

Functioning of Local Government (Union Parishad): Legal and Practical Constraints

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	3
Introduction	4
Study Objectives	5
Methodology	5
Study Area	6
Sampling and Sample Size.....	6
Method of Data Collection and Analysis.....	6
Population and Unit of Analysis	6
Rationale/ Significance of the Study.....	6
Limitations of the Study.....	7
Defining Concepts	7
Evolution of Local Government in Bangladesh.....	8
Evolution of Functions of Local Government and the Current State	10
Findings of the Survey	12
Major Survey Findings	17
Major FGD Findings.....	17
Major Legal and Practical Constraints.....	18
Analysis of the Major Study Findings	19
Recommendations.....	22
Conclusion	23
Annex	24
Annex-1.....	24
<i>An Analysis of Composition of Different Commissions/Committees on Strengthening</i> <i>Local government.....</i>	24
Anex-2.....	25
<i>Committee on Accelerating and Strengthening Local Government, 2007</i>	25
Anex-3.....	27
<i>Comparative Analysis of Recommendations Made by Various Committees/Commission</i> <i>on Legal and Practical Constraints</i>	27
Anex-4.....	32
<i>Administrative Structure of Union Parishad</i>	32
Union Parishad.....	32
The Village Court	32
Anex-5.....	33
<i>The Current Functions of the UP.....</i>	33
Anex-6.....	37
<i>Fund and Financial Management of the UP (Income, Budget, and Fund)</i>	37
Anex-7.....	39
<i>Study Findings (in detail).....</i>	39
Annex-8.....	47
<i>Questioner to the Secretary (as the Administrative Member) of the UP</i>	47
Anex-9.....	53
<i>FGD (Focus Group Discussion) Report</i>	53
Anex-10.....	57
<i>IDI (In-depth Interview) Report on UP Representatives</i>	57
Anex-11.....	61
<i>IDI (In-depth Interview) of LG Experts</i>	61
Annex 12.....	64
<i>Study Area</i>	64

List of Abbreviations

ACR	: Annual Confidential Report
ADP	: Annual Development Program
BDO	: Basic Democracy Order
CTG	: Caretaker Government
DC	: Deputy Commissioner
FGD	: Focus Group Discussion
IDI	: In-depth Interview
LG	: Local Government
LGED	: Local Government Engineering Department
LGRF	: Local Government Representative Forum
MLSS	: Member of Lower Supporting Staff
MP	: Member of Parliament
NGO	: Non-Government Organization
NILG	: National Institute of Local Government
OC	: Officer in-Charge
PA	: Project Aid
RMP	: Rural Maintenance Program
RWP	: Rural Works Program
SDO	: Sub-divisional Officer
SPSS	: Statistical Package for Social Science
TO&E	: Table of Organization and Equipments
UNO	: Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	: Union Parishad
VGD	: Vulnerable Group Development
VGf	: Vulnerable Group Food

Introduction

Bangladesh has a long and eventful tradition of local government. The structure and functions of local government have been evolved in consonance with socio-economic and political transformation of the country. Nevertheless, the Bangladesh Constitution (Articles 9, 11, 59, and 60) made provisions for establishing local government as an inseparable organ of administering state affairs to safeguard democratic values and to secure economic and social justice.

These four articles of the constitution together constitute the supreme source of all laws, ordinances, and rules relating to the local government system of the country. Yet, one potential conflict arises from Bengali and English versions of those provisions of the constitution. Though the English version mentioned the terms 'local government' and 'local government institutions', the Bengali version interpreted them as 'shtaaniyo shashon' (local administration) and 'shtaaniyo shashon shoncranto protisthan' (local administrative institutions) respectively. These interpretations do not reflect the spirit of local self government. This conflict is a persistent threat for sound policy prescriptions for establishing strong local government system in Bangladesh.

The local government bodies, or more specifically the Union Parishad, are struggling in delivering expected public services to the common people at the grass root level mostly due to lack of appropriate administrative and financial authority as well as institutional capability. The UP could play a catalytic role in local level development if it could overcome the existing administrative and financial limitations through the acceleration of the decentralization process. A careful review of the responsibilities and authority of the UP shows that it alone renders and maintains all those services within a defined local limit, the part of which different ministries, departments, directorates, and such other agencies of the central government do as per the principle of specialization. Yet it enjoys very little power compared to its responsibilities. Nevertheless it has been persistently deprived of exercising its limited power due to bureaucratic influence and lack of political will. Consequently, it has fallen far short of meeting expectations of the people.

Looking at practical necessities, there is no alternative but to strengthen local government system. This would facilitate in consolidating democracy and promoting good governance. Keeping this context in mind, this study concentrates on identifying legal and practical constraints that adversely affect UPs in their effective functioning. It is hoped that the findings of the study will enable us to discern major barriers pertaining to UPs effective functioning and recommending measures to overcoming them.

Study Objectives

The main objective of this study is to identify legal and practical constraints to effective functioning of the UP. In accordance with the findings, the study will provide with rational, effective and practical recommendations to remove those constraints to make UPs more capable and vibrant.

This broad objective has been broken down into following specific purposes:

- to find out ways and means so as to remove lack of institutional efficiency;
- to discern opinions of the public representatives and secretaries about the responsibilities and authority of the UP;
- to draw opinions about transformation of the structure of the UP so as to enable it to discharge its organizational and official responsibilities properly;
- to probe into the barriers of and outside pressures that the UP usually faces in making decisions;
- to draw opinions about probable mechanisms to stop bureaucratic and political interference in UP functioning; and
- to make recommendations on amendments to constitutional provisions and ordinances relating to local government to enable it to function in an autonomous manner.

Methodology

Data have been collected from two kinds of sources:

1. Primary sources, and
2. Secondary sources

Different methods have been used to collect primary data. They are:

1. Survey,
2. In-depth Interview and
3. Focus Group Discussion

The survey was conducted through administering questionnaires among chairman, 1 member, 1 member of the reserved seat, and the secretary (as the administrative officer) of each selected UP. Discussions were held with the leaders of the Local Government Representatives Forum (LGRF) based on both structures and open-ended questionnaires. In-depth interviews and open discussions were conducted with local government experts and officials.

Secondary data were collected by reviewing relevant research materials and reports of various committees and commissions on local government.

Study Area

The study area included 90 unions covering all six divisions of the country. At the preliminary stage, one district was selected from each division and three upazilas from each selected district were chosen. Then five unions from each selected upazila were selected purposively considering easy access, availability of leading local representatives and some other conveniences into consideration.

Sampling and Sample Size

Through purposive sampling method, the chairman, 1 general member, 1 member from the reserved seats, and the secretary from each selected union were chosen as respondents. One-fourth of the total respondents were women drawn from the reserved seats.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

Thirty-six trained and skilled young persons were employed for field level data collection. The questionnaire was prepared in Bengali for easy understanding. The questionnaire was pre-tested for measuring validity and applicability before its final use. The primary data was collected through Interview Schedule/ Index. Data were also collated from selected published research materials and reports of various local government commissions/ committees. Data were collected from 10 November 2007 to 31 January 2008. The preliminary data was computerized through data coding process for analysis. 'SPSS' program has been used for data analysis.

Population and Unit of Analysis

All chairmen, general members, members of reserved seats, UP secretaries and of all Union Parishads constituted the population of this study. Chairmen, general members, members of reserved seats, and UP secretaries who are knowledgeable about legal and practical constraints to effective functioning of the UP taken together formed the unit of analysis.

Rationale/ Significance of the Study

Though the UP has been assigned with many functions (mandatory and optional) of various kinds vide the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1983, it is playing insignificant role in local level administration at present. Most of the UPs are rendering some infrastructural services, conducting 'Village Court' for settlement of local arbitrations under limited capacity, compiling birth registration, issuing citizen certificate, and overseeing health, education, and agricultural services.

Though the chairman of the UP is to head the school management committees of all primary and secondary schools within the territory of the concerned UP, but in practice, chairmen to those committees are being elected from respective wards.

In addition, despite the chairman of the UP is to be the ex-officio chair of the local market management committee, this post persistently lies outside of his de facto jurisdiction. This gradual disempowerment process made UPs almost impotent in rendering minimally effective public service at grassroots level.

Despite UPs having indispensable importance in advancing local development and thereby contributing to national prosperity, the prospect of Ups doing that is gradually fading in the face of numerous legal and practical constraints. This persistent crisis requires immediate and acceptable resolution. This study aims at resolving this crisis.

Limitations of the Study

One significant limitation is the sample size. Ninety out of 4498 UPs were selected due to time and financial constraints. As emphasis was given on the instantaneous presence of respondents representing almost all occupations and social strata, views of many important local personalities were excluded from the sample. During data collection period, the devastating hurricane ‘Sidr’ rampaged the South-West region on 15 November 2007. This significantly interrupted the data collection process in the South-Western districts selected for the study.

Defining Concepts

Union Parishad (UP): Union Parishad means ‘Union Parishad’ as defined under the 1983 Ordinance.

Legal Constraint: Legal Constraint means all constraints created by ordinances, circulars, other statutes and rules.

Practical Constraint: Practical constraint means administrative, political, social and economic constraints that encumber decision making process of the UP.

Local Government: Local government means a government established with a smaller territory within the country. Administrative autonomy is not given to such bodies.

Local Self Government: Governments that are created by law with smaller territories and have authority conferred by law are called local self governments.

Standing Committee: Standing committee means all committees formed by the UP for discharging its functions effectively, formulating development plans, implementing them and ensuring people’s participation.

Annual Development Program (ADP): ADP means the course of actions usually taken to allocate resources in a fiscal year to achieve prioritized developmental goals.

Guard File: Guard file is an especially important file. Important documents such as laws, ordinances, rules, contracts, important correspondences are preserved in this file.

Evolution of Local Government in Bangladesh

The evolution of local government in the Indian subcontinent did not follow any specific laws or rules. It experienced dramatic changes in its nature based on the defining characteristics of the ruling regimes. During pre-Mughal era, village-based local governments, e.g. village council were in force. Each village used to administer its own affairs.

During medieval age, village administration was organized under the Village Panchayat. The Panchayat was responsible for collecting revenues, maintaining law and order, superintending education, irrigation, religious rituals, and moral behaviors of the villagers.

Later during the Mughal period, the revenue collection system became more systematic and the local administration became more dynamic in this regard. In this period, Sarkar/ Chakla, and Pargana became the nerve centers of general and revenue administration.

With the inception of the Permanent Settlement System, the British colonial rulers replaced the indigenous system with the British model of local governance. Both the Pargana and the Panchayat system were abolished. The civil and criminal laws and courts became the basis of local administration and landlords became the local rulers.

The British Government introduced the Chawkidari Act 1870 that attempted to revive the age-old Panchayat system. This Act entrusted the district magistrate with the power to form a five member Panchayat for each village.

Under the Local Self-Government Act 1885, a three-tier system came into operation: district board for district, local board for subdivision, and union committee for several villages spreading over an area of 10-12 square miles.

Later, through the enactment of the Bengal Village Self-Government Act 1919, the former three-tier system was replaced by a two-tier system consisting of union board and district board.

During Pakistan period, President Ayub Khan introduced a new pattern of government system called Basic Democracy that introduced a four-tier local government set-up:

union council, thana council, district council, and divisional council in ascending order.

Immediately after the liberation, Bangladesh politics fell under immense pressure from both within and outside. Dramatic changes were brought in the structure of the local government in accordance with changes made in the governance system to match the ideological shift of the ruling regime.

The Presidential Order No. 7, promulgated in 1972, dissolved all existing local government committees. In order to continue local administration, the government appointed designated committees to replace the defunct committees. The Union Council was renamed as Union Panchayat (later Union Parishad) and the District Council was renamed as the District Board (later Zila Parishad). The Thana and Divisional Councils were not replaced by such ad hoc committees.

The Presidential Order No. 22 specified that each union composed of several villages would be divided in three wards; three UP members would be elected from each ward. Besides, provisions were made for the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be directly elected by all eligible voters living within a UP. The Order further stipulated that the Sub-divisional Officer (SDO) and the Deputy Commissioner would be ex-officio chairmen at thana and district level local bodies respectively.

During Zia regime, the Local Government Ordinance 1976 was promulgated that introduced a three-tier local government system: Union Parishad, Thana Parishad, and Zila Parishad hierarchically arranged in ascending order. The structure and functions of the UP remained almost same as they were under the Presidential Order No.22, with exceptions that the post of the Vice Chairman was abolished and four additional nominated members (two from women and another two from peasants) were included. But the Ordinance conferred significant control of the central government over the UPs. For example, the SDO was given the veto power against any decision of UPs.

Under the Local government (Thana Council and Thana Administration Reorganization) Ordinance 1982, considerable authority was delegated to the Upazila Parishad. The Upazila Parishad was entrusted with the power to impose tax, rates, fees and tolls. The UP lost its authority again in this process to accommodate transfer of responsibilities and authority to the Upazila Parishad.

After the changeover to the parliamentary system of government in 1991, the first Khaleda Zia government (1991-1996) abolished the upazila system. A Local Government Reorganization Commission was constituted on 24 November 1991 to review the effectiveness of the contemporary structure of the local government and recommend on possible reorganization in accordance with the 12th amendment made to the constitution. This Commission proposed a two tier system for the rural area: Union Parishad at union level and Zila Parishad at district level.

The Sheikh Hasina government (1996-2001) formed another commission to suggest the structure of local government consistent with democratic spirit and with sustainable base. This commission suggested for a four-tier system: Gram parishad at village level, union parishad at union level, upazila parishad at thana level, and zila parishad at district level. One significant achievement of this government was holding of election in reserved women seats at UPs.

The second Khaleda Zia government (2001-2006) did not take any noticeable step for strengthening local government system.

Despite repeated assurance of introducing elected bodies at all administrative levels in their respective election manifestoes, major political parties did not give effect to their pledges whenever they came to power.

Evolution of Functions of Local Government and the Current State

During ancient age, village councils (equivalent to the present Union Parishad) were competent bodies. Practically, all government tasks were performed within their jurisdiction. The control exercised by the central government over them was marginal. They had adequate financial resources to perform their multifarious functions (Khanna, 1977). These included civic, police and judicial functions, such as maintenance of law and order, punishment of crimes, settlement of disputes, maintenance of management of communal lands and public utilities, construction of roads, collection of revenue, and other public works (Siddiqui, 2005: 33).

During medieval age, the Village Panchayet was entrusted with the task of looking after education, irrigation, religious practices and moral conduct, holding of fairs and festivals, maintaining law and order and so on (Siddiqui, 2005: 36). But evidence suggests that the village level government was at this time significantly controlled by the central government and thereby it lost its long traditional independent and self-sufficient nature.

The inception of the British rule considerably weakened the traditional independent village government system. Despite its increasing impotence under the Mughal regime, the Panchayet was engaged in multifarious public welfare and civic activities and thereby became the main driving force of local level development. But the British rule made the Panchayat a local police body; it had little to do with public welfare. The Bengal Local Self-Government Act 1885 established Union Committees (UCs) entrusted with responsibilities, like construction of unsealed roads, primary education, sanitation, upkeep of tanks and ponds and registration of vital statistics. The UC had the power to raise funds from villagers owing or occupying adequate properties (Siddiqui, 2005: 42). Such power was conferred for administrative convenience only.

The Act of 1919 did nothing other than conferment of power to form Union Court for settlement of minor offences. Other functions were same as that of under the Act of

1885. So, the 1919 Act was a minor improvement over the 1885 Act. Village governments used to enjoy much more judicial power during ancient and medieval ages.

Under the Basic Democracy Order (BDO) during Pakistani period, the functional jurisdiction and financial resource base of the Union Council were significantly increased in paper but in practice this council was under complete political control of the central government.

The Orders and Ordinances relating to the UP during post independence period were continuance to the BDO in terms of functions and taxation power. Though the Local government Ordinance 1976 delegated forty functions relating to law and order, public welfare, revenue collection, development and adjudication to the UP, it did not rearrange the revenue sources of the UP to match the assigned tasks (Siddiqui, 2005: 68).

The 1983 Ordinance conferred some 38 functions of the UP, which included civic and public welfare, police, revenue, development and judicial.

The aforesaid discussion reveals that the UP-type village level governments gradually lost their significance in administrative role playing from ancient to the British period. This trend of gradual disempowerment of local bodies might be caused by improved communication system and the need for regime stability. The beginning of the development era following independence of the subcontinent spread the need for effective village governments for grass root development. But relative political immaturity and the absence of enlightened citizenry made the concept of functionally independent union parishad non-viable. This realization was evident from the widening gulf between assigned responsibilities to the UP and conferred legal authority and technical competency.

This study attempted to explore legal and practical constraints that UPs are facing in effectively performing their functions.

Findings of the Survey

The survey was conducted to ascertain various kinds of impediments a UP faces in running its mandated affairs. Opinions have been drawn from the elected chairman, 1 general member and 1 member from the reserved seats of 90 UPs under 18 upazilas. These 18 upazilas were selected from 6 districts with 3 upazilas from each and 1 district was selected from each of the 6 divisions. Ninety chairmen, ninety-two general members, eighty-seven reserved seat members and ninety UP secretaries (UP secretary was included as the administrative member of the UP and he/she was asked on administrative aspects) totaling 359 participated in the survey. They were asked questions on 27 different aspects (16 questions were directed to elected members while 11 were for UP secretaries) of the UP functioning and their responsibilities.

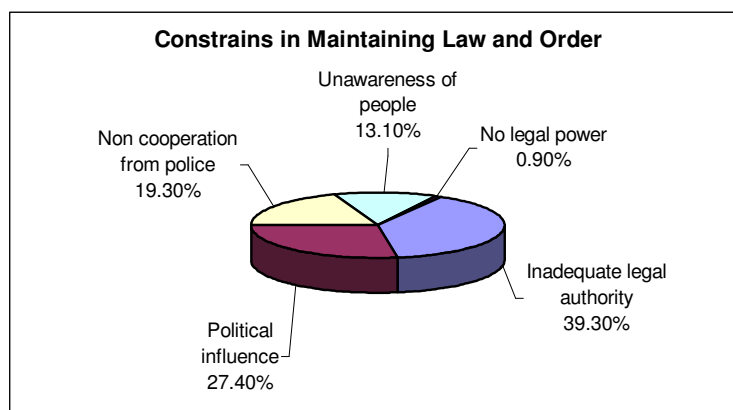
Maintenance of Law and Order, Reduction of Crimes and Resistance to Smuggling

Have you faced any obstacle in maintaining law and order in your UP?

42.8% of total respondents replied that they did not face any obstacle, 33.0% said that they faced some problems in doing so, and 24.2% said they faced considerable problems.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

39.3% said they had inadequate legal authority. 27.4% thought they had to face unlawful pressures from politicians and locally influential people. 19.3% mentioned that despite their request for help they did not get positive response from the police. Even at



times, they were insulted by the police. 13.1% opined that illiteracy of and lack of awareness among people was a problem in maintaining law and order effectively. 0.9% replied that they had no legal power to apply it in appropriate cases for taking instant action.

Have you faced any obstacle while performing your functions relating to agriculture (agriculture/plantation/livestock rearing/ fishery)?

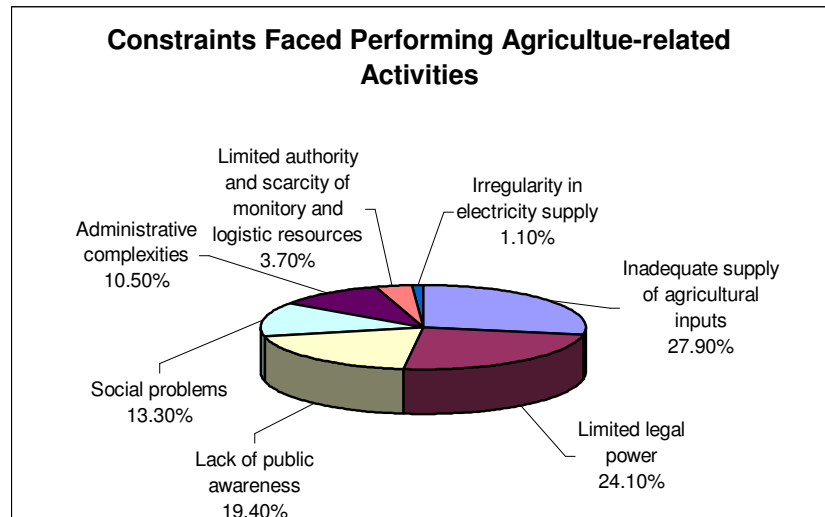
39.4% replied that they sometimes faced problems in this regard. 36.1% said that they did not face any such problem, 20.8% mentioned that they faced considerable obstacles, and 3.7% did not give any response.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

27.9% found inadequate supply of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, seeds, etc. as the major constraint.

24.1% said that they had limited legal power. 19.4% blamed lack of public awareness. 13.3% said that they faced some social problems. 10.5% mentioned about administrative complexities that severely impede the UP in promoting agricultural development. 3.7% expressed the opinion

that local agriculture suffers heavily due to limited authority and scarcity of monetary resources and logistic support. 1.1% felt disgusted over frequent irregularity in electricity supply that interrupted irrigation during dry season.

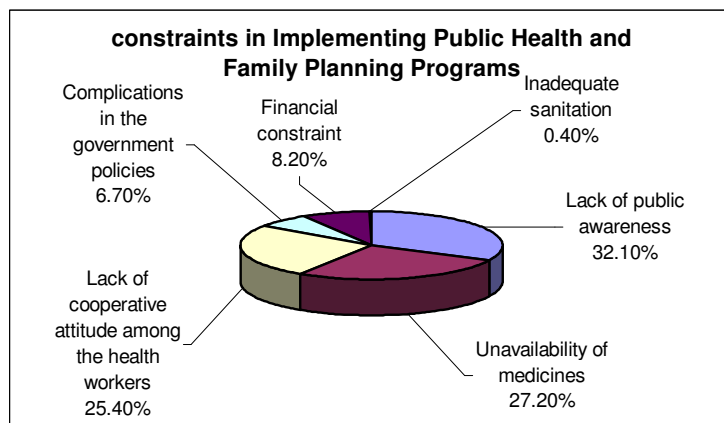


Have you faced any constraint in implementing public health and family planning programs?

48.7% replied that they did not face any problem, 33.8% admitted that they sometimes faced problems in this regard, 14.5% mentioned that they faced considerable constraints in implementing those programs, and 3% did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

32.1% of the respondents identified lack of public awareness about public health and family planning as the major problem. 27.2% talked about unavailability of medicine, 25.4% blamed lack of cooperative attitude and initiative on the part of the health workers, and 6.7%

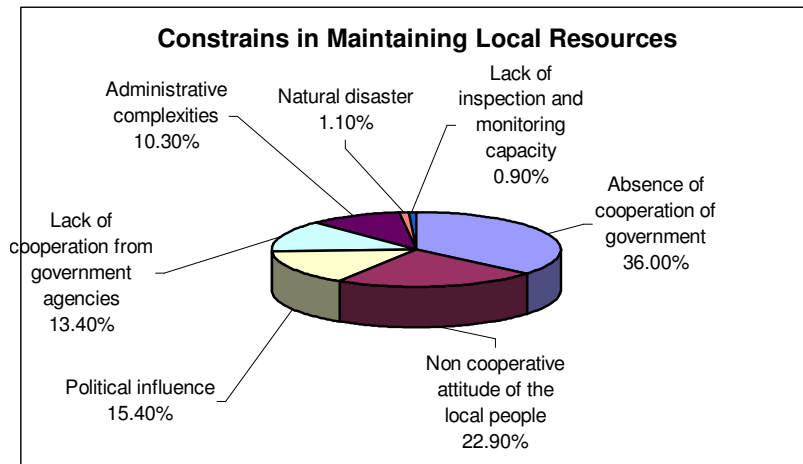


found complications in the government policy as the major constraint. 8.2% indicated to financial constraint and 0.4% talked about inadequate sanitation.

Have you faced any problem in maintaining local resources (roads, bridges, culverts, dams, canals, and electricity)?

43.8% of the respondents replied that they sometimes faced obstacles. 29.4% admitted that they faced considerable constraints. 23.8% said that they did not face any such obstacle, and 3% did not reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?



36.0% replied that lack of cooperation of government is the major obstacle. 22.9% found non-cooperative attitude of the local people to the UP in maintaining local resources as the major constraint. 15.4% were of the opinion that they could not work in

maintaining local resources because of intense political pressure. 13.4% blamed lack of cooperation from government agencies as a major obstacle. 10.3% of the respondents held the view that administrative complexities and red tapes were liable for their failure in playing effective role in this respect. 1.1% mentioned about natural disaster and 0.9% found absence of proper inspection and monitoring capacity as the major constraint.

Have you faced any constraint in managing natural disasters (storm, drought, flood, cyclone, and tornado)?

46.1% replied that they sometimes faced problems in this respect. 27.5% mentioned that they did not face any problem, and 21.6% admitted that they faced considerable problems in managing natural disasters. 4.8% of the respondents chose not to reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

47.6% of the respondents believed that financial constraints were liable for their failure in managing natural disasters. 35.2% blamed insufficient relief supply from the government. 6.7% mentioned about political pressure that obstructed them playing their due role. 5.7% identified insufficient storm shelters as a major constraint in this

regard. 4.4% said that the UP did not have sufficient and trained manpower in managing natural disasters. 0.4% indicated to severe shortage of drinking water during disaster.

Have you faced any problem in carrying out birth and death registration, voter list preparation and such other survey programs?

48% replied that they did not face any constraint in such cases. 41.3% said that they faced some obstacles in this respect, and 9.7% admitted that they faced considerable problems in carrying out such programs. There was no response from 1.1% of the respondents.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

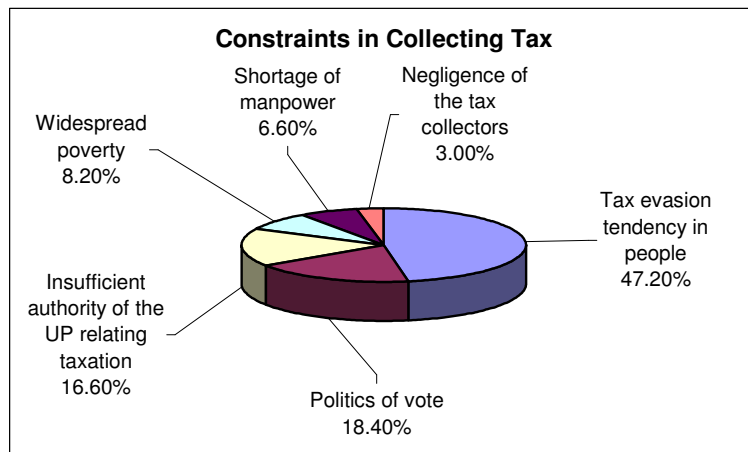
32.7% of the respondents found lack of public awareness as the major constraint. 19.4% said that the UP had shortage of manpower to conduct those activities properly. 18.9% mentioned about shortage of birth and death registration certificates as a major constraint. 15.1% identified financial constraint as a major obstacle. 10.6% blamed lack of cooperation among members of the survey/registration team. 2.3% felt that unskilled data collectors were responsible for poor quality registration and faulty information in survey programs.

Have you faced any constrain in playing active role in tax collection?

42.4% said that they faced some problem in this respect. 29.7% admitted that they faced considerable constraints. 19.3% said that they did not face any obstacle in this regard. 8.6% did not reply to this question. Tax evasion

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

47.2% of the respondents held the view that tax evasion tendency in people in general was liable for poor tax collection. 18.4% identified 'politics of vote' as the major constraint. 16.6% mentioned about insufficient authority of the UP to take effective



actions against tax defaulters. 8.2% considered widespread poverty of the UP residents as the major constraint in collecting taxes. 6.6% blamed shortage of manpower of UPs in collecting taxes. 3% identified negligence of the tax collectors as a major constraint.

Do you face any legal and practical constraints in performing economic activities timely and regularly?

Legal Constraints:

50% respondents said that they could only provide inadequate legal assistance in sending and preserving cash book, cheque book, and money deposit receipts. 35.7% said that they could not finish activities timely as the cheque book requires signature of the chairman only. The signature of the secretary is not required. There is no scope of delegation of such authority to others when the chairman is not available. This causes delay. 14.3% mentioned that economic activities were obstructed due to negligence of the UP members to legal obligations in managing cash and cheque books.

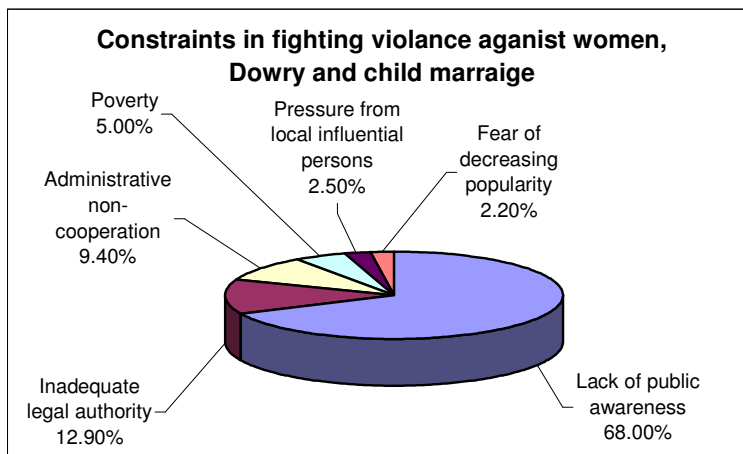
Practical Constraints

42.6% said that economic activities were obstructed due to negligence of the UP members to their duties. 26.2% opined that shortage of manpower was a major constraint to the timely and regular performance of the economic activities. 8.2% of the respondents replied that complications in banking transactions impeded economic activities significantly. 8.2 % blamed tax collectors for their late transfer of collected taxes to the UP fund. 6.6% mentioned that lack of secured storage facilities for cheque books, cash books, and other financial documents impeded timely completion of economic activities. 4.9% said lack of coordination liable for time overruns in performing economic activities. 3.3% found lack of training in performing economic activities as a major constraint.

Have you faced any constraint in fighting violence against women, dowry, and child marriage?

45% replied that they faced few problems in this respect. 31.6% said that they did not face such problems. 21.2% admitted that they faced considerable constraints. 2.2 % did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?



68% identified lack of awareness on those issues as the major problem in this respect. 12.9% said that they had no defined legal authority to take effective punitive action against those involved in women persecution, dowry or child marriage. 9.4% mentioned about lack of administrative

cooperation. 5% felt that poverty was a major constraint. 2.5% opined that pressures from locally influential persons also thwarted bold actions against such crimes. 2.2% replied they did not take appropriate actions in fear of losing popularity.

Major Survey Findings

- In respect of law and order, most of the public representatives identified insecurity, excessively limited legal authority, and party as well as political pressure as major constraints.
- In respect of health and family welfare services, most of them found lack of awareness of the people, insufficient supply of medicine, absence of professionalism, and financial insolvency as major constraints.
- In respect of educational services, they identified limited legal power, financial insolvency, insufficient number of educational institutions, and unavailability of accurate information from the concerned authority as major problems.
- In respect of development and maintenance activities, political pressure, non-cooperation of the government, administrative complexities, and red tapes were identified as major constraints.
- In respect of revenue collection, most of them found tax evasion tendency among the people, politics of vote, absence of effective legal resolution mechanism to the problem, and widespread poverty as major constraints.
- With respect of violence against women, fighting of dowry and child marriage, they found lack of public awareness, lack of proper legal authority, lack of cooperation from the administration, pressure from the locally influential people and fear of losing popularity as major problems.
- The women members of the reserved seats blamed non-cooperative behavior of their male counterparts, inadequate training, lack of proper opportunity to participate in different matters of the UP as major constraints.
- In respect of resource management and optimal distribution of resources, most of the respondents blamed monopolistic dominance of the chairman, internal conflict between chairmen and members, corruption, and ignorance of the elected representatives as major constraints.

Major FGD Findings

- There is no alternative to financial autonomy for comprehensive development of the UP. In fact, absence of effective financial management made the UP a weaker and less acceptable institution. Most of the time, the UP implements programs and decisions imposed by the central government, which mostly are at variance with local needs.

- Widespread negative perception about UP chairmen and members among the people results in defamation of even an honest UP representative. This is particularly frustrating for good and capable persons who are increasingly getting discouraged from take part in UP election. It becomes, therefore, imperative to give people accurate information about the UP to create consciousness among them toward electing the right persons to the UP leadership.
- Increasing intrusion of the central government into the rightful domain of the local government resources and inadequate allocation as well as untimely disbursement of resources in favor of the local government made it heavily dependent on the central government. This, in one hand, causes waste of scarce resources, and fails to meet people's expectation on the other.
- In the absence of perspective and farsighted plans, most of the projects undertaken by the UPs fail to yield desired impact upon the target group, except some short-term visible benefits.
- Monopolization of the use of power by the chairman prevents UP members from playing their effective and rightful role in UP development. This dictatorial tendency of the chairman also creates problems in decision-making, project formulation and financial management.
- Political interference in UP activities has become a de facto rule that impedes smooth functioning of the UP. This unlawful practice has become an instrument to defend interests of the vested class.

Major Legal and Practical Constraints

1. Lack of proper legal authority in carrying out public programs and deliver public services is a major practical constraint identified in FGD, Survey and IDI.
2. Lack of public awareness on different issues related to UP functions such as sanitation, violence against women, family welfare, etc. creates problem for UP functioning.
3. In the absence of institutionalized relationship between the UP and its residents, there is lack of cooperation between them that in turn, affects service delivery both qualitatively and quantitatively. This is because most of the residents do not have clear knowledge about the UP activities and its role in local development.
4. Lack of coordination between the UP and field level government agencies, and between the UP and other non-government agencies in terms of respective programs is a major threat.
5. There are many cases where the UP gets obstructed by the locally influential people in implementing its programs. The UP does not have legal power as well as administrative support to challenge such illegal influences.
6. Persistent tendency of the bureaucracy to control the UP is another major constraint. Such control is manifested through frequent promulgation of the executive orders curtailing the authority of the UP.

7. Party and political pressure on the UP is endemic. There is no clear demarcation between jurisdiction of the members of the parliament and the local government representatives.
8. Monopolistic dominance of the chairman over the UP and internal conflict between chairmen and members severely affect UP functioning.
9. There exists serious capacity gap within the UP in rendering its responsibilities in terms of manpower, training, and supply of logistics.
10. Gender discrimination in delegating authority and responsibility to the UP members is evident that results in demoralization of the reserved seat members.
11. Politics of vote is a major constraint to the effective functioning of the UP. The UP representatives give preference to attract voters through patronization rather than delivery of better public services.
12. Financial insolvency is a major threat to the effective performance of the UP. Most of its potential sources of revenue have been taken away from it. It is now completely dependent on the central government grant. This dependency obstructs long-range planning and sustainable program implementation.
13. The honorarium of UP chairmen and members and remuneration of the UP officials are very meager that causes demoralization of the UP members. This also drives them to be corrupt.
14. Administrative complexities and red tapes hamper UP activities.
15. Faulty organizational and task structures.
16. There is no alternative to financial autonomy for comprehensive development of the UPs. In fact, absence of effective financial management made the UPs a weaker and less acceptable institution. Most of the time, the UP implements programs and decisions imposed by the central government that mostly are at variance with the local needs.
17. Widespread negative perception about UP chairmen and members among the people results in defamation of even an honest UP representative. This is particularly frustrating for good and capable persons who are increasingly getting discouraged to take part in UP election. It becomes, therefore, imperative to give people accurate information about the UP to create consciousness among them so that they could perceive the importance of electing right persons to the UP leadership positions.

Analysis of the Major Study Findings

A careful analysis of the aforesaid study findings provide with the following crucial directives:

1. A significant number of respondents (almost 39%) denied of facing any major constraint in performing their respective responsibilities. This does not conform to the real performance of the UP. Such responses establish either of the following three assumptions:

First, despite their poor performance, those respondents denied existence of constraints to rationalize their activities and avoid unwarranted threats to their political career.

Second, they made the judgment on the basis of their limited abilities and overall condition of the country.

Third, they were actually performing better than those who admitted of facing obstacles.

If any of the assumptions is valid, it is necessary to undertake further in-depth comparative study of demographic, political, and economic status of different UPs and their respective performances to come up with strong policy prescriptions. The FGD and IDI findings also support this suggestion.

2. Absence of proper legal authority has been found to be the worst constraint as most of the respondents irrespective of their positions (whether chairman, general/reserved seat members, or UP secretary) identified this as the major barrier to their functioning. Almost all regulatory functions such as maintenance of law and order, revenue collection, monitoring of education and health programs, fighting violence against women and dowry, distribution of VGD/VGF cards, timely record keeping, coordination of programs conducted by various agencies, of UPs are adversely affected by the absence of effective legal power. Moreover, taking development projects and spending money in a customized manner to suit local needs are not feasible under the existing legal mandate given to the UP. Some interesting legal problems can be found if we compare few findings. These are mentioned below:

- All members either elected or appointed want power. This indicates that they have shallow knowledge about their respective responsibilities and the way they have to coordinate. This also means that respective jurisdictions of chairman, general members, reserved seat members and secretary need further clarification. The study finding has revealed that almost all responsibilities and power are concentrated in the hands of the chairman, which obstructs effective role playing by others. This is a major source of internal conflict within the UP. The UP secretaries have opined that they cannot maintain timely records due to negligence and non-cooperation of the members and unrestrained executive authority of the chairman. This shows that members are not very serious about their responsibilities. There is no such clear legal binding to perform their duties properly. This also indicates that the UP working procedure is not foolproof.
- Lack of coordination among programs run by various government and non-government agencies is a direct corollary of legal impotence. The respondents said that the existing laws do not institute an effective coordinating authority on the UP. The UP leadership has no control over functionaries of line

ministries/agencies working in parallel at union level. It cannot force non-government agencies to undertake programs in harmony with the UP plan.

- Legal impotence is also evident from excessive bureaucratic control over the UP. A significant number of respondents said that they did not get police support in maintaining law and order. The UP activities are controlled by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO). All government agencies attempt to control development programs run by the UP. Timely disbursement of funds for conducting programs included in UPADP is a rare case. One possible consequence of such severe legal limitation is the acquirement and exercise of de facto power by the UP chairmen. The FGD findings have revealed that the UP representatives think bureaucrats are the main barrier in establishing viable UPs. Such bureaucratic resistance is blamed for failure of previous local government reform efforts. Effective UP functioning will be impossible if a fair and just relationship cannot be established between the bureaucracy and the UP.
 - Legal limitation on the one hand and administrative non-cooperation from line government agencies on the other hand made UPs highly vulnerable to influence of the locally powerful class.
3. Financial insolvency causes many practical obstacles to effective performance of the UP. Most of the respondents have blamed this as the worst cause of their professional dissatisfaction. Many practical constraints are the products of financial weakness. These are:
- Insufficient honorarium and salary (some respondents even called disgraceful) given to the UP functionaries is a major cause of their demoralization. Some have also told that this creates family problems as well.
 - Insufficient UP fund does not allow covering transaction cost of running UP activities. As a result, corruption has cropped up in many cases.
 - Excessive financial dependence over the central government made the UP susceptible to political and administrative control. In undertaking development programs and VGD/VGF card distribution, political pressure is excessive over the UP. In FGD and IDI, most of the participants have made financial dependence responsible for such unlawful political pressure.
4. Shortage of technical capacity is another important constraint. This is intricately related to financial weakness. Other important findings are direct consequence of this problem. These are:
- Shortage of manpower, especially some technical ones is a major barrier to effective performance.

- The existing manpower is of little use due to lack of required qualification and training opportunities. Moreover, manpower development programs of UPs are not only inadequate, but unrelated to task demands, unresponsive to cognitive abilities and time constraint of the trainees. This resulted in poor service delivery by the UPs.

All those constraints created image problem for the UPs that has resulted in a gap between the UP and its residents. A significant number of the respondents said that they did not get cooperation from the people. This indicates poor credibility of the UP in public eyes. People consider UPs inefficient, corrupt and unresponsive to their needs.

Recommendations

- The UP has to be conferred with meaningful autonomy. It must have its own fund, rules of procedure, and budget. It will undertake and carry out local development activities independently and without any outside interference.
- The structure of the UP manpower needs to be rearranged in order to increase its working capacity. Some new posts like assistant secretary, tax assessor, and accountants should be created. Once these posts are created their incumbents will assist the secretary. These new recruits should be computer literate.
- The relationship between Members of Parliament (MPs) and the local government should be cooperative and complementary instead of domination and subjugation. MPs should not in any way interfere in the affairs of UPs.
- If UPs are given adequate fund and manpower, they would be able to better identify local needs and problems and devise development plans accordingly.
- It is imperative to devise social accountability mechanisms to make the UP accountable to the local people.
- Proper coordination of UP activities is necessary for effective performance. Emphasis has to be given on anti-corruption measures and their compliance while establishing coordination relationships among various actors.
- Instead of present phased allocation and disbursement of funds in favor of the UP, lump-sum disbursement should be practiced. The disbursement has to be made directly in favor of the UP. The date and amount of disbursement have to be widely publicized through newspapers, television, and radio so that local people are aware of them.
- Honorarium should be increased to a respectable level. It should be no less than tk. 15,000 per month for the chairman.
- Administrative complexities have to be removed as far as possible from decision-making process. Care has to be taken to insulate this process from political and party influences.
- Appropriate training for the elected representatives as well as appointed officials should be given to develop their capacity and enhance efficiency.

- The functions of the UP have to be revised. Rules of procedure has to be modernized. Proper coordination has to be ensured between government and non-government programs during their formulation and implementation.
- It is necessary to think seriously about minimum educational qualification for the public representatives.
- Information collection and management system need to be modernized.
- An independent local government commission has to be established for funding and monitoring of local government activities. Local government representatives shall be accountable to that commission for their actions.
- Respective jurisdictions of MPs, central government and local government have to be urgently redefined in a clear and specific manner to free the UP from political interference.
- The UP has to perform many other functions excepting 48 assigned functions. Therefore, decentralization in UP functions is essential. Each ward member will be delegated with certain functions to be performed within his/her ward.
- Holding of ward meetings has to be made mandatory. Plans will be formulated and implemented following recommendations drawn from ward meetings.
- Forum could play effective role in uniting UP members. It will be possible to create pressure on the government by the forum and thus secure demands of the UP. It will also convey UP demands to the government.

Conclusion

It is impossible to realize national development goals without proper and accelerated local development. But persistent political and administrative interference in the UP affairs has made it ineffective. The constitution did not mention different aspects of local government management in detail as it did for the parliament, the executive and the judiciary. The composition, structure, election/nomination, functions/responsibilities, financial power, sources of income, rules of procedure, control of local bodies, monitoring have not been mentioned in any detail in the Constitution. Consequently, the central government used its unfettered authority to modify laws and rules relating to local government. This practice hindered consistency in the form and functions of the local government. Clear and specific constitutional directions in those respects will restrain the executive organ from frequently modifying local government system and give consistency in its functioning, which is especially important for institutionalization of the local self-government system in Bangladesh.

Annex

Annex-1

An Analysis of Composition of Different Commissions/Committees on Strengthening Local government

During the post-liberation period, different regimes (civil and military) did experiment with structure, authority and functions of local government to suit their respective political interests. As a result, different commissions/committees were formed from time to time to examine different aspects of local government and suggest remedial measures. Reviewing of the nature, objectives, and recommendations of those commissions/committees will be of great assistance to analyze present trends in local government.

Name of Commission and Committees	Chairman	No. of Politician	No. of Bureaucrats	No. of Researcher / Experts	No. of Local government Representative
Local government Structure Review Commission, 1992	Nazmul Huda (Minister)	6	8	3	0
Local government Commission, 1996	Rahmat Ali (Member of Parliament)	3	3	2	0
Committee on Recommendation about Financial Authority and Sources of Income of Local government Institutions, 1998	Dr. A. T. M. Zahurul Huq (University Teacher)	0	5	6	0
Committee on Strengthening Local government, 2007	Dr. A. M. M. Shawkat Ali (Civil Servant)	0	2	3	2

The table reveals that most of the commissions/committees were dominated by civil servants. Another interesting fact that emanates from the table is that commissions/committees formed during political government were chaired by politicians and that formed by an apolitical government was headed by a former bureaucrat. Almost all committees either included or co-opted local government experts/ researchers/university teachers. No commissions/committees drew representation from local government representatives excepting the last committee formed in 2007.

Anex-2

Committee on Accelerating and Strengthening Local Government, 2007

The present caretaker government (CTG) formed a seven member committee on 3 June 2007 to accelerate and strengthen local government.

The Committee submitted its report on 13 November 2007. The report attempted to draw opinions of concerned sections of the population. Its recommendations include increase of manpower, conferring of authority to write ACRs of the officials, increase of local income sources, provision for women representation in 40% of the total elected seats by rotation, issuance of citizenship certificate, abolition of the Gram Sarkar (village government), abolition of the system of making members of parliament advisers to the local bodies, and conditions of disqualification for candidates, etc. Besides, the report made specific recommendations on the structure and organogram of the local bodies.

Some notable recommendations regarding legal and practical constraints are:

- to finalize proposed draft ordinance keeping existing three tiers, i.e. Zila Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad;
- to work out local council service structure for local government institutions;
- to determine need-based manpower structure in each tier of local government in accordance with directives of the local government commission and functional jurisdictions;
- to determine number of relevant office equipments and vehicles in accordance with the manpower structure and approval of expenditure relating to the aforesaid and such other items included in the Table of Organization and Equipments (TO&E) in the revenue expenditure budget;
- to promulgate new service structure for the local government modifying the existing government rules and delegate power of giving final approval of decisions on manpower structure of the local government to the local government department on recommendation of the commission;
- to include computer skill in the qualification requirements of the secretary and the accountant in the proposed service rules for local bodies and giving the secretary and the accountant an extra increment in respective pay scales;

- to create a post of accountant in each UP and appoint a computer literate person therein following existing rules;
- to ensure that government makes appropriate decisions in budget allocation to meet expenditure relating to maintenance of computer at the local level; and
- to determine number of seats for the aborigines in areas (if any) other than in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in consultation with their representatives in appropriate cases and make a guideline on this issue to be followed afterwards;

Importantly, the Committee recommended establishing an independent commission to accelerate development of local government institutions and make them accountable to this commission. The commission will be formed with three members who are to be drawn from persons having long experience of working in the central administration or local government.

The notable recommendations of the Committee regarding electoral process and the structure of the local government are:

- the present election system of the UP should be continued;
- to include a representative from each UP in the Upazila parishad through direct election keeping section 6 of the Upazila Parishad Act 1998 unchanged;
- to increase the number of wards of the UP from 9 to 15;
- women directly elected through rotation method shall fill 40% of total seats in each tier of the local government, and in consultation with the Election Commission, this rotation system to be published in gazette notification; and
- this system will be abolished after the completion of three terms of election.

Anex-3**Table: 1***Comparative Analysis of Recommendations Made by Various Committees/Commission on Legal and Practical Constraints*

Issues of UP Capacity Building	Local Government Structure Review Commission 1992	Local Government Commission 1997	Committee on Recommendation on about Financial Authority and Sources of Income of Local Government Institutions 1998	Committee on Accelerating and Strengthening Local Government Institutions 2007
Structure and Manpower of UP	Each union shall be divided in 9 wards. One member will be directly elected from each ward by the eligible voters of the concerned ward. A chairman to the UP shall be directly elected through adult franchise. Three women to the reserved seats representing three wards shall be directly elected by eligible voters of the three wards concerned.	Each UP shall have a chairman, 9 general members, three women members in reserved seats. Each UP shall have a full-time secretary and an assistant secretary. The later shall play the role of tax collector and accountant simultaneously. Each UP shall have 9 chowkidars and 1 dafadar to perform assigned functions.	Each UP shall have a chairman, 9 general members, three women members in reserved seats. Representatives from local cooperatives, freedom fighters, backward sections of the society (e.g. fishermen, weavers, landless class, destitute women, etc.) shall be included but they shall have no right to vote in the UP meeting. ¹	Each UP shall have a chairman, 9 general members, and three women members in reserved seats. Create a post of accountant and appoint computer literate person therein. A new local council service rules shall be made to accelerate decentralization process.
Responsibilities and Functions	The following principles might act as effective guidelines for	to formulate an integrated UP development plan; to identify inter-	to raise awareness about women and children advancement.	functions relating to administration and supervision

¹ The special focus of the 1998 committee was on 'review of financial authority' of local government. Therefore, this committee endorsed the recommendations of the 1997 commission other than those of relating to financial authority. For the sake of simplification, some notable recommendations actually made by the 1997 commission have been shown in the column set for 1998 committee in the table.

	<p>determining responsibilities:</p> <p>1.to keep functional jurisdiction within limits of public welfare and locality;</p> <p>2.to render service on the principle of equality; and</p> <p>3.to prioritize needs and wants of citizens of backward sections of the locality for the sake of balanced development.</p>	<p>ward development projects and inclusion of them in the development plan; to ensure public health services to the local citizens in the union health center;</p> <p>to supply drinking water and to improve sanitation management;</p> <p>to update the registration of birth, death and marriage based on information received from the village council; and</p> <p>to assist people in times of natural disaster and conduct rescue programs locally and participate in government relief programs².</p>	<p>to assist the central government in implementing development programs and play the role of implementing agency, if required.</p> <p>to issue licenses for trades and callings;</p> <p>to construct inter-ward roads and maintain them and to manage irrigation and water resource;</p> <p>to assist NGOs; and</p> <p>to review performances of all agencies working at union level and to provide suggestions to the Upazila Parishad in this regard.</p>	<p>of the government officials; Maintenance of law and order; functions relating to public welfare; and formulation of local economic and social development plan and their implementation.</p>
Authority and Power	<p>complete administrative and financial authority necessary to accelerate local development, such as power of taxation</p>	<p>all government agencies working at union level to be placed under the control of the UP through law; this requires</p>	<p>complete administrative and financial authority necessary to accelerate local development,</p>	<p>appointing UP officials by the government and placing them under the supervisory control of the</p>

² These recommendations are same as that of the 1998 committee.

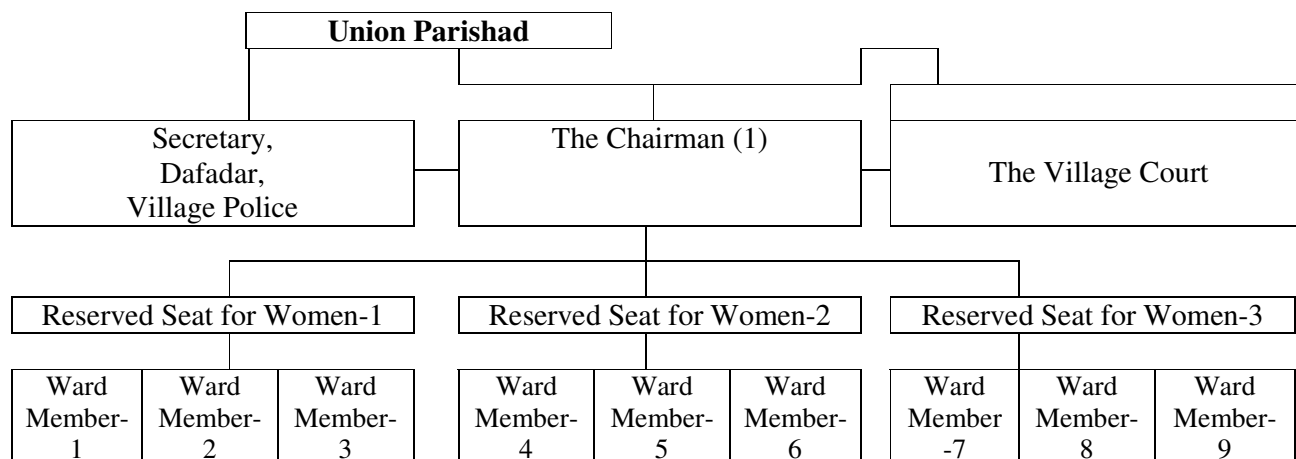
	for local purposes, power of budget making and fund management, etc.; complete authority in local development planning and implementation; and authority to supervise officials of the central government working at the UP level, coordinate their activities and evaluate their performance.	change of the present UP building into a complex where elected representatives of the UP and the appointed officials of both the central government and the UP will be placed under the same roof; and to rearrange the structure, functions and authority of the UP as time demands and as conforms to the importance of it in local governance.	such as power of taxation for local purposes, power of budget making and fund management; complete authority in local development planning and implementation; and authority to supervise officials of the central government working at the UP level, coordinate their activities and evaluate their performance.	UP; and the chairman shall have the authority to write ACRs of all officials placed under UP control.
Autonomy	complete authority in decision making on local issues; functional freedom-proper administrative and financial authority to manage activities independently within the defined territory; and establishment of rights of local people on national resources	if new UP complexes are constructed at the center of a union, they shall have seminar hall, office of the chairman, and office rooms for other government officials.		
Status	it is imperative to replace the current domineering and submissive relationship between the central and the local government with cooperative and synergic	the chairman of the UP shall write the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) of the officials of the central government working at union		

	relationship in order to upgrade present status of the local government; and the sustainability and status of the local government will be enhanced if it is established on public consensus than by promulgating ordinances/acts.	level, and in writing such ACR chairman shall consult all members of the UP.		
Women Empowerment		to increase public awareness about advancement of women and children.; and to accelerate social resistance to violence against women.		women directly elected through rotation method shall fill 40% of total seats in each tier of the local government; and. this system will be abolished after completion of three terms of UP election.
Accountability and Transparency	extensive people's participation in development activities.	projects shall be identified on priority basis and included accordingly in the UP 5-year plan; each year top priority projects will be selected from this perspective plan for implementation; and the report on project implementation shall be exhibited in a public place at the end of each fiscal year.	the UP shall formulate its budget in accordance with the Budget Manual approved by the government and exhibit it in a public place to inform people and draw their comments over it; the UP shall properly maintain its income – expenditure accounts which will be audited at the end of a fiscal year; and	each local government institution shall publish respective 'Citizen Charter' describing available services, conditions of service delivery, quality and time standards of service delivery; such charters shall be updated each year; proper and effective monitoring of local government activities be

			<p>emphasis shall be given on ensuring accountability and transparency in UP functioning and proper role playing by the elected representatives.</p>	<p>ensured by formulating a new and timely local government inspection manual; and. ward Assembly shall be formed in each ward of the UP; such assemblies shall hold ward meeting at least three times a year; and meetings so held have to fulfill quorum that demands the presence of at least 1/20 of total voters of a ward.</p>
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Anex-4

Administrative Structure of Union Parishad



Each UP has some salaried appointed officials as well. They are:

Name of the Post

No. of the Positions

1. Secretary

1

2. Dafadar

1 (no. of positions might vary with the area of UP)

3. Chowkidar/ Mahalladar

9

Under the Local government (Amendment) Ordinance 1997, election of the UP representatives irrespective of general or reserved seats was started based on adult franchise. Each UP has a full time secretary appointed by the deputy commissioner. The provision of village police is there to maintain law and order of the UP (1-2 dafadars and 5-9 chowkidars / mahalladers). Dafadars and chowkidars are appointed by the deputy commissioner on approval of the Upazila Nirbahi giving them 15-20% commission given to them.

Anex-5

The Current Functions of the UP

The functions of the UP can be classified in following four broad categories:

- social functions
- police and defense functions
- administrative functions
- development functions

All those functions can further be classified in a) mandatory functions (10 functions) and b) optional functions (38 functions).

In addition, the UP performs functions as may be assigned by the government from time to time.

Responsibilities of the Chairman, General Members, Women Members of the Reserved Seats, and the Secretary

The UP chairman is the head of the Parishad. He is responsible to the UP members. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and the Deputy Commissioner (DC) monitor and control activities of chairmen.

The specific jurisdiction of the chairman is as follows:

1. has been entrusted with all executive power of the UP.
2. can assign certain functions to UP members if he/she deems necessary.
3. supervises and monitors daily administrative activities of the UP.
4. has the authority to appoint, transfer and sanction punishment to employees under the control of the UP subject to prior consent of the concerned controlling officer.
5. maintains all communications on behalf of the UP.
6. monitors and supervises activities of UP employees.
7. issues all notices of the UP.

The responsibilities of the chairman may be classified into following categories:

1. development functions
2. administrative functions
3. public relation functions
4. revenue and budget functions
5. judicial functions
6. other functions

Development Functions

- to coordinate formulation and implementation of the UP development plans;
- to assist in constructing physical infrastructure under various programs of the UP; and
- to undertake village development programs, food for work programs, canal digging and such other development programs;

Administrative Functions

- to play the role of the administrative head of the UP;
- to convene and chair UP meetings;
- to control and monitor activities of different committees and sub-committees of the UP in accordance with the rules;
- to appoint village police subject to prior approval of the UNO and the controlling authority;
- to provide necessary data and information to the central government and other regional agencies;
- to maintain own installations/establishments of the UP; and
- to perform such other functions as may be assigned by the government.

Public Relation Functions

- to take necessary actions to exhibit proceedings of development programs and services rendered by the UP;
- to inform the local police station about the state of law and order of the UP;
- to inform the concerned authority about natural disaster, epidemic, and insect attack on crops; and
- to maintain communication with different government directorates at upazila level, e.g. agriculture, health, fishery, forestation, etc.

Revenue and Budget Functions

- to perform overall economic activities of the UP;
- to determine rates of taxes, fees, and other charges after consulting important personalities of the locality and the secretary to the UP;
- to appoint tax collectors and monitor their performance;
- to place the draft budget in the UP meetings for discussion; and
- to recommend necessary modifications in the budget.

Judicial Function

- to perform as the head of the village court;
- to conduct local arbitration (shalish) about small feuds, riots, and disputes over land ownership; and
- to play due role in the arbitration council.

Other Functions

Apart from the aforesaid functions, the chairman performs other functions as well. These include:

- to issue and attest various certificates;
- to distribute ration cards;
- to appoint suppliers and dealers (sir questioned what? So give the answer)
- to regulate relief distribution programs; and
- to identify landless citizens and play complementary role in khas land (government owned land) distribution.

Responsibilities of the UP Members

- to maintain law and order in their wards;
- to attend UP meetings regularly and give opinions in decision making;
- to prepare lists of development projects for their wards and try to include those projects in the UP development plan;
- to play active role in budget-making;
- to implement and supervise projects in their wards;
- to chair different committees and sub-committees in the absence of the chairman;
- to assist judicial proceedings as the member of the village court; and
- to prepare list of the affected citizens during natural disaster and play complementary role in relief distribution.

Special Responsibilities of the Women UP Members

- to assume the position of chairmen to one-third of the project implementation committees;
- to play active role in preparing the list of destitute women;
- to participate in the selection of location for building roads by the UP;
- to assist and advise the Rural Maintenance Program (RMP) monitoring official (the UP secretary) in resolving RMP problems;
- to submit reports regularly on quality of the RMP activities;
- to monitor the RMP activities in their wards;
- to perform as the chair of the committee on selection of RMP workers;
- to act as the vice chairman of the selection committee on old age allowance program;
- to raise problems of respective wards in UP meetings;
- to take part in relief programs during natural disaster;
- to prepare list of old aged men and women of their wards;
- to identify different problems of women of the UP and prepare programs accordingly; and
- to assist the chairman in preparing list of VGD beneficiaries.

Responsibilities of the UP Secretary

- to record and preserve all documents of the UP;
- to manage the UP office;
- to maintain communications on behalf of the UP;
- to collect different taxes, rates, fees and tolls of the UP;
- to keep accounts of the UP;
- to keep accounts of assets of the UP;
- to act as the chief monitor of the RMP; and
- to perform such other functions as may be assigned by the UP.

The UP has two types of village police:

- Dafadar and
- Mohalladar/ Chowkider

The Functions of the Village Police

- to guard UP wards;
- to assist the police in investigation into and suppression of crimes and in arresting criminals;
- to assist the chairman and the Parishad in performing their official duties;
- to inform the officer in charge (OC) of the local police station about the state of law and order in every 15 days;
- to inform the officer in charge (OC) of the local police station about those matters which might create riots or are potentially threatening situations to social peace and harmony;
- to preserve birth and death register and inform the Parishad about each birth and death within the UP;
- to instantly inform the Parishad about epidemics or severe diseases of men, animals or crops that occurred within the UP, or about extensive insect attack on the crops;
- to inform the Parishad about problems with dams or irrigation;
- to inform the Parishad about any damage caused to movable or immovable properties of the UP, or placed under its trusteeship, or illegal occupation of such properties, and to resist such damages or illegal occupation;
- to assist tax collectors in discharging their duties;
- to supply information on local matters for official use.

Anex-6

Fund and Financial Management of the UP (Income, Budget, and Fund)

The elected representatives of the UP are responsible to the people of their respective constituencies for their actions. The local people observe the activities of their elected representatives. The conventional system that is still practiced, however, is not to let people know anything about the UP activities and procedures. Moreover, there is a common belief that the activities of a UP are the sole jurisdiction of the elected representatives. The people have nothing to do in this regard. In this section of the report, the term 'Committee on Financial Management' means both the Financial and Establishment Committees and the Audit and the Accounts Committee together. This is because those two committees deal with all matters related to finance.

The Budget of the UP

A budget is an estimated income and expenditure statement for a fiscal year. The UP prepares its yearly budget following government rules as applicable in this respect. The detail description of the projected income and expenditure of a UP in the upcoming fiscal year is called the UP budget. The overall development of the UP depends on the efficiency of this budget. The approval authority of the UP budget is the Deputy Commissioner (DC). If a UP fails to prepare its budget within the time-frame, the DC gives budget at his discretion for that UP in pursuance of his authority.

The major sources of income of the UP are:

1. all taxes, rates and fees imposed on the citizen in accordance with law;
2. the profit and rent from the property under the control of or managed by the UP;
3. any fund collected under the Ordinance or other temporary law;
4. funds received from any individual, organization, or local authority;
5. funds received from the income of trusts managed by the UP;
6. all grants from the government or any other source;
7. all profits from investments; and
8. the income from other sources determined by the central government.

The Approved Areas of Expenditure of the UP

The approved areas of expenditure of UP include:

1. payment of salary and allowance of all appointed officials of the UP;
2. meeting of expenditure generated from carrying out responsibilities as assigned with the UP by ordinances or laws;
3. other expenditures made on approval of the DC;
4. expenditures that are to be made from the UP fund as per government order; and
5. expenditures that are to be made from the UP fund under the 1983 Ordinance.

Areas of the UP Expenditure approved for Government Grant

Sources of Grant:

- From Upazila Parishad
- From the central government

The UP usually gets government grant in the following areas:

- a) for paying honorarium, salary and allowance (partial):
 - honorarium of the chairman
 - honorarium of the members
 - salary of the secretary
 - salary of the village police
- b) transport allowance of the chairman and the members for the purpose of attending UP meetings regularly;
- c) grant made for model villages or cluster villages;
- d) grant for deficit financing of the UP budget;
- e) block allocation for the annual development plan;
- f) grant for rural works program (RWP);
- g) grant as project aid (PA);
- h) various compensatory grants; and
- i) test relief.

The Local Sources of Income of the UP

1. tax on annual value of homestead or Union Rate, known as ‘holding tax’;
2. tax on professions, trades and callings;
3. tax on cinemas, dramatic, and theatrical shows and other entertainments;
4. fees for licenses, permits granted by the Parishad;
5. fees (lease money) from specified haats, bazaars and ferries within the UP to be determined by the Government;
6. fees (lease money) from water bodies (jalmahaal) within the jurisdiction of UP and to be determined by the Government; and
7. 1% of the property transfer tax.

Other Sources of Income of the UP

1. funds received from any individual, organization, or local authority;
2. profit and rent from the property under the control of or managed by the UP;
3. profits from investments;
4. Funds received from the income of trusts managed by the UP; and
5. income from other sources determined by the central government

Anex-7

Study Findings (in detail)

The survey was conducted to discern various types of impediments a UP faces in performing its mandated functions. Information were collected from the elected chairman, 1 general member and 1 member from the reserved seats of 90 UPs under 18 upazilas. These 18 upazilas were selected from 6 districts with 3 upazilas from each and 1 district was selected from each of the 6 divisions. Ninety chairmen, ninety-two general members, eighty-seven reserved seat members and ninety UP secretaries (UP secretary was included as the administrative member of the UP and he/she was asked questions on administrative aspects) totaling 359 participated in the survey. They were asked questions on 27 different aspects (16 questions were directed to elected members while 11 were for UP secretaries) of the UP functioning and their responsibilities.

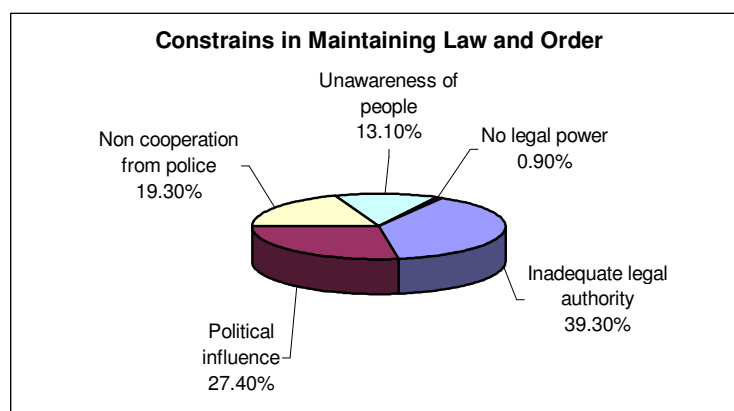
Question: Have you faced any obstacle in maintaining law and order in your UP?

42.8% of total respondents replied that they did not face any obstacle, 33.0% said that they faced some problems in so doing, and 24.2% mentioned they faced considerable impediments in this regard.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

39.3% said they had inadequate legal authority. 27.4% thought they had to face unlawful pressures from politicians and locally influential people. 19.3% mentioned that despite their request for help they did not get positive response from the police. Even at

times, they were insulted by the police. 13.1% opined that illiteracy of and lacks of awareness among people were a problem in maintaining law and order effectively. 0.9% replied that they had no legal power to apply it in appropriate cases for taking instant action.



Question: Have you faced any impediment in reducing crimes and containing smuggling in your UP?

52.8% said that they did not face any such impediment. 30.9% replied that they sometimes faced problems in this regard, and 16.4% said that they faced considerable obstacles in this regard.

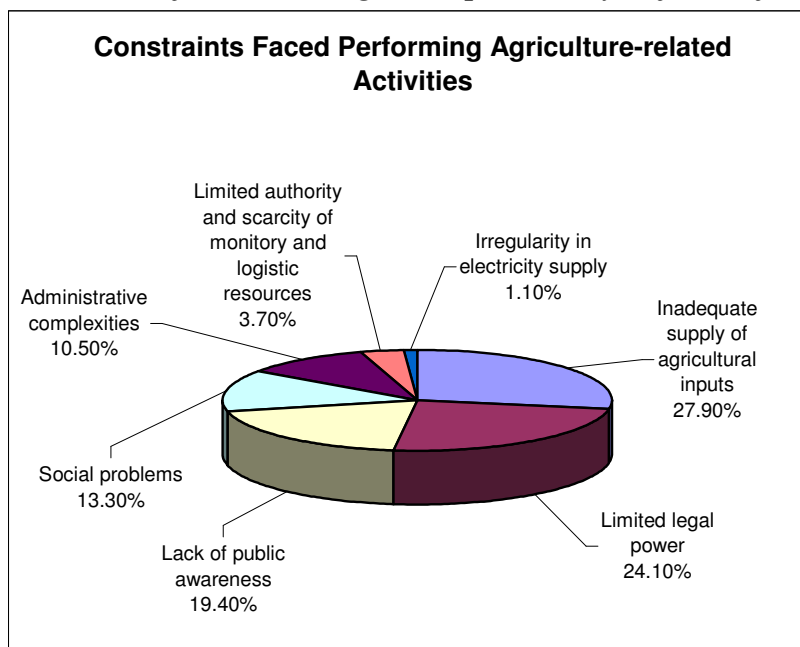
What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

17.1% indicated about limited legal power conferred to them. 28.5% felt insecurity, 15.8% mentioned about political pressure. 9.5% said that they found lack of social awareness against crimes and smuggling as serious impediments.

Question: Have you faced any obstacle while performing your functions relating to agriculture (agriculture/plantation/livestock rearing/ fishery)?

39.4% replied that they sometimes faced problems in this regard. 36.1% said that they did not face any such problem, 20.8% mentioned that they faced considerable obstacles, and 3.7% did not give any response.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?



27.9% found inadequate supply of agricultural inputs like fertilizer, seeds, etc. as the major constraint.

24.1% said that they had limited legal power. 19.4% blamed lack of public awareness. 13.3% stated that they faced some social problems. 10.5% mentioned about administrative complexities that

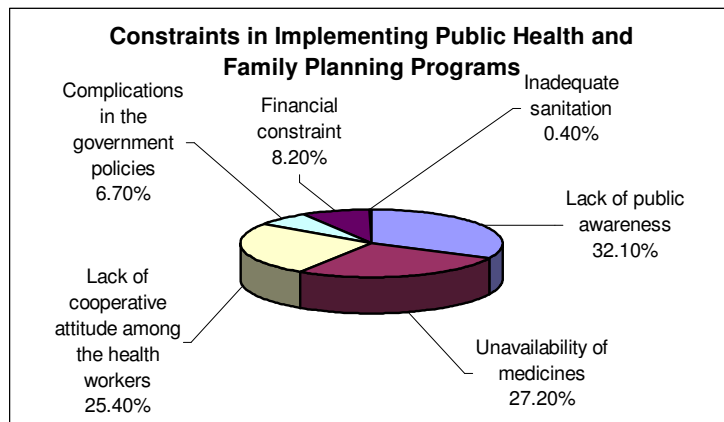
severely impede the UP's role in promoting agricultural development. 3.7% expressed the opinion that local agriculture suffers heavily due to limited authority and scarcity of monetary resources and logistic support. 1.1% felt disgusted about frequent irregular supply of electricity that interrupted irrigation during dry season.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in implementing public health and family planning programs?

48.7% replied that they did not face any problem, 33.8% admitted that they sometimes faced problems in this regard, 14.5% mentioned that they faced considerable constraints in implementing those programs, and 3% did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

32.1% of the respondents identified lack of public awareness about public health and family planning as the major problem. 27.2% talked about unavailability of medicine, 25.4% blamed lack of cooperative attitude and initiative on the part of the health workers, and 6.7% found complications in the government policy as the major constraint. 8.2% indicated to financial constraint and 0.4% talked about inadequate sanitation.



Question: Have you faced any obstacle in conducting sanitary latrines and supply of pure drinking water programs?

46.8% of the respondents said that they faced some problems in conducting such programs. 36.1% replied that they did not face any obstacles, and 17.1% admitted that they faced considerable problems in this regard.

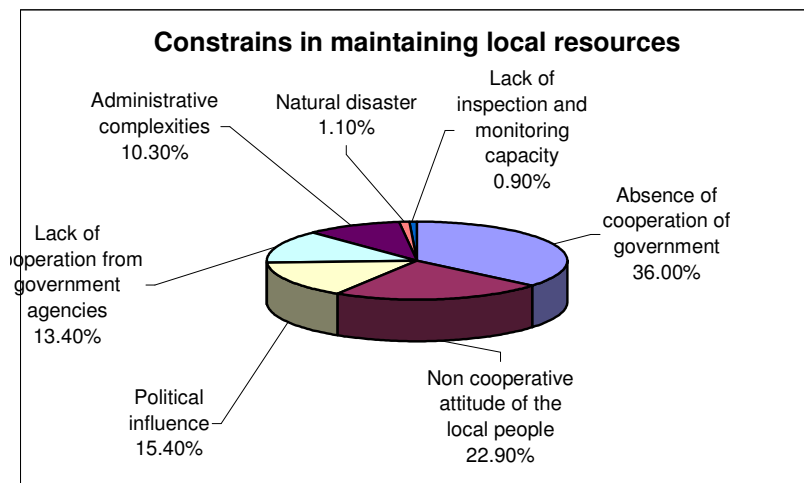
What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

38.5% found inadequate inspection and monitoring of the sanitary and water supply programs as the major constraint. 32.9% blamed limited supply of sanitary goods/materials for distribution among the local people. 24.1% talked about lack of public awareness about hygiene and sanitary matters as a considerable barrier, and 4.5% said that they were mistreated by the people and the local influential persons.

Question: Have you faced any problem in maintaining local resources (roads, bridges, culverts, dams, canals, and electricity)?

43.8% of the respondents replied that they sometimes faced obstacles. 29.4% admitted that they faced considerable constraints. 23.8% said that they did not face any such obstacle, and 3% did not reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?



36.0% replied that lack of cooperation of government agencies is the major obstacle. 22.9% found non-cooperative attitude of the local people to the UP in maintaining local resources as the major constraint. 15.4% were of the opinion that they could not work in

maintaining local resources because of intense political pressure. 13.4% blamed lack of cooperation from government agencies as a major obstacle. 10.3% of the respondents held the view that administrative complexities and red tapes were responsible for their failure in playing effective role in this respect. 1.1% mentioned about natural disaster and 0.9% found absence of proper inspection and monitoring capacity as the major constraint.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in conducting education-related functions (primary and mass education, technical and non-formal education)?

53.9% said that they did not face any problem in this regard. 30.9% replied they faced some problems, 8.5% admitted that they faced considerable problems, and 7.1% did not reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

57.3% of the respondents mentioned about their limited legal power in conducting education-related activities. 25.6% blamed severe resource shortage as the major constraint. 14% said that they were misinformed by the authority about the educational institutes. 0.6% found insufficient number of teachers and the rest 0.6% found poverty as major constraints.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in supervising and monitoring government and non-government development programs?

48% of the respondents replied that they did not face any problem. 26% said that they faced some constraints, 16.7% admitted that they faced considerable problems in this regard. 9.3% did not reply this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

75.3% mentioned that there was no coordination between the UP programs and the programs conducted by government and non-government agencies. 17.2% talked about political problems, and 7.5% found absence of accurate information as the major constraint in this regard.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in managing natural disasters (storm, drought, flood, cyclone, tornado, etc.)?

46.1% replied that they sometimes faced problems in this respect. 27.5% mentioned that they did not face any problem, and 21.6% admitted that they faced considerable problems in managing natural disasters. 4.8% of the respondents chose not to reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

47.6% of the respondents believed that financial constraints were responsible for their failure in managing natural disasters. 35.2% blamed insufficient relief supply from the government. 6.7% mentioned about political pressure that obstructed them playing their due role. 5.7% identified insufficient storm shelters as a major constraint in this regard. 4.4% said that the UP did not have sufficient and trained manpower in managing natural disasters. 0.4% indicated to severe shortage of drinking water during disaster.

Question: Have you faced any problem in carrying out birth and death registration, voter list preparation and such other survey programs?

48% replied that they did not face any problem in such cases. 41.3% said that they faced some obstacles in this respect, and 9.7% admitted that they faced considerable problems in carrying out such programs. There was no response from 1.1% of the respondents.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

32.7% of the respondents found lack of public awareness as the major constraint. 19.4% said that the UP had shortage of manpower to conduct those activities properly. 18.9% mentioned about shortage of birth and death registration certificates as a major constraint. 15.1% identified financial constraint as a major obstacle. 10.6% blamed

lack of cooperation among members of the survey/registration team. 2.3% felt that unskilled data collectors were responsible for poor quality registration and faulty information in survey programs.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in conducting sports and cultural activities (improvement of sports, establishment of libraries, observation of national festivals, etc.)?

55.4% replied that they did not face any problem in this regard. 24.5% said that they faced some problems. 10.8% admitted that they faced considerable problem in this respect and 9.3% did not respond to this question.

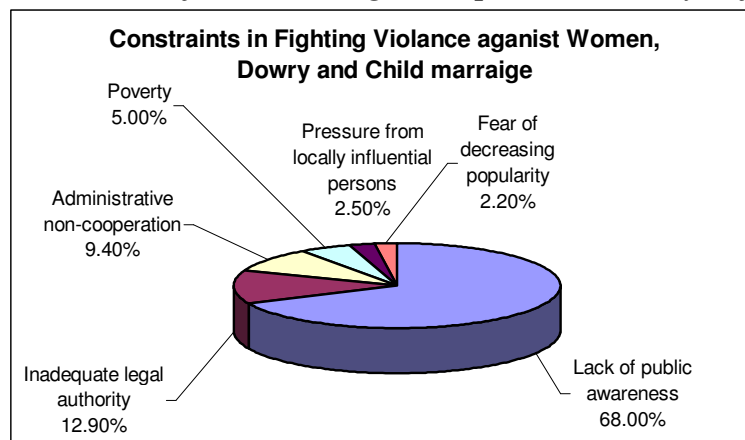
What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

55.3% found financial constraint as the major problem. 15.4% mentioned about shortage of sports materials, 15.4% said that sports and cultural programs suffered from lack of sponsorship. 12.2% held political pressure responsible in this regard. 0.8% said that they did not participate due to their busy schedule.

Question: Have you faced any constraint in fighting violence against women, dowry, and child marriage?

45% replied that they faced few problems in this respect. 31.6% said that they did not face such problems. 21.2% admitted that they faced considerable problems. 2.2 % did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?



68% identified lack of awareness on those issues as the major problem in this respect. 12.9% said that they had no defined legal authority to take effective punitive action against those involved in women persecution, dowry or child marriage. 9.4% mentioned about

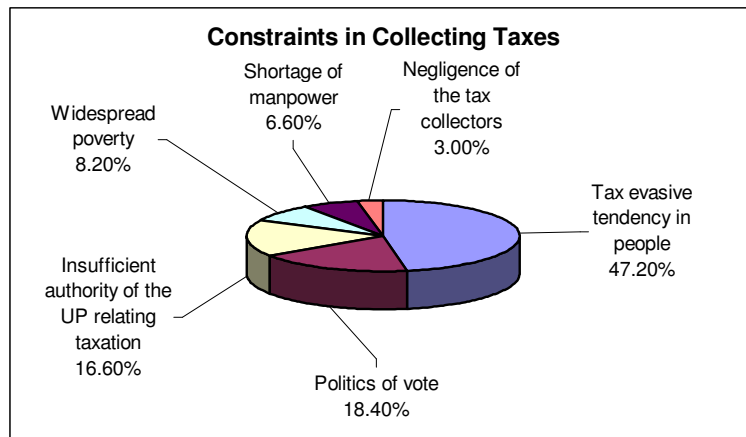
lack of administrative cooperation. 5% felt that poverty was a major constraint. 2.5% opined that pressures from locally influential persons also thwarted bold actions against such crimes. 2.2% replied they did not take appropriate actions in fear of losing popularity.

Question: Have you faced any constrain in playing active role in tax collection?

42.4% said that they faced some problem in this respect. 29.7% admitted that they faced considerable constraints in playing their role in collecting taxes. 19.3% mentioned that they did not face any obstacle in this regard. 8.6% did not reply to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) have you faced, if any, in this regard?

47.2% of the respondents held the view that tax evasion tendency in people in general was liable for poor tax collection. 18.4% identified 'politics of vote' as the major constraint. 16.6% mentioned about insufficient authority of



the UP to take effective actions against tax defaulters. 8.2% considered widespread poverty of the UP residents as the major constraint in collecting taxes. 6.6% blamed shortage of manpower of UPs in collecting taxes. 3% identified negligence of the tax collectors as a major constraint

Question: Are you satisfied with the role you played as the chairman/ members/ women (reserved seat) member?

39% of the respondents replied that they were partially satisfied. 33.5% said that they were not satisfied, and 26.8% felt that they were satisfied with their performance. 0.7% did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) caused your dissatisfaction, if any?

25.4% told about financial problems that caused much dissatisfaction. 24.7% indicated to the low honorariums they got. 12.9% mentioned that they had limited legal power to perform effectively. 11.5% found resource constraint as the major problem. 9.7% said that they had to face family problems in carrying out their responsibilities. 7.9% regretted that they did not get expected cooperation from people.

Question: Have you faced any problem (e.g. from other members of the UP) while performing your responsibilities?

72.1% said that they did not face such problems. 27.5% mentioned that they had problems with their colleagues. 0.4% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

What kinds of obstacles (legal and practical) you faced, if any, in this regard?

33.7% said that their colleagues who were elected from general seats underestimated them. 37.1% talked about non-cooperative attitude of the male members. 29.2% said that disagreement among the UP representatives was a major constraint.

Question: Have you got any training as a UP chairman/general member/ women member?

97.4% replied that they received training. 2.6% said that they did not get any.

Has your training made any change in your work place?

44.5% said that significant changes took place in their work place as a result of training they received. 42.4% replied that some changes occurred. 2.6% mentioned that they could not realize changes whether there were any. 8.9% were of the opinion that no significant changes took place. 1.5% said that nothing changed at all.

What were the reasons you identified for lack of change?

27.8% mentioned that insufficient finance was the reason. 27.8% said that training that they received was inadequate. 20.4% told that training was not need-based. 14.8% indicated non-cooperation from the chairman and the general members. 5.6% said that training was adequate but not enough to build confidence. 3.7% said that women were discouraged to participate in training.

Annex-8

Questioner to the Secretary (as the Administrative Member) of the UP

Those UP secretaries who participated in the survey were asked about 16 official activities of the UP.

Question: Do you write monthly, quarterly, annual reports and comments of the UP?

77.3% replied that they regularly wrote such reports and comments. 11.3% said that they wrote but not regularly, and 2.3% mentioned that they could not do so regularly because of time constraint. 1.1% did not reply this question.

Have you faced any legal or practical constraint while writing such reports?

Legal Constraint

100% of the respondents mentioned lack of authority in writing reports.

Practical Constraint

62.9% said that they had shortage of manpower. 20% told about the negligence of the UP members that caused delay in report writing. 8.6% mentioned that they had time constraint. 4.8% found administrative complexities as the major constraint. 3.8% identified lack of skill development training responsible for this.

Question: Do you preserve deeds of properties, contract papers, and documents of property leases in the guard file as permanent documents?

73.9% replied that they regularly preserved them in the guard file, 23.9% said that they did so but not in all cases. 1.1% admitted that they did not do so regularly, and 1.1% did not respond.

What kinds of legal and practical constraints you faced in preserving those important documents?

Legal Constraint

71.4% mentioned that they had problems while preserving documents. 28.6% said that there was no specific law that stipulates the role of the secretary in preserving those documents.

Practical Constraints

36.7% talked about shortage of manpower. 20% identified administrative complexities in this regard. 13.3% found shortage of furniture in preserving documents. 10% identified lack of cooperation of the UP representatives as a major problem. 6.7% mentioned about financial problem, 3.3% talked about lack of training in this respect.

10% identified that all official correspondence and other important directives and orders come to the chairman that causes delay in recording important documents.

Question: Do you face any legal and practical constraints in performing economic activities timely and regularly?

Legal Constraints

50% of the respondents said that they provided inadequate legal assistance in sending and preserving cash book, cheque book, and money deposit receipts. 35.7% said that they could not finish activities timely as the cheque book requires signature of the chairman only. [The signature of the secretary is not required (there is no scope of delegation of such authority to others when the chairman is not available. This causes delay]. 14.3% said that economic activities were obstructed due to negligence of the UP members in managing cash and cheque books.

Practical Constraints

42.6% of the respondents mentioned that economic activities were obstructed due to negligence of the UP members. 26.2% said that shortage of manpower was a major constraint to the timely and regular performance of the economic activities. 8.2% said that complications in banking transactions impeded economic functions significantly. 8.2% blamed tax collectors for their late transfer of collected taxes to the UP fund. 6.6% said that lack of secured storage facilities of cheque books, cash books, and other financial documents impeded timely completion of economic activities. 4.9% said lack of coordination liable for time overruns in performing economic activities. 3.3% found lack of training in performing economic activities as a major constraint.

Question: What is your role as the member-secretary of VGF and VGD project committees and preserving important documents relating to those projects?

43.2% of the respondents mentioned that they prepared master rolls and preserved important documents relating to projects. 26.1% said that they had to arrange distribution of VGD and VGF goods. 17% said that they kept register of those projects. 6.8% said that they had to be present the VGD and VGF card distribution programs and announce the date of distribution of such cards for public information. 4.5% did not respond at all. 2.3% said that they had to engage in forming necessary committees.

What kinds of legal and practical constraints have you faced in preserving important documents related to projects as the member-secretary?

Legal Constraints

43.8% identified that they had very limited power as the member-secretary to the committees. 37.5% mentioned that shortage of money in transporting VGD and VGF

goods was a major problem. 18.8% stated about shortage of manpower and time in distributing VGD and VGF goods.

Practical Constraints

26.5% said that monopolistic power of the chairman in all cases made it difficult to collect and preserve documents of the projects on time. 21.7% mentioned that they could not do their work properly for absence of accurate information. 20.5% identified financial problem as a major constraint to VGF and VGD projects. 15.7% stated about manpower shortage. 12% identified political pressure a major constraint. 3.6% found absence of computers as a constraint.

Question: What is your role in assisting the chairman in policy-making, data collection, and program implementation of the UP as per its assigned responsibilities?

46.5% said that they assisted their respective chairmen in policy making. 27.7% mentioned that they assisted the chairman by writing different documents for projects. 27.3% felt that their responsibility was to inform all concerned in meetings about different aspects of the project. 3.4% said that they helped chairman in distributing relief.

What kinds of legal and practical constraints have you faced in playing your role?

Legal Constraints

47.8% said that they had no power to enforce law in appropriate cases that hampered implementation of the project. 21.7% mentioned that considerable time was wasted to secure approval of the chairman that impeded implementation. 17.4% identified that delayed arrival of some essential instructions/circulars was a major constraint. 8.7% said about lack of training as a constraint. 4.3% told that absence of local representative in implementing project was a major constraint.

Practical Constraints

32.9% identified shortage of manpower for delayed collection of data and implementation of project. 21.9% identified that inadequate scope of policy-making hampered data collection and project implementation. 15.1% held the view that negligence of the chairman was liable for delayed implementation. 12.3% found lack of training in policy making, data collection, and project implementation as a serious constraint. 6.8% identified shortage of fund responsible for poor data collection and implementation. 6.8% mentioned that lack of coordination deterred them playing effective role. The rest 4.1% mentioned about lack of training as a major constraint.

Question: What is your role in undertaking and implementing development projects from the revenue income of the UP?

25% mentioned that they prepared master rolls in undertaking and implementing such projects. 21.6% did not respond. 20.5% said that they gave suggestions to the UP

representatives in almost all aspects. 18.2% said that they played their role by collecting data and writing reports. 9.1% stated that they contributed in increasing revenue income by collecting taxes and thereby contributed to project formulation and implementation both in development and revenue sectors. 4.5% said that they played their role by convening meetings. 1.1% told that they played their role by forming project committees and revenue committees.

What kinds of legal and practical constraints have you faced in undertaking and implementing development projects?

Legal constraints

46.7% replied that they had no power to enforce laws in appropriate cases that obstructed them in undertaking and implementing development projects. 46.7% identified the absence of specific policy relating to undertaking and implementing development projects as a major constraint. 6.7% found limited power to ensure implementation of projects as a major constraint.

Practical Constraints

26% said that financial problem was the major constraint in this respect. 18.2% found lack of awareness of the UP members often impeded undertaking and implementation of projects. 14.3% identified political pressure was responsible for obstructing initiating and implementation of projects. 15.6% blamed non-cooperation by the UP members was a major constraint. 14.3% blamed administrative complexities in this regard. 6.5% felt that shortage of manpower was liable for not undertaking and implementing projects. 5.2% talked about lack of awareness of people responsible for obstruction.

Question: Do you regularly preserve documents pertaining to formulation and evaluation of various programs of the UP?

80.7% replied that they did so regularly. 19.3% said that they did so but not regularly.

What kinds of legal and practical constraints have you faced in preserving documents?

Legal constraints

57.1% said that they felt problems while preserving documents. 14.3% stated that their presence in all meetings is obligatory and therefore, they did not get time to preserve those documents timely. 14.3% said that almost all types of documents required forwarding to upazila that involved a lot of time and therefore they were unable to preserve documents and proceedings of meetings in time. 14.3% identified the absence of administrative power.

Practical constraints

44.9% identified shortage of manpower as a hindrance to documentation process. 15.9% said that chairman was not aware of the need for timely documentation. 14.5% said that preservation of documents was obstructed due to lack of opportunity in collecting accurate information. 11.6% talked about absence of proper coordination mechanism. 8.7% held shortage of modern office equipments liable for poor documentation. 4.3% told about lack of training that obstructed documentation process.

Question: Are all government circulars, laws and information applicable to the UP received and recorded timely?

81.8% of the respondents were of the opinion that they timely received and recorded all such laws and circulars. 15.9% said that they did so partially. 1.1% admitted that they never did so, and 1.1% did not reply this question.

Have you faced any legal and practical constraints in recording documents and proceedings timely?***Legal Constraints***

44.4% said that it was difficult to record documents and proceedings timely due to absence of clear reference to legal authority. All correspondences, directives and executive orders are issued to the chairman and he/she in turn issues all directives and orders within his/her jurisdiction. 33.3% considered this one man-centered communication as a barrier to timely record-keeping. 22.2% said that timely recording of documents and proceedings hampered due to lack of training in office management.

Practical Constraints

43.9% identified shortage of manpower as the notable constraint to timely record keeping. 31.6% found untimely arrival of government circulars, directives and orders as the reason for irregular and untimely recording of documents. 10.5% said that as they had no facility of computers and photocopiers they found it very difficult to record so many documents manually on time. 8.8% said that internal conflict among UP representatives was a major source contributing to poor record keeping. 5.3% blamed lack of coordination among the UP members for untimely documentation.

Question: Are you satisfied with the role you played as the administrative member of the UP?

37.5% said that they were satisfied. 34.1% replied that they were partly satisfied with their secretarial role. 27.3% said that they were not satisfied, and 1.1% did not respond.

Question: Have you faced any problem pertaining to family, social and administrative (e.g. from other members of the UP) while performing your responsibilities?

60.2% said that they had to face social, family and administrative problems in performing their responsibilities. 38.6% said that they did not face such problems. 1.1% did not respond.

Question: Have you received any training as the administrative member of the UP?

96.6% said that they received training. 3.4% replied that they did not get any training.

Has your training made any change in your work place?

53.4% told that training brought significant changes in their task performance. 42% said that training partly changed their work process. 11% said they could not understand whether any change took place or not. 3.4% did not respond.

Annex-9

FGD (Focus Group Discussion) Report

1. What are the ways to remove institutional weaknesses of the UP?

The first precondition of increasing efficiency is to arrange training programs. The more the number of training, the more the idea about structure and other aspects of the UP will be clear, which certainly will increase efficiency. As public representatives come from various backgrounds, coordination of their functions is very important. There is no better alternative to training in improving coordination. Training may be of two types: theoretical and practical.

If such training could be arranged in sufficient number this will certainly increase the efficiency of the public representatives. That means they could gather theoretical as well as practical knowledge relating to their work. We can use exogenous knowledge in such training, i.e. what other countries are doing in providing training to their local government representatives and how they are giving such training. Such experience will help us a lot.

One crucial reason for weakness of local government is that those who are capable are not interested to contest in local government election. There are two reasons for this: lack of power/authority and negative perception of the people about public representatives.

Widespread negative perception about UP chairmen and members among the people results in defamation of even an honest UP representative. This is particularly frustrating for good and capable persons who are increasingly getting discouraged to take part in UP election. It becomes, therefore, imperative to give people accurate information about the UP to create consciousness among them so that right type persons hold leadership positions in UP.

The UP members should have minimum educational qualification. If five-day training is cramped in two days, training will fail to yield expected result.

2. How to protect the UP interest in inter-governmental distribution of revenues?

At present, the UP has no scope of taking part in negotiation of inter-governmental resource allocation decisions. Therefore, parochial interests are getting priority over the UP interests in making such decisions. The ADP fund that is provided by the central government used to be controlled by the MP in the past. Now that fund is controlled by the UNO. The UP chairman has no role in this regard.

The control of the UP over the local resources has to be increased if we want to strengthen the local government. For that to happen all income generated from the local resources must go to the UP fund. Local income sources such as haat-bazaar,

ferries, khas ponds, water bodies, etc. should be under the total control of the local government. . If the central government wishes to obtain revenue from these sources, then it must take it from the local government.

The present policy of sharing of revenue between the central and the local government is unacceptable. At present, the central government is taking away our resources and making us dependent on it. But the central government never gives adequate allocation to the local government. In this way, we are being deprived of our lawful right. Therefore, our resources have to be given to us. In this case, if the central government needs to share resources, it should take that amount from the local government. 1.88% of the total budget has been allotted for local government this fiscal year. But the lion share of this allocation is given to the LGED. Consequently, the utilization of the fund is very poor; even 40% of the projected work is not implemented in a fiscal year. Corruption of the bureaucrats and the ministers is seriously undermining local development projects. Unfortunately, chairmen and members have to bear the blame for corruption though they are less liable for them. So, far-reaching changes have to be made in the present policy of inter-governmental resource distribution. If block allotment directly comes in the UP, then its interest will be protected.

3. What role financial autonomy might play in the comprehensive development of the UP?

There is no alternative to financial autonomy for comprehensive development of the UP. In fact, absence of financial autonomy made the UP a weak and less acceptable institution. Most of the time, the UP implements programs and decisions imposed by the central government, which are mostly at variance with local needs. These imposed programs are designed in a way to protect the interests of the politicians and the bureaucrats. The UP cannot play active role in formulating self-made development plan. For example: union complex buildings are being built now. Unfortunately, these buildings have no storage, though the UP has been entrusted with relief and fertilizer distribution. If the plan of building complexes were locally designed, such flaws could never been there.

Under the current system, all decisions are imposed by the government. But we think that people have to be encouraged and different programs need to be undertaken with their participation. This is because only local level planning can satisfactorily address local problems.

At present, the UP cannot spend even 10% of the budget that it proposes. This harsh reality indicates excessive lack of financial autonomy of the UP. The government does not provide UP with adequate resources as it plans for development. This results in midway shutting down of many projects that cause huge waste of scarce resources. Thus money is spent but this fails to meet public expectation. In the absence of long-term perspective and farsighted plans, most of the projects undertaken by the UP fail to yield desired result except some short term visible benefits for target groups.

4. Why UP is weak in resource management and optimal distribution?

Scarcity of resource is the main reason of weak resource management by the UP. Persistent resource shortage makes optimum distribution impossible. At present, tax is the major source of UP income. Expenses like wages of chowkidars, village police, other employees and other expenditure of the UP have to be made from this single source. Therefore, it becomes impossible to take even a single project based on local earning. Other reasons for weaknesses in resource management and optimal distribution are:

- The UP is inefficient in tax collection. The members are not knowledgeable in this respect.
- Members of the UP cannot play significant role due to monopolistic dominance of the chairman. This creates problems in financial management.
- In many cases, UP members think that they will get some financial benefits from local level programs. But if they do not get anything later on they start suspecting the chairman, which creates internal conflict in the UP. This hampers optimum resource allocation.
- Corruption of the public representatives is a major challenge to financial management of the UP. In most cases, they are forced to be corrupt as local people go to their representatives with any problem. But people are unwilling to pay for services provided by the UP. On the other hand, the UP has no allocation for resolving personal problems of constituents. Therefore, UP representatives are forced to be corrupt.
- Mal coordination in resource distribution is present.
- The role of the UP in resource management and distribution becomes gradually weaker because of excessive interference by the bureaucrats.

5. How to put an end to political and governmental interference in the functions of the UP?

Political interference in UP activities has become a de facto rule that impedes smooth functioning of the UP. This unlawful practice has become an instrument to defend interests of a vested class. Therefore, putting an end to governmental and political interference in the functions of the UP for more vibrant accountability and transparency is a demand of time. The following steps might be of great aid in this regard:

1. The local government institutions have to be completely separated in accordance with laws. This will effectively resist unwarranted interference within their legal jurisdictions.
2. A separate independent commission has to be established for monitoring of local government activities. Local government representatives shall be accountable to that commission for their actions.

3. The UP should have due representation starting from formulation of plans to monitoring of implementation. Programs that are running at union level have to be placed under monitoring of the UP.
4. Respective jurisdictions of MPs, central government and local government have to be urgently redefined in a clear and judicious manner to free the UP from political interference.

6. What amendments are necessary to constitutional and statutory laws to make the UP autonomous in performing its responsibilities?

The authority of the UP was slightly increased with the promulgation of the 1983 ordinance. But since 1996, such authority has been gradually taken away from the us in different forms through declaration of the executive circulars from time to time. For example, an order has been promulgated that forces us to take prior permission of the concerned authority for holding of meetings. Indeed, bureaucrats of our country never want to see an autonomous local government. Sections of the ordinance that deter local government from functioning autonomously have to be suitably amended. Fundamental changes have to be made in the UP laws and review of ordinances is necessary.

7. What type of structural transformation of the UP is necessary for it to perform its organizational and official functions effectively?

The following measures need to be taken for effective functioning of the UP:

1. There exists considerable lack of efficiency among the UP members. Necessary steps have to be taken to increase their efficiency level.
2. The UP has to perform many other functions excepting 48 assigned functions. Therefore, decentralization of UP functions is essential. Each ward member has to be delegated with certain functions to be performed within his/her ward.
3. A tax assessor has to be appointed for tax collection.
4. The structure of the UP manpower needs to be rearranged in order to increase its working capacity. Some new posts e.g. one assistant secretary, one accountant and one technical officer need to be appointed in each UP.
5. An assistant accountant needs to be appointed too.
6. Each standing committee has to be strengthened.
7. Holding of ward meetings has to be made mandatory. Plans will be formulated and implemented following recommendations drawn from ward meetings.
8. The UP members have to be made aware of their various responsibilities.
9. Computers need to be provided to each UP and their proper use has to be ensured.
10. Regular coordination with governmental officials has to be ensured.

8. What role the Forum of local government organization might play in establishing effective UP?

If arrangement is made to assign the responsibility of evaluating UPs by the Forum, each chairman will try to make his /her UP effective as a member of the Forum. Forum will play effective role in uniting UP members. It will be possible to create pressure on the government by the Forum and thus secure demands of the UP. It will also convey UP demands to the government.

Now, block allotment is directly disbursed in favor of the UP. This is the contribution of the Forum. BUPF can coordinate with the central government.

Annex-10

IDI (In-depth Interview) Report on UP Representatives

1. Does the UP have the autonomy to perform its responsibilities for local development?

- 1.1 the present policy of government allotment for UPs provides the UP with very little scope for taking effective steps in local development;
- 1.2 the concerned government officers have control over each aspect of our work;
- 1.3 disbursement is not made timely;
- 1.4 the rate of formulation and implementation of local level plan is unsatisfactory;
- 1.5 we have office and rank only but we have no power and freedom;
- 1.6 the UP Ordinance 1993 is an unreasonable policy;
- 1.7 administrative and bureaucratic complexities exist;
- 1.8 we do not have resources of our own;
- 1.9 spending of government grant is tied with regulations;
- 1.10 political interference;
- 1.11 we do not have power to undertake projects according to public demand;
- 1.12 interference by locally influential persons;
- 1.13 lack of efficiency and education among the public representatives;
- 1.14 non-cooperation from people; and
- 1.15 non-cooperation of colleagues.

2. How much freedom do you enjoy in implementing annual development plan?

- 1.1 no program is taken with direct participation of the local people;
- 1.2 influenced by the UP members or colleagues;
- 1.3 most of the plans are orally made, no resolution, record or other written documents collected in such cases;
- 1.4 it is impossible to make plans methodically due to resource shortage;

- 1.5 sectoral allocation is inconsistent with local demands;
- 1.6 LGED imposes all programs on us;
- 1.7 lack of administrative cooperation;
- 1.8 ADP funds come in installments cannot be disbursed in time;
- 1.9 bureaucratic complexity;
- 1.10 money allotted in favor of ADP has to be spent under due procedure that is often at variance with local problems;
- 1.11 shortage of equipments
- 1.12 non-cooperation from the people;
- 1.13 project allotment is not consistent with time demand and hence public confidence reduced; and
- 1.14 lack of efficiency and education among the public representatives.

2. Do you have the power to take decision and conduct programs for the development of the UP?

- 3.1 to serve the demands of the UP members, unequal distribution of resources has to be made, which sometimes breaches due procedure;
- 3.2 lack of adequate technical manpower;
- 3.3 it is difficult to collect sufficient money;
- 3.4 district and upazila administration control every aspect of financial management of the UP;
- 3.5 opportunity to undertake and implement economic activities is limited;
- 3.6 shortage of manpower in general;
- 3.7 the existing laws are not conducive for tax collection;
- 3.8 government seems not interested in implementing recommendations of the UP;
- 3.9 interference by different government agencies during program implementation;
- 3.10 insufficient local income results in lower financial autonomy;
- 3.11 taking timely economic decisions hampered by insufficient resources; and
- 3.12 lack of coordination.

4. Do you think political interference obstructs decision making for development of the UP?

- 4.1 projects undertaken on political consideration;
- 4.2 political interference in distributing VGF;
- 4.3 political linkages of the UP representatives influence their organizational task load;
- 4.4 pressure of the local member of parliament;
- 4.5 many irrelevant activities have to be performed for political pressure;
- 4.6 politicians want some benefits;
- 4.7 political inferiority on the part of the UP chairmen and members; and

4.8 nepotism influences performance of judicial functions.

5. Which standing committees are working in your UP as per the law?

- 5.1 thirteen committees exist in paper only, formal and informal discussions on agriculture, health, education, finance held in every three months; and
- 5.2 committees not effective because of financial constraint, most of the decisions of committees not implemented.

6. Do you think it is essential to re-fix mandatory functions of the UP?

- 6.1 some works need to be re-fixed;
- 6.2 reallocation of functions has to be made keeping in view social needs; and
- 6.3 useless functions should be abandoned.

7. How much spontaneity do you think the UP has in collecting revenues?

- 7.1 UP has the spontaneity, as people reluctant to pay taxes, the UP also losing its interest in collecting taxes;
- 7.2 public representatives are reluctant to collect taxes for fear of losing popularity, people not accustomed to paying taxes;
- 7.3 UP cannot collect taxes for geographical and economic reasons;
- 7.4 taxes not collected many times for environmental reasons;
- 7.5 the strategy of tax collection is faulty;
- 7.6 lack of sincerity of UP affects spontaneity in tax collection
- 7.7 tax on trade is realized to 80%, but overall revenue collection of the UP poor; and
- 7.8 lack of efficiency causes low rate of collection.

8. Do you think that your legal experience and power are adequate to form and conduct village court for local arbitration?

- 8.1 UP can exercise some power under criminal and civil code, but exercise of such power creates many problems;
- 8.2 we lack experience, have little knowledge about various sections and sub-sections of laws, have no training in this regard;
- 8.3 judicial power minimal;
- 8.4 practice of implementing conventional laws minimal;
- 8.5 limited legal power;
- 8.6 non-cooperation by the local police station;
- 8.7 lack of coordination between various law enforcement forces;
- 8.8 political pressure.
- 8.9 judicial power to fine up to Tk. 5000;
- 8.10 have power to give verdict, no power to enforce it;

- 8.11 existing laws not suitable for now; and
- 8.12 judicial power has to be conferred to public representatives in accordance with educational qualifications.

9. How the authority and responsibility of the UP should be distributed and coordinated between the chairman and the members?

- 9.1 decisions should be taken after mutual discussion;
- 9.2 sincerity and absence of self-interest are essential;
- 9.3 secrecy and partiality need to be abandoned;
- 9.4 responsibility and authority of the representatives have to be clearly demarcated;
- 9.5 opinions of women members must be given consideration;
- 9.6 discrimination in allocation of responsibilities between general and reserved seats must be stopped;
- 9.7 responsibilities have to be distributed in accordance with education, experience, and efficiency;
- 9.8 accountability and transparency need to be ensured;
- 9.9 standing committees to be truly strengthened and given power for their coordination;
- 9.10 power has to be defined by the commission;
- 9.11 views of others be accommodated in formulating and implementing development plans need to be developed; and
- 9.12 UP meetings need to be held regularly.

10. What is the proper time of giving training to UP representatives?

- 10.1 training should be provided immediately after being elected;
- 10.2 training be given between January and March every year; and
- 10.3 separate need-based training for UPs may be arranged during September-October.

Annex-11

IDI (In-depth Interview) of LG Experts

1. What should be the responsibility and authority of the UP?

- 1.1 scope of UP activities needs to be well defined and delegation of power and allocation of resources have to be made accordingly;
- 1.2 people's participation has to be ensured;
- 1.3 massive modification of the 1983 Ordinance essential;
- 1.4 responsibilities and authority of the women members need to be increased;
- 1.5 present authority and responsibility should be kept;
- 1.6 accountability measures need to be institutionalized;
- 1.7 decentralization of power essential; and
- 1.8 collective responsibility should be ensured.

2. How much authority do you think the UP is currently enjoying?

- 2.1 UP enjoying sufficient autonomy;
- 2.1 power will be abused if more authority is conferred to it;
- 2.2 enjoying autonomy to an insignificant extent; and
- 2.3 does not have autonomy at all.

3. What should be the manpower structure of the UP for increasing its capacity?

- 3.1 increase in manpower should be need-based, all UPs must not have the same manpower structure;
- 3.2 allocation to UPs can be made in proportion to population and the manpower can be increased accordingly;
- 3.3 secretary of the UP should be more qualified;
- 3.4 two class IV and one-class III employees should be appointed;
- 3.5 a computer assistant and an MLSS have to be appointed to assist the technical specialists (agriculture, fisheries) and the secretary; and
- 3.6 all government officials working at union level should be transferred under the supervision of the UP.

5. What should be the proper relationship between LG institutions and the Member of Parliament (MP)?

- 4.1 relationship with the MP be cooperative and suggestive rather than mandatory and submissive;
- 4.2 no functional relationship between the two, both should do their respective jobs;
- 4.3 MP should constrain himself/herself in policy-making role only; and
- 4.4 desirable that MPs concentrate on their law making responsibility only.

5. How will the UP be able to implement local and national plans on its own initiative?

- 5.1 prepare annual development plan and place demand list accordingly;
- 5.2 create an environment of taking local initiatives through spontaneous participation of people at the grass root level;
- 5.3 wide-ranging legal limitation exists in this respect; and
- 5.4 legal framework needs to be modified in order to create opportunity for implementing plans.

6. How do you evaluate introducing social accountability mechanisms as a means to measure effectiveness of the UP services?

- 6.1 accountability and social responsibility of the UP representatives and the UP officials have to be ensured;
- 6.2 the concept 'social audit' may be considered in this regard;
- 6.3 the UP representatives are to some extent accountable to their voters only but never accountable to those who did not vote for them;
- 6.4 introducing accountability mechanism will have positive impact; and
- 6.5 monitoring should be done by committee.

7. What should be the relationship between the UP and the local administration? How can coordination between the two be ensured?

- 7.1 relationship between the two should be cooperative in nature;
- 7.2 coordination is not mandatory, legal amendment is necessary to institutionalize coordination mechanism;
- 7.3 lack of coordination is a tradition and effective coordination can never be achieved; and
- 7.4 one precondition for effective coordination is to delegate responsibility to the local administration and enforced by law.

8. Role of the National Assembly or the Ministry of Local Government of the central government shall be limited to policy making only – what is your opinion about this statement?

- 8.1 think this is right, they should never engage in other activities except policy making;
- 8.2 development plan can be taken up collectively by ensuring collective monitoring and research;
- 8.3 monitoring function to be duly emphasized;
- 8.4 role of the National Assembly has to be confined within policy making realm, but as far as policy implementation is concerned, the role of the Ministry of Local government should never be denied; and

8.5 there must be mechanisms to ensure accountability of the central government.

9. Tier-wise/ phase-wise allocation in the national budget is necessary- what is your opinion about this statement?

- 9.1 essential for union, upazila, and district levels;
- 9.2 the entire budget process should center around the local government; and
- 9.3 the main budget should be based on local government to remove overlapping in allocation and prevention of waste of money.

10. How do you consider the logic of increasing honorarium for UP representatives? What is your personal suggestion in this respect?

- 10.1 honorarium has to be increased;
- 10.2 the chairman should enjoy salary and status equivalent to Class I and members should enjoy those equivalent to Class II;
- 10.3 allotment can be made to meet other expenses without increasing honorarium;
- 10.4 increase in honorarium is reasonable as it is unethical to give someone insufficient salary and expect great service from him; and
- 10.5 honorarium should be increased but this increase has to be based on the capacity of UP.

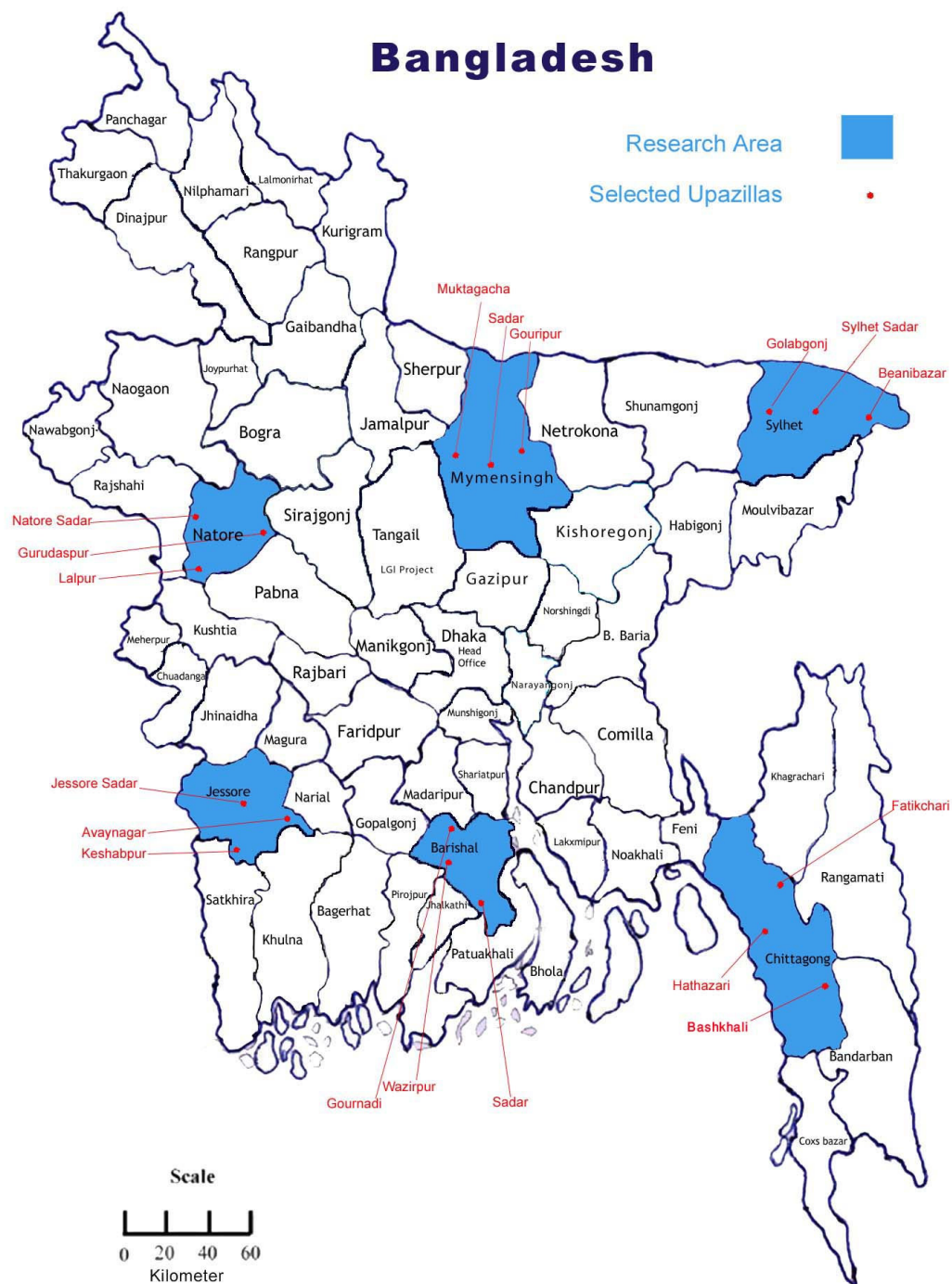
11 What role might the local government commission with power to make laws, allocate money, and make appointment play in strengthening local government system?

- 11.1 requires further research, not the right time to comment on it;
- 11.2 if commission is properly established and functions effectively, it will play positive role in this respect; and
- 11.3 a very long-standing demand, this commission has to be fully autonomous.

12. How do you consider issuing circulars, orders that are inconsistent with the law (e.g. though the law says to increase local revenue, the power of leasing haat-bazaars, has been taken away from the UP)?

- 12.1 no comments;
- 12.2 right decision, otherwise such sources could be abused;
- 12.3 UP should retain power of leasing rural markets, to prevent the possible abuses of such sources, local government commission might form a representative committee in which the UP chairman will be a member, this committee will be entrusted with power to make decisions on leasing.
- 12.4 if local government and the administration jointly do this, related complexities will be at minimum and might result in more profit; and
- 12.5 all these are political issues.

Study Area



Study Area

Division	District	Upazila	Union	
1.Barisal	1.Barisal	1.Gournadi	1.	Mahilara
			2.	Nalchira
			3.	Batazore
			4.	Chandshi
			5.	Khanjapur
		2.Barisal Sadar	6.	Kashipur
			7.	Charbaria
			8.	Chormonai
			9.	Chandramohon
			10.	Shastabad
		3.Wazirpur	11.	Sholok
			12.	Shikarpur
			13.	Guthia
			14.	Borakata
			15.	.Bamrail
2.Dhaka	2.Mymensingh	4.Muktagacha	16.	Dullah
			17.	Goga
			18.	Mankon
			19.	Bashati
			20.	Kumargatha
		5.Mymensingh Sadar	21.	Dapunia
			22.	Khagodhor
			23.	Bororchor
			24.	Kustia
			25.	Charnilakhia
		6.Gouripur	26.	Moilakanda
			27.	Gouripur
			28.	Achintapur
			29.	Bokainagor
			30.	Shidla

Division	District	Upazila	Union	
3.Sylhet	3.Sylhet	7.Golapgonj	31.	Laxmipasha
			32.	Lak Khanaband
			33.	Dhaka Dokhin
			34.	Bhadesshwar
			35.	Badepasha
		8.Beanibazar	36.	Shawla
			37.	Dubag
			38.	Mollapur
			39.	Mathiura
			40.	Muria
		9.Sylhet Sadar	41.	Khadimnagar
			42.	Tulkdikor
			43.	Tukerbazar
			44.	Kandigao
			45.	Khadimpara
4.Khulna	4.Jessore	10.Jessore Sadar	46.	Ramnagar
			47.	Deara
			48.	Kochua
			49.	Norendrapur
			50.	Chachra
		11.Avaynagar	51.	Paira
			52.	Bagutia
			53.	Prembag
			54.	Sundoli
			55.	Chalishia
		12.Kesobpur	56.	Keshobpur
			57.	Biddanandakhati
			58.	Monglekot
			59.	Gourighona
			60.	Pajia

Division	District	Upazila	Union	
5.Chittagong	5.Chittagong	13.Hathazari	61.	Hathazari Sadar
			62.	Chikondondi
			63.	Uttar madrasha
			64.	Garduara
			65.	Mirzapur
		14.Fotikchari	66.	Rosanggiri
			67.	Dharmapur
			68.	Lelang
			69.	Abdullahpur
			70.	Samitirhat
		15.Bashkhali	71.	Shilkup
			72.	Bailchari
			73.	Pukuria
			74.	Chamble
			75.	Shadanpur
6.Rajshahi	6.Natore	16.Natore Sadar	76.	Tebaria
			77.	Dhighapatia
			78.	Baraharispur
			79.	Kapuria
			80.	Laksmipur Khulabaria
		17.Gurodaspur	81.	Chapila
			82.	Dharabarisa
			83.	Masinda
			84.	Khupzipur
			85.	Nazirpur
		18.Lalpur	86.	Walia
			87.	Arbap
			88.	Chandhupail
			89.	Eshardi
			90.	Duaria

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১১. স্থানীয় সরকার প্রতিষ্ঠানের আর্থিক ক্ষমতা ও আয়ের উৎস সম্পর্কিত সুপারিশ প্রণয়ন কমিটির
১২. স্থানীয় সরকার (ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ) অধ্যাদেশ ১৯৮৩
১৩. সিদ্দিকী কামাল/ নুরুজ্জামান সৈয়দ, উপজেলা প্রশিক্ষণ ম্যানুয়েল (জুন ১৯৯০)
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