

Study on the role of CEA on the effectiveness of LLA

Khulna and Tangail districts, Bangladesh

BDRCS & Netherlands Red Cross



Primary question: how does CEA enhance LLA?

01 Ownership drives behaviour change

CEA creates inclusive spaces where communities internalize climate risks and decide how to act. Regular meetings and feedback loops translate into household preparedness plans, livelihood adaptations, and collective action.

02 Trust and transparency legitimise decisions

Public posting of beneficiary lists, clear criteria, and time-bound review periods reduced conflict and increased acceptance of decisions, even among those who did not directly benefit.

03 Stronger committees lead to sustainability

Where CEA was sustained, local leaders gained both technical capacity and social legitimacy. Communities became more willing to follow their guidance and invest in long-term adaptation without external support.



RQ1: which CEA mechanisms were most effective?

01

Courtyard + committee meetings

Most effective mechanism are meetings that were held at convenient times and when participants could influence decisions.

02

Feedback mechanism

Boxes, public lists, and hotlines have built trust where feedback visibly changed decisions.

03

Transparent selection

Publicly posting beneficiary lists and allowing community review reduced conflict and increased acceptance even among those who did not benefit.

04

Women's + youth platforms

Women shifted from passive attendance to active initiation of meetings and household planning. Youth led early warning dissemination.

05

Training and info sharing

Training on hazards, agriculture and preparedness amplified other CEA mechanisms by equipping communities to act on collective decisions.



RQ2: how do contextual factors shape CEA?



Geography + hazard

Different hazards shaped what communities prioritised. In Khulna, salinity and waterlogging drove household and livelihood measures. In Tangail, flooding drove collective response planning.

Socio-economic + infrastructure

Face-to-face mechanisms remained essential where digital access was low. Women linked participation to road access, mobility, and childcare.

Cultural + gender norms

CEA created shifts: women began initiating meetings and planning. But men rated long-term sustainability higher than women in Tangail, signalling persistent gaps.

Political + institutional context

Political interference was a recurring risk. Strong transparency practices in Tangail (public lists, structured review) helped neutralise this. Less so in Khulna.

RQ3: key lessons from CEA-LLA integration

1 Deep CEA makes LLA feel local

Ownership emerged where engagement extended to co-decision-making, not just consultation.

2 Closing the feedback loop is non-negotiable

Where feedback led to visible change, trust deepened. Without it, CEA becomes symbolic.

3 Platforms turn participation into leadership

Women and youth moved from passive attendees to meeting initiators and early warning leaders.

4 Regular spaces beat one-off consultations

Continuity builds trust. Repeated interaction allowed committees to mature and gain legitimacy.

5 Short funding cycles constrain impact

CEA enables but cannot substitute structural investment. Short cycles prevent embedding adaptation leadership.

6 Political interference is a real threat

Strong transparency practices (public lists, review periods) partially neutralised political pressure.



Conclusions



- CEA is a central enabler of LLA, not a complementary or optional component.
- When CEA is sustained as a system: combining regular engagement, responsive feedback, transparency and inclusive leadership, directly strengthens community ownership and sustainability.
- Strong CEA correlates with higher trust, preparedness behaviour, and confidence in local leadership.
- Where CEA is constrained by short funding cycles, weak institutions, political interference, or socio-economic barriers, it improves participation but does not fully shift power.
- LLA is most effective where CEA functions as a form of local governance, embedded in everyday decision-making.

Recommendations



01 Design CEA as a continuous process

Plan regular engagement spaces from the outset, not as one-off consultations but as a sustained programme spine resourced throughout the lifecycle.

02 Prioritise closing the feedback loop

Assess feedback mechanisms by whether communities see clear, timely responses, not by whether whether channels exist.

03 Embed transparency as a core principle

Make publicly posting beneficiary lists, clear criteria, and community review standard practice in all LLA programming.

04 Move from participation to leadership

Actively support women and youth to take on facilitation, monitoring, and decision-making roles, not just attendance.

05 Adapt mechanisms to socio-economic realities

Face-to-face mechanisms must remain the backbone. Digital tools are a complement, not a replacement.

06 Align funding with the ambition of LLA

Advocate for longer-term horizons and adaptive programming space. CEA cannot compensate for short project cycles.