients' mother is a teacher of that school, the father of the student is another school's head teacher. This student's mother gave the name of the other kids' name from their community for the special stipend. Field data suggest that their socio-economic status does not make them eligible for getting both regular and special stipends together whereas the poor dalit students in other communities are deprived of both types of stipends.

This kind of faulty enlistment of stipend beneficiaries was also found in some other study locations. Moreover, it was found in some locations that the allocation from the PMO which are solely allocated for the indigenous communities living in the plain lands have been distributed among dalit students.

3.7.2 Health

Unauthorised money: The dalit and indigenous service-seeking people experienced bribery in public healthcare institutions. In-patients and emergency patients faced the bribery most. For example, a dalit person in a study location shared his experience of receiving emergency treatment from a district level hospital. He went to the hospital with an injury in his finger. After completing the dressing, the emergency staff claimed an undue money of 100 Taka. In another location, a dalit person went to an upazila health complex for emergency treatment with a road accident injury. A medical staff claimed an undue money of 200 Taka after dressing.

The public hospitals take advantage of bribery when the dalit and indigenous women go with labour pain. For example, in a study location, a Pahan woman had to pay 2500 Taka for a normal delivery in an upazila health complex, though she had an antenatal care card, by which she was supposed to get free delivery support. Another Pahan community woman had to pay BDT 9000 illegitimately for a normal delivery. A Banshmali mother in another location shared her experience of paying an extra money of 1200 Taka to the doctor during her delivery in an upazila health complex. Besides, she had to pay 900 Taka to the nurses, as they claimed as tips.

The IPs and dalits experienced bribery while taking some other services from the government hospitals. A Garo service recipient in a study location claimed:

It is difficult to get to any doctor in an upazila health complex without paying extra money to the medical staff including cleaners.

A dalit service recipient in a study location informed that he received pathological services such as blood test from an upazila health complex, however, he was not provided with any money receipt. Another person of this community informed that he took his sister-in-law to the hospital and had to pay extra money for a blood test.

The dalit and indigenous service recipients also experienced bribery in the outdoor services. For example, a Garo service recipient claimed:

I had to pay 100 Taka to a cleaner to get to a doctor.

Some dalit and indigenous women experienced bribery in getting antenatal care (ANC) card and maternity allowance. For example, in a study location, a dalit mother had to pay 500 Taka to an upazila health complex's staff to get an ANC card. A Pahan woman in another location informed that she had to pay 3000 Taka to get an ANC card. The card is distributed after the fourth month of pregnancy and the upazila health complexes deals the distribution. There are also allegations of taking 500 Taka from the money provided to the ANC beneficiaries. A family planning inspector in a study location confirmed:

There is no fee for getting an ANC card and maternity allowance. However, sometimes beneficiaries happily give us 500 Taka as tips.

Table 6: Unauthorised money taken for healthcare services

Types of services	Ranges of corrupt money
Outdoor healthcare	20-100 Taka
Emergency healthcare	100-200 Taka
Pathological tests	100-450 Taka
Birth delivery	100-9,000 Taka
Antenatal care card	500-3,000 Taka

Source: Field data

3.7.3 Social safety net schemes

Bribery in selection of beneficiaries – no money no enlistment: Field data suggest a huge number of incidences of bribery in beneficiary selection. A many respondents argued that bribe money works as the determinant of getting social safety net support. They further informed that the bribery takes place at different stages. For example, a Santal elderly person (aged 62) in a study location bribed 2000 Taka to a UP member for getting an old age allowance. The elderly person alleged that after getting the first installation, the UP member took 1000 Taka away from him. Two dalit persons from a fishers community in another study location informed that they had to bribe 4000 Taka to the UP chairman for the enlistment for old age allowance. An old Rabidas person in another study location informed that he had to bribe 3000 Taka to an UP member for getting an old age allowance card.

Field data also suggest that the burden of bribery for getting social safety net support is imposed more on the dalit and IPs, compared to the mainstream communities. For example, a few Pashchima community people in a study location argued that 5-6 persons from their community were enlisted for old age allowance and they had to bribe 5000 Taka each. However, they informed that their three poor Muslim neighbours who were also enlisted for the same allowance but did not need to pay any bribe money.

The persons with disabilities being living with multiple vulnerabilities had to bribe for getting disability allowances. For example, in a study location, a Pahan person with disability informed that he had to bribe 2000 Taka for getting a disability allowance. A 32 years old Monipuri person in another location informed that his son with disability was enlisted for disability allowance but a condition was applied to him. As per the condition, he had to pay 1000 taka to an UP member when he withdrew the allowance for the first time. A Rabidas person with disability in another location had to bribe 3000 Taka to get his name enlisted for the allowance. Some persons with disabilities informed that they were not provided with any allowance as they failed to pay bribe. For example, in a study location, a person with disability from dalit community argued that a social service official claimed 5000 Taka for enlisting him for the allowance, which he could not manage to pay.

The poor women in dalit and indigenous communities also experienced bribery in getting widow allowance. For example, a widow Rabidas woman in a study location informed that she had to bribe 2000 Taka to an UP member for the enlistment in widow allowance list. Another dalit woman had to pay a bribe of 1000 Taka to local an UP member for getting widow allowance. It was also alleged that even after being enlisted for widow allowance two Munda women in a study location were not provided with any allowance.

The IPs and dalits also experienced bribery in getting support of test relief schemes. For example, a woman from Rabidas community in a study location informed that she bribed 2000 Taka to a local UP member to get enlisted for the cash for work scheme.

The pregnant and lactating mothers also experienced exclusion from the enlistment of maternity allowance due to their inability to pay bribe money. For example, a woman of Banshmali community in a study location informed that a UP member claimed 3000 Taka for the enlistment for maternity allowance. Due to her inability to pay the money, she failed to get any allowance in spite of her poor financial condition. However, A few dalit and indigenous women could manage to pay bribe money for the maternity allowance. For example, a Santal mother in a study location had to bribe 4000 Taka to a local UP member for maternity allowance.

Table 7: Unauthorised money taken for accessing social safety net schemes

Types of services	Ranges of corrupt money
Old age allowance	500-5,000 Taka
Disability allowance	1,000-3,000 Taka
Widow allowance	500-2,000 Taka
VGF/VGD	1,000-2,000 Taka
House building	6,000-20,000 Taka
Dalit allowance	1,500-2,000 Taka
Maternity allowance	500-4,000 Taka

Source: Field data

Taking bribe money but not keeping commitment: A many instances say that the dalit and indigenous people paid bribe money for getting allowances but were not provided with the support. In some cases, the bribe money was not even refunded in spite of their meagre financial conditions. For example, in a study location, a Banshmali woman bribed 1000 Taka to an UP chairman for getting food for work support three years ago but she was not provided with work. The poor woman expressed:

I will never go to the Chairman for anything if I even need to beg.

In another study location, an UP member took unauthorised money from two Munda persons with a commitment to provide VGF card. However, only one of them got the card. Moreover, the deprived person did not get his money back.

Irregularities in distribution of allowances to the IPs and dalits: The study team tracked several beneficiaries of special allowances allocated and managed by the DSS. Field data suggest that there are some irregularities in the selection of beneficiaries. For example, in a study location, the team collected the list of dalit beneficiaries from the upazila social service office. The team went to some selected beneficiaries to verify the selection. Three beneficiaries were found in a Rishi community. They informed that they paid 1500 Taka each to their ward councilor for the enlistment. The team also visited more three dalit beneficiaries in another location and found that they all live beside an UP chairman's residence, the chairman helped them get the cards. The team also visited another beneficiary in a fisher community, found that the person was no one but the most solvent, and empowered person i.e. the leader of his community. The person informed that he maintained good relations with upazila parishad chairman, through which he managed to get his name enlisted. The team also visited some beneficiaries in another study location and found that the selected beneficiaries got enlisted by bribing money. Some of them were found to be better off in terms of economic condition compared to other dalit families in their localities.

Field data suggest that the PMO fund for the plain land IPs get due emphasis in the local administration. However, there are some allegations that the local administration allocates the fund to the dalit people instead of IPs as, in some places, the local administrations fail to identify who the right IPs are. For example, in a study location, 45 Bagdi families got 5000 Taka each from the PMO fund. There was also an allocation of money for distributing auto-rickshaw. It was found that the Bagdi communities had three factions. One group alleged that the most powerful group embezzled the money instead of distributing among the poor Bagdi families. The wrong allocation of PMO fund was also distributed among Rabidas families in another study location. However, in many cases, this fund was distributed rightly to the indigenous communities. For example, in a study location, 2145 Munda people received 5000 Taka each from this fund. However, some families alleged that there was an allocation of 3000 Taka for each of those who received training on sewing but they were provided with 2500 Taka each.

Field data also reveal that the IPs and dalits were provided with some support during their big festivals and the allocation was made to the churches and temples; not to the families. However, they reported that they did not get the full amount of their allocations. For example, the Garo community and Rakhaine community in two separate study locations

were provided the allowances from their respective upazila parishads during Christmas Day and Buddha Purnima respectively. For each church and temple, one metric ton rice was allocated. However, the church and temple authorities informed that they did not even provided with the allocated rice. Instead, they were provided with some money. The communities argued that if they could sell the rice in market, they would gain around 30,000 Taka for each institute, whereas they were provided with less than 15,000 Taka.

In some locations, some allocations were provided to the poor dalit and indigenous persons, but in some cases, the process of selection had an involvement of bribery. For example, in a study location, some poor Mahato families were provided with housing support. They were supposed to get a 16-yard-long house with a tube well and a latrine. The beneficiaries informed that the LGI representatives claimed 10,000-20,000 Taka from each of the families. They also alleged that they were provided with only 12-yard-long house instead of 16 yards. Moreover, they were not provided with any tube well. They further alleged that the beneficiary families had to bear the cost of masons and carrying the materials dropped far from their homes.

Field data also reveal that both dalit and indigenous communities experienced irregularities in receiving safety net support allocated for them. For example, some Banshmali beneficiaries in a study location informed that they received VGF support from the union parishad. They argued that they were provided with 10 kg rice for each of the poor families, though the actual distribution arrangement of government was 20 kg. Some Munda beneficiaries in another location informed that they were provided with VGF rice by using a bucket rather than weighing on scale. The beneficiaries informed that each of the families was provided with less than 18 kg rice by using this trick. The concerned UP chairman accepted the allegation and provided with as reason behind the trick. He argued:

Government does not provide us any transportation cost. All UPs have to arrange this cost from their own source.

An UP member in another study location argued:

We distribute less as we receive at least one kg less than the allocation for every packet when we collect from the government go-down. Besides, we cut down one kg more and distribute among those who are left out of the distribution list. We also need to give some money to the Chowkidars (village police) as they distribute slips among the beneficiaries.

3.7.4 Local Government Institutions (LGIs)

Taking side of the powerful; not the oppressed IPs and dalits: Both dalits and indigenous communities experienced biased treatment from the people's representatives. They argued that the chairmen and members most often take side of the powerful elites instead of making a justice. Field data suggest that the LGI representatives clearly take into consideration their vote banks. They also consider who are their relatives and friends. The people's representatives are accused of biasing their justice in favour of powerful elites, which most often go against the interest of the oppressed IPs and dalits. For example, in a study location, a dalit person argued that he had a land dispute with a Muslim neighbour, who was claiming the land ownership and not letting the dalit parson harvest his paddy. The person was asked whether he did seek any assistance from their UP chairman or member. He replied:

“Who do I go to for justice? Their (UP Chairman) relatives occupied my land.”

In another location, a dalit boy eloped with a Muslim girl. The Muslim community threatened the dalit family to handover their girl, otherwise, they would demolish the entire dalit community. The dalit family was forced to handover the girl and flee from the area. This type of incidence is rare in dalit and indigenous communities that a boy of their community makes any affair with a girl belonging to mainstream communities. However, this is a normal case that a boy belonging to mainstream communities can make affair with a girl belonging to dalit and indigenous communities and throw her out whenever they wish. However, the dalit or indigenous families would not make any complaints against the incidence. A Munda person in a location narrated such a case. He expressed:

We do not have any courage to charge a family belonging to the mainstream community for why someone of them have made an affair with our daughter. We never think of that because everyone including the chairman and member will take side of them; not ours.

In another study location, a dalit family traded milk. They had some dealings with a number of people who were not paying their dues amounting to six lacs Taka to the dalit milk trader. Getting no other way, the trader complained to the UP chairman. The chairman assured the trader several times but did not take any initiative to help the trader recover his money. As advised by the chairman, the trader went to the police station to lodge a case. The police station told him to collect a recommendation from the UP chairman. The trader requested the chairman to go with him to the police station. The chairman told him to go first and he would join later. The trader waited for the chairman the whole day at the police station but the chairman did not keep his word. After losing his total capital to the powerful mainstream people, the dalit family has fallen in a miserable condition. The trader expressed:

I have stopped sending my daughter to college, who was enrolled in a diploma college.

As he was asked why the chairman did not help him recover his money, he replied:

One of them is an UP member and others are his relatives and friends who are great factors for his election.

Unauthorised money in getting services: Field data suggest that the IPs and dalits had to face burden of unauthorised money in getting services from the LGIs. For example, a dalit young man in a study location informed that he had to bribe 3000 Taka to the municipality office to get a trade licence. However, he was not provided with the service.

Field data also reveal that the dalit and indigenous groups experienced forced bribery in collecting birth certificate from UPs. For example, a Banshmali person in a study location alleged that he was forced to pay 700 Taka to get birth certificate for his son.

Table 8: Unauthorised money taken for accessing services from the LGIs

Types of services	Ranges of corrupt money
Birth certificate	100-700 Taka
Ethnicity certificate	350-5,000 Taka
Salish	1,000-80,000 Taka

Trade licence	3,000-6,000 Taka
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Source: Field data

3.7.5 Land

Irregularities in khasland distribution: A significant part of the dalits and indigenous families are living in government owned khaslands. They alleged that they applied for khasland and most of the time the authority did not consider them for the allocation. Field data reveal that there is a big number of landless families in both dalit and indigenous communities under all the study locations. The families alleged that they are not provided with khasland for their living and livelihoods.

Box 12: Land grabbing by powerful mainstream neighbours and getting no help

In some cases, although the dalit and indigenous families got allocation of khasland, they did not get the possession. For example, a person of Pahan community in a study location informed that he got an allocation of khasland, however, a Muslim powerful person occupied that. A person of Malpahari community in another location also informed that he got an allocation of khasland in 1986, but still he could not take the possession.

In 1991, a Malpahari family in a study location got a lease of a government owned land of one acre and 28 decimals for 99 years. It was mentioned in the lease contract that they can use maximum eight decimals for living and rest of the land has to be used for agriculture. It was also mentioned that they will not be able to sell or handover this land to anyone. In 2000, a few mainstream Bengali families occupied major part of the land and made the Malpahari family cornered. Feeling the whole situation not in favour of the family and finding no support from UP chairman, the family was bound to leave the land.

Grabbing government owned land through irregularities: In many cases, the IPs do not have legal documents to claim their legal ownership of lands. Field data suggest that the powerful mainstream communities take opportunities of this gap and tend to prepare fake document to grab the lands occupied by the IPs. As indicated before, some land officials are not well aware of the customary laws and traditional land ownership systems of IPs. However, in few cases, corrupt land officials also assist the powerful elites to grab the lands of the IPs by helping produce fake documents.

Irregularities in jalmohal allocation: Some of the dalit communities such as Jalodas, Halder (Jele), Rajbongshi, Bagdi depend on fishing in open water bodies for their livelihoods. The dalit fisher community in a study location informed that they used to take lease of a jalmohal (beel) for generations as they deserved the right to jalmohals as the real fishing community. Last year, they failed to win the lease. A fake fishing community was developed by some local powerful elites to win the lease. They managed some members from dalit fishing community by alluring them of money and shaped a fake fishing association for participating in a leasing process. The real fishers' association complained the matter to the UNO and upazila chairman. However, they did not provide any solution. A same situation also took place in some other study locations where the real dalit fishing community had to give membership to some non-fishing powerful elites because of their undue pressure as well as advices from local administration.

Land administration takes side of the powerful elites: Field data suggest that land grabbing of dalit and indigenous communities is a common phenomenon. A Santal family in a study location informed that one of their Muslim neighbours occupied his six decimals land, though they have all legal documents. They complained to the UP chairman but did not get any solution. A many Santal families also shared similar stories of land grabbing by their powerful mainstream neighbours. The Rakhaine communities in another location are in a serious threat of losing all their lands to the powerful Bengali land grabbers. A Rakhaine woman expressed:

We are living here since the British period. Here there were jungles, we cleared them and made the lands usable. Now Bengalis are grabbing our lands.

Two Harijan community members in a study location informed that they had some lands beside the residence of a local MP. The land was in their mother's name. The MP forcefully grabbed that land. The family complained to the AC land office and local police station. However, no one helped them to get back their land. Some Mahato community members in a study location informed that they sold some lands to a local elite, who is a brick kiln owner. After purchasing the land, the brick kiln owner started digging the land to collect soil for his brick kiln. However, he dug in such way that the soil of the adjacent lands owned by Mahato families broke down to the dug wholes. The Mahato families protested the matter and complained to local administration. Local administration visited the place. However, they did not get any cooperation to stop this malpractice.

In 2017, an anti-drug mission of law enforcement agency was going on. During that time a local Bengali elite capitalised this mission and forced some Santal families in a study location to sell their land at cheaper price. Those who refused to sell their lands was threatened of lodging fake cases of dealing drugs. A Santal family refused to sell their land. The Bengali elite used the law enforcement agency to harass the family. Police arrested two men of the family on account of having Phensidyl bottles. Finally, the family was bound to sell their land at a cheaper price.

Unauthorised money taken in obtaining land services: Some IPs and dalits informed that they had to bribe for getting land services. For example, a dalit cobbler in a study location informed that he bought five decimal lands. He had to bribe 12,000 Taka for registration. From his experience, he argued:

It is impossible to complete any work at the land office without paying bribe money.

A Rakhaine person in in another location informed that he had to bribe 40,000 Taka to get a registration of a three decimal land at the sub-registry office. Another Rakhaine person also bribed 4,000 Taka to sub-registry office for land registration. Another 64 years old Rakhaine persons also shared that he bribed 10,000 Taka during the registration of a purchased land. Another Rakhaine person, who sold his land, shared his experience of bribing at sub-registry office. He had to bribe 6,000 Taka during selling his land. He argued:

They take money from everybody, however, take more from the Rakhaines.

A Malpahari family in a study location got an allotment of 1.28 acres khas land in 1986. However, he got only a partial control over the land and rest of the land was grabbed by some mainstream people. He went to the local UP member for help who claimed 80,000

Taka in exchange of the support, which he did not manage to pay. A Banshmali woman in another location informed that she received a copy of deed from sub-registry office but she had to bribe 1300 Taka for it.

A Santal woman in another location went to a union Tahsil Office to pay land tax. She was not provided with any money receipt, even after she asked for one. Another Santal person in the same location had to pay extra money during payment of land tax. The person informed:

The actual tax was 40 Taka only, whereas additional 100 Taka was taken from me.

A Koch community member in a study location had to pay 500 Taka in addition to the actual government fee (300 Taka) to withdraw a land record. The Koch person said:

They didn't give me any receipt as it was a bribe. From the clerk to high official of the land office they take bribe and you cannot complete your task without paying bribe money.

A Santal person in another location informed that he had to bribe to withdraw a land record. Another Santal person in the same location informed that he had to pay 100 Taka for every single record copy and 300 Taka for Khatian. However, he was not given any money receipt. A Rakhaine person in another location had to bribe 500 Taka to get his land demarcation number. He expressed:

Whenever I had visited any of the land offices, I had to pay bribe money to get my work done.

In another location, a plot of land of a Monipuri person was recorded for another person's name during the land survey. The Monipuri person took support from a policeman to solve the problem by bribing 3,000 Taka. A Rakhaine person in another location alleged that the AC Land office provided his land document to a powerful Bengali elite to help him produce fake documents. The person argued that the AC Land office took money from him in the name of preparing new document. He claimed that in different stages the AC Land office took 1800 Taka from him. He further claimed that the AC Land office took illegal money from both parties. A Rakhaine land seller in the same area bribed 4,000 Taka for the mutation of his land. A dalit fisherman in a study location informed that he had to pay undue money for the mutation of his land. He had to pay 7,000 Taka in total, whereas the actual government fee for mutation is 1,150 Taka. Another dalit fisherman in the same community informed that he had tried for getting a mutation of his land for last seven months but failed. Finally, he had to spend 4,000 Taka as unauthorised money for this purpose.

Table 9: Unauthorised money taken in accessing land services

Types of services	Ranges of corrupt money
Land registration	4,000-40,000 Taka
Withdrawing documents	500-1,800 Taka
Land record	100-10,000 Taka
Mutation	4,000-5,850 Taka

Source: Field data

3.7.6 Other services

Bribery in electricity connection: Field data suggest that both dalit and indigenous groups experienced huge bribery in getting electricity connection. It was found that they had to pay more bribe money than that of the mainstream communities paid. For example, the Rabidas communities in a study location had to pay 8,000 Taka for each family, which burdened only 5,000 Taka to their mainstream neighbours. It was found that the Rabidas families was closer to the main connection point than that of the mainstream families. However, they had to pay more money to get the same service. The Pahan communities in another location experienced the same burden. They had to pay 10,000 Taka for each family for an electricity connection whereas each of the mainstream communities paid 8,000 Taka. They were also forced to pay 2,000 Taka extra for each family to repair the transmitter. Each family among the Monipuri communities in another location had to pay 8,000 Taka to get an electricity connection.

In another location, 32 Rishi families had to pay 30,000 Taka to get an electricity connection. They paid the money to an electrician who worked as a broker. They paid the money two years back. After 15 months of the payment, they found that the installation of the poles just started. However, the mainstream communities got the connection earlier. In another location, starting from 2002 to 2018, 20 Rabidas families paid more than one lac Taka (5,000 Taka by each family) for an electricity connection. However, they have not yet got the connection, although their mainstream neighbours got the connection few years after app the application.

Box 13: Bitter experiences in accessing government job

An under graduate student from Munda community in a study location went to the deputy commissioner (DC) office to collect a certificate of her identity as indigenous people so she could submit while applying for government job. She visited the office several times but every time she was refused by the clerks to meet the DC for this purpose. During the data collection, the poor Munda student informed:

Still I do not have any accreditation of government that says my identity as an indigenous student. Without this certificate, I will not be able to get any opportunity from quota system.

In another location, a Munda candidate applied for job in Army. He did not use Munda as his surname due to some bitter experiences of their community people. Form their experience they perceived that not using Munda as surname helps them mix with the mainstream community. He went to DC office to collect a “tribal” certificate to avail quota support in getting the job. However, he was refused to provide any certificate as his name did not contain Munda as surname. Thus the poor Munda candidate failed to get the opportunity of quota system.

A different example was also found in some areas. For example, in another location two Rabidas men collected ‘tribal’ certificate for getting job in primary school. Although they were dalit but not ‘tribal’, they were given the certificate. One of them informed that each of them spent 3500 Taka to manage the certificate.

In a city corporation area, the Harijan communities get sub-connections from their nearby temples. However, the user families are required to share the bills with the temple community leaders. On the other hand, City Corporation also cuts the electricity bill during the payment of monthly salary. Thus, they bear double burden of electricity bill. The Harijan communities in another location get electricity through their landowner's connection and pay the bill to the owner.

Irregularities in job recruitment: Field data suggest that the educated dalit and indigenous candidates experienced irregularities in the recruitment of government services. A Santal participant from a study location informed that he applied for a constable position in Bangladesh Police. As he informed, gradually he passed all the tests under the recruitment process. After completion of viva voce, six lac Taka was demanded from him to finalise his recruitment. Poor Santal candidate was unable to make the undue payment and hence he failed to bag the job. In another location, a Hajong high school teacher informed that he got this job by bribing eight lac Taka. The teacher further informed that from their community they have two boys got jobs in Army, two in BGB, two in police, and two in schools – most of them got their jobs by bribing.

The traditional city cleaners in cities and towns experienced bribery in getting the cleaner job. For example, in a study location, some dalit persons got cleaner job by bribing 20,000 Taka each. Some dalit cleaners of a City Corporation alleged that they bribed 2-4 lac Taka for getting the cleaner job. They further informed that not all dalit candidates afforded to the bribe money. The recruiter took the opportunity and by using the loophole of laws, they recruited more than 20% Bengali cleaners by means of taking more bribe money.

In another study location, an Oraon candidate applied for a job in a local high school. He had to bribe 2.5 lac Taka. He paid the bribe money but he was not provided with the job. In another location, a Santal candidate was deprived of getting a village police job as he failed to bribe an amount of 70,000 Taka. Another Santal candidate managed to bribe 30,000 Taka but he was neither provided with the job nor he got the money back.

A mother of a dalit candidate in a study location informed that her son applied for a government job. After the viva voce police visited their place for verification and they also bribed 600 Taka to the police. However, after the verification, her son was not finally offered with that job. A parent of a Munda candidate in another location informed that one of his sons got a constable position in Bangladesh Police. When he was asked about whether he had to bribe, he answered:

Is it possible in Bangladesh to get a job in police without money?

Irregularities in quota system: Most of the IPs living in the plain lands have a perception that the quota system for government jobs work for those living the CHTs; not for those living in the plain lands. A Hajong participant in a study location opined:

Everybody says there is a quota system for the indigenous peoples. It might be exclusively preserved for the Chakma-Marmas; not for us.

A Hajong participant in the same location informed that a Hajong candidate applied for a job in DC office for an office assistant position. All other candidates were Bengalis. He argued that quota system did not work there. The Hajong candidate was not selected. He further

argued that the Bengali candidates were recruited by means of bribery and influence of local MP.

As per law, cleaners are supposed to be 80% from dalit community but in reality Bengalis are getting more than their 20% share by means of bribery. For example, in a study location, there are more than 50% cleaners working in a municipality who were recruited from mainstream community. It was found in an upazila health complex that no cleaners were recruited from dalit communities – all were from Bengali community. The doctor informed that they opened the job through newspaper but did not circulate the information to the Harijan communities. Thus, they did not get any cleaner from Harijan communities.

Table 10: Unauthorised money taken in accessing other services

Types of services	Ranges of corrupt money
Electricity connection	1,500-13,000 Taka
Recruitment	20,000-60,000 Taka

Source: Field data

3.8 Accountability in providing services to the IPs and dalits

3.8.1 Education

Weak complaint receiving and redressing mechanism: Both dalit and indigenous students experienced some bullying from their peers and even teachers due to their identities. Some students raised this issue and complained to teachers. Some students argued that they never complained to their teachers even they experienced some abusive behaviours. Considering the non-reporting culture, some teachers argued that there exist no problems for dalit and indigenous students in their schools. However, field data suggest that this exists in many schools, some reporting was also there and the authorities did not take proper measures.

Some upazila level education officials argued that they did not get any complaints from dalit and indigenous students. Rather they claimed that the teachers are well aware of inclusive education. They do not think that the teachers can have any discriminatory attitudes towards dalit and indigenous students. However, it was found that the upazila education officers know some incidences. In some cases, the officers were found to be defending their teachers' negative attitude. In some cases, some dalit and indigenous students informed that their stipends were interrupted without any reason. They went to their teachers to get solution. However, it was informal in every case and most of them did not get any solution.

Weak monitoring: It was also found that the home visit by teachers is not frequent in IP and dalit communities, although the teachers know that students from dalit and indigenous communities have huge absenteeism, and in some cases non-enrolment from hard-to-reach areas. In some cases, it was found that the upazila level education officials do not know whether the schools having dalit and indigenous students need extra support. An education officer at an upazila did not make it clear whether he received and distributed text books

written in the languages of five indigenous communities. The central level officials of DPE were also found unaware of whether the special textbooks are in use in the schools or not.

3.8.2 Health

Lack of monitoring in tribal health programme: A central level concerned official of the tribal health programme informed that their operation plan includes some special actions for tribal people, but not for dalit communities. In their operation plan, they have a budget for the special mobile team for working in the tribal areas. However, the official informed that they do not have any budget for monitoring the activities implemented in the fields.

Monitoring failure in EPI programme: The death of a number of Tripura children in polio in different locations of Chattagram district reveals that there was a monitoring gap in ensuring EPI vaccination coverage in the hard-to-reach areas. It means that there was a huge monitoring failure of the vaccination activities in the hard-to-reach areas. Field data suggest that for this acute negligence the responsible officials were not held accountable with due importance; rather they were just transferred to other stations.

Weak monitoring in field level health and family planning activities: Field data suggest that the dalit and indigenous service recipients have allegations of not getting proper treatment and medicines from the community clinics. In many cases, the researchers also found them closed in working hours, which was also informed by many respondents. Moreover, it was found in some cases that the family planning staff do not attend the pregnant and lactating mothers living in the hard-to-reach areas. In some cases, some deserving lactating mothers were deprived of maternity care and allowances. Moreover, there is a gap in monitoring field level deficits from the higher authorities.

No formal complaint receiving and redressing mechanisms: The health officials at upazila health complexes informed that they did not receive any complaints from indigenous peoples and dalit communities. As discussed earlier, the officials at health complexes do not have proper ideas about these communities and their attitudes towards taking public health services.

3.8.3 Social safety net schemes

Huge monitoring gaps in beneficiary selection and distribution of social safety net supports: A social service official in a study location informed that beneficiaries are mainly nominated by the UP members and chairmen. He argued that it is difficult for them to scrutinise every beneficiary's background and eligibility for the support. He mentioned:

The UNO and social service office just approve the selection of beneficiaries. Most of the time we do not disagree with the nominated list prepared by the people's representatives.

A social service officer in another location also informed about same procedure. He mentioned:

We do not prepare the entire beneficiary list. We just verify and enlist the persons nominated by the members and chairmen of UPs. However, if we find any non-eligible person we remove them from the list.

Gaps in complaint receiving and redressing mechanisms: Almost all the upazila level relevant officials argued that they heard about irregularities and nepotisms in beneficiary selection but did not receive any notable number of complaints. For example, a social service officer of study location informed that sometimes they hear that UP chairmen show nepotism and recommend names from their close ones. However, they never received any complaint regarding this. A social service officer of a study location argued:

We heard about objections on the fairness of beneficiary selection but never received any written complaint. If we receive any, we call concerned chairman and verify the allegation.

A social service officer in another location informed that there is an upazila level coordination committee that looks after the distribution of social safety net schemes. He argued that anybody could go to the committee to lodge his or her complaints.

However, field data suggest that the government officials feel the challenges to hold the people's representatives accountable for their anomalies in beneficiary selection. The upazila level social service officials argued that political pressures work in the selection of beneficiaries. In most of the cases, the representatives at UPs and upazila parishads determine who will get the social safety net supports. An USSO expressed:

We face political pressure in preparing beneficiary list and there is no way to avoid it. We have to break the rules and welcome irregularities due to this influence.

Another USSO also argued that they are bound to depend on the UP chairmen for the selection of beneficiaries for dalit allowance. The officer informed that the upazila parishad chairman has a huge influence on the selection process since he is the convener of the distribution committee. The researchers also witnessed the scenario of political pressure in distributing other social safety net schemes. During an interview with a social service official, a person came to visit the official and handed over his cell phone by saying an important person wants to talk to the officer. Later the officer shared with the researchers that she received a request from a political leader for an old age allowance. There are also gaps from the central level officials. One mid-level official of the DSS argued:

A mechanism exists to receive and redress complaints. However, we do not receive that many complaints. We monitor project related activity, but it not possible for us to monitor every district, every beneficiary...

3.8.4 Local Government Institutions (LGIs)

Lack of formal complaint receiving and redressing mechanisms: The LGIs do not have any formal complaint receiving mechanisms from the dalits and indigenous communities. Unlike other citizens, they can seek helps from the LGIs when they get into any troubles. The door of the LGI representatives remain open for them. However, field data suggest that in many cases dalit and indigenous peoples have created a gap on their own, which is resulted from their bitter experiences. As discussed earlier, they saw that the LGI representatives usually take side of the powerful mainstream people. A female ward councillor in municipality argued:

Dalit people usually do not come to me a lot. If they come, I will listen and try my level best to solve their problem. But they never come to me.

In another study location, an UP member argued in the same way:

Here most of the Hajong families have their own land. They themselves solve their problems, which are mostly land related. They do not come to us for Salish.

Deficits in taking punitive measures: Field data suggest that the LGI representatives are involved in nepotism and other kinds of irregularities in beneficiary selection of social safety net supports. They also take side of the powerful mainstream people who oppress the dalit and indigenous peoples. However, there is no remarkable examples of taking any measures to monitor their activities and take necessary actions against their irregularities.

3.8.5 Land

Deficits in monitoring of khasland distribution and jalmohal allocation: Field data suggest that there are some irregularities in khasland distribution and jalmohal allocation. It was found that jalmohal was not allocated to the real fishing communities. The real dalit and indigenous peoples did not get notable allocation of khasland in spite of their landlessness and extreme poverty. Moreover, in some cases, they were evicted from government owned land by powerful elites and even by the help of authorities. However, they were not rehabilitated properly. These incidences are not monitored properly let alone the perpetrators are hardly taken under punitive measures.

Lack of accountability: Field data suggest that there is a huge gap in taking punitive measures if it is found that the local land authorities are involved in helping the local elites to grab lands of dalit and indigenous peoples. It was also found in some study locations that the local forest officials file cases against poor Garo and Barman people without any notable reasons. When the victims go to forest office to know about the reason, they do not clarify anything and they rather suggest to prove their non-involvement in the court. This type of harassment is taking place for decades, but the corrupt forest officials remain out of any accountability. It was also found that the ministry level officials are also aware of how the powerful local elites capture the jolmohals by depriving the real fishing communities belonging to indigenous and dalit communities. However, it is hardly taken into consideration to hold the local officials accountable and ensure access of the IPs and dalits towards natural resources.

3.8.6 Others

Lack of accountability in electricity services: Field data suggest that the dalit and indigenous peoples experienced huge irregularities in getting electricity connection. However, the central office i.e. the Rural Electrification Board (REB) is not well aware of that.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Discussions

4.1 Consequences of not ensuring inclusion of the indigenous and dalit peoples in rights and public services

High dropout rate from education: Dropout rate is high among dalit students. This is also high among the students from indigenous communities. Field data suggest that there are several factors prevailing that lead to the drop out.

The first thing is language barrier. Parents of the students from indigenous communities and some dalit communities as well as the teachers argued that language is a severe barrier to continuing education. The indigenous and dalit children do not understand Bengali well.

Secondly, security concern among the parents of both indigenous and dalit communities leads to child marriage and thus to drop out from school. The common scenario is that female students are not allowed to cross class six or seven. They are married off early. Sexual harassment while getting to school enhances the concern. In a study location, some students from Hajong community informed that they experienced sexual harassment while getting to school.

Thirdly, the negligence of teachers and education officers to making home visit to the absentee students of indigenous and dalit communities contribute to the drop out.

Fourthly, the absence of high schools nearby the localities of indigenous peoples and dalits plays an active role to be slipped from education after completing primary education. For example, in a study location, the enrolment rate of Munda children is good in primary schools but they drop out from education when they wish to get admission in high schools. The high schools are located outside and far from their locality. Due to the long distance, it takes time and costs to get to school, which they cannot afford.

Fifthly, the students from indigenous and dalit communities experience multiple discriminatory practices at schools, which plays the key role to create negative attitude towards education systems dominated by insensitive people involved in teaching profession.

Finally, the behaviour of the peers contributes the most to having a high drop out rate. Many students from both indigenous and dalit communities informed that they experience abusive language from their peers who belong to mainstream community. The environment cannot be congenial for them as they informed that their teachers do not take action against those students who are accused of harassing the indigenous and dalit students even after getting complains.

Negative attitudes towards taking services from government hospitals: In most cases, it was found that the indigenous peoples and dalits are not willing to take medical services from any government hospital. A medical officer of an upazila health complex in a study location expressed:

Indigenous peoples are very passive in receiving healthcare. They usually are not willing to visit government hospitals. A very few of them, who are well aware, come here.

Such negative attitudes have grown for several reasons. First, the medical doctors and other staff are not well aware of the nature and needs of indigenous peoples and dalits. That is why they do not think of doing any different and special for them. Secondly, the indigenous peoples and dalits' experience of getting services from government hospital is worse than that of the people belonging to mainstream identities. The Bagdi and Pashchima community people of a study location expressed that when they visit government hospitals doctors and nurses can easily understand that they are powerless and so, they give less importance to them. The Koch people in another location expressed that they usually avoid government hospital for treatment. A Koch person said:

I do not go to government hospital since it is not possible to get better healthcare from there. They provide medicine to the influential people who can bargain with them. We, the Koch people, cannot bargain. Therefore, we do not get any medicine.

Thirdly, there is no special provision of healthcare for dalits and IPs alongside instructions from the government for providing special care to them.

Mistrust and self-exclusion from public services: The people in dalit and indigenous peoples experienced that there are huge examples of nepotism of chairmen and members of UP for the mainstream people. Therefore, they do not trust on their own judgement and seldom go to the people's representatives to seek any justice. In a study location, an UP member informed that Hajong community themselves solve their problem. They do not place their problem to any authority or third person to get them mediated. In another location, a Tripura leader and a group of women in same community argued:

We always solve our problem ourselves, without taking any help of the member and chairman. Chairman and member have a tendency of taking advantage of our internal problem.

Self-exclusion from right to voting and democratic spaces: Field data suggest that the LGL representatives take into serious consideration whether the dalits and indigenous peoples vote for them during election. A many dalit and indigenous respondents argued that the LGL representatives hardly believe their communities during elections. They suspect these communities as they notice that they do not express their direct support for any particular candidate. Some candidates, having affiliation with some particular political parties, suspect that these communities always bear weakness for a particular political party other than theirs. From that doubt, they put pressure on the voters of these communities not to go to the centres for voting. A many dalit people in some study locations expressed that they have abstained their direct participation in any election for more than two decades, by which they intend to show that they are not blind supporter for any particular party, for which they could be charged for. They have been continuing this self-withdrawal for two decades for the sake of their safety and security. A dalit person expressed, "During election different groups threaten us. That's why we have not cast our vote in any election for about 20 years." An IP person in another study location also expressed, "I wanted to run as a candidate for the union parishad election. They killed my cattle, destroyed my crops and threatened me. Later I did not run for the election."

Risk of disappearing self-identity, mother tongue and cultural diversity: The students from indigenous communities face the language problem most. The students from indigenous communities informed that the mainstream students laugh at them when they speak their own language and speak Bangla having a jumble of their own dialect. This problem is acute at the primary level. This problem is also common for the students from non-Bengali dalits. The parents and students of the study locations argued that it sometimes gets difficult to understand the lessons and even the questions during the examinations and thus they face tough situation to upgrade their class. In a study location, a Rakhaine parent informed that her son was struggling to adapt with Bangla language at school. They finally decided to send him to Myanmar for education in Rakhaine language. One Mahato parent in another study location argued that if their children were taught in their own language then they would have achieved better result. A good number of Santal, Munda, Oraon, and Mahato parents in some study locations informed that they got the sense that their children would get in trouble if they were not good in Bengali. They, therefore, initiated to teach their children to speak Bengali at home as well as speak all time so that their children can adapt well in school with the mainstream language. However, this is risking the existence of their own language. The parents also expressed with frustration that if it continues, their language would not survive in future.

Reproduction of marginalisation and poverty: Field data suggest that there exists multidimensional social exclusion in the study areas in accessing basic public services and rights provisions. Violation of rights and exclusion of the dalits and indigenous peoples from the basic public services have intensified the vulnerability of these peoples to poverty and marginalisation. Literature suggest that the dalit groups and plain land indigenous peoples are more vulnerable compared to other marginalised communities of Bangladesh. There exists lack of constitutional recognition, non-recognition of rights, threat and insecurity, exclusion from mainstream support and services etc (MJF, 2016). Literature further suggest that the dalit groups in Bangladesh have experienced with limited access to education, healthcare services, housing employment, and political spheres. They have been kept out of the reach of any remarkable development interventions by the duty bearers. They are even out of separate counting since they deserve special affirmative actions. Moreover, there is no official records in Bangladesh that can give with statistics on the number of dalit population living under undignified conditions (Ali, 2014).

On the other hand, indigenous peoples in Bangladesh have seen a significant denial of self-identity – they do not have the official recognition of their identity as the indigenous peoples – rather they have perceived an enforcement that has rewritten their identity as the small ethnic groups. Alongside, they have limited access to mainstream social, economic and political spheres (Ali, 2013). This is worth mentioning that there is a ministry for the indigenous peoples living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs) of Bangladesh. However, there is no such designated public body, which can look after the ethnic minorities living in the plain lands.

The experiences of the excluded groups are not homogenous. For example, the intensity of discrimination and exclusion that the indigenous peoples and dalit groups of Bangladesh are facing is not similar (Ali, 2014). However, their experiences of being excluded have commonly placed them in a state of deprivation of basic human rights and capabilities, which

resulted in a vicious circle of poverty and injustice. The study findings also provide that due different challenges of inclusion, the indigenous and dalit peoples are prone to experience further deprivation of their rights and entitlements and thus there is a potential risk that exclusion and corruption in basic service sectors and violation of rights may reproduce poverty and marginalisation of the indigenous and dalit peoples, unless some concrete affirmative actions are not taken and implemented.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The identities and rights of the indigenous and dalit peoples are not well recognised and included in the legal frameworks of Bangladesh. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees equal rights and opportunities for all citizens irrespective of their identities and distinct characteristics. The Constitution also provide the direction to the state to create affirmative actions to ensure equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for those who are left behind. However, the Constitution does not recognise the names of all ethnic identities, except the identity of Bengalis, which suggests that the separate ethnic groups living in Bangladesh beside the Bengalis are not recognised in the Constitution. Moreover, the identities of dalits and their excluded and left behind situations induced by the historically imposed ‘untouchability’ and social stigma are not mentioned in the Constitution. Moreover, the mother languages used by different ethnic groups alongside the Bengalis are not recognised in the Constitution. Moreover, Bangladesh was in abstention during adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). However, in spite of its position Bangladesh is bound to implement the Declaration as it was adopted through a voting where majority of the member states were in favour. Nonetheless, many states including Bangladesh still maintain some reservation to expressly distinguish the presence of indigenous peoples. Thus, it has impacted critically on the government’s efforts to fulfil the rights of the indigenous peoples as stated in the international conventions.

Despite the problem of non-recognition, there is a bright side of the story. The Government of Bangladesh has taken some affirmative initiatives for the socioeconomic development of indigenous and dalit peoples. Their ‘left behind’ situations, exclusion and poverty have been recognised in some important policies and strategies, which include the National Social Protection Policy 2015, the Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020, the Dalit Manual 2013, etc. Special needs of the indigenous and dalits peoples have been addressed in some other policies such as the National Education Policy 2010, the National Health Policy 2011 to a great extent. However, the other side of the story reads that these policies have not properly addressed the needs and priorities of dalits considering their historical deprivation induced by the deeply rooted social exclusions. Some other laws and policies have some notable limitations and applied challenges, for which the indigenous peoples and dalits are experiencing denial of rights to land, open water bodies, inclusive public service provisions, government jobs, inclusion in formal power structure, fulfilment of social, cultural, political and economic rights, etc. They are experiencing discrimination and exclusions in accessing different public service provisions, as there is no passed laws that can provide the provision of penalisation for discriminatory practices in public service delivery. The current legal framework condition does not guarantee that the existing laws and policies of Bangladesh are properly inclusive for the indigenous and dalit peoples of Bangladesh for their fulfilment of rights and entitlements to public service provisions.

The ugly part of the story is that the social exclusions and deprivation imposed on the indigenous and dalit peoples by the mainstream communities run through stigmatised perceptions and unjust social stratification have some dreadful reflections on the practices of public service delivery mechanisms. The reflections of negative social perceptions in the public service providers have resulted into the manifestation of discriminatory attitudes and practices towards the indigenous and dalit peoples. The discriminatory attitudes and practices take place by the means of denial of providing services, dillydally responsiveness, harassment, undue burden of unauthorised payment, deprivation from development schemes, biased dispute resolution favouring the powerful elites, impediment to the access to natural resources and social safety net schemes, etc. These manifestations are synonymous to exclusions originated in society but extended up to the public service providing institutions, which spells out that the practices of service delivery prevailing in the public offices, are not properly inclusive for the indigenous and dalit peoples of Bangladesh. Apart from the manifested challenges for inclusion in rights and public services, there are some underlying challenges of inclusive public service delivery for the indigenous and dalit peoples, which include negative societal norms and attitudes, unjust social structure, deficits of knowledge of inclusive services among the public service delivery authorities, lack of rights awareness among the indigenous and dalit communities, etc. The other notable challenges include limitations in laws and policies, gaps in transparency, integrity and accountability mechanisms in the concerned institutions.

This is also commendable that the Government of Bangladesh has some affirmative actions for the indigenous and dalit communities. However, these initiatives are not sufficient to curtail the cumulative deprivation of these peoples as well as to leverage their socioeconomic conditions. Moreover, there are gaps in mapping out the needs and priorities of these peoples, which requires active participation of these peoples in the assessment of needs and priorities as well as planning, implementation and monitoring. Deficits of transparency and accountability in the mechanisms of implementing the special affirmative actions need to be identified and addressed in an effective manner. Furthermore, there are challenges in ensuring the affirmative actions such as the quota provisions in accessing government jobs, natural resources, and formal power structures. Recent abolishment of the quota provisions in the first and second-class jobs has intensified the challenges of getting access to government jobs, which were helpful for the indigenous candidates before. Moreover, some amendments in laws has jeopardised the accessibility of dalit candidates to cleaning professions such as city cleaners. The recognition and fulfilment of customary laws and practices, provisions of education in mother languages, removal of barriers in access to natural resources, basic public services and government jobs can be thought of as some way forward for the inclusion of indigenous and dalit communities in rights and entitlements.

This is to conclude that unless the affirmative actions for the indigenous and dalit communities are not expanded widely and implemented effectively, and the challenges of accessing basic public services are not addressed and made them inclusive, the inevitability of reproduction of poverty and marginalisation of these peoples would not be possible to minimise. It is therefore necessary to concentrate on minimising the challenges evident

through this research. Otherwise, the main aspiration of SDGs i.e. 'Leaving No One Behind' will remain unattained.

5.2 Recommendations

The research findings and conclusions suggest some practicable recommendations for the fulfilment of rights and inclusive public service provisions for the indigenous and dalit peoples of Bangladesh:

1. Recognize the ethnic identities of all indigenous peoples as well as the identities of dalits through proper inclusion in the Constitution of Bangladesh as well as take proper steps to implement the international conventions on the rights of the indigenous peoples.
2. Identify the groups of indigenous peoples and dalits through proper research and recognise their distinct identities as well as address their rights and entitlements through inclusion in a specialised ministry.
3. Identify the areas of inclusion through proper research and address them in laws and policies through the formulation of laws and policies inclusive for indigenous peoples and dalits.
4. Finalise the draft Elimination of Discrimination Act and ensure its effective implementation.
5. Develop textbooks for the indigenous and non-Bengali dalit children in their mother tongues and ensure the appointment of teachers for teaching the books with a view to ensuring the right to education in mother tongues.
6. Organise orientation and training for the public service providing officials to change their negative attitudes and behaviours and eventually to ensure inclusive public services for the indigenous peoples and dalits.
7. Form a separate land commission for the indigenous peoples of plain land areas and provide effective solutions to their land ownership disputes.
8. Remove the legal limitations and challenges of implementation of laws and policies with a view to ensuring access of the indigenous peoples and dalits to wetlands, forests and other natural resources.
9. Introduce a quota system for dalits in accessing government jobs and restore the quota system for the indigenous peoples in the first and second-class government jobs as well as ensure proper implementation of the existing quota system.
10. Provide clear instructions about ensuring representativeness and participation of indigenous peoples and dalits in the formal power structures at different levels including the local government institutions (LGIs).
11. Take initiatives for the social security, socioeconomic development and dignified lives of the indigenous peoples and dalits based on their opinions and guarantee their

active participation along with transparent and accountable mechanisms and their proper practice in order to ensure the effectiveness of the initiatives.

- I2. Develop separate monitoring mechanism in relevant departments or ministries with a view to ensuring education, health, social safety net, and other basic services for the indigenous peoples and dalits living in hard-to-reach areas.
- I3. The National Human Rights Commission, media and civil society should play an active role to ensure rights and protection of the indigenous peoples and dalits of Bangladesh.

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Annex I: Glossary

Bagdi	Bagdi is one of the old local community. Nowadays, they use Khan, Shordar, and Raj as their title. They mostly live in Faridpur, Rajbari, Kushtia, Jhenaidah, Jashore, Magura and Rajshahi areas.
Bainna Bede	They are food collector after harvest. They speak Bangla.
Banshfor	Banshfor community is thought to be a part of the greater Kanpuri community. Some researchers claim that they are sub-group of Dom community. Bansfors are also known as cleaners. They bury dead body and speak Bhojpuri and Hindi.
Banshmali	Banshmali is one of the communities of dalits living on handicrafts made of bamboos.
Barman	Barman came from Odisha of India, as it is said. One of the Barman group lives in Mymensingh, Tangail, Gazipur district, and another group lives in Rongpur and Dinajpur district. Their mother language is Nagri.
Bede	They work as traditional healer and entertainer with snake/monkey. They speak Bangla. They are nomadic in nature. They live in boats.
Chakli	They are involved as washer men. They speak Telegu.
Dalit	The Dalit Manual 2013 of the Government of Bangladesh defines dalits those are identified as dalits and do not make any reservation to introduce as dalits. The Manual further states that dalit communities are involved in cleaning and other essential service related activities. Although the Harijans are regarded as the part of dalit people, the Manual differentiates them by stating that these communities are regarded as 'untouchable' and involved in cleaning activities. The Seventh Five Year Plan of the Government of Bangladesh states that dalit status is historically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure. These groups of people, as imposed on them the stigma of untouchability, have limited social, economic and employment opportunities to interact with the mainstream.
Dom	They bury dead body and help post-mortem in hospitals. They speak Bhojpuri.
Domer	They are involved as cleaner. They speak Jabbalpuri and Hindi.
Dhopa	They are washer men. They speak Bangla.
Garos	Garos are known as Mandi. They are well renowned matrilineal society. Tangail, Mymensingh, and Sylhet have the largest number of Garos community. They have written form of their own language.
Goala	They are milk seller They speak Bangla.
Hadi/Hela	They are involved as cleaners. They speak Telegu.
Hajong	Hajong community came from Assam of India. They are mostly found in Mymensingh, Netrokona, Sunamganj district. Their profession is farming. Hajongs have their own unique dress - males wear Dhuti and females Piran.
Harijan	Harijan term refers to communities who are traditionally called "untouchable", also referring to lower caste Hindu. They are now called dalits. They are involved in town or city cleaning. They speak Jabbalpuri, Telegu and Hindi.
Indigenous	The United Nations states, "Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique

Peoples	cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples.”
Jalmohal	Government owned open water bodies
Jele/ Jalodas/ Rajbongshi	Jele/Jalodas are fishermen, one of the oldest professional groups still active in a significant number. Their particular caste groups are Malo, Rajbongshai, Jalodas, Kaibarto. The Muslim fishermen by profession are called Nikari.
Jugi	They are involved in bamboo work. They speak Bangla.
Karmakar	Karmakar is blacksmiths, who make items with bell metal and brash. They usually make and sell metal products to meet up household and agricultural needs like Nirani, Shabol, Kural, plow-plate, scissor, Da and Boti.
Khas land	Government owned land
Khasia	Khasia is one of the oldest indigenous communities of Indian subcontinent. It is thought that they came from Cambodia adjacent area from very ancient time. They are found in different districts of Sylhet division. They are mostly engaged with betel leaf production.
Koch	Koch community is found all across the country. However, they mostly live in Sherpur, Mymensingh and Tangail district. The Koch community claims that their ancestors came from Kochbihar, Jalpaiguri, and Meghalaya of India. They are patriarchal society, but as family identity, they take the matrilineal name.
Kolu	They are traditional oil presser. They speak Bangla.
Kumar	Kumar they are also known as Pal, Rudopal, Kulal, Kuar, and Kumor. They are mostly engaged in pottery. They mostly make earthen household pots.
Lalbegi/Vulmiki	They are involved in cleaning profession. They speak Urdu and Hindi.
Madiga	They are involved in cleaning, tea garden work, drum beating, etc. They speak Telegu.
Mahato	Mahato community mostly lives in the northern districts of Bangladesh. This community is divided into two different castes. They are an agriculture-based community.
Malpahari	They are also termed as Pahari and Mala. They are originated in Rajmohal Pahar in Bihar of India, around 7-10 thousands Malpahari people are living in greater Rajshahi region. They mostly lead their lives as agricultural worker.
Mala	They are involved in tea garden work or cleaning profession. They speak Telegu.
Mali	They in involved as gardener or cleaner. They speak Bangla.
Monipuri	Monipuri community lives in greater Sylhet. They migrated from Monipur of India. Their weaving industry is very popular.
Muchi/Chamar	They are shoe and leather worker. They speak Hindi.
Munda	Munda community is mostly found in greater Khulna. They are also found in tea gardens of Sylhet and Moulvibazar. Their native residence is Ranchi of India. They were brought here by the Jamindars to clean the forest and make cultivable land. They used to be hunter and farmers. Now they have become agriculture based day labourer.
Masuwara	They are involved in pig rearing, They speak Bangla.

Mushaheries	They are mice and eel eater.
Nunia	Nunia community is mostly found in Kamalganj of Moulvibazar. Nunia community is also found in Tripura and Assam.
Oraon	Oraon community live in North Bengal, especially in Chapainwabganj, Naogaon, Natore, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, and Rangpur. They are mostly farmer; either they are tenant farmers or agribased day labourers.
Pahan	Pahan people live in Chapainwabganj, Naogaon and Rajshahi area. One of the Pahan groups thinks their community is from Bihar and Odisha. They are mainly day labourer and tenant farmers. The main profession was hunting or capturing birds.
Pasi	They are involved as collector of palm and date juice. They speak Bhojpuri.
Pashchima	They live in Jamalpur area, migrated from western part of India to work in jute mills.
Patni	Patni community ply boats in transporting people and goods over river regime. They are traditional makers of fishing and household instruments like Chalun, Dhol, Chai.
Rabidas	Rabidas are also known as Rishi and Ruhidash. Their origin is different states of India and brought here during the British Colony. Rabidas communities are mostly found in North Bengal. Their mother language is Nagri. There are mainly leather related professionals.
Rishi	They are involved in shoe/leather work. They speak Bangla.
Rakhaine	Rakhaine people are also known as “Mogh”. They live in Patuakhali, Barguna, and different areas of Chattogram. Their current profession is mostly fishing and day labourer.
Sabari	They are involved in city or town cleaning. They speak Telegu.
Santal	Santal people live in greater Dinajpur and greater Rajshahi. The ancestors of Santals came from Jharkhand, Deogarh, and Purulia of West Bengal. Maximum of Santal’s profession is agriculture labourer, tenant farmers, and maximum of them are very poor.
Sharnakar	They are involved in goldsmith profession. They speak Bangla.
Sheel	Sheel’s are also known as Napit or barber. Grooming male is their main profession. Their profession is essential for everyone, but they are neglected for their profession.
Sing	Sing community identifies themselves as lower caste Kshatriya. Their earning comes from making and selling goods from bamboo.
Sutradhar	They work as carpenter. They speak Bangla.
Tahsil Office	Union land office
Tripura	Tripura community is one of the well-renowned communities of the subcontinent. A large portion of the community lives in the state of Tripura, India. In Bangladesh, they mostly live in Chattagram division. Their mother language is “Kokbobork”. Their weaving industry was very popular. Now they are mostly agriculture-based day labourer.
Union Parishad	Lowest tier of local government institutions in Bangladesh
Upazila Parishad	Sub-district level local government institutions in Bangladesh