

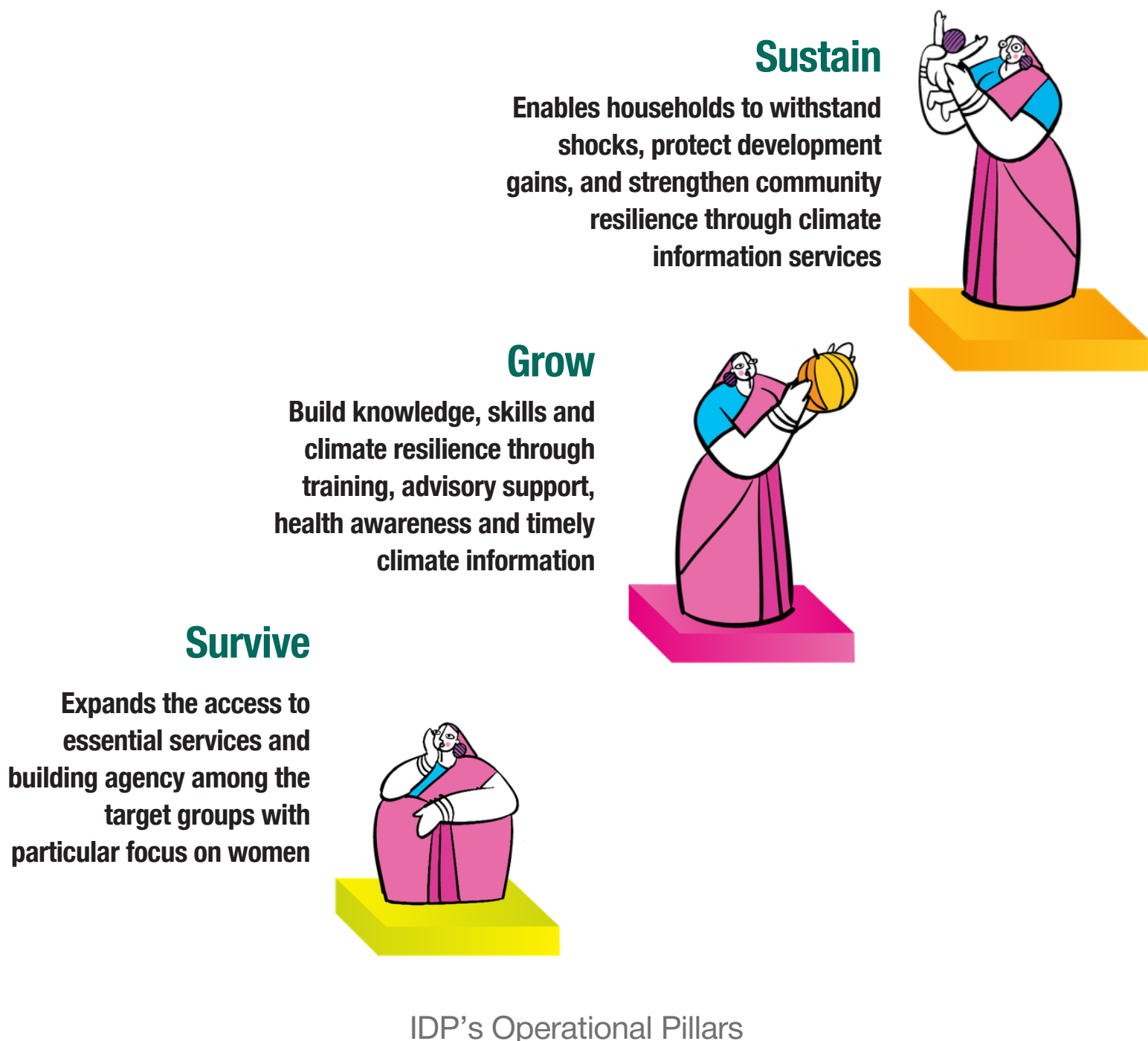


Integrated Development Programme

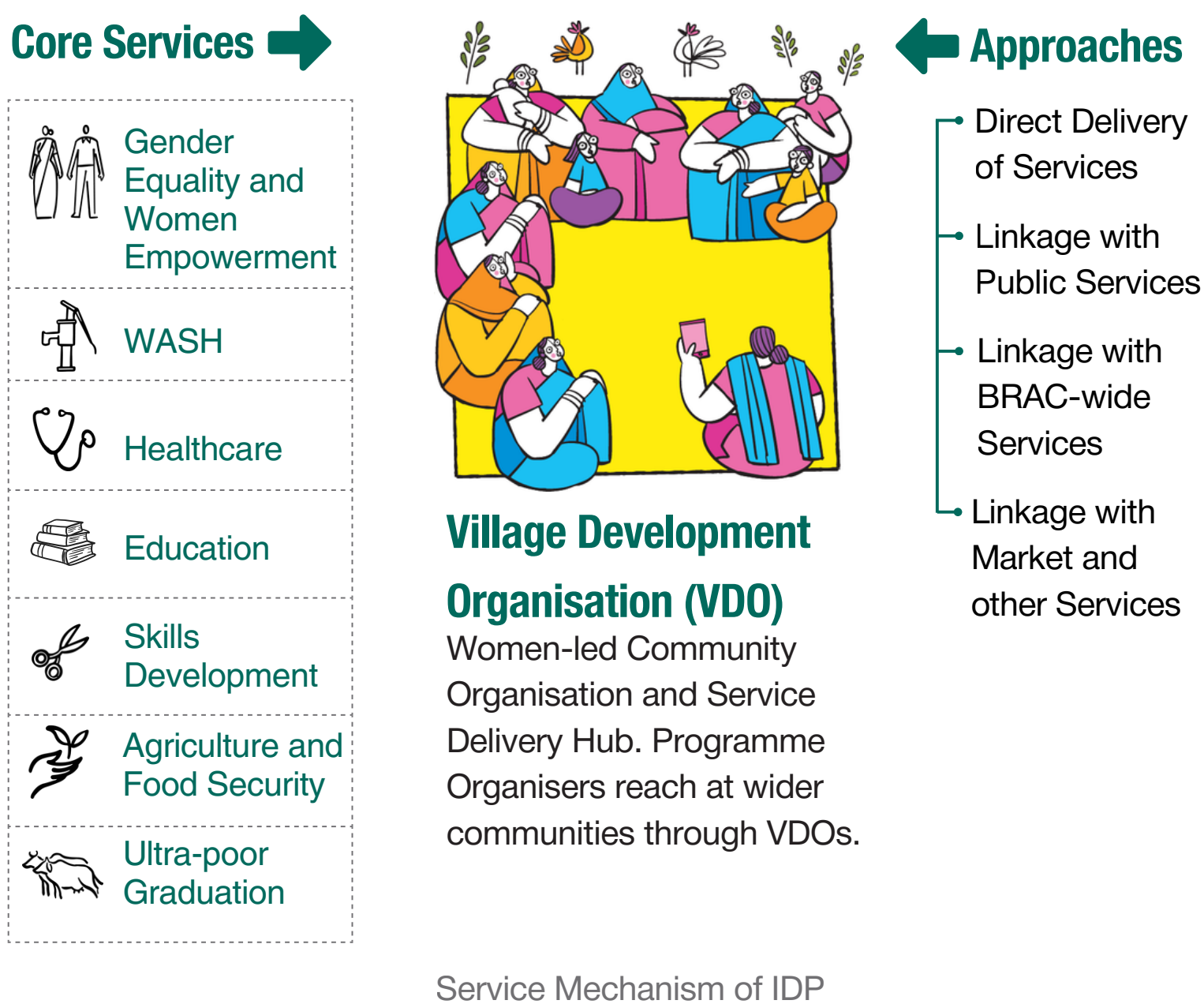
Newsletter | Jan-June 2026

One in four people across Bangladesh are multidimensional poor. These deprivations are most acute among communities that are geographically remote, socially isolated, and climate-vulnerable, where access to essential services, market access, economic opportunities and social protection system remain limited. Climate change further exacerbates these inequalities through recurrent floods, cyclones, salinity intrusion, drought, groundwater depletion, and heat stress are undermining livelihoods and food systems. For marginalised communities, including people with disabilities, with limited assets and repeated shocks, erode coping capacity and trap households into persistent poverty cycles.

The programme aims at building resilience of the communities constrained by geographical, social, and climate-induced barriers by deepening the delivery of essential services, promoting livelihood opportunities, and enhancing their coping mechanisms.

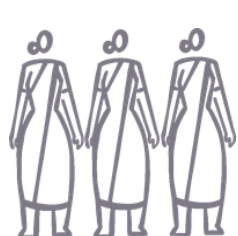


IDP's operational architecture is structured around three pillars: Survive, Grow, and Sustain, supporting the poor and marginalised households to graduate out of poverty with resilience.



IDP connects the low-income and isolated communities with critical services via four channels: direct service delivery, synergies with various BRAC programmes, linkages with government schemes/services, and partnerships with the private sector and NGOs.

Programme Highlights (January-June 2026)



3,366
Village Development Organisations (VDOs) with **1,01,195** members



248
Schools with **5,884** students



45,720
Households practicing homestead gardening



5,773
Farmers under crop insurance



458
Swapnosarathi groups with **11,450** adolescent girls



6,122
UPG participants



700
Youth enrolled in skills development initiatives



2,97,743
people covered with essential health services



1,102
women have access to seasonal loan including **233** indigenous women



208
Households under the coverage **5** piped water network



3,962
households maintaining basic and safely managed WASH facilities

Highlights of Programme Activities (Jan-June 2026)

Beyond Tobacco: Empowering Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Farmers with Alternative Crops

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), where tobacco cultivation remains widespread and its negative health impacts often fall heavily on women, IDP continued promoting alternative and sustainable crop options in Alikadam and Lama upazilas of Bandarban. In partnership with BRAC Seed & Agro Enterprise (BSAE), the programme introduced BRAC Challisha potato as a viable alternative to tobacco cultivation, which is associated with deforestation and soil degradation.



Planted in November 2025 and harvested in February 2026, the pilot produced a total of 1,220 kg of potatoes, demonstrating the potential of climate- and market-responsive crop alternatives. By piloting potato as an alternative crop proven successful as farmers earned high income (BDT 83k-350k/per acre) compared to tobacco (BDT 80k-250k/per acre).

As tobacco is usually cultivated from November to June, the pilot initiative promotes a sequential cropping approach. Following the successful potato harvest, farmers continued cultivating maize, cucumber, okra, yard-long bean, and bitter gourd, enabling year-round production and diversified income opportunities.

Redesigning the VDO Model

Determining a graduation approach



Recognising the need to strengthen community-level presence, IDP is redesigning the Village Development Organisation (VDO) model to ensure it remains responsive, resilient, and community-led. In February, a VDO Model Redesign Workshop was held to shape the future direction of VDOs, which serve as the programme's primary platform for service delivery. Key discussions focused on refining the structure and operational framework of VDOs, as well as developing clear exit strategies. As part of this process, IDP is also working on defining a graduation pathway for VDO groups, with the development of VDO member graduation indicators currently underway.

BRAC Dhan-2 Initiative

Strengthening Marginalised Women's Economic Agency and Market Linkages



The BRAC Dhan-2 initiative was piloted, engaging smallholder women farmers from Ajmiriganj (Habiganj) and indigenous women farmers from Panchbibbi (Joypurhat). In collaboration with BRAC Seed and Agro Enterprise (BSAE), IDP continued piloting a contract farming model for BRAC Dhaan-2, an aromatic, short-duration, high yield rice variety cultivated by 105 women farmers, including 65 Indigenous women, in the Barind and Haor regions.

Instead of relying on uncertain wage labour, these women invested in and managed their own crop production. Farmers produced 69 metric tonnes of rice and 57.1 metric tonnes, 82% procured by BSAE under the buy-back arrangement.

Beyond production, the initiative ensured market access. Rice harvested from these remote areas is being procured and marketed through BRAC-supported systems, eventually reaching urban consumers through Aarong, a premium retail outlet. The initiative is strengthening women's participation in agricultural value chains while improving market access and income opportunities.

IDP Annual Meeting

Reflecting, Aligning, and Moving Forward



A three-day IDP Annual Meeting was held from 16-18 June 2026, bringing together field teams from the IDP and ICCP zones. Participants presented the Annual Operational Plans (AOPs) for IDP and ICCP zones, aligning programme priorities with BRAC's strategic direction, and reflecting on key lessons and achievements from the past year. Alongside operational planning, the meeting provided a platform for collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, and strengthening coordination to support effective programme implementation in the coming year.

Life on the Char

Amena Begum’s Fight to Keep Going



My husband left when my daughter was only 11 months old. I had no time to grieve. I had to learn how to survive.

I was married at a young age and faced abandonment not once, but twice. My second husband left while I was pregnant, forcing me to raise my children on my own.

I learned that stability is not something others can give you. It is something you have to build yourself.



Two years ago, I joined BRAC's Village Development Organisation (VDO), where I found support among other women who had faced struggles like mine. Later, I was selected for the Ultra-Poor Graduation programme, and the livestock I received gave me a fresh start. By saving little by little, I was able to buy a second-hand sewing machine. Today, I earn an income by stitching clothes for people in my community. The income is small, but it helps me take care of my children.



When I see my daughter studying, I feel hope. I want her life to be different from mine.

I may not have had many opportunities, but I am determined to create opportunities for my children. Whatever comes, I will keep moving forward.

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