Exchange visit programmes are aimed at capacity building among the community leaders through sharing experiences in terms of community mobilization, community action planning, setting priorities, understanding the basic needs of improving environmental sanitation and economic conditions, gender equalities and community empowerment. The programme included discussion meetings with CDCs by visiting CDC members, on site visits to different activities and sharing experiences between towns, between project staff and between community members.

As a core element of the community empowerment strategy, the community exchange programmes have been successfully implemented having a powerful effect on individuals, especially women. Exposure to travel and different environments builds a bridge among young community leaders elsewhere in the region has assisted their confidence and ability to negotiate with government officials and gave them new ideas.

The town-to-town exchanges have also enabled the development of mutual support exemplified during the floods of 2004 by the visits of community leaders to towns with donations of food and equipment.

### Building Community Capacity

**Local Partnership for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project**

- **Population**: 144.5m (July 2005)
- **50% of urban population is characterized as poor and 50% are hard core poor
- **5% of urban area is characterized as slums**
- **The most visible characteristics of slums is reflected in a medical environment of poverty**

**Source**: Report of Evaluation Mission (GHK)

Improving Life

**Developing Skills, Improving Life**

Apprentice Shammi’s Employer, Khulna

"Improvements in water and sanitation facilities in the slums have led to overall improvements in health and well-being. Better roads have solved the poor. Every family now has 5 to 6 children – a key factor. In the past, unemployment, however, we are confident that we can earn a living we can overcome everything."  

**Fast Facts**

- **People’s Republic of Bangladesh**
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- **The most visible characteristics of slums is reflected in a medical environment of poverty**

**Source**: Report of Evaluation Mission (GHK)

**Policy Impact**

- **Pro-poor policies**: The strategy adopted aims to initiate or strengthen group formation within the urban poor communities to facilitate community level development planning and the implementation of community projects. At the same time, the community is being mobilized, project staff work with Government and non-Government representatives to create an enabling environment for the urban poor, through provision of training, technical support, and capital investment in the form of a community development fund and a poverty alleviation fund.

**BANGLADESH**

**UN-HABITAT Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya**

Email: habitat.fukuoka@unhabitat.org

Tel: (81-92) 724-7121; Fax: (81-92) 724-7124

ACROS Bldg. 8F, 1-1-1 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0001 Japan

**UN-HABITAT Fukuoka Office**

ACROS Bldg. 8F, 1-1-1 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0001 Japan

Tel: (81-92) 724-7121; Fax: (81-92) 724-7124

Email: habitat.fukuoka@unhabitat.org

http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org

**UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific**

**UN-HABITAT Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya**

Email: habitat.fukuoka@unhabitat.org

http://www.unhabitat.org