



Improving Rural Effective Total Sanitation based on Empowered Female Local Government Member of Union Parishad Led Intervention in Bangladesh

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Funding Agency

Implementing Agency in Collaboration with JCF

Bilqis A.Hoque, Sufia K, M.A.Siddik, M.A.Zahid, S. Ahmed

INTRODUCTION

Background

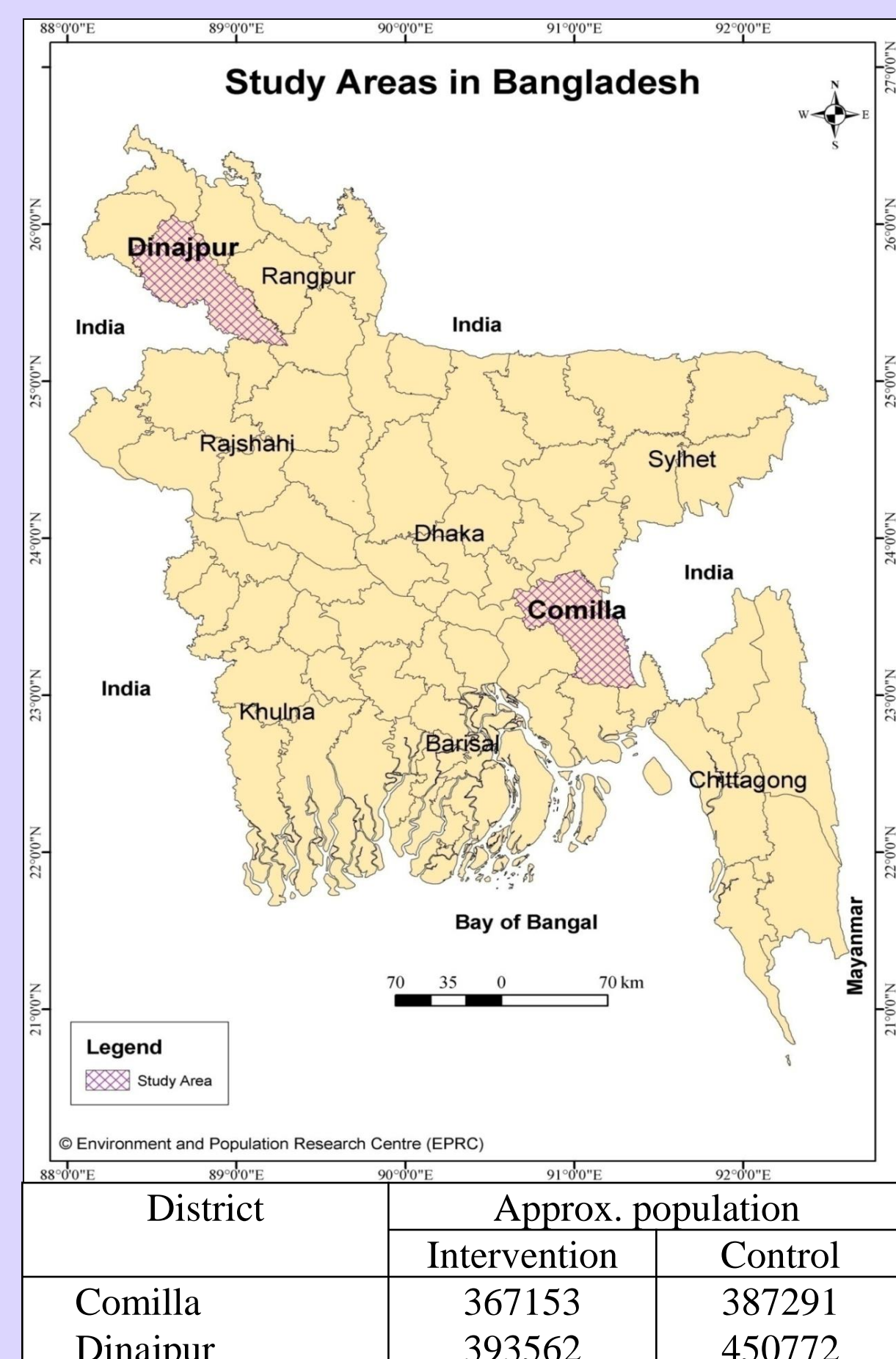
- Bangladesh National Sanitation Strategy 2005 (and WS Sector Development Plan 2011): 100% sanitation will mean to include all of the followings: a) No open defecations, b) hygienic latrines available to all, c) use of hygienic latrine by all, d) proper maintenance of latrines for continual use, and e) improved hygiene.
- Union Parishad (UP) Act 2009 (Amended): UP is the grass-root institution for integrating local people in to development process. Sanitation is one of its main responsibilities. UP is formed of elected: 1 Chairman, 9 general members and 3 reserved women members.

Objectives

- To learn whether Female Local Government Member (FLGM) with Cluster Women Group (CWG) can establish an institution for effective sanitation, including improved sanitary latrine and related hygiene practices.
- To learn if establishing FLGM-led institution can lead to improvement in sanitation.

Design

- Randomized Control Trial (RCT) method. It included 32 intervention and 32 control unions in Comilla and Dinajpur district.
- Educational intervention through FLGM linked to CWG in intervention unions.

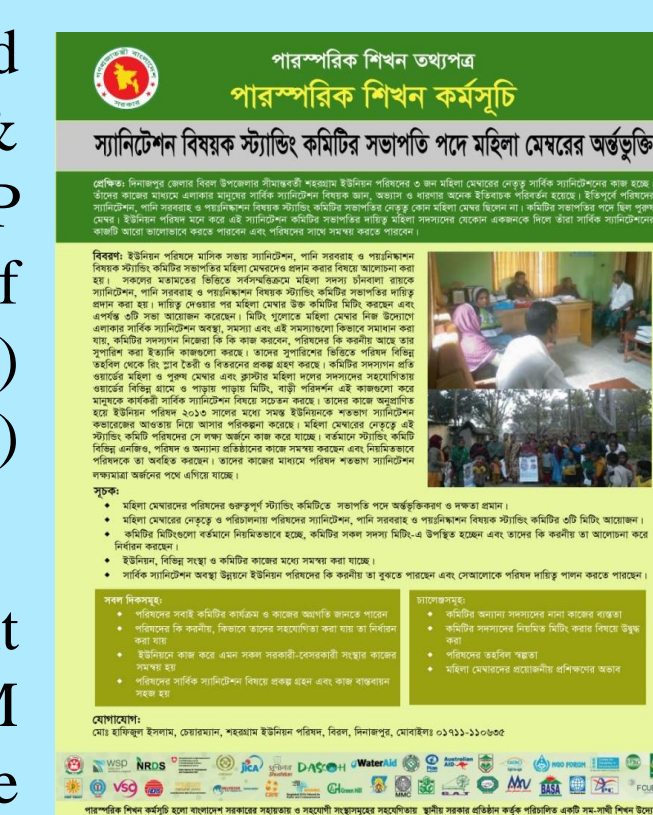


PROGRESS

1. Trained 93 FLGMs and 1674 CWGs.
2. Educated and discussed about the project among 434 members of Union Parishads.
3. FLGMs and CWGs promoted sanitation among women, communities and approximately 175,000 populations in intervention areas.
4. Project Volunteers (1/Union) assisted FLGMs and CWGs in conducting courtyard/ group meetings and distributing IEC materials.
5. FLGMs helped the poorest to build latrines; depending on respective FLGM's accessibility to fund (the project had no provision for funding/ installing latrine).
6. Monitoring and evaluation were done based on baseline, 2 intermediate and 4 process monitoring surveys. The final survey will be done in Feb-March 2015.
7. Project period: May 2012 – Apr 2015 with one year "no-cost extension".

PRODUCTS

- Out of 10 "Best Practice" fact sheets developed from HLP Bangladesh workshop-2013 by LGD & WSP-SA; three were done by our FLGMs and UP Chairman. Those included: (i) involvement of FLGM as Chair of WASH Standing Committee, (ii) construction of low-cost latrine by FLGM, and (iii) promoting sanitation by FLGM with CWG.
- National Institute of Local Government incorporated the suggestion about involving FLGM as Chair of WASH Standing Committee (with the fact sheet) in 'UP Training Manual for 2014.'



NEW CHALLENGES OR CHANGES IN PROJECT

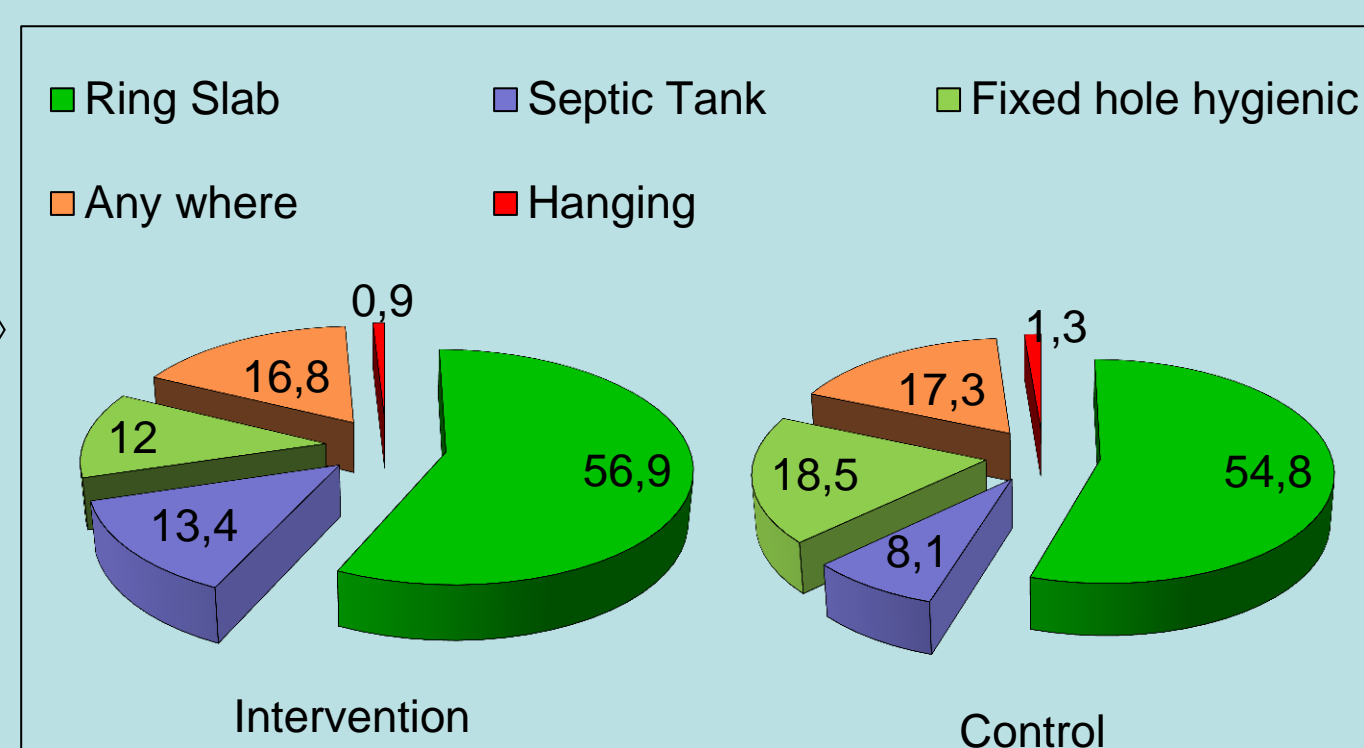
- According to the Union Parishad Act, water supply and sanitation are regarded as one activity (WASH). FLGMs has requested us to combine those as one activity in our recommendations . But that will need an evidence based research results.
- Differences in incentives to the communities between our project (only promotional education) and other ongoing project (free/subsidized latrines to poor, money for attending meetings, etc) are becoming barriers to community participation
- Lack of technology for proper desludging/disposal of pit wastes is contributing to the continued entry of pollution into water bodies; irrespective of the sanitation coverage.
- Tension/reservations between male and female UP members on their roles and responsibilities increasing as the confident FLGMs demanding for equal participation.
- The intermediate follow-up and evaluation by a third party with no connections (in absence of such provisions within the project), is causing gaps in developing the new model



SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE AND LESSONS

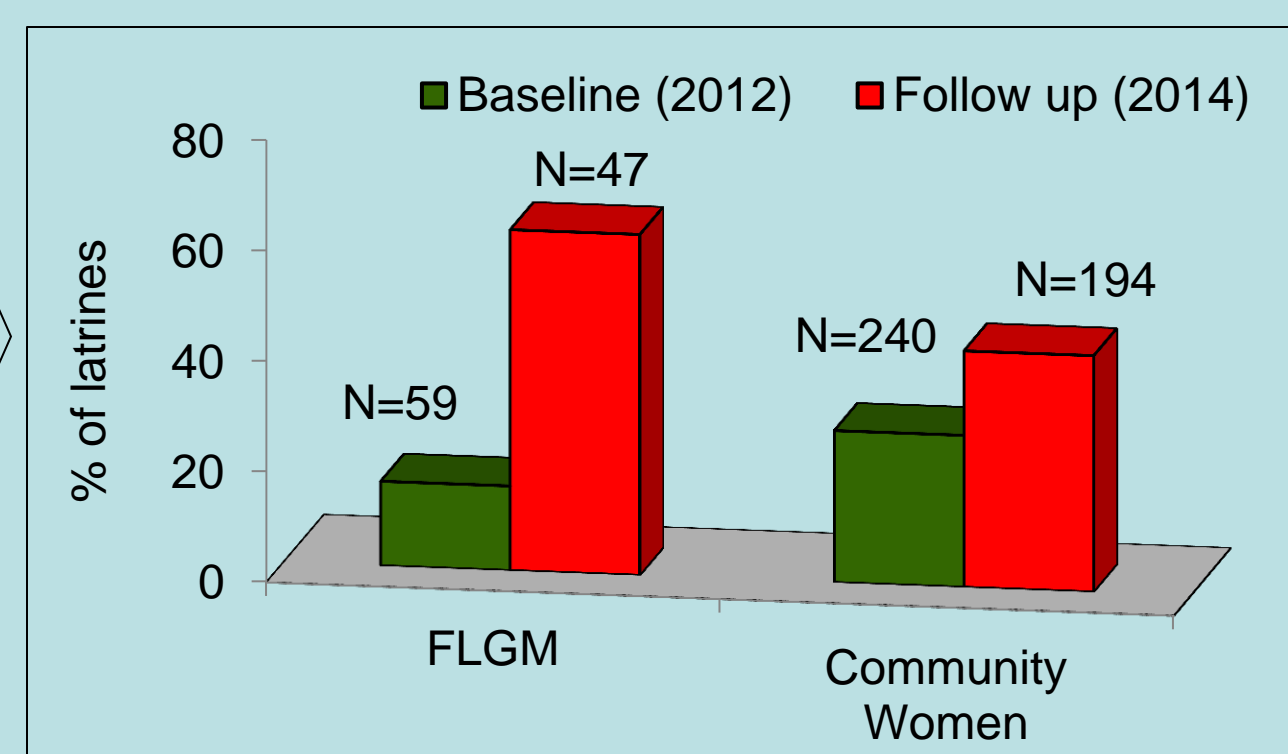
Evidence

Approximately 82.3% in intervention and 82.4% in control areas had access to latrine.



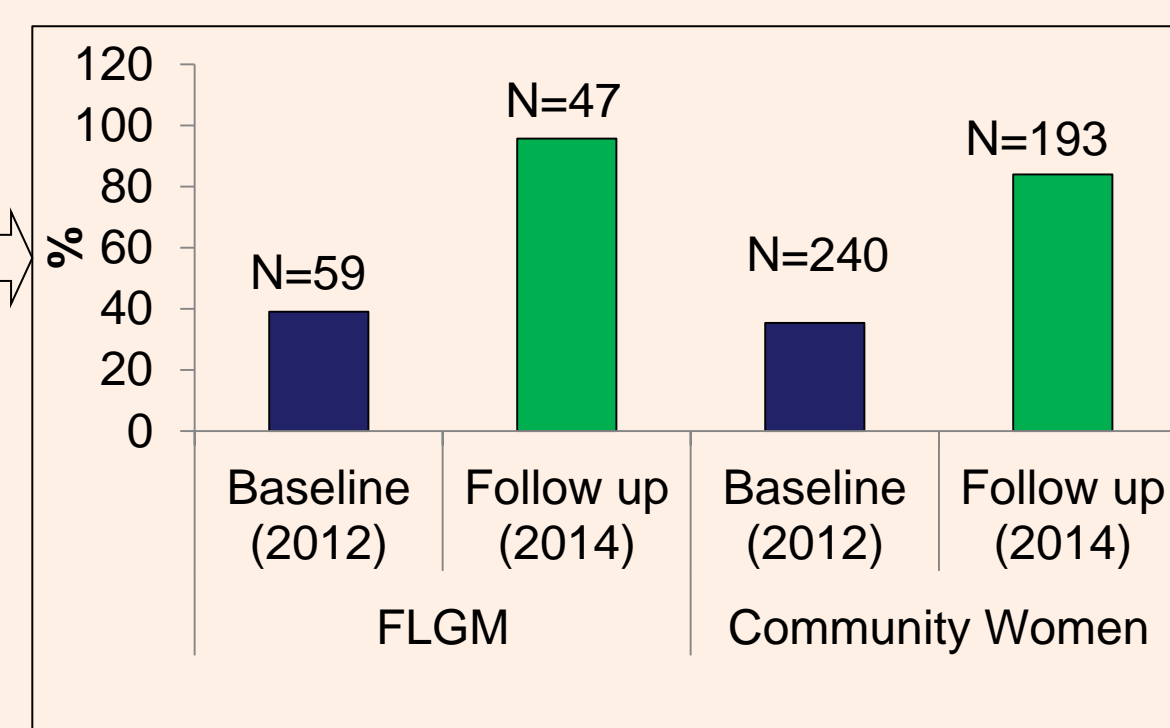
Defecation practices during baseline

Process Monitoring (PM) surveys indicated that the rates of perceptions about functional conditions of hygienic latrine improved significantly.



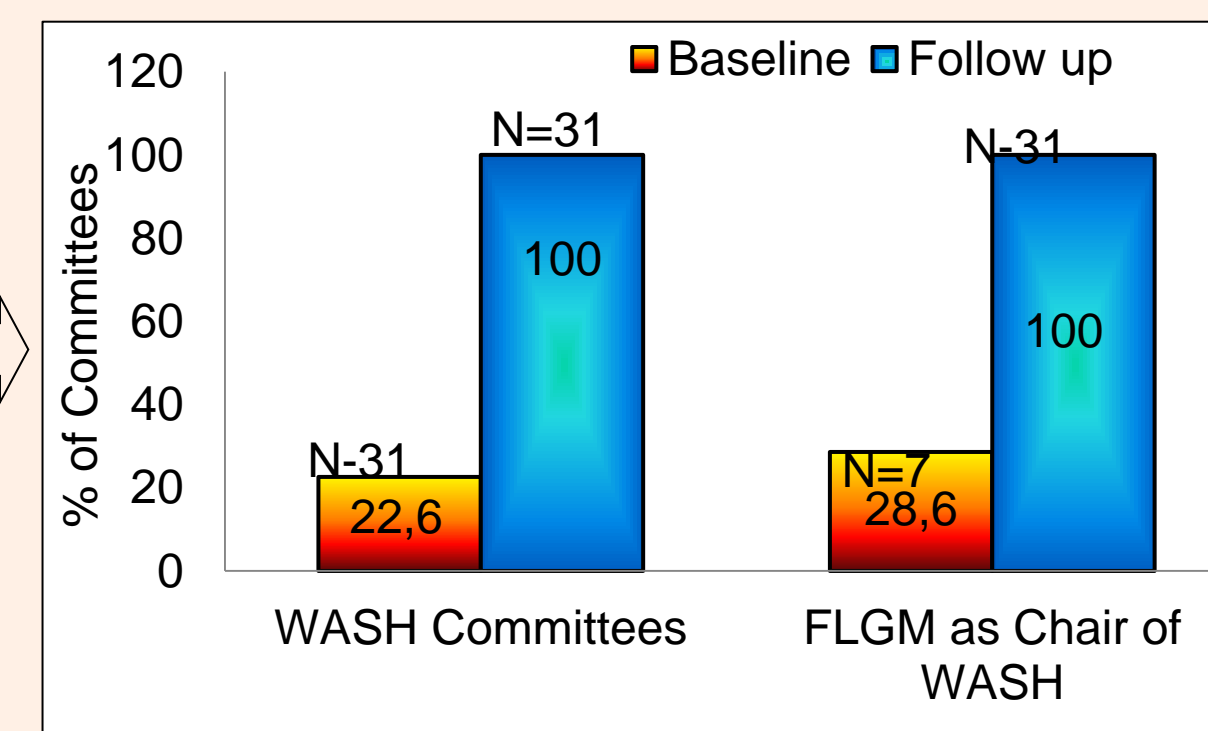
Perceptions about hygienic latrine

Observed rates of presence of hand wash agents improved significantly in 2014 follow up process monitoring survey than in 2012 baseline process monitoring survey.



Having hand wash agent inside/near latrine

Rates of presence of WASH Standing Committee and position of FLGM in those Committees improved significantly.



Changes in WASH Standing Committees and FLGM position

Lessons

- FLGMs, with CWG assistance, have shown potentials to lead 100% sanitation and institutional development in line with the UP.
- Process monitoring surveys (PM) indicated that rates of access to sanitary latrine increased to about 97% (PM 2014) from about 80% (PM 2012). Project target is to increase sanitation coverage by 10% of that it was in baseline situation.
- Lack of access to fund for sanitary latrine (as free or subsidy) among the poor were the main barriers in effective (hygienic) sanitation promotion.
- Trained FLGM can play important roles in promoting sanitation in schools.
- FLGM's overall capacity as UP member significantly improved .

SOMETHING YOU WOULD ASK OF OTHER GRANTEES

- Exchange of experiences through network discussions and field visits.
- Transfer of appropriate technology on appropriate latrine and sludge management.
- Collaborative research to develop appropriate technology and institution for sustainable sanitation development.

SOMETHING YOU WOULD OFFER TO OTHER GRANTEES

- Share developed product/best practices.
- Educate about/exchange information on local government involvement.
- Disseminate information about hygiene particularly, hand washing practices.
- Collaborative research to develop appropriate technology and institutions.