

**Process Evaluation
Of
People's Reporting Centre Project (PRC)**



7, Circuit House Road, Ramna, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 9360588-9, 9344225-6, Fax: 8315807
E-mail: dwatch@bangla.net
Website: www.dwatch-bd.org

Funded By : HRGG-PSU/DANIDA

Acknowledgement:

Taleya Rehman

Coordination:

Mostafa Sohel

Data Analysis, Editing and Report writing:

Saiful Islam

Assisted By:

Feroze Mohammed Nurunnabi Jugal
Mahiuddin Rana
Tawfik Alahi
Nilufar Yasmin

Data Collection:

Jessore Local Office
Gazipur Local Office
Nilphamari Local Office
Dinajpur Local Office

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Preface:

Process Evaluation of Peoples Reporting Center Project

People's Reporting Center (PRC) project of Democracywatch operating successfully in specific working areas since October 2003. The organization conducted a Baseline Survey in the working areas and non-working areas respectively to assess the performance of Union Parishad before starting the project. After analyzing the survey Democracywatch find out the problems and worked with those unions to change the situation.

After one year of work we have a comparative results which easily describe the present situation of the said UPs. This process evaluation made significant contribution towards the project.

Union Parishad: Perceptions of the inhabitants

1. Background:

Union Parishads (UP) has had a continuous existence since the 1880s, though their functions and constitution have changed over time, and they are currently the only elected, statutory local government body for the rural Bangladesh. The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance of 1983 and its subsequent amendments provide the legislative framework for UPs, which are further regulated and controlled by orders and circulars issued by the Ministry of Local Government¹.

Each Union is divided into nine Wards. One member is directly elected to the UP from each Ward on the basis of adult franchise. One-woman member is directly elected from each of the three old Wards by the voters (male and female electors). The UP Chairman is directly elected on the basis of adult franchise from the whole of the Union. Thus a UP comprises 9 elected Ward members, three elected women members, and an elected Chairman.

Democracywatch has undertaken a project named Peoples Reporting Centre (PRC) on local government in cooperation with the Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA). Initially six Union Parishads (namely Bason, Fathepur, Ramnagar, Khogakharibari, Singra and Bulakipur) under the district of Gazipur, Jessore, Nilphamari and Dinajpur, were chosen as the operational area of the project.

¹ See Article 76, 77 of the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1983

1.1 Objectives of this Study:

General Objectives of the Study:

To determine people's expectations and to appraise existing situations on some selected UPs.

Specific Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To obtain the people's perception about the LG bodies functioning
- ✓ To obtain people's opinion about the quality of the services provided by the LG body
- ✓ To determined demands made by the local people for the services expected from the elected representatives
- ✓ To assess people's perception about the efficiency of the elected chair, members etc.
- ✓ To get a picture of local initiatives taken by the people as alternative solution
- ✓ To get a picture about the sector-wise development plans taken by the concerned authorities
- ✓ To make a list of social dispute filed and remedies given by the local body
- ✓ To know people's perception about the law and order situations of the locality
- ✓ To know People's Perception about PRC activities.

1.2 Methodology:

Data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire. Through a sample frame as many as 219 female and 382 male respondent being drawn from 6 Unions covering 4 Upazilas in 4 districts were interviewed through a structured questionnaire. The field survey was conducted over a period of a month starting from 15 November 2004. A total of 601 people were interviewed. The gathered data was processed, verified and analyzed on the computer using such software as FoxPro and SPSSWIN. This report is based on the findings from the resident survey.

2. Findings:

Peoples' Awareness on Local Government Activities

- ✓ Now the people of the surveyed locality are aware on Union Parishad functioning. Respondents are known most of the functions of Union Parishad.
- ✓ About 50.4 percent of the respondents knew the existence of different committees of their Union Parishad in the year of 2004, which was only 20 percent in the year of 2003. Out of these respondents 55.2 percent are male and 42.0 percent are female. On the basis of district category 65.0 percent respondents of the Nilphamari know the Union Parishad has some committees, On the other hand 69.0 percent respondents from Dinajpur said that they knew nothing about the Union Parishad committees. The comparative difference between the year 2003 and 2004 are shown below.

Table A: Respondents knowledge about UP committees

District	2003		2004	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Gazipur	34.6	65.4	50.0	50.0
Jessore	18.7	81.7	62.7	37.3
Nilphamari	31.1	68.9	65.0	35.0
Dinajpur	8.4	91.6	31.0	69.0
Total	19.9	80.1	50.4	49.6

- ✓ In reply to the question, '*In your opinion, are you Satisfied with the performance of Union Parishad performs?*' 53.4 percent of respondents answered that it carries out its duty properly and they are satisfied. 27.5 percent thought that its performance is average and 19.2 percent said that it has not been doing its job properly.

Table B: Respondents satisfaction on UP performance

	2003	2004
	Percent (%)	Percent (%)
Very Satisfied	1.5	3.5
Satisfied	20.3	49.9
Moderate	40.2	27.5
Dissatisfied	35.4	18.5
Very dissatisfied	2.6	.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Main cause of dissatisfactions is:

	%
1. Member, Chairman doesn't do any work	22.7
2. They are failure to do their duties and responsibilities	15.5
3. Communication system is very bad	12.7
4. Party people get priority	9.1

Demand for Better Services

- ✓ 26 percent of the respondents went to the Union Parishad over the last six months for their necessity. With these problems/necessity, on average concerned authorities were contacted six times and were pressed for having a solution. For every solution they use to take money on an average Tk. 37.09 and average time taken for any solution is 4 days. Overall, 70.9 percent of the respondent got positive results from contacting the authority, which was 9.2 percent in the year 2003.

Table C: Went to the Union Parishad over the last six months

	Percent (2003)	Percent (2004)
Yes	16.0	26.0
No	84.0	74.0
Total	100.0	100.0

- ✓ In reply to the question 'Have you got any help from chairman or member?' 26.5 percent people said that they always get help from chairman or member. 60.6 percent respondent said that sometimes they get help from them. 10.1 percent replied they (UP Representatives) are hardly available and 1.3 percent respondent never got any help from them.

Table D: Respondents got help from chairman or member

	Percent (2003 Before PRC)	Percent (2004 After 1 year)
Always available	20.9	26.5
Sometimes	49.7	60.6
Very few time we met with him	17.9	10.1
Never met	7.1	1.3
No comments	4.3	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Initiatives Taken by Local People

- ✓ In addition to the services provided by the surveyed Union Parishad, the inhabitants have undertaken some initiatives by their own. Most notable among them are:
 - Reconstruction of lanes/roads in front of their households/locality
 - Shalish
 - Distribution of VGF card

People's Perception on Elected Local Officials

- ✓ The respondents were asked to evaluate their respective UP officials (chairman, members, and Women members) on the basis of some traits. The responses are given below in percentage:

Table F: Evaluation of Chairman/Members- Union Parishad

Traits	Very high			High			Average			Poor			Very poor		
	C	M	WM	C	M	WM	C	M	WM	C	M	WM	C	M	WM
Honesty	11.2	3.0	1.4	34.8	23.0	22.0	47.6	60.3	61.4	3.3	8.0	10.0	3.0	5.2	5.3
Ability to socialize	10.3	5.7	3.2	45.1	32.7	24.9	33.4	47.9	46.4	6.6	7.9	14.7	4.5	5.8	10.8
Knowledge about the locality	14.2	10.5	7.9	38.5	27.9	20.6	37.9	46.4	43.2	5.4	10.3	18.4	4.0	4.9	9.9
Ability to resolve problems	5.7	2.7	2.1	33.0	15.6	9.2	44.3	57.5	44.9	9.5	15.1	26.0	7.5	9.1	17.8
Responsibility	5.0	2.7	1.2	26.1	12.8	9.7	52.4	52.4	51.0	10.2	17.8	23.2	6.3	14.4	15.0

C=Chairman, M=Member, WM= Women Member

- From the above table it is understood that people of the surveyed locality rated their elected representatives very highly against above-mentioned five traits. However, there are some divergences in people's opinion and perception on their Chairman/members. Average 32.2 percent of the respondent said that the UP representatives of their locality are honest and 11.5 percent rated dishonest.
- On the ground of capability to meet people of the locality, a large number of respondents 55.4 percent rated the chairman is capable, 38.4 percent for members and 28.1 percent respondent said for women member. It illustrates that the chairman and member is more capable and women member is less capable to meet the people of their respective locality. But the women members are increase their capability from 22.8 percent to 28.1 percent.

- About the state of the locality, above table shows that the Chairman are more familiar than the member and women member.
- For resolving the problems of the inhabitants of the respective Union Parishad, 38.7 percent interviewee answered that chairman is efficient, where as only 11.3 percent said for the women member.
- For responsibility above table shows that the chairman has more responsible then member and women member.
- On the basis of these five traits, among the UP representatives, women members are illustrated as incompetent respect to their Ability to resolve problem and responsibility though the women representation has been introduced in the Union Parishad since 1976.

Assessment of respective UP women member

Table F: People's perception about Women member

	Percent (2003)	Percent (2004)
Satisfactory	30.1	40.1
Couldn't understand	17.3	11.5
Not satisfactory	19.8	18.5
Don't know about her duties	30.4	29.0
No answer	1.5	1.0
Don't Know	0.8	-
Total	100.0	100.0

- ✓ 40.1 percent of the respondents said that the duties of women members are in satisfactory level; it's now increased 10.0 percent. 18.5 percent not in satisfactory, But now the dissatisfactory level is 1.4 percent. 30.4 percent respondents said that the women members doesn't know their duties in the year 2003, now the percent is 29.0.
- ✓ Those who are not satisfied (18.5 percent) with the duties that performed by the women members, out of them 25.5 percent says that women members

have not visited their wards. 22.5 percent answered that Women members has lack of communication with general people and 13.7 percent answered that people don't know her.

Table G: Causes of dissatisfaction about Women member

Causes of dissatisfaction	Percent
Women members are not visit their words	25.5
Lack of communication with general people	22.5
People don't know her	13.7
She doesn't take any initiatives for helping people	9.8
Women members have no idea about their duties	7.8
They don't get any work from UP	6.9
Her work is not satisfactory	3.9
Don't help the poor people	2.9
Don't care about their commitment	2.9
Women members are not serious about their duties	2.0
Women members are illiterate	2.0
Total	100.0

- ✓ 40.3 percent of the male and 39.7 percent female respondents are satisfied with the performances of UP women member. It shows that the women respondents are less satisfied than men with the women LG representatives' performances.

	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Satisfactory	40.3	39.7	40.1
Couldn't understand	10.5	13.2	11.5
Not satisfactory	20.2	15.5	18.5
Don't know about her duties	28.3	30.1	29.0
No answer	.8	1.4	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Local Problems Identified by the Residents

- ✓ The respondents identified some 'Major' problems that need to be solved. Three problems, in order of magnitude are as follows:
For Union Parishads:

- Road reconstruction, particularly small roads of the locality
- Setting up tube-wells/Sanitary latrine in every household and
- Development of education.

Table H: Major problems of Union Parishad

Category Level	Percent
Road reconstruction	81.8
Agriculture/irrigation	8.7
Plantation	7.2
Help poor people	4.7
Development of education	26.6
Create scope for job	4.5
Health care/family planning	18.4
Improve law and order	9.4
Proper shalish	7.0
Sanitary latrine/tube well	54.5
Birth & death registration	5.7
Proper distribution of VGF/VGD card/relief	10.9
Protect child marriage/women torture	2.3
Social development	1.2
Electricity	20.4
Religious establishment	3.8
Improvement of local bazar	2.2
Protect dowry	7.0
Solve gas problem	2.3
Increase old age allowance	6.5
Cleanliness	2.0
Protect abuse of drug	2.2
Collect tax	.3
Culvert	12.2
Women Education	1.5
Drainage System	12.7
Culture & recreation	2.1
Build small Dam	1.7
Establish Post office	1.0
Flood control	2.2
Political influence	.8

(Used Multiple responses)

3. Recommendations:

In the backdrop of the above findings and review, we may suggest that:

- Strengthening and capacity building of Union Parishads needs to be addressed from a broader perspective. Need for training of the UP officials (both male and female). However, it is to be noted that because of adverse socio-cultural conditions and relatively low level of competences, the need for training of the Female UP members deserves priority over the male members. Side by side Secretary of the union parishad should include for the extensive training programmes.
- The non-government organizations, civil societies, and the government to raise and increase awareness, and to create demand among the people for having services from their local governments should take extensive programs and campaigns. Because it is very clear that after a long intervention from the PRC programme the situation of UP has been changed. It has taken a positive turn to the UP officials.
- A Committee should be formed in every ward, consists of local people, public leaders, Imams and teachers. The Committee will present the respective UP people's demands to the UP officials.
- Committee will act as a catalyst and assist to improve the service delivery in Union Parishad with local people.
- Increase Video show, Public meeting and Yard meeting to aware mass people of the Union.

4. Conclusion:

It has been observed throughout the fieldwork that people's awareness and attitude towards their Union Parishad is as low as the services and benefits they receive from local bodies. Union Parishad's activities and services have a little or no impact on rural lives. People are only enthusiastic and show interest during UP elections and afterwards they do not find any utility of Union Parishad.

Throughout the field visit two issues of importance has been revealed. Firstly, local elected bodies, more precisely; the Union Parishads need more legal authority as well as monetary and resource control to meet the necessities of the people and requisite development of rural Bangladesh. Secondly and finally, the non-government organizations, civil societies, and the government to raise and increase awareness, and to create demand among the people for services from their local governments, which they are entitled to get, should undertake enormous programs and campaigns.

Appendix I

GENDER

	Percent
Male	63.6
Female	36.4
Total	100.0

UNION

	Percent
Bashon	16.6
Fatepur	16.8
Ramnagar	16.6
Khagakharibari	16.6
Shingra	16.6
Bulakipur	16.6
Total	100.0

DISTRICT

	Percent
Gazipur	16.6
Jessore	33.4
Nilphamari	16.6
Dinajpur	33.3
Total	100.0

OCCUPATION

	Percent
Service	12.6
Student	8.2
House wife	25.5
Farmer	17.8
Business	21.0
Tailor	.5
Hawker	.3
Carpenter	1.5
Teacher	6.2
Driver	.3
Mechanic	.5
Jobless	.5
Labour	.5
Retired	.7
Doctor	1.8
Imam	.7
Rickshaw/Van Puller	1.0
Advocate	.2
Others	.3
Total	100.0

MSTATUS

	Percent
Unmarried	18.1
Married	80.2
Widow	1.0
Separated	.3
Husband or Wife left	.3
Total	100.0