The British Council launched the Leadership for Advancing Development in Bangladesh (LEAD Bangladesh) project aiming to empower young people in Bangladesh as leaders in their communities to identify innovative, sustainable solutions to local and global challenges in the areas of SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

The programme was designed to allow Bangladeshi youth to interact with leaders from among the Bangladeshi diaspora community in the UK. By connecting diaspora to aspiring youth leaders, the project expects to identify new pathways to collaboration and support for Bangladeshi youth.

LEAD Bangladesh targeted:

- 3000 Bangladeshi youth (ages 18-25 years) across different communities
- 40 Bangladeshi diaspora leaders in the UK (ages 30-50 years).

The following outcomes were expected from LEAD Bangladesh:

- Enhanced leadership and social skills of young people in Bangladesh
- Improved understanding of the ground realities / challenges in Bangladesh among diaspora leaders
- Empowerment among youth to engage with their communities on important issues, climate change and civic engagement
- Increased dialogue among young people, local government, and sectoral experts
- A sustained network of changemakers in Bangladesh, the UK and across the Commonwealth, who come together to exchange knowledge, ideas and initiatives on challenges

Keymakers Consulting has already conducted and submitted the baseline evaluation of the programme as well as the M&E tools for the project. Now, British Council wishes to evaluate whether LEAD is able to meet its envisioned outcomes and to measure the ultimate impact of the project.

Objectives of Endline

1. Gauge knowledge & skill improvement of youth participants in terms of:
   a. Leadership
   b. Communication and social skills
   c. Self-awareness and empathy
   d. Critical thinking and problem solving
   e. Community engagement
   f. Knowledge of SDGs

2. Assess change in perceptions of diaspora leaders on Bangladeshi youth, challenges in Bangladesh and own role in fostering change in Bangladesh.

3. Assess perceptions of key stakeholders in terms of the intended objectives, relevance, effectiveness and barriers and triggers

4. Measure impact of SAP on community and change in attitude towards community development projects

5. Explore best practices and improvement areas that can make the LEAD programme replicable in other countries

Research Design

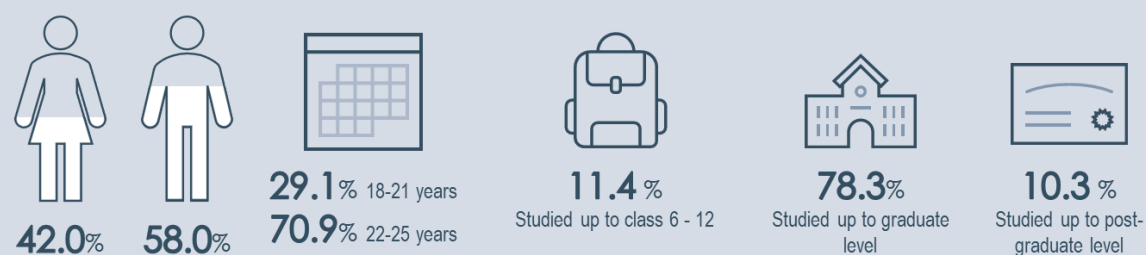For the endline evaluation, **350** youth participants were surveyed across six locations:

- Dhaka
- Chattogram
- Sylhet
- Rajshahi
- Khulna
- Chuadanga

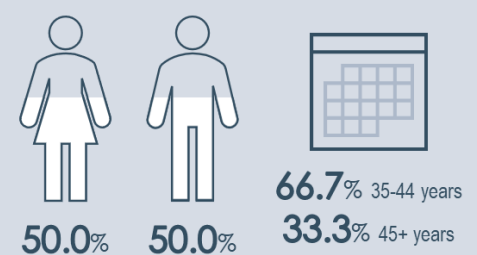In addition, 6 diaspora leaders submitted the self-administered evaluation questionnaire.

Furthermore, 12 Focus Group Discussions with youth, 6 Focus Group Discussions with beneficiaries, 3 Depth Interviews and 13 Key Informant Interviews were conducted.

Overview of endline evaluation results
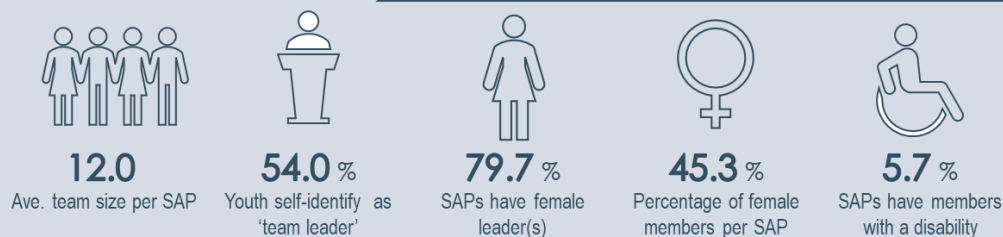
Profile of surveyed youth participants

42.0% 58.0%

29.1% 18-21 years
70.9% 22-25 years

11.4% Studied up to class 6 - 12

78.3% Studied up to graduate level

10.3% Studied up to post-graduate level

Profile of diaspora leaders

50.0% 50.0%

66.7% 35-44 years
33.3% 45+ years

LEAD element assessment by youth participants

Aspects that are appreciated
- ✓ Face to face interaction with trainers and fellow participants
- ✓ Interactive activities that involve demonstrations, presentation and performance
- ✓ Collaborative activities such as discussions and debates with other participants
- ✓ Activities encouraging active participation of all team members
- ✓ Practical examples and exercises demonstrating the theories being taught

Aspects that are not appreciated
- ✗ Online training interactions → less opportunity to engage with others
- ✗ Training modules that are lecture-based
- ✗ Five-day training duration → does not allow youth adequate time to internalise learnings
- ✗ No provisions for giving feedback on training content (some)
- ✗ Inadequate language sensitisation in terms of issues relating to class / ethnicity (Khulna – few)

	Received training	Overall rating	Learnt new, relevant info
Leadership training	93.4%	4.6	79.5%
SDG-8 training	16.9%	4.9	89.8%
SDG-13 training	33.4%	4.7	88.9%
SDG-16 training	49.6%	4.6	74.7%

	Participation rate	Overall rating	Learnt new, relevant info
Online group coaching	38.0%	4.5	39.8%
Joint visioning workshop	6.3%	5.0	77.3%

Youth experience with programme

12.0 Ave. team size per SAP

54.0% Youth self-identify as 'team leader'

79.7% SAPs have female leader(s)

45.3% Percentage of female members per SAP

5.7% SAPs have members with a disability

- 🟥 No positive impact
- 🟧 Limited positive impact
- 🟩 Some positive impact
- 🟩 A lot of positive impact

Impact of LEAD participation on youth's life
73.7% | 25.4%

Impact of SAP on youth's local community
56.0% | 41.1% | 2.6%

CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE
- Detailed understanding about the SDG specific to own SAP
- Learnt new leadership models (like leading beyond authority)
- Better awareness about the structure of local government in own locality
- Introduced to content on gender topics

CHANGES IN SKILLS
- Enhanced leadership skills
- Better problem solving and critical thinking skills
- More confidence in public speaking
- Refined project management skills such as resource management, planning, etc
- More effective approach to teamwork
- Better emotional control

CHANGES IN ATTITUDE
- Greater self-confidence
- Open to talk to more people and strangers
- More proactive attitude, more positive thinking
- More respectful of other's opinions
- Place value on the impact of small actions
- More enjoyment in voluntary work

Diaspora leader perception

WHAT WORKS
- Opportunity to directly interact with Bangladesh
- Opportunity to work with motivated youth
- Participation in Leadership Symposium in Bangladesh
- Joint Visioning Workshop
- Immersive activities like site visits

WHAT DOES NOT WORK
- Mismatch between expected role and actual role in LEAD
- Infrequent and limited interactions with youth
- Inadequate tech support for online coaching
- Inadequate briefing on local community, needs and constraints
- Useful yet generic leadership training
- Limited areas for individual expression of expertise

Programme impacts

ACCORDING TO BENEFICIARY
- Better environment
- More engaging community
- Financial benefits
- Enhanced safety
- Positive behavioural change
- More responsible youth

ACCORDING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT / POLICYMAKERS
- Objective assessment of community needs
- Good PR for local govt
- More accountable local leaders
- More direct, effective comm. with voters
- Better community spaces
- More job creation
- Greater support from community to release funds

Recommendations from endline evaluation

Youth Training modules

1. Find avenues to increase participant engagement during training and team activities

- Focus on face-to-face training wherever possible, especially for modules that require group discussion, presentation and performance. In the event of further pandemic-induced restrictions, consider delivering some training modules face-to-face with social distancing protocols in place.
- Split 5-day long training into smaller 'modules' so that youth can better internalise the concepts being taught
- Consider incorporating video examples of previous, 'successful' SAPs to better illustrate the desired outcomes from the project.
- Encourage youth to conduct their regular team meetings in a face-to-face setting, keeping social distancing and safe guarding guidelines in place.

2. Deliver more engaging learning experience for remote learning sessions

- Provide infrastructural support to youth for online sessions. Partnering with NGOs, educational institutions for their facilities / equipment / internet connection can be considered.
- Consider developing more video and animation-based content for remote learning modules
- Incorporate tools and activities that allow for more interactive and immersive group discussion and team work
- Consider introducing steps to better monitor how facilitators deliver content to a real youth audience during online training so that techniques covered in the ToT are properly executed.
- Consider designing modules and lessons specifically for online learning and online interaction.

3. Continue including gender sensitisation module in leadership training

4. Continue using the existing training module used for leadership training

5. Provide SDG-8 module training to more youth participants

6. Revisit training material for SDGs, especially SDG 16-related content: Current content is perceived to be too 'lecture-based'

7. Consider creating more opportunities of participation for youth with disabilities

8. Provide 'basic' leadership training to like-minded youth

9. Incorporate some content on spoken English communication to facilitate better dialogue between youth participants and diaspora leaders

Diaspora Training modules

1. Manage expectation levels of diaspora leaders

- Consider clearly defining and communicating the scope of diaspora involvement at the initial phases of the LEAD journey
- Clearly communicate the purpose of LEAD Bangladesh: diaspora leaders need to understand that the programme aims to empower youth leaders to solve problems and make decisions themselves
- Prepare an FAQ that clearly illustrates the roles and responsibilities expected from diaspora leaders

2. Adapt training content to reflect the contextual reality of Bangladesh

- Considering developing an introductory module that provides contextual information about Bangladesh, its culture and its current development challenges
- Provide some generalised context on Bangladeshi youth's educational level, skill level and so on prior to group coaching sessions. This will allow diaspora leaders to prepare accordingly.
- Consider providing some background information about the geographic areas being covered in the programme

3. Provide more extensive training on group coaching

SAP design and implementation

1. Ensure youth include project sustainability during the SAP planning phase

- Include SAP handover / takeover planning as part of the SAP design process
- Included provisions for basic training with like-minded youth for successful project handover

2. Ensure SAP design contains clear, measurable goals and not just broad goals (like increasing awareness)

- Include activities in SAPs which have easy to understand demonstrable results – projects that only have broad goals are less likely to be perceived to be successful.
- For SDG-16 themed SAPs, avoid setting broad, ambitious goals that are difficult to measure and hard to deliver on a short time span. Instead, considering breaking down broader goals into more focused objectives, with more targeted activities.
- SDG-13 themed SAPs were more successful in providing positive impact to local community since they had elements that led to visible changes in the community. Consider incorporating the same philosophy to SDG-8 and SDG-16 themed SAPs.

3. Give youth the opportunity to replace free-loaders and inactive members

4. Consider expanding SDG-13 themed SAPs to more locations

5. Consider increasing the number of SDG-8 themed SAPs
- Consider expanding SDG-8 themed SAPs to regions with an existing culture of entrepreneurship. This will increase community acceptance of SDG-8 themed SAPs
- Consider targeting more female participants with SDG-8 themed SAPs.

6. Revisit how SDG-8 SAPs are designed in terms of project duration and team dynamics
- Some SDG-8 SAPs are have been unable to ensure participatory leadership and collaborative decision making.
- Some SDG-8 SAPs have achieved only 30-50% and need more time for their social business to take off.

7. Create a repository of 'successful' or 'well-designed' SAPs that future youth participants of LEAD Bangladesh can access and explore
- Consider photographing or videotaping SAP visits and using this content to develop an SAP repository
- Consider creating an SAP case study library based on SAP reports, visits and documentation collection over the time-span of the programme

Online group coaching design

1. Increase opportunities for youth participants to participate
- Allow all SAP members to attend online group coaching sessions, even as observers or viewers of a live stream.

- Consider increasing the number of interactions a youth participant can have with diaspora leaders
- Increase the time allocated for coaching by allowing youth to join sessions 20-30 minutes before diaspora for safe-guarding briefing.

2. Create opportunities for diaspora leader to express their areas of expertise while also ensuring safeguarding protocols

Joint visioning workshop design

1. Inform youth abour Joint Visioning Workshop at the initial phases of LEAD Bangladesh
- Communication regarding Joint Visioning workshop is mainly done by partner NGOs though the extent of communication is not uniform across centres. Consider developing a clear communication message and communication timeline for all partner NGOs to follow
- Consider including mention of Joint Visioning Workshop in official British Council communication channels for LEAD Bangladesh.

2. Ensure consistent communication of the attendee selection criteria for Joint Visioning Workshop including the documentation / visa requirements and processing timeline so that it does not come as a last-moment surprise
- Ensure NGO partners are communicating the selection criteria and process clearly to youth participants and in a timely manner.
- Give all youth participants a checklist and timeline that illustrates the requirements and time required to become a Joint Visioning Workshop attendee so that there is no confusion about the process