

The Last Mile Service Providers Delivering Essential Services in Rural Bangladesh

The SHOUHARDO III program and its successor SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity have a profound legacy of the capacity building of the Local Service Providers (LSPs). The LSPs are the people from within the community. They hold entrepreneurial spirits to serve the community with essential services related to agriculture, aquaculture and livestock, health and nutrition, and savings and loans.

Serving in the remotest areas of the Deep Haor and Remote Char (DHRC) regions, these LSPs fill the void where the coverage of public and private services is either limited or absent. LSPs receive service fees for their services. These fees form a substantial part of their income.

LSPs could be categorized into three major types based on the services they provide-



**Agricultural, Aquaculture
and Livestock Services**



Savings and Loan Services



Health & Nutrition Services



Agriculture Advisory and Inputs (Seed Agent)

Seed agents are no longer just providers of seeds, these agents operate as integral agricultural advisors for farmers. Beyond the provision of high-quality seeds, their services expand to offering other essential agricultural inputs and products. Moreover, they act as knowledge carriers, sharing innovations and best practices, informed by their ties with the Department of Agricultural Extension and affiliated sectors.

Livestock Health and Awareness (Vaccinator)

While vaccinations remain their primary service, these professionals do more than just inoculate. They actively engage in educational campaigns, emphasizing the importance of timely vaccinations and overall health and wellness for livestock and poultry. Their partnerships with organizations like the Department of Livestock Services facilitate extensive vaccination campaigns, assuring the well-being of animals across communities.



Agricultural Produce Collection and Market Insights (Collector)

Collectors act as crucial conduits in the agriculture supply chain. They provide direct purchase services for farmers, guaranteeing fair prices. Additionally, by relaying current market trends and demands, they play an advisory role, aiding farmers in making informed decisions. Their efforts especially support women farmers, enabling them to overcome barriers to market access.

Aquaculture Supply and Guidance (Fish Fry Hawker)

These hawkers go beyond merely supplying and move into the advisory domain. While they provide top-quality fingerlings for robust fish farming, they also offer consultations, ensuring farmers adopt best practices in aquaculture. Their connections with the Upazila Fishery Office and other departments make certain that the most recent techniques and knowledge in fish farming reach the grassroots.





Community Financial Literacy and Empowerment (Sanchay Sathi)

Sanchay Sathis are the torchbearers of financial self-reliance at the community level. Beyond initiating and managing Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), they instill a savings culture and connecting mature VSLA members to commercial banks. Their consistent interactions aim at enhancing financial literacy, covering aspects of savings, strategic borrowing, and future financial planning.

Comprehensive Health Services (Blue Star Provider)

These providers are holistic health solution providers. Their range of services is vast, from growth monitoring of children to advising on family planning, including selling of health products. Their collaborative approach, particularly with initiatives like the SHOUHARDO III Plus Activity, ensures that communities have access to comprehensive health services.



Maternal and Newborn Care (Private Community Skilled Birth Attendant)

PCSBA professionals exemplify the pinnacle of maternal and neonatal care in the regions they serve. They promote institutional births for the safety of mothers and infants. Post-delivery, their services extend to postnatal check-ups, newborn care, and growth monitoring, all aiming to secure the health and well-being of both mother and child.

LSP Service Satisfaction



In the past year, satisfaction metrics for Local Service Providers (LSPs) have been notably commendable. The satisfaction score was 95% for the Collector segment, while both the aquaculture and nutrition segments achieved an outstanding 100%. The leading factors contributing to such high satisfaction, as reported by respondents, include service availability, time-saving attributes, a heightened quality of life, and unparalleled expertise.

To provide a snapshot of the impact over the past year: 69% of SHOUHARDO households, distributed across 940 villages, have availed the expertise and services of more than 2,200 LSPs (data up to October 2023).

Future Strategy: Expansion of the LSP Network

SHOUHARDO III Plus strategic roadmap is firmly anchored in the evolution and enhancement of the LSP network. The Activity envision SHOUHARDO III Plus LSPs not merely as service providers but as trained entrepreneurs, consistently pinpointing community needs. Their mission is to seamlessly integrate both veteran and emerging LSPs into the cohesive “LSP Network,” ensuring service excellence and consistency throughout.

As local networks expand, SHOUHARDO III Plus commitment is to adapt the array of services LSPs provide, ensuring they align perfectly with local community needs. In line with this vision, SHOUHARDO III Plus is taking several steps:



Digital Empowerment

Providing LSPs with access to digital training content, covering pivotal areas like entrepreneurship, marketing, livestock management, and cutting-edge agricultural practices. This content isn't merely for learning; it's a tool to showcase and amplify the diverse services LSPs bring to the table.

Branding and Identity

A unique logo for seven types of LSPs to establish a recognizable service provision

Capacity Building

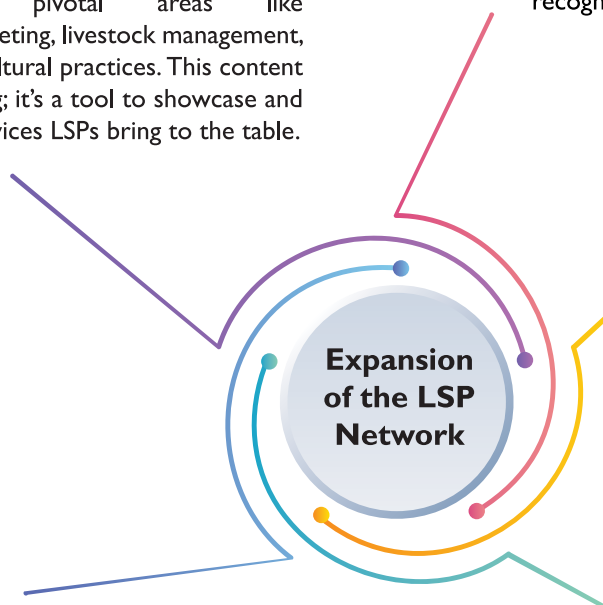
Offering specialized coaching to handpicked LSPs, developing their skills and expanding their capabilities.

Partnerships

Cultivating strong ties with both public and private sectors, providing robust support and scaffolding to our LSPs.

Service Mapping

Assisting LSPs in the identification and mapping of crucial services and goods, ensuring no essential need is overlooked.



*All artwork is developed by the local service provider

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