

**PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS  
AT GRASS-ROOT LEVEL: A CASE STUDY OF ALAMPUR AND  
JAGANNATHPUR UNION PARISHAD**

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## Abstract

Despite participatory development process is given prominence in National Rural Development Policy, people-centric development culture has not yet been institutionalized in rural Bangladesh. In the academic discourse decentralization has long come to be regarded as the best way of integrating local people into the web of development. Development practitioners, however, see decentralization as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for involving cross-section of local people into development intervention. Because of elite domination a powerful few customarily overshadow the powerless mass, the poor and the marginalized and successfully block their meaningful integration in local government bodies in Bangladesh.

The present study is an endeavour to have a fresh look at the local governance status through assessing the level of people's participation in development process. The study also explores the actors and factors shaping participation as well as causes for non-participation. For the purpose of the study two unions namely Alampur Union Parishad under Rangpur district and Jagannathpur Union Parishad under Comilla district were selected. In both Union Parishads (UPs), numbers of respondents from among the community members have been interviewed through a structured questionnaire. Furthermore, selected respondents like Upazila Chairman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Upazila Engineer and Project Implementation Officer (PIO) were also interviewed. In addition, four randomly selected development projects have also been extensively studied as cases.

The study reveals some interesting findings. Though elected members of Union Parishads (UPs), both male and female, equally participate in planning development projects, participation of common people in the preparation stage of those projects is negligible. Project Implementation Committees (PICs) are formed as mere official formalities in which the members are neither adequately consulted nor properly informed of the implementation status of the projects. Participation in PICs, therefore, is very limited and often artificial. Participation of community people in project planning is as low as 7 percent which rises to 24 percent during implementation stage. However, there is a pervasive feeling that development projects are generally non-participatory. The profiles of studied UPs and survey data indicate that the economic and educational diversity influences on the nature and perception of participation of the respondents between the selected UPs. Consequently, though one studied UP namely, Jagannathpur UP shows some promising indications in terms of participatory

practices but these appear to be more of personal initiatives of the UP chairman than of any institutional process. Both qualitative and quantitative data show that socio-economic backgrounds of the participants are found to be vital factors. Participation is mostly limited to the socially, economically and politically well off people. Influence of local Member of Parliament (MP), political leaders at Upazila (UZ) level and nominated local political persons of the local MP in project selection and inclusion of their party men in PICs is a common practice which ultimately hinders to the selection process of public need based projects and the participation of cross-section people in local development projects. In addition, patron-client relations, self-exclusion by the rural enlightened people also shape the nature of participation. Moreover, the existing rules and regulations as well as the structure of UPs as Local Government Institutions (LGIs) do not encourage participation. In synthesis, it is mentionable that all the variables and indicators taken in this study to explain the dependent variable (participation of community people in development projects) have been found to be significantly correlated.

In fact, the elected representatives seem to have developed a patron-client relationship with the rural elites in sharing mutual benefits which keeps the poor and the marginalized outside the development process. In order to break through the unholy alliance and to place a culture participatory practice at UP level, massive awareness program, in collaboration with local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) which are working closely with the poor and the disadvantaged need to be initiated. Project evaluation system should be activated to bring transparency in local project management system and to ensure accountability in the activities of the elected representatives. Enactment of participation friendly guidelines can also be an important option for promoting and encouraging involvement of local beneficiaries in local development projects.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADP	Annual Development Plan
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
CARR	Committee for Administrative Reorganization/Reform
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DDLG	Deputy Director of Local Government
DDO	Drawing and Disbursing Officer
DO	Demi-Official Letter
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DLG	Democratic Local Governance
EC	European Commission
EDD	Empowered Deliberate Democracy
FFWP	Food for Works Programme (in Bengali <i>Kabikha</i> )
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
LG	Local Government
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
LGRD	Local Government and Rural development
LGSP	Local Governance Support Project
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PIO	Project Implementation Officer
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTDC	Thana Training and Development Centre
UDCC	Upazila Development Coordination Committee
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
UZP	Upazila Parishad
WB	World Bank

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# Chapter – 1

## Introduction: Setting the Scene

### 1.0 Study Background

People's participation is the *sine qua non* for development. The notion of people's participation in their development has been gaining momentum in the process of human empowerment and development. Contemporary development scholars have been advocating the inclusion of people's participation in development projects as they believe the avowed objectives of any project cannot be fully achieved unless people meaningfully participate in it. Stone (1989) argues that people's participation in development projects may help bring effective social change rather than impose an external culture on a society. Similarly, referring to the experience of rural development programs, Shrimpton (1989) states that community participation in the design and management of a project greatly enhances the likelihood of project success due to improved goodness of fit and increased sustainability.

The most popular and widely adopted strategy for ensuring people's participation in local development is identified as decentralization. There is perhaps no other institution like local government bodies to provide a wide scope for people's participation at the grass-root level. In Bangladesh, ever since decentralization has become a major policy concern, the political masters have exploited it as a means of gaining their political goals. As a result, despite numerous reform initiatives in this field by the successive governments, Local Government Institutions (LGIs) have not yet emerged as autonomous and self-governing units. This, in turn, limited the scope of mass people's participation in the local decision-making process as well as development process of rural Bangladesh.

In Bangladesh, Union Parishad (UP) is the grass-root institution for integrating local people into the development process. Since independence all the development projects undertaken and implemented at grass-root level are done with the supervision of UP, the lowest platform of Local Government (LG) as it is run by the people's representatives. Ironically the outcome of development projects is not significantly visible as most of those were not guided by the beneficiaries'. Participatory culture in rural Bangladesh therefore, remained a distant reality.

The grassroots reality shows that the local power structure in Bangladesh is concentrated in the hands of local elites. These local elites under the patronage of central and local political leaders of the ruling party mostly controlled the local development programs. Most of the elected UP representatives, though having low educational profile, hail from the upper strata of society. The UP representatives and local political leaders are often labeled as an 'exploitative class' who control the destiny of the rural people by remaining close to the citadel of power (Asaduzzaman, 2008) and they often maneuver people's participation to their own benefits. As a result, despite huge external and internal pressure, the elusive phenomenon of people's participation in local development projects is ignored and remained only in papers as a striking slogan. This study therefore, has tried to review the dilemma of the theory and practice of people's participation in local development projects especially at UP level. It has also tried to explore the level of local people's participation in development projects as well as to identify the factors of low level participation at UP level.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The necessity of people's participation was first felt when the Growth Model of development failed to bring in desired result. The Basic Need Model of development adopted by the developing countries in the 1970s emphasized on the fulfillment of basic needs by diverting resources from the rich and urban sector to the poor and rural sector. This approach practically faced resistance from both the urban and rural elites. Consequently, by the late 1970s emphasis was imparted to 'people's participation' in planning and administration. The prime objective was to involve people in decision making process. During the same period the idea of 'decentralization' also attracted wide attention of the developmentalists as a strategy for ensuring people's participation in devolvement activities. Since 1970s scholars, development practitioners, donors as well as governments particularly those in developing countries, began to consider people's participation through decentralization as a new strategy for development. In the new paradigm, decentralization is regarded as a means to achieve people's participation in development. Consequently, decentralization is emerged as a reform package and people's participation through decentralization came to be regarded as one of its vital objectives (Ahmed, 1987).

Bangladesh has a long history of LG. But it could not achieve the expected level of decentralization and people's participation. All the reforms initiated by the successive

regimes from 1960 to 1989 (Ayub, Zia and Ershad era) were politically motivated. Local development as well as local participation got special priority in the reform package of the military and dictatorial rulers but their hidden agenda was to evolve a new political system to legitimize and civilianize their rules and to extend their control and support base to the grass-root level. As a result, only people with strong socio-economic and political background and with close ties with the power structure had some opportunity to assert their positions in LGIs. The bulk majority of the people particularly the poor and the disadvantaged, enjoyed little or no scope for participation except in electing their representatives (Siddiqui, 1994).

The Constitution of Bangladesh categorically emphasizes the need for establishing LG with a representative character. To this end, the representatives of the LGIs are popularly elected. Though this guarantees people's political participation, the present LG structure hardly provides any scope for participation of common people in decision making process. As a result, participatory development through LGIs is still a dream only. Local people see development projects being implemented but they have hardly any stake in those.

In any developing country, projects are the backbone of local development. Development projects are undertaken to improve the livelihood of the community. Effective management of development projects depends primarily on proper project selection, project design, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, values, norms, social belief and opinions of the local people which are affected directly or indirectly by development interventions should also be considered. Otherwise, sustainability of development projects may generally be questioned.

Local level development projects are generally implemented by UP. Hence, the socio-economic development of the local people largely depends on the proper functioning of this vital institution. Related literature shows that there is very little scope of participation for common people in decision making, management and supervision of UP's development projects. Since independence of the country, thousands of development projects have been implemented by popularly elected UPs, but these have failed to produce desired outcome. Poor villagers still live in misery and deprivation; their basic human needs are not fulfilled. Their lifestyle is not improved as much as it was expected. The participatory practice has not yet been cultured properly. Project information is

hardly disseminated to the community people. An effective evaluation system has not been institutionalized till today. From this backdrop some questions may subsequently arise in the mind of a development practitioner—Does the existing decision making process of UP not promote people’s participation in development process? Does the development projects undertaken by UP suffer ownership crisis? What are the factors that affect the participatory process in UP level development projects? The present study is an endeavour to look through these pertinent questions.

## **1.2 Review of existing Literatures**

There is plethora of literature on local government in Bangladesh, but there is paucity of literature exclusively focusing on people’s participation in development process at local level. However, a few research studies are conducted on people’s participation at grass-root development projects. The core findings of those studies are pointed out here.

Though local level participatory planning is highly demanded from different corners of the society even from government publications for long but participatory planning friendly instructions is almost absent in different development projects guideline which is reflected in a government prescribed detailed guidebook for the union parishad named ‘Union Parishad Training Manual’ published by the National Institute of Local Government (NILG). In the sixth chapter of this book titled ‘Participatory planning at local level’, it was mentioned that,

“Real development has not been achieved because in a top-down method, the demand felt by the people is not reflected and there is no participation and sharing of the people in making plans. In this context importance has been given in local level participatory planning as well as national planning” (NILG, 2003:225).

Ali *et al* (1983) found that people’s participation is the basic tool for achieving national goals of development. In order to implement governmental policies in right perspectives, the people -- the real clients of the governmental operations, are to be involved at all stages of development intervention. But because of bureaucratic preponderance and distrust by the successive governments to the people, people’s participation in a large scale in local development process remained beyond the reach of the ordinary people.

Aminuzzaman (2008) notes that some invisible but serious issues characterize the quality and process of participation and governance of the rural local government. Most critical

ones include: i) continued centralized control over the UP- maintained through the administration and the limited resources at its disposal; ii) the critical and often hidden role of the MPs and other political stakeholders in development planning and management; and iii) lack of effective institutional mechanism which gives poor and marginalized to take part in the development project planning, supervision and or implementation. All such factors have a direct impact on the level and quality of local level accountability and popular participation of the common people into the affairs of the LG. Aminuzzaman also observed that women and marginalized are excluded from major decision-making arenas in the rural power play and privileged distribution.

Another study on people's participation on development projects was conducted by Khan and Asaduzzaman (1995). This study revealed that people's participation in development projects through local government is still a misnomer. The inclusion of local people in the PIC, as part of culturing participating practices is basically a political maneuvering. By this way, UP chairman has to accommodate other UP members and local elites in order to diffuse factionalism and strengthen his own power. In fact, such inclusion did nothing but to fulfill the requirements of rules and regulations. The same study also revealed that patron client relationship pervades the political relationship, resulting in factional politics. This specific clientelist rural politics provides ground for the national leaders for developing clientelist network with the rural factional leaders. This chain of relationship has implications for development intervention. Thus the UPs remain under the domination of these local elites who usurped the development resources for personal aggrandizement. To materialize their desire, they are always dead against the mass people's involvement in local development projects.

Nazneen (2004: 167) found that the participation of the poor and the marginalized in rural development projects has not increased significantly rather some touts and intermediaries have enjoyed more access to those projects and grasped its fruits. In equalities as regards involving, owning development projects and sharing project benefits between the community people and local elites is a ubiquitous reality in rural Bangladesh. There is a general assumption that the interest of the poor and the disadvantaged can not be safeguarded in the exploitive social structure unless it is protected by legislation. In this context, the study revealed that despite the over supply of legislations to protect the rights of the underprivileged, the rural elites have been consolidating their strong repressive

influence on local development interventions. Legal coverage, therefore, does not provide any meaningful role in integrating local people into development project cycle.

Afsar (1999) in her study shows that poor people's participation in local development activities is very limited; community participation in the decision-making process has been very minimal. Because of the over-class bias and widespread corruption there has been severe neglect of the poor and the disadvantaged in the decision-making process. Khan (2009) identifies bureaucratic domination in the local councils, lack of knowledge, and lack of expertise in technical matters are the root causes for non-participation. Local elites form connivance with local administration for their own interests and bypass the needs of the mass. So the scanty participation that exists is limited only to the rich and participation of the rural poor is minimal.

Hossain *et al.* (1978) examines that people's participation in planning and implementation of development projects has been very limited. Siddiquee (1995) observes the same findings in his study. His study also reveals that poor people are hardly included in PICs. Committees are mostly dominated by people with strong socio-economic or political background. In addition, project committees have largely been used as mechanisms of patronage distribution. Development projects have been a means for the local representatives to build a future for themselves. He further identifies that prevailing socio-economic and political contexts act as important deterrents to grassroots' participation in the development process.

Asaduzzaman (2008) found that people's participation in development projects is still an 'elusive golden deer' that the nation sought persistently but could not find during the last three decades or more. His study however, emphasized that clientelism which is a direct product of the undemocratic political culture of Bangladesh, is a major threat to people's participation in local development programs /projects. In addition, the study also identifies political reluctance and bureaucrat resistance as major challenges to people's participation in development intervention in Bangladesh.

People's participation in development programs/projects has been gaining momentum as a new strategy for development since 1970s. In post-independent Bangladesh, almost all the development projects ever taken at grass-root level have been initiated and implemented under the supervision of UP. But the livelihood of poor villagers, the real

beneficiary or victim of development initiatives has not been significantly improved. The participatory culture has not been institutionalized at UP level till today. One of the reasons behind this contention may be improper addressing of the issue through extensive research. In fact, there is lack of empirical evidence on the extent and status of community people's participation in UP-led development projects and identification of the major factors for non-participation and its possible solutions. Therefore, the study is undertaken to fill up the gap of the knowledge of participatory practices in grass-root level development project cycle.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

Participatory development has been at the limelight of academic interest for quite some time. Policymakers as well as development practitioners emphasize on decentralization through LG system to ensure participatory development. Studies have been conducted to explore the level of participation in the local development process in Bangladesh. Geographically the focus of this study is limited to two union parishads of two upazilas under Comilla and Rangpur districts. The UPs belonging to two different regions of Bangladesh and with different socio-economic backgrounds have been purposefully selected. One distinct advantage of selecting these two unions as the unit of analysis is that it will help examining community people's scope and nature of participation in UP level development projects considering the existing economic and educational diversity among people of these two zones. In fact, the study has endeavored to assess the nature of people's participation in development projects (particularly in identification and implementation stages) in Alampur and Jagannathpur union parishads in the financial years of 2008-2009 and 2009-2010. Besides mapping the extent of people's participation in the development process, the study has also explored the factors impeding local people's participation in development project cycle.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

Since independence successive governments have pursued decentralization as an important policy issue. Subsequently, some reforms have also taken place. But it is alleged that decentralization initiatives have failed to realize the avowed objectives of people's participation in development process particularly in local level development projects. Questions are frequently being asked whether decentralization in the country has promoted people's participation, whether the local government institutions have institutionalized

democratic practices or whether all walks of people have been incorporated in the development planning at the local level. The present study is an attempt to address these frequently raised empirical questions. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To assess the level of participation of local people in union level development project cycle.
- To identify the major issues and causes that affects the extent of participation of local people in union parishad-led development projects.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study is intended to answer some questions regarding local people's participation in union-led development projects. The answers to these questions will expose the reality of beneficiaries' involvement in rural development process and will open up the way of addressing the same. The main research question of this study is: Does the existing decision making process of union parishad promote people's participation in development projects? However, the specific research questions are:

1. To what extent the local people are involved in the decision making process of union level development projects?
2. What are the factors/barriers that influence on and/ affect the participatory process in union level development projects?

### **1.6 Rationale of the Study**

Participatory development at local level has been an increasing concern for policy-makers as well as development practitioners. Donors' pressure is another aspect of the whole issue. After independence of Bangladesh, local development projects were prioritized and a large number of projects were undertaken in UP level for the improvement of rural people's livelihood integrating them into the web of development. Only a little progress has been marked regarding institutionalization of participatory culture in UP level development program. But so long the beneficiaries' ownership has not been established in those development program/projects, sustainability of the development programs will be in question. Against this backdrop, any study aiming to explore different dimensions of it is important not only for the development practitioners but also for the policymakers. The study, through its findings and detailed analysis, will help to bring out the latest scenario

of development governance at the grassroots level. It would come up with significant policy guidelines emanating from the findings of the study for the policymakers. It may further help the policymakers identify the loopholes, if any, in the present system and thereby assist them to formulate proper policies in future.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Collecting primary data from any rural area in Bangladesh is not an easy task. Yet in order to make the study a success, many attempts were taken within the existing environment, which also suffered from some limitations.

- Time and resources constraints always pain the researchers. Limited time and resources have been allotted for the completion of this study also. Hence two unions from two upazilas were chosen for convenience.
- Small sample size may be a concern. However, samples of 100 cross-sections of community people along with 22 UP chairmen/members were studied. Though efforts were there to ensure a modest representation of target groups but the sample size might be more than that.
- Access to rural women has always been difficult in Bangladesh. Collecting data from the rural women, vast majority of which is uneducated, proved to be very difficult for the researcher. Many denied to give any interview and those who were not reluctant were found shaky in their responses.

### **1.8 Chapter Outline**

The thesis has been organized into six chapters. The **First Chapter** outlines the topic and background of the thesis. It sheds light on research objectives, rationale, scope and limitations of the study. **Chapter Two** contains the methodology adopted to pursue the study. It discusses the methods and techniques applied for data collection and analysis. The theoretical and analytical framework, on which the study is based, is presented in the **Third Chapter**. It surveys literatures that discusses the prevailing concept of “participation” and “development project” and provides the framework, which has been used for the study. **Chapter Four** specifically deals with a brief account of exploring participatory practices in local level development process in Bangladesh. The history, the dilemma of the theory and practices of people’s participation through decentralization efforts

in Bangladesh and the vision of National Rural Development Policy for local development have also been attempted to explore through analyzing available literatures. **Chapter Five** looks at the Unions under study and presents the findings and subsequent analysis of the study. Finally **Chapter Six** contains the recommendations for improvement of grass-root people's participation in the planning and implementation process of local development project in Bangladesh. In addition, it winds up the study by giving the general summary of this study including the direction for future research.

### **1.9 Summary**

People's participation is regarded as one of the cornerstones of good governance. It helps enhance accountability, transparency and ensure sustainability of development initiatives. Ever since the independence of the country successive governments initiated reforms for decentralization aiming at integrating mass people in the development process. But as most of these reform initiatives were politically motivated, LGIs have not developed into self-governing units. Consequently, participation of community people, particularly the poor and the marginalized, in decision-making process has been historically very limited. Against this backdrop the present study aims at exploring the level of popular participation in development projects undertaken by UPs in Bangladesh. Because of time and resource constraints the study is spatially limited to two UPs and four development projects implemented in the fiscal years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010.

Union Parishads being run by elected representatives since independence of Bangladesh have immense potentiality to be an effective platform for grass-root people's integration into development priorities. Due to relative inaccessibility of community people to UP, it has not grown up as a model institution for ensuring participatory practice. To find out the factors working behind such contention is a time worthy task which will eventually help the policy makers as well as development practitioners to address this issue properly for the coming days. The study therefore, has intended to measure meticulously the status of people's participation in local development projects as well as to identify the reasons behind non participation of beneficiaries into it. Furthermore, the study will provide some policy guidelines for development through recommendations based on its findings and analysis. The next chapter will highlight the methodology applied in conducting this research.

# **Chapter – 2**

## **Research Methodology**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents an overview of methodology and procedures applied in this study. It describes the process that was employed to collect and analyze data in order to explore and measure the level of local people's participation in decision making process as well as development planning at union level.

### **2.1 Research Methods**

Both qualitative as well as quantitative method has been used to carry out the research. Qualitative data is collected through interviewing three target groups; 1) community people, 2) elected representatives like UP Chairman/ member, UZ Chairman and 3) related government officials at field level like UNO, concerned UZ engineer and PIO. In addition, in order to get a deep understanding and reality of local people's participation in planning and implementation of UP-led development projects, some selected case studies have also been studied among the completed or ongoing development projects under the study area. Quantitative data, on the other hand, has been obtained through questionnaires. In this context, the number of respondents has been fixed 130.

### **2.2 Selection of Study Area**

The prime focus of this study is to assess the extent of beneficiaries' involvement in project selection/planning and project implementation. Therefore, the unit of analysis is union level development projects. Two union parishads of Bangladesh; one from northern region i.e. Alampur Union Parishad of Taraganj Upazila under Rangpur district and another from southern region i.e. Jagannathpur Union Parishad of Comilla Sadar Upazila under Comilla district have been selected to collect primary data in this regard. The general assumption is that there exists diversity in respect of educational status and economic condition among the people of these two zones. Selection of these two UP has been made to map whether such diversity impacts on the local people's realization of development thinking or not.

### **2.3 Techniques of Data Collection**

Data were collected during February—March 2010. Both primary and secondary methods of data collection have been used.

## Primary Data

Three methods were used to collect primary data; these are questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and case study.

## Questionnaire Survey

Data have been collected through questionnaire from 100 community people and from 22 elected representatives i.e. UP chairman/member. For this reason two questionnaires one for interviewing the local people and another to interview the representatives of the UP were developed. Later on the questionnaires have been tested extensively for its validation amidst respondents of similar category of Holidhani Union under Jhenidah Sadar Upazila in Jhenidah District. Questionnaire ‘Ka’ (Appendix-A) has been used to interview hundred randomly selected village level respondents, of which seventy were male and the rest thirty were female. Questionnaire ‘Kha’ (Appendix-B) has been used to interview twenty two UP chairman /members, both male and female. In order to triangulate data, questionnaire contains some questions which are common to both groups. The questions were both open and close ended. Some parts of it were designed to get opinions and comments on specific issues from the research participants. Close ended questions were used to save time and open ended questions to get in-depth knowledge and insight; as well as personal experiences and observations.

**Figure: 2.1 Numbers of the Respondents Surveyed**

SI No.	Category	Total Number
1	Community People	100
2	UP Member	20
3	UP Chairman	2

## Interview

In this study, primary data has also been collected through interview. Interview has been taken by the researcher. Interviews of eight UZ level people’s representatives and government officials including UZ Chairman, UNO, UZ Engineer and PIO were taken. Interviews were conducted through unstructured questionnaire. The following table indicates the number of the respondents for interview.

**Figure: 2.2 Numbers of the Respondents Interviewed**

SI No.	Interviewee	Total Number
1	Upazila Parishad Chairman	2
2	UNO	2
3	Upazila Engineer	2
4	PIO	2

### **Case Study**

To assess the participation of key stakeholders in project selection/planning, project design, project implementation and effective involvement in project monitoring activities as member of PICs---are a critical task which can be extensively done through case study. Case study in this research has played a vital role in unearthing the mystery lies behind participatory practices so far cultured in rural Bangladesh. Four randomly selected immediately completed development projects of the financial year 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 of the study area, two from each UP have been studied extensively. The committees of the said projects have been scrutinized. Informal discussion was taken place with some members of the committees in order to explore their socio-economic status and their participation in the project implementation. Some primary beneficiaries of the projects were identified and talked informally with a view to examining their position in the project planning and implementation.

### **Secondary Data**

To give good insight about the research topic, secondary data has been gathered through content analysis. It is used for the reanalysis of previously collected and analyzed data. Secondary data is collected from journal articles, published books, government documents, policy papers, manuals, related Acts/Rules/Regulations, research reports, internet documents etc. The books and published documents relevant to the study were collected from various sources like from Dhaka University and North South University library, BPATC library, NILG library, Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy library, Ministry of LGRD, World Bank and different national dailies.

### **2.4 Sampling**

Altogether two UPs were surveyed in this study. Total respondents were 130; 61 from each union. In general, out of 130 respondents, 122 from Union level and 08 from

Upazila level has been selected. For the purpose of this study the selected respondents are divided into three categories; 1) union level people, 2) elected representatives like UP Chairman/member, UZ Chairman and 3) government officials like UNO, UZ Engineer and PIO.

**Figure: 2.3 Sampling Frame at a Glance**

SI No.	Category	Total Number
1	Community People (Male+Female)	$(35+15) 50 \times 2 = 100$
2	UP Member (Male+Female)	$(7+3) 10 \times 2 = 20$
3	UP Chairman	$1 \times 2 = 2$

### **2.5 Data Processing, Analysis and Validation**

The collected data was accumulated, categorized and analyzed keeping in mind the objectives of the study. The analysis of quantitative data of the stated sources was done with the help of statistical tools like Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), MS Excel etc. and interpretations of data are likely to be based on statistical generalization. The qualitative information is presented in a narrative or tabulated form. Moreover, in some cases, charts and tabulation presentation have also been used to present the findings of the data in a graphic manner. In fact, Quantitative method was used to generalize and identify prevalence from the data provided by the informants. Qualitative method was used to explain the significant phenomenon, causalities, social realities and experiences.

In this study data has been collected by questionnaire survey. Interview method has been followed also. The combination of both methods therefore, helps to collect reliable and valid data. The researcher uses qualitative and quantitative method for collecting data. Combination of both methods that mentioned as logic of triangulation by O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) is considered as one of the best methods in validation of data. The findings of the study from one type of method are used to check against the findings deriving from the other type. Furthermore, it is mentionable that researcher himself visited fields and collected the questionnaires from the respondents personally. Interviews and discussions were conducted by the researcher as well. In case of content analysis, principle of authenticity and objectivity has been maintained. So data are credible and reliable as much as possible.

## **Chapter – 3**

### **Theoretical Perspectives and Analytical Framework**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The central objective of this chapter is to develop a framework for analysis. This chapter has been divided into four parts. In the first part, important concepts have been discussed. Major theories and models of implementation have been examined in part two. Part three discusses the factors affecting and conditioning participation of people in development process. Part four furnishes a framework for analyzing the participation of community people in UP-led development projects. In fact, community people's participation in the development process is the fundamental issue that the research endeavours to address in this study. Hence, a clear understanding of the concept 'participation', 'development' and 'development project' is of vital importance for the present study.

#### **3.1 People: What It Means**

People generally mean a body of citizens of a state or country. In social science parlance, people denotes a group of humans, living in the same country under one national government; a nationality and who used to sharing a common religion, culture, language, or inherited condition of life. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines 'people' as a body of persons who compose a community, tribe, nation, or race; an aggregate of individuals forming a whole; a community; a nation. In this study 'people' includes on the one hand, workers, day labors, minorities, women folk who usually considers as key actors for project implementation; on the other hand, local elites, businessmen and other enlightened and socially responsible persons in the local community who are able to contribute to the planning, designing, monitoring and evaluation stage of development projects.

#### **3.2 Concept of Participation**

People's participation is a popular concern amidst academics, development partners, UN agencies and subsequently most of the Third World governments over the last three decades. Though the mushrooming growth of its offshoots is evident in every specialized branch of development studies such as economics, political science, sociology and lately public administration and public policy analysis, yet participation as a concept still lacked

a systemic theoretical ground and empirical basis of judgment in the social sciences. Now-a-days, people's participation has emerged as an umbrella term for a new approach in development intervention.

Conceptualizing participation is not a simple task. The term participation is generally operationalized differently depending on the context and field in which it is studied. In ancient Greece participation was viewed as a matter of voting, holding offices, attending public meetings, paying taxes and defending the state (Samad, 2002: 49). But in modern times participation became synonymous of 'sharing' (Kaler, 1999: 125). Gram (1993), Oakley and Marsden (1984) and Wolfe (1985) put forward that participation is closely linked with the concept of empowerment. Without empowerment participation may be meaningless. People's participation is the process of empowerment of the deprived, marginalized and the excluded (cited in Samad, 2002: 58).

Participation also means putting the last first. Participation is also partnership. The concept of partnership comes very close to the concept of empowerment. Cohen & Uphoff (1980) viewed participation with regard to development projects as "people's involvement in decision making processes, in implementing program, their sharing in the benefits of development programs" and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such program.

Popular participation can be defined as the active involvement of the local people in the planning and implementation of development projects. For effective plan formulation, control of projects and sharing of benefits of development, participation is necessary. Uphoff (1987) defines four types of participation as stated below (cited in Khan and Asaduzzaman, 1995:98):

- a) Participation in decision making, in identifying, formulating alternatives, planning activities, allocating resources etc;
- b) Participating in implementation, in carrying out activities, managing and operating programs, partaking of services;
- c) Participating in evaluation of the activity and outcomes'; and
- d) Participation in economic, social, cultural or other benefits, individually or collectively.

Since its inception, social scientists, development practitioners and development agencies have been conceptualized the term "participation" in their own view and its scope and

meaning are still open to debate. Khan (1998) summarizes the definitions of participation to date and prepares a list of those. Participation is-

- (a) an organized effort to increase control over resources and regulative institutions;
- (b) people's involvement in decision-making, implementation, benefit-sharing and in evaluation of programs;
- (c) people's capacity to take initiative in development, to become "subjects" rather than "objects" of their own destiny; this can only be achieved through a de-professionalization in all domains of life in order to make "ordinary people" responsible for their own well-being;
- (d) participation involves a reversal of role playing: people should be the primary actors and government agencies and outsiders should "participate" in people's activities.

In this work, participation refers to active or meaningful involvement of local people in UP-led development projects in Bangladesh. To be more precise, only those activities or involvements on the part of local people, which have influenced the decision-making at planning and implementation stage of development projects, have been considered as participation in this study. Any other activities, which have the show of participation, have deliberately been kept out of consideration.

### **3.3 Development: What It Means**

The conceptual base of 'development', which emerged from the dominant modernization paradigm of the 1950s and 1960s and which began equating development with modernization, urbanization, industrialization and westernization, has undergone considerable changes. Even the views of the 1970s, which equated development with the 'fulfillment of basic needs' do not hold well today. Development has been treated as a multidimensional process, involving major changes in social structures, acceleration of economic growth, reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. This process deals not only with the ideas of economic betterment but also with greater human dignity, self-reliance, security, justice and equity (Nazneen, 2004:206). Development, in this study, is concerned basically with the improved quality of life that can be ushered in the grass root level through proper implementing of development projects.

The concept of development is used in different disciplines. In the parlance of development economics 'development' means "improvement in a country's economic and social conditions". More specifically, it refers to improvements in ways of managing an area's natural and human resources in order to create wealth and improve people's lives.

U.S. President Barack Obama views that constant development is the law of life, and a man who always tries to maintain his dogmas in order to appear consistent drives himself into a false position. From that point of view human development is very much needed as it leads to economic development. A country's economic development is related to its human development, which encompasses, among other things, health and education. To bring a positive change in the life of common people, nationwide development programs are undertaken which later on implemented through development projects.

### **3.4 Concept of Development Plan, Program and Project**

National development plans/programs are virtually prepared by every developing country to hasten their economic growth and attain a range of social objectives/goals. These goals are spelt out in sectoral, regional plans/programs, which include economic development projects. Projects provide an important means by which investment and other development expenditures foreseen in plans can be clarified and realized (Gittinger, 1982). However, plans/ programs can be variously defined.

Program is considered as the time phased efforts towards sectoral economic development of a country. A realistic and practical plan visualizes a very close corresponding relationship between the plans, its programs and projects which in turn, are harmonized and integrated intra-sectorally and inter-sectorally in order to move them in steps on the path leading to the achievement of the plan objectives and targets.

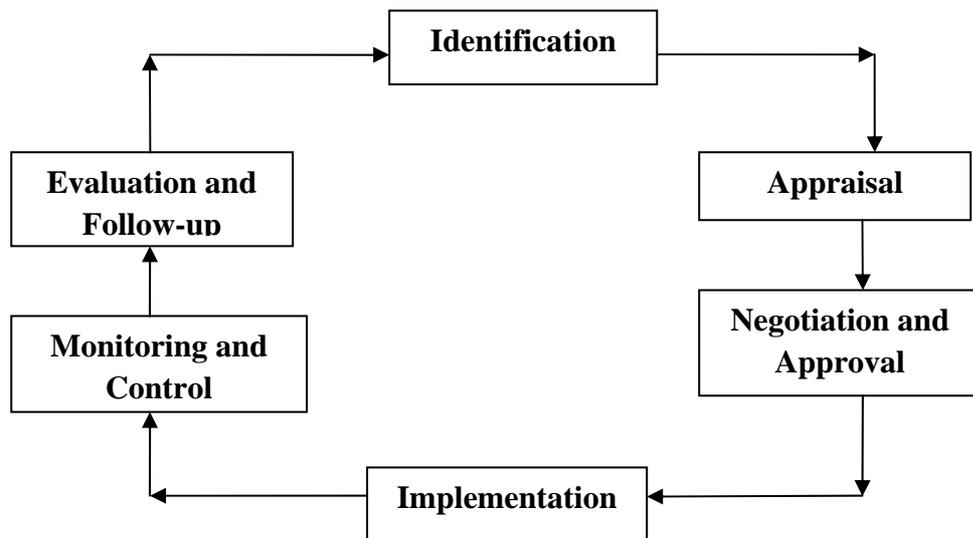
Literally, 'project' is a plan hypothesis with a starting time, a finishing time, a cost and geographical location for achievement or accomplishment of specific objectives. The PMI has defined project as a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service (Project Management Institute, 2004:5). Usually, projects are the supportive part of programs whereas programs are the supportive to development plans. Little & Mirrless (1986) have presented the relationship between plans and projects as twin proportions that "plans require projects" and "projects require plans". Chadha (2005) defines this relationship, as "projects are the pivot of a sectoral program and the sectoral programs in

turn constitute a well-conceived national plan. But the project formulation needs national plans and vice versa thus raising the fundamental issue of the hen and the egg dilemma". Projects, in this study, refer to the development projects undertaken and implemented through LGIs in UP level. A development project, in content and coverage is flourished through several stages which are known as project cycle.

### 3.5 Development Project Cycle

The cycle that projects go through from their initial conceptualization to implementation and evaluation is called the project cycle. A development project sets out to meet a perceived need by a sequence of activities, which includes identification, preparation, appraisal, implementation and evaluation. The sequence has been adapted by Baum (1978). The stages and components of project cycle and their logical sequences can be formulated with the following diagram:

**Figure: 3.1: Project Cycle: The Six Phases**



In the project cycle, *identification of project* ideas is very important to overcome problems or fulfill the development priorities in the context of local objectives. As the development projects affect the life of local people, local people's participation in this stage is utmost necessary. It is the local people who knows the nature of their problem and knows the way of overcoming such problem. So project idea and possible solution must be emanated from initiative by local people. Project *appraisal and approval* may only take place after the policy makers have accepted the project when the funding organizations get satisfied with the feasibility criteria. So it is very technical matter and participation of local people in this stage is not that much important.

**Implementation** is perhaps the most vital stage of the project cycle involving the procurement of equipment and resources, recruitment of personnel and allocation of tasks and resources within the project organization. Under the project implementation plan, resources are mobilized, activities determined and control mechanism established so that the project inputs can produce project outputs in order to achieve the project purpose. Hence local people's participation at this stage is conducive to the successful operation of projects. The purpose of **monitoring and controlling** of a project is to evaluate project performance by providing timely information and feedback to the management from all levels helping the project management to achieve the target of the project.

The final stage in the project cycle is **evaluation**, which is enhanced by follow-up action. Evaluation may be done by different people/concerned agencies/ donors of the project on an ex-post basis to assess the performance of the project to see whether its stated objectives are achieved or not and to what extent it does. For the purpose of present study, community people's participation in the development project activities particularly in the identification and implementation stages of the projects managed under the UP in Bangladesh has been examined only.

### **3.6 Decentralization and People's Participation**

Since 1970 the cosmetic term 'participation' has become part and parcel of the 'developmental' process. During the same period 'decentralization' has also attracted wide attention of the developmentalists from the consideration of effective and efficient management of development activities. 'Decentralization' and 'participation' look like twin sisters; where participation was identified as one of the goals of development, decentralization was considered a means to achieve it or when decentralization was seen as a reform package, participation was regarded as one of its vital objectives.

Because of the paradigm shift in the concept of governance with its focus on 'decentralization' and 'participation', the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of LGIs in various parts of the world. In many countries, in a bid to ensure people's participation in the development process, LG has been promoted and subsequently strengthened through decentralization of power and authority from the central level. In 1990s, development practitioners and donors came up with the agenda of establishing democratic local governance (DLG) through popular participation on both decision-

making process and management of resources. In both developed and developing countries, the paradigm shift is towards participatory approaches in governance.

In a study Blair (2000) identifies the potential of DLG, which includes people from all walks of life in community decision-making, in six developing countries – Bolivia, Honduras, India, Mali, the Philippines and Ukraine. DLG nurtures the practices of participation and accountability. In these countries, measures have been taken to incorporate people like women, ethnic minorities, marginal farmers and the like in the local governance process. Fung and Wright (2001) cite examples of Empowered Deliberate Democracy (EDD), which nurtures the values of participation through LGIs. Participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre city of Brazil has led to efficient allocation of public resources according to public needs and priorities. The system has allowed public control over public fund transforming ‘the clientelistic, vote-for-money budgeting reality into a fully accountable, bottom-up, deliberate system driven by the needs of city residents’. Another example of EDD is the *Panchayat* system in West Bengal and Kerala of India. The system has allowed the poor and the marginalized, particularly women and lower caste members, to be included in decision-making process as well as development process. The dominance of traditional socially and economically elites has been replaced by a more democratic structure which allows everyone participate in decision-making and development process. In Nepal, participatory development approaches have led to social mobilization and paved the way for human resources development.

Bangladesh had been under colonial rule for more than two hundred years. So the colonial tendency of controlling the LGIs by the central government has been engrained into the governance system of the country. Before its independence the country had hardly experienced any effective decentralization effort. Even after the independence, different governments in Bangladesh have taken several reform initiatives to introduce participatory local governance through decentralization of functions and authority to the locally elected institutions. All these governments have recognized the relevance of the role of decentralized local institutions in planning and implementing need-based development projects for poverty alleviation and reduction of socio-economic inequality (Siddiquee, 1995). But the governments have failed to keep their commitment, as the objectives were rhetoric. Rather every successive government has used the LGIs to strengthen their own political base in rural areas, ignoring the principle and importance of

decentralization of power to local level. People's participation through decentralized LG, therefore, in the truest sense is still a misnomer. However, it is evident that development projects have been a means for the local representatives to build a future for themselves. But the prevailing socio-economic and political contexts act as important deterrents to grassroots participation in the development process. In synthesis, it is evident that participation of local people in UP led development projects in Bangladesh is conditioned by multifarious factors.

### **3.7 Factors Conditioning Participation**

Participation is an indispensable ingredient of development and development administration in all countries and occupies an institutional basis in the total process of developmental change. It is the way to improve on traditional ways of making decisions, setting agendas, and devising policy (Rowe and Frewer, 2004:513). But participation is not easy to achieve. People's participation in development programs is not only affected by the environment in which participatory practices take place but also conditioned by the institutional framework, socio-economic as well as political backgrounds of the participants (Cohen and Uphoff, 1980, Cornwall, 2002, Samad, 2002 and Gupte, 2004).

Attempts have been made to analyze participation or participatory approaches from different perspectives. For analyzing people's participation in development programs Cohen and Uphoff (1980) have provided a comprehensive model which incorporates three basic and fundamental dimensions of participation: what kind of participation takes place, who participates and how the process of participation takes place (cited in Ahmed, 1987: 16). The comprehensive model regarding people's participation addresses issues like whether participation is voluntary or directed, whether it is manipulative or whether people are really empowered or not. It also includes historical, natural and social factors that shape the nature and extent of participation. For ensuring social inclusion in policy cycle he includes the criteria like sex, family status, education, social division and income level of the participants whose involvement must be in project identification, implementation, benefits and evaluation stage. Side by side, he mentioned that social, economic, cultural and political factors usually creates bottleneck for people's participation in policy/project cycle. In the case of Bangladesh, all the factors including institutional framework that Cohen and Uphoff mentioned in their comprehensive model

regarding people's participation are more or less influencing in the context of people's accesses in development projects in local level.

In order to examine the factors that affect the effective participation of local people in development project cycle at UP level, various participation theories and models have been reviewed. On the basis of literature review, Cohen and Uphoff's (1980) comprehensive model regarding people's participation is chosen to analyze the participation of community level people in development projects in Bangladesh. Besides Cohen and Uphoff's (1980) model, Community Participation Theory propounded by Khwaja (2004) is also consulted and used for the present study.

The community participation theory assumes that community participation has a real influence on the decision, i.e., greater community participation makes it less likely that the decision is determined by the external agency (Khwaja, 2004:434). Khwaja (2003a) cited in Khawaja (2004:434) checks for this assumption and shows that it is indeed true—higher community participation in a decision also implies a lower likelihood that the external organization rather than the community is identified as the main decision maker. The participation of citizen is essential at each stage of a project cycle. In community participation theory, focuses are given on the participation of beneficiaries, and not that of government personnel in the development project. The joint or collaborative involvement of beneficiaries in groups is a hallmark of community participation; and that community participation refers to a process and not a product in the sense of sharing project benefits. Participation of people is of utmost essence while identifying a project. If their participation is ensured, they can best fit the need, nature and type of project according to their own need as well as challenges and constrains. Even they can identify the core social issues better than the staffs working at UP level. Moreover, their participation in project identification imbibes the sense of ownership among them which will, help during the implementation of the project in question.

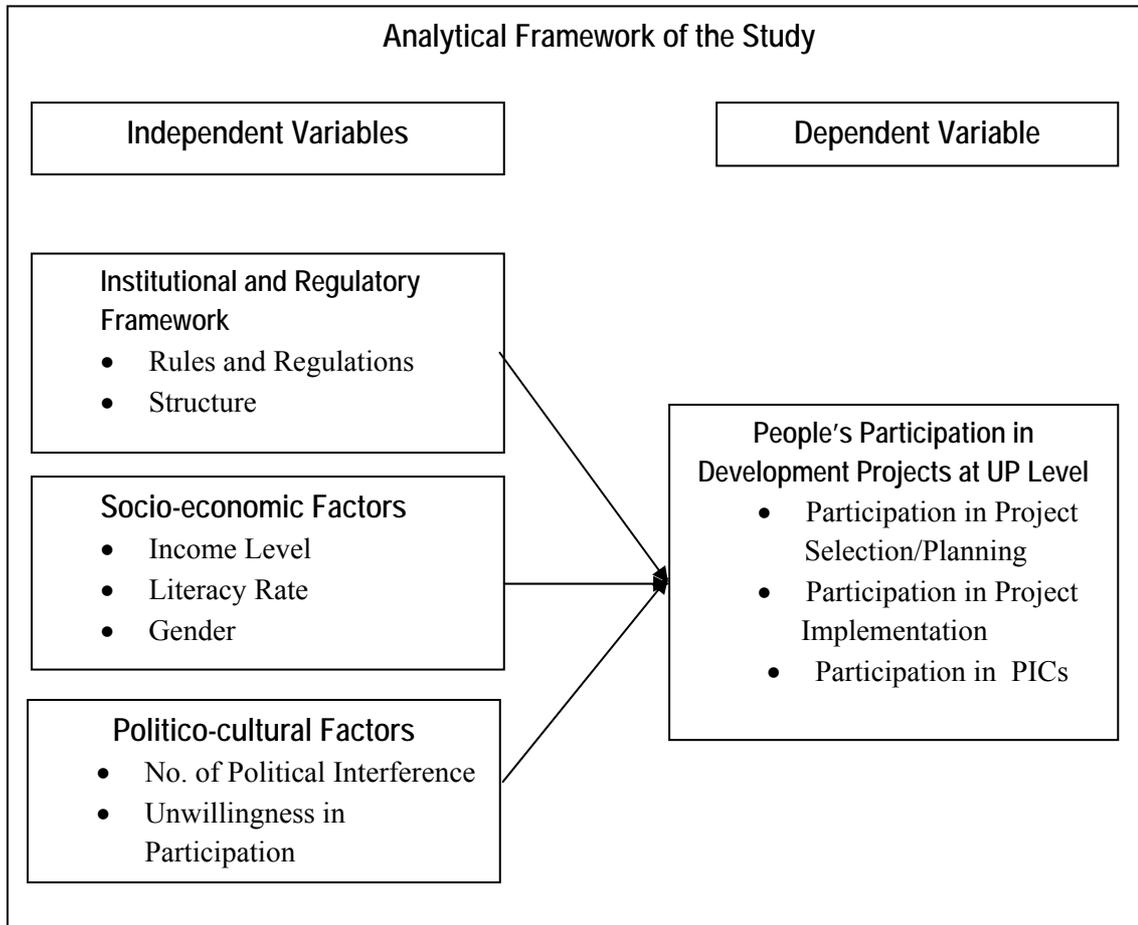
### **3.8 Analytical Framework of the study**

In the present study, people's participation in development project at UP level is dependent variable. The existing institutional and regulatory framework, socio-economic status of the people and the prevailing politico-cultural situation which largely affects and shapes participation of UP level people in development projects, are taken as independent variables. On the basis of the aforementioned literatures, discussions of various theories

and propositions and various findings of the scholars, the researcher would like to operationalize the variable through the following analytical model (Figure: 3.2).

**Figure: 3.2**

**Framework for Analyzing People’s Participation in UP-led Development Projects**



**3.9 Operational Definition of Independent Variables and its Indicators**

The present section is devoted to the independent variables used in this study. The main assumption is that there are a number of social, cultural, economic and political factors that may have been affecting and arguably encumbering to some extent the effective participation of community people in development activities in UP level. For the purpose of analysis, the main factors that may affect community people’s participation in development projects especially in planning and implementation stages are mainly categorized in three areas; a) institutional and regulatory framework, b) socio-economic factors, and c) politico-cultural factors. For better understanding, an attempt has been made here to clarify the variables and its determining indicators.

### **Institutional and Regulatory Framework**

The congenial institutional structure and supportive legal framework of an organization is considered as a precondition for ensuring stakeholders' access in planning and implementation process of its development programs. In Bangladesh politically authoritarian and highly centralized state structure mingled with political rent-seeking inhibited the poor and the marginalized generally in involving the domain of decision-making process at local level. In addition, complex regulatory framework of UP acts as deterrent in integrating and elating the community people into local development projects.

### **Structure**

The institutional structure integrates and widens the scope of all parties involved in successful operationalization of development projects. It instigates and encourages people to participate in development initiatives undertaken by it. In this study, structure indicates the existing UP's formatting. Due to the colonial tendency of heaving power in the center and the bureaucratic tendency of establishing control on local council, UP has failed to emerge as a well-structured LGI though it is being run by people's representatives for a longer period. Lack of expertise in technical matters and absence of gradual institutional reform has made the existing UP structure non-participatory (Khan, 1991).

### **Rules and Regulations**

Proper legal provision is very important in shaping the institutional procedures as well as ensuring and protecting the participatory right of community people in development projects. The indicator has been used to assess the extent of influence of the existing rules, regulations and guidelines of UP in encouraging local people into the participatory practices at local level.

### **Socio-Economic Factors**

People's participation is greatly determined by the socio-economic factors in which they are bound to live and adjust. The socially poor, disadvantaged community and minorities are seldom asked for participation in government run program/ projects. This is shaped by the prevailing social norms and cultures in a society. As social theory implies, the social determinants for participation are gender, economic status, level of education, person's influence in the society. Actually social-economic factors play significant role in shaping both participation and participatory outcomes. Age-old traditions like gender stratification, social backwardness, patron-client relation and so forth in the society may

seriously inhibit the process of participation. Social exclusionary practices like gender inequality, religious factors etc. may undermine participation of certain groups particularly the women in decision-making (Gupte, 2004: 366).

### **Income Level**

In a traditional society, income level of a person is considered as an important criterion for judging one's ability. Similarly, to assess the extent of participation of common people in development project, income level as an indicator has been chosen in this study. There is a general assumption that higher the income level, higher the participation. As a result, it can be said that lower income level affects participation. Economic condition of people also determines their active participation in project run by local government. Economically strong people often make alliances with the elected representatives and exploit their positions to ensure mutual gains. It may be inferred from their proposition that the better-off people in society in terms of economy easily get participation in various government run programs because their social identity is the prosperity and the social prestige they hold in the society. Moreover, they are key influential persons in the society in absence of who hinder the implementation of government run program and policies.

### **Literacy Rate**

Education is the pass word to enter into the development intervention. Meaningful participation in development project largely depends on the educational status of community people. Hence, to explore the level of participation of common people in development project, literacy rate or educational status has been chosen as an indicator in this study. It is evident that illiterate people hardly understand the nitty-gritty of a project and thus their illiteracy is a great hindrance to their participation in PICs. Illiterate people are often looked down upon as problematic as they more often cannot articulate their demands and put forward their opinions in a systematic way. Hence, their illiteracy is leading them to non-participation.

### **Gender**

For ushering a balanced development, integration of cross-section of people irrespective of gender is a viable option. The rural society is predominantly patriarchal in which female participation in development activities is traditionally looked down upon. The common religious sentiment is also against women's spontaneous participation in development program. However, people with strong family background enjoy privileges

at all levels. In fact, without the support of the traditionally strong families implementation of any development program in UP level is very difficult.

### **Politico-Cultural Factors**

Politico-cultural factors are also responsible for constraining participation of people in projects run by local government. Likewise, socio-economic factors, political backgrounds of stakeholders have been influential factor in shaping the participation outcomes. Powerful stakeholders, who are politically, socially and economically dominant, for their own interests may thwart the participation of their counterparts (Samad, 2002). In fact, in most of the cases, interests of the political elites and administrators, who run the regime, penetrate the arena and shape the outcomes. From time immemorial a politico-cultural factor i.e. patron-client relationship<sup>1</sup> has engrained in the local community of Bangladesh.

### **Number of Political Interferences**

The said indicator has been used to quantify the perpetual truth i.e., political intervention in local development program. In many cases, project are selected not on the basis of local people's urgent need and demands but for facilitating local ruling party political leaders or elected representatives closest ones some undue advantages. Political interference, therefore, is a common phenomenon in processing rural development projects in Bangladesh. Historically politics has been preserved for very small, relatively homogeneous elite who shares a common education, culture, and ethos; interacts socially; and intermarries in this land. The political arena is dominated by informal networks of patron-client relations which ultimately prevent the local people to be involved in the development projects. These networks of patron-client relations coupled with complex bureaucratic structure of the country make participation difficult (Kochanek, 2000:547).

### **Unwillingness in Participation**

Meaningful contribution in development projects largely depends on people's spontaneous participation on it. Furthermore, to make any development program a success, involvement of cross-section of people into it is a necessary precondition. In

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<sup>1</sup> Relatively a dominated portion of the society who had good terms with influential ruling party masters takes over patronage network. They become the patrons "buying off" the demands of potential clients from amongst the aspiring intermediate classes and using this political power to bargain for resource allocation to their particular faction or getting the works done for them.

rural Bangladesh, traditionally and culturally people particularly socially enlightened class and female folk are non-participatory in nature. The socially enlightened class is self-centered and always tries to avoid involving into existing participatory practices rather thinking it as an unnecessary hassle. The female folk on the other hand, traditionally and religiously engaged themselves into household works and always try to express unwillingness to involve into local development projects. Such type of attitude has become a part of rural tradition. In order to quantify the cultural influence on participation, unwillingness in participation has been chosen as an indicator in this study.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

People's participation is a broad and comprehensive societal happening that can not take place in isolation. Participation is the by-product of a democratic, civic and political cultural process. Multifarious social, cultural, political, economic factors inhibit participation. Even the state itself in its anti-participatory mode inhibits participation, but promotes participation when it is in participatory mode. Thus, participation is a complex affair, which is required to make balances among many conflicting factors. The present study explores the level of participation of local people in the planning and implementation of development projects at UP level by examining the factors that affect it. Furthermore, the framework of participation, developed by the author based on Cohen and Uphoff's basic framework for describing and analyzing participation including the views of community participation theory, has been used to analyze the nature and extent of participatory practices in local level development projects. The next chapter will depict a brief overview of the participatory practices in the local development process of Bangladesh.

## Chapter – 4

# Exploring Participatory Practices in Local Development Process of Bangladesh

### 4.0 Introduction

Decentralization and people's participation at all levels of administration are two basic tools for achieving national goals of development. In order to implement governmental policies in right perspectives, the people --- the real clients of the governmental operations, are to be involved at every stages of administrative hierarchy. The emergence of the two concept 'decentralization' and 'people's participation' in public administration and development literature is not just a coincidence rather both are considered as a package for development i.e. participation is identified as one of the goals of development; decentralization is considered as a means to achieve it. As policy model decentralization not only offers opportunities for the local people to interact with government institutions and be integrated in the governance process but it has come to be regarded as a key to effective public administration and good governance as well as a facilitator to sustainable development. Throughout the world there has been a growing interest in decentralization and since 1970s decentralization efforts have been a common phenomenon in various parts of the world.

In Bangladesh, the idea of decentralization is not new. A large number of Committees and Commissions in the past right from the British Rule through Pakistan period devoted some of their attention to involving the common people into local development initiatives through decentralization program though these initiatives continued to be slow and obscure (Ali *et al*, 1983). However, in 1980s the policy of decentralization was emphasized and subsequently undertaken to increase the quantum of popular participation at the grassroots level development initiatives. The 1980's decentralization effort in the country led to the creation of UZs and establishment of administrative setup at levels lower than the district. This chapter focuses on the decentralization effort ever taken in Bangladesh to unearth the status of people's participation in local development process.

#### **4.1 Decentralization for People's Participation in Development Process in Bangladesh: Past and Present**

Decentralization is being widely recognized in all developing countries as a vital strategy for ensuring grass-root level democracy and participatory development. Bangladesh has repeatedly experimented with decentralization in the colonial, post-colonial and post-independence period. Every successive regime between 1882 and 2008 attempted to reform the local government structure. The first initiative of decentralization in the land dates back to the year 1882 when Ripon Resolution was enacted. Towards the end of the nineteenth century LG system was also introduced by the-then British rulers. Since then a considerable number of decentralization initiatives have been taken by different governments in various forms. The avowed objectives of those reform initiatives had been building as well as strengthening the capacity of local level organizations particularly of LGIs and in the process to create scopes and opportunities for the participation of community people in the management of local affairs. But, since the ultimate objective of the colonial regimes was to consolidate the colonial power, the decentralization efforts taken and implemented during the British colonial rule and Pakistan period had been piecemeal, narrow and restrictive in nature (Siddiquee: 1995: 150). As a result the stated objectives of decentralization could not be achieved. Hardly any major changes occurred in the pattern of local people's participation in the decision-making as well as development administration. During the colonial period mass people's participation in the development process had always remained a distant reality.

A decentralization policy for rural development under the banner of the Basic Democracies system was introduced in 1959 by General Ayub Khan, which offered a four-tier government i.e. Union Council at Union level, Thana Council at Thana level, District Council at District level and Divisional Council at Divisional level reflecting a mix of deconcentration and devolution (Khan, 1997:8). During Pakistan period, union councils played important political role. As a result, participation had been limited to local political elites only.

Since independence almost every government explicitly committed itself to decentralization and made efforts towards this end. The new Constitution of Bangladesh had provisions for representative bodies at all level of LG. In 1973, the President's Order 22 was promulgated under which some reforms in the LG had been taken: 1) a three-tier LG namely Union Parishad (Council), Thana Development Committee and Zila Parishad were introduced; 2) District Governorship was introduced; 3) UP election was held in 1973. Although to ensure

the grass root democracy, the UP election was held but the government did not hold election to the other LG tiers nor did it take any measures to devolve authority to any of them. So it is evident that during this period more attention was vested to national than local issues.

A more significant change in the LG system was brought about in 1976 through the Local Government Ordinance, 1976. This Ordinance provided for a UP for union, a Thana Parishad for thana and a Zila Parishad for district. However, no election was held in any tier except UP. In 1980, as a result of the said Ordinance, Swanirvar Gram Sarker was introduced for the first time at village level in Bangladesh providing for an equality of representation to various functional interests like farmers, landless laborers, freedom fighters, women and youths. Many argues that implicit objective of the reform package of decentralization was to gain political support at grass root level for the military regime in its process of civilianization.

The important event in the history of LG system in Bangladesh was marked through the introduction of Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganization) Ordinance in 1982. This Ordinance followed by three new Acts was passed to install his 'decentralized' LG system. The Upazila Parishad Ordinance (1982) was particularly significant as this was supposed to help the implementation of the decentralization program of the government. Under the Ordinance, some reforms in the LG had been taken: 1) decentralization of administration through the abolition of former sub-divisions and upgraded the Thanas into Upazilas; 2) UZ was established having more functions and responsibilities and huge funds were allocated to it directly; 3) UZ was made the focal point for rural development; 4) officers from different departments were placed at UZ level; 5) the Gram Sarker was abolished. The major change that occurred was that for the first time all development functions were given to the locally elected council and the councils were supported by devolution of financial powers to enable it to plan and implement projects of local importance through popular participation. In the newly introduced system, a significant shift 'in control of local decision-making from the bureaucracy to democratically elected groupings' occurred (Siddiquee, 1995). But the momentum of the UZ system did not last long. Moreover, the UZ system was also thought to have decentralized corruption and any significant degree of participation was far from being achieved (Khan, 1987:407).

The elected chairman of the council was also given the authority to plan and implement development projects without seeking approval from higher authorities. The Chairman of the

Committee for Administrative Reform/Reorganization (CARR), which suggested the reform, stated that the rationale and objectives for decentralization were:

- ❖ Improvement of socio-economic condition of the people;
- ❖ Involvement of the people in the constructive decision-making process;
- ❖ Creation of opportunities for cooperation and coordination among the decision-makers, persons involved in implementation and local people, with a view to ensuring a dynamic development process;
- ❖ Making government officials accountable to people's representatives and effectively distributing various administrative responsibilities among local level authorities;
- ❖ Preparation and implementation of projects according to the needs of local people and
- ❖ Bridging the gap between people and administration (cited in Alam *et. al*, 1994: 17).

Bringing administration closer to the people and thereby ensuring popular participation in the decision-making process was the stated objective of the introduction of Upazila system. Planning Commission (1983) in one of the important government documents says that:

The main objective of decentralization is to induce faster and appropriate development at the local level through direct participation of the local people. This will help in identification, planning and implementation of development projects which will benefit the local people most, more easily than before (cited in Siddiquee: 1995: 152).

After nine years of reasonably effective implementation of UZ System, the democratic government under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia coming into power abolished the UZ system in 1991 and reinstate the bureaucracy dominated thana administration i.e. TTDC where the chairmen of UP were given the chairmanship by rotation and TNO was made secretary to it by promulgating the Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganization) (Repeal) Ordinance, 1991. Since then no significant changes have taken place in the structure of the LG in Bangladesh. Though several Commissions were formed, their recommendations for 'major changes' in the structure, composition, functions and finances of rural LG bodies have not been implemented. The Non-party Caretaker Government, after coming to power in 2007, chose to re-establish UZ system and accordingly Ordinance was promulgated. The UZ election has been conducted in January 2009.

The newly elected Awami League government has recently enacted The Upazila Parishad (Reintroduction of the Repealed Act and Amendment) Act, 2009 detailing the functions and

duties of the UZ. The law has created widespread controversy among the civil society members and caused discontentment amongst the newly elected representatives of UZs. The role of MP as stipulated in the law has been termed by many as a bottleneck for development administration as well as participatory local governance. In fact, the UZ system is now struggling for tripartite power shedding among local MP-UZ Chairman-UNO or control crisis i.e. who controls whom. It is a fact that after a long interval, constant experimentation and ups and downs, the UZ system is restored in the local governance system in Bangladesh with new hopes and aspirations and government is trying to readjust the roles and responsibilities of the actors relating to UZ resolving the existing power shedding and control crisis.

#### **4.2 Unearthing Reality of Decentralization for People's Participation in Development Process in Bangladesh**

Historically there has always been a tendency of heaving power and authority at the center in this land. The country had been under colonial sway for more than two centuries. The colonial rulers exploited every means to establish their control and authority over the length and breadth of the country. The colonial tendency of controlling the LGIs by the central government has been one of the salient features of total governance scenario of the country. Before independence the country had hardly experienced any decentralization proper. Even after the independence of Bangladesh, when decentralization efforts have been taken, these are characterized by concentration of power and authority in the traditionally stronger groups such as landlords, businessmen, political leaders or people with sound socio-economic background. The poor and the marginalized sections such as women, peasants characterized by economic, social and political backwardness have not been involved in the decision-making process.

In the field of participatory development and especially on people's participation in local development projects, much literature is non-existent. A few literatures that are available present a disappointing picture. Historically people's participation in the development process had been very limited in this land. Siddiqui (1994) observes that during the Pakistan period popular participation at the grassroots level was extremely limited. Only people with strong socio-economic and political background had some opportunity to assert their positions in development administration. The backward sections of the society i.e. the poor and the disadvantaged traditionally identified as the excluded, have had limited accesses to or no scope for participation except in electing their representatives.

After the independence of the country the situation has hardly improved. Mass people's participation in the decision-making process remained a distant reality. Afsar (1999) mentions that community participation in the decision-making process is very limited. Because of the over-class bias and widespread corruption there has been severe neglect of the poor and the disadvantaged in the decision-making process. With a view to strengthening the LG organizations, successive regimes undertook decentralization efforts. The most revolutionary step in the history of LG in Bangladesh has been marked in 1982 through the introduction of UZ system in the name of "bringing the administration nearer to the people and improving local people's access and promoting their participation in decision-making process." But Khan (2009) finds that the declared objectives of decentralization – promoting participatory development and ensuring people's access – have never been achieved. In fact, during Ershad regime decentralization has been used as a device to establish 'privileged access' of a powerful and influential few into the state resources. Because reforming LG system in the name of decentralization was a 'political mobilization process' aiming at consolidating power, the efforts in this regard were counterproductive contributing to further polarization between the rich and the poor.

Decentralization is basically a political process, which also opens up possibilities for achieving goals other than governance issues. Power and politics play a big role in the policy of decentralization. Decentralization can be used to gain political goals though the steps of decentralization can be taken in the name of public welfare and ensuring people's participation in the governance process. Mawhood (1983), Mutizwa-Mangiza (1990, 1991), and Rakodi (1986), put forward the idea that decentralization is a means of achieving greater legitimacy by the central governments. General Ershad's 'epoch-making step' of decentralization, though taken with the stated objectives to improve government performance and to facilitate the implementation of development programs through popular participation, was in reality to achieve political goals i.e. to build a support base for his government in the rural areas, and undercut the primarily urban base of the opposition parties. Ershad was highly successful in this regard. The newly elected chairmen of UZs were naturally loyal to the regime. Through the newly elected group Ershad also established his party control over the resource delivery systems throughout the country (cited in Agrawal *et al.* 1999:34).

Ershad's decentralization efforts created opportunities at least for the local leaders and the socially advantaged group to formally participate in development administration despite

serious limitations and political objectives of the military regime. But the abolition of UZ system by the succeeding government limited that opportunity and re-established the position of the administrative apparatus at the local level. Khan (2009) examines that the abolition of the UZ was seen as a victory of the bureaucrats. Unfortunately, the democratically elected government of Khaleda Zia indulged in an anti-democratic practice as regards to decentralization and access.

Ironically, most decentralization initiatives in Bangladesh have been initiated by undemocratic governments. Though ostensibly the reforms aimed at strengthening LGI, the hidden agenda was to consolidate political base at the local level. As a result, participation had been limited to local elites only and the mass population remained outside the boundary of decision-making:

Decentralization contributes towards creating a politically motivated interest class and serves at a local level to protect the interest of the central political and military regimes. In countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh, where military rule was prolonged for decades, the military-bureaucratic oligarchies have adopted decentralization as a policy measure to satisfy the urban and rural notables with whom they have an interdependent relationship. The access of this privileged class into state resources and services is entrusted by the bureaucratic means. In return, the local elites work as the 'vote banks' in the process of 'legitimizing' and 'civilianizing' the dictatorial rule of the regimes (Rahman, 1995: 137).

Khan (2009) identifies bureaucratic domination in the local councils, lack of knowledge, and lack of expertise in technical matters as root causes for non-participation. Local elites form connivance with local administration for their own interests and bypass the needs of the mass. The state of the society also significantly inhibits participation. Social fragmentation, patron-client traditions, and personalized charismatic leadership have given rise to an unstable system of governance, which is highly centralized and authoritarian (Khair, 2004: 54). Political power is mostly limited to a handful powerful few; the state and its bureaucracy are powerful actors in determining the allocation of resources. The poor and the marginalized generally remain outside the domain of decision-making process of development projects.

The very aim of the literature review is to point out a pen picture on people's participation in relation to local development administration in Bangladesh. In this journey only a few attempts have so far seen to exclusively examine people's participation in decision-making process at local level. In recent development interventions, high emphasis, both from donors and policymakers, has been given on participatory approaches to development initiatives. As

people's meaningful participation has come to be recognized as the way to achieve sustainable development, attention must be given to explore factors shaping the nature of participation as well as reasons causing success and failure of participation and to assess the extent of participation of the local people in development programs.

### **4.3 Space for Participatory Practices in National Rural Development Policy**

The vision of National Rural Development Policy is to integrate and ensure local people's active participation in all forms of local level planning, formation of projects/program and its proper implementation, monitoring and evaluation process. In order to formulate development project planning at local level, emphasize is given for collecting relevant information. Moreover, to encourage the elected representatives at local level and the officers working at LG to be self reliant through having training in case of planning, designing and preparing the local development projects. Finally, the core vision of RD Policy is to integrate cross section of local people irrespective of gender, class and creed into the rural development activities.

### **4.4 Conclusion**

People's participation is a democratic process and as the country progresses towards democratic polity, people's participation is to be ensured at all levels of administration in order to make the government 'of the people, by the people, and for the people.' But to what extent and by whom participation can be more fruitfully utilized for national development is the crux of the problem today (Ali *et al*, 1983). However, in recent development interventions, participatory approaches have been emerged as a more effective and efficient strategy to ensure people's participation in the governance process and to make the best use of local resources. To institutionalize the participatory practices in local development projects, the technical and institutional capacity of LGIs needs to increase with devolution of authority. In Bangladesh several abortive decentralization efforts have been made to ensure people's participation in the development process. But as the system has remained highly centralized, meaningful participation is not guaranteed by the decentralization measures that have been adopted hitherto. In addition, political motives of decentralization remained unclear. The authoritarian state structure mingled with political rent-seeking inhibited people's participation in decision-making and development process. The present study is an endeavor to measure the status of people's participation in Alampur and Jagannathpur Union Parishads and explore the factors limiting and inhibiting the process of participation in decision-making. The next chapter will focus on the scenario of participatory practices in the study area.

## Chapter – 5

### **Participation of Local People in Development Projects of Alampur and Jagannathpur Union Parishad**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

Development programs of the government are usually implemented at the grass root level through development projects. In rural Bangladesh, development projects are planned and subsequently implemented by UPs keeping an eye to national guideline. The very aim is to connect the community people into different phases of development projects. To assess the level of local people's participation in development process, two UPs of Bangladesh (Alampur Union Parishad of Taraganj Upazila under Rangpur district and Jagannathpur Union Parishad of Comilla Sadar Upazila under Comilla district) have been randomly selected in this study. Both community people and elected representatives of the UPs were interviewed to explore the extent of popular participation in UP-led development projects.

This chapter systematically furnishes the findings of the study. Initially, this chapter provides some background information about the study unions as well as the development projects undertaken by both Alampur union and Jagannathpur union in the financial years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 with a view to analyzing the status of participation of local people in development project. Thereafter the data collected from the survey has been presented chronologically with findings and necessary analysis supported by case studies keeping an eye to the research questions of this study. Finally, a summary of the major findings has been drawn where the results of the study is reflected.

#### **5.1 A Brief Overview of the Study Union Parishads**

It has already been mentioned that for the purpose of this study, two UPs of Bangladesh (Alampur Union Parishad and Jagannathpur Union Parishad) have been purposively selected. One distinct advantage of choosing these two UPs, one from northern region and one from southern region is to examine the local people's scope and nature of participation in UP-led development projects considering the existing economic and educational diversities among the people of these two zones.

**Jagannathpur Union Parishad** of Comilla Sadar Upazila under Comilla district is considered as a model UP in Comilla District. Because of the high literacy rate, people of this

UP are culturally aware, economically well off and more or less conscious about local development initiatives. Yet local politics are largely dominated by a few local and political elites. **Alampur Union Parishad** of Taraganj Upazila under Rangpur district, on the other hand is inhabited by a population of 21,000 most of who are directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. However, because most of the people are poor and illiterate, local politics are dominated by people with strong socio-economic backgrounds. The main features of the study union parishads are reflected in the Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1**  
**Profiles of the Study Union Parishads**

Feature	Alampur Union Parishad	Jagannathpur Union Parishad
<b>Establishment</b>	1960	1964
<b>Area</b>	22 Square Km.	8.25 Square Km.
<b>Population</b>	21,019	45,015
*Male	10,960	22,515
*Female	10,059	22,500
<b>Educational Institutions</b>	10	21
*College	-	1
*High School	2	4
*Govt. Primary School	2	5
*Non-govt. Primary School	3	5
*Dakil Madrasha	2	4
*Community School	1	2
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	40%	70%
*Male	41.54%	60.12%
*Female	34.76%	56.22%
<b>Communication Facilities</b>		
*Kutcha Road (in Km.)	60 Km.	20 Km.
*Brick Built (BB) Road (in Km)	6 Km.	19 Km.
<b>NGOs working in the area</b>	6	9
<b>Main Occupation</b>	Agriculture (90%), Small-scale Business	Industrial work, Small-scale Business, Overseas worker, Service

*Source:* Compiled with the information collected from Alampur and Jagannathpur Union Parishad complex

## 5.2 Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

As has already been mentioned in chapter one that one hundred randomly selected community people was interviewed for the purpose of the study. In order to examine whether there is any correlation between socio-economic status of the respondents and their participation in development projects, relevant information on age, gender, occupation, educational level and income level of the respondents have been collected. Of the hundred

randomly selected respondents, 70 percent were male while the rest 30 percent were female. Most of the respondents (61%) are aged between twenty-one and forty years. Almost half of the respondents (43%) are either illiterate or have only attended primary school. Most of the respondents (46%) are poor with less than four thousand taka as their monthly income. The details of the socio-economic profiles of respondents have been presented in Appendix – C. In addition, two UP chairmen and twenty UP members were also interviewed during the study. Most of them were from well-to-do families and socially as well as politically powerful in their respective areas.

### 5.3 Approval and Implementation Process of Development Projects

At the grass root level, development projects are undertaken and being implemented through depending on the guidelines given by the controlling or funding authority. In Bangladesh at UP level, usually four types of development projects (Table 5.2) are being undertaken and implemented now-a-days.

**Table: 5.2**  
**Development Projects Currently Undertaken at UP level**

SL. No.	Types of Development Projects	Funding Authority
1	ADP Funding Project	Local Government Division
2	Local Governance Support Project (LGSP) <sup>2</sup>	Local Government Division in collaboration with WB, UNDP, UNCDF, DANIDA and EC
3	Relief and Rehabilitation Program (Social Safety-net Programs)	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
4	Direct Funding Program	Local Government Division

For the purpose of the present study, the researcher has tried to look into all the types of development projects (recently completed) as cases and interviewed the local people, elected UP chairmen /members and related others with a view to assessing local peoples' participation in those projects especially in project planning and implementation level. All the types of development projects are unique in approval and implementation process.

<sup>2</sup> Local Governance Support Project (LGSP) is a project started in July 2006 and being implemented under the supervision of Local Government Division with the financial assistance of Government of Bangladesh (GoB), WB, UNDP, UNCDF, EC and DANIDA. The very aims are to increase the fiscal power of UP, to ensure the participation of local people in development planning and implementation and to accelerate the development activities based on local demand.

### **Projects taken under Annual Development Plan (ADP)**

During the study it was found that the UZ did not follow ADP. It was found that planning beforehand often was very difficult because of uncertainty regarding the amount of funds, which would ultimately be made available. The steps that are being followed in planning and implementation of development projects are as follows:

- Receipt of development funds from government by the UZ;
- Distribution of the allocated funds to the UPs on the basis of size and population of the UPs by UZ engineer, which is subsequently approved by the Parishad;
- Invitation of development projects from the UPs and government departments;
- Submission of project proposals by UPs and government departments;
- Scrutiny by the technical committee headed by UNO and approval of the project proposal given by the UDCC now headed by UZ Chairman;
- Implementation of the projects by respective UPs and government offices through formation of PICs, which includes representation from local people.

### **Projects taken under Local Governance Support Project (LGSP)**

To accelerate good governance at UP level through institutionalizing transparency and accountability is the prime objective on which LGSP was started its operation since July 2006. The steps followed in planning and implementation of development projects under LGSP are as follows:

- Receipt of allotted funds from the Local Government Division by the UP Chairman;
- Arrange open meeting by the UP so that local people can raise their major problem and thereby chalk out the dire needs which demands immediate attention;
- Necessary projects are designed and formulated with local peoples' participation;
- Submission of requisition for technical assistance to the UNO by the Parishad;
- Projects estimate is prepared by UZ engineer or assigned officer of UNO;
- PICs are formed and its members are selected from local people on open meeting.

### **Projects taken under Allocation from Ministry of Food and Disaster Management**

Some development projects have been undertaken times to times by the national government at UP and UZ level under specific guidelines with the funds and food grains allotted from the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management under social safety net programs like VGD

(Vulnerable Group Development),<sup>3</sup> VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding),<sup>4</sup> Test Relief (TR),<sup>5</sup> Food for Works Program (*Kabikhal* FFWP)<sup>6</sup>, 100 Days Employment Generation Program (EGP) for the Hardcore Poor etc. The very aims of these programs are to give some relief to the helpless/devastating/ natural calamity affected hardcore poor people. The steps that are being commonly followed in planning and implementation of such projects are as follows:

- Receipt of development funds by the UZ from the Ministry/Department through DC;
- Distribution of the allocated funds to the UPs by the UZ engineer;
- Preparation of projects with PICs by the UPs and forward it to the UZ;
- Scrutinizing the UP sent projects, UZ committee forwarded it to district committee;
- Getting approval from district committee, UNO issues DOs to disburse the allocation for the concerned UPs.

### **Projects taken under Direct Funding Program**

To strengthen the LG through fiscal decentralization, this Direct Funding Program to UP started since 2004. The UP enjoys liberty in project selection, planning and implementation under this Direct Funding program. The steps that are being followed in planning and implementation of development projects under Direct Funding program are as follows:

- Receipt of development funds from government by the UP Chairman;
- Arrange Parishad meeting and chalk out needs which demands immediate attention;
- Necessary projects are designed and formulated with local peoples' participation;
- Submission of requisition for technical assistance to the UNO by the Parishad;
- Projects estimate is prepared by UZ engineer or assigned officer of UNO;
- PICs are formed and its members are selected from local people on open meeting.

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<sup>3</sup> Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) is a safety net program implemented under the supervision of Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitations and Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and financed by GoB, World Food Program (WFP), EC, Canada and Australia with a view to promoting self-reliance among the most vulnerable women by providing them with food assistance and training in an alternative livelihood.

<sup>4</sup> Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) is a short term relief program operated by Ministry of Food and Disaster Management with the financial assistance by GoB and some development partners to provide disaster victims calamity related emergency needs such as food and basic necessities.

<sup>5</sup> Test Relief (TR) is a food transfer program by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management through which the rural poor are employed in slack season developing and maintaining rural infrastructure.

<sup>6</sup> Food for Works Program (FFWP) is an employment generation program for the poor implemented under the supervision of Department of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) with the financial assistance of GoB, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and WFP. This program has been used to absorb excess agricultural labor involving them into government-managed construction of large scale rural infrastructure for which the laborers are paid in kind with food, in lieu of wages during slack seasons and during natural calamities such as flood, or dry season etc.

#### 5.4 Development Projects in the Year 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

During the field work, attempts were made to collect data on as many projects as possible. But because of limited time only recently implemented development projects were extensively studied. The following table shows the number of projects undertaken in Alampur Union Parishad and Jagannathpur Union Parishad in two financial years.

**Table: 5.3**

#### **Number of Development Projects Undertaken in Alampur and Jagannathpur UP**

Sector Year	Projects under ADP		Projects under LGSP		Projects under M/Food & Disaster Management						Projects under Direct Funding	
	A/UP	J/UP	A/UP	J/UP	A/UP	J/UP	A/UP	J/UP	A/UP	J/UP	A/UP	J/UP
					TR		Kabikha		100 Days EGP			
2008-2009	8	17	7	19	17	16	8	10	612	440	2	2
2009-2010	6	6	5	8	--	--	7	8	400	600	--	--

Source: Both Upazila Engineers' and PIO's Offices, Taraganj and Comilla Sadar Upazila  
(A/UP= Alampur UP and J/UP= Jagannathpur UP; EGP=Employment Generation Program)

A total of eighteen different development projects have been undertaken up to March 2010 under the year 2009-2010 in Alampur UP. Under the direct funding scheme, 1,33,014/- was allocated for Alampur UP for the year 2008-2009 but no allotment has yet been allocated for the ongoing financial year. Till date TR has not been allocated for the year 2009-2010. The above table shows that due to non-allocation of TR and fund under direct funding program, the number of development projects has been decreased in the year 2009-2010 comparing to the previous year. But one noticeable thing is that under the 100 days EGP<sup>7</sup> of the present government for the hardcore poor, 612 beneficiaries has already been benefited in the first phase of 60 days program and the second phase of this scheme, i.e., 40days program is now going on which will provide benefit for almost 400 beneficiaries of Alampur UP.

Table 5.3 also shows that in Jagannathpur UP due to non-allocation of TR and fund under direct funding scheme, the number of development projects has been reduced drastically in 2009-2010 than that's of the previous year. Total allocation under LGSP was 15, 52,350/- in 2008-2009 whereas in the year 2009-2010 this allocation has been increased in 4, 47, 3389/- (1<sup>st</sup> installment), though the 2<sup>nd</sup> installment has not yet been disbursed to the concerned UP.

<sup>7</sup> 100 Days Employment Generation Program (EGP) is a GoB initiated program which aims at bringing the rural extreme poor and capable people including marginal farmers under social safety net during the time they remain unemployed. Under the program the seasonally unemployed poor and vulnerable are engaged in works such as canal digging/re-digging, road/barrage construction/reconstruction, earth fortress erection/re-erection etc. with a cash transfer payment basis.

**Table: 5.4**  
**Sector-wise Development Projects Undertaken in the Study Area**

Sector Year	Infrastructure	Social Welfare and Entertainment	Agriculture	Transport and Communication	Health and Sanitation	Education and Training
2008-2009	14	04	06	47	15	06
2009-2010	09	01	04	27	10	03

*Source:* Both Upazila Engineers' and PIO's Offices, Taraganj and Comilla Sadar Upazila

A total number of ninety two projects were implemented during the year 2008-2009 which is reduced to fifty four (up to March 2010) in 2009-2010. The reason behind such reduction was in some cases, the last installment of allocation has not allotted yet or a drastic decrease in the allocation of TR in the year 2009-2010. Table: 5.4 further shows that there is a propensity to take projects on infrastructure, transport and communication, public health and sanitation. In the year 2008-2009, almost 87 percent projects undertaken belonged to these three categories whereas it rose to 85 percent in the next year up to March 2010. In the year 2009-2010, only five projects were taken in agriculture and social-welfare sectors. It indicates that the elected representatives are more interested in undertaking projects on infrastructure, transport and communication, public health and sanitation may be because they show immediate results.

### **5.5 Development Projects taken as Case study**

A total of four different development projects undertaken in the study area were taken for extensive study. In selecting the projects, attention was given to cover a diverse range of sectors. The details of projects studied have been listed in the table below:

**Table: 5.5**  
**Development Projects taken as Case study**

Name of the Project	Sector	Funding Authority	Money allocated	Year of Implementation	Geographical location
Construction of Eco-latrines in Mr. Abu Zafor's homestead	Infrastructure	ADP	12,000/-	2009-2010	Jagannathpur Union
Reconstruction of a village <i>Kacha</i> Road	Transport and communication	M/Food & Disaster Management	12 M. Ton	2008-2009	Alampur Union
Supply of RCC Ring in different locations	Transport and communication	Direct Funding	56,358/-	2008-2009	Jagannathpur Union
Completion of incomplete Bridge at Baniapara amidst Baniapara-Shikarpara Road	Transport and communication	LGSP	7,96,836/-	2008-2009	Alampur Union

*Source:* Both Upazila Engineers' and PIO's Offices, Taraganj and Comilla Sadar Upazila

## **5.6 Data Presentation, Presentation and Analysis of Major Study Findings**

The very aim of this study is to address two research questions: 1) the extent of grassroots people's participation in development project planning and implementation and 2) factors influence on and affect the participatory process in UP-led development projects. With a view to addressing the above mentioned questions, the survey has been conducted in Alampur UP and Jagannathpur UP under Rangpur and Comilla district respectively. A total of hundred cross-section people, twenty UP members and two UP chairmen were interviewed using two separate questionnaires. In addition concerned UZ Chairman, UNO, UZ Engineer and PIO have been interviewed through unstructured questionnaire in order to know about their opinion on the issue. The respondents were asked questions where the objective was to find out rural people's status of participation in the decision making process of UP-led development projects. Likewise, to unearth the real picture lay behind the participatory practices so far cultured in development projects in the study area, four different development projects have been extensively studied as cases. During the study some interesting findings have been revealed which needs a critical analysis. A careful analysis of the following study findings have to be done as well with some crucial directives.

For the sake of sequential presentation of data, at first, the data have been furnished in accordance with research questions highlighting the independent variables. Likewise, the study findings and its relevant analysis have been articulated accordingly. Keeping an eye to research objectives—all these are done to justify the analytical framework of the study.

### **5.6.1 People's Participation Status in the Decision Making Process of UP-led Development Projects**

It has already been mentioned that participation in decision making process of development projects in this study includes involvement of local people in project selection, planning and implementation process and inclusion in PICs. To make participation meaningful, local people must have the right to know and be known about the project related information. In addition, they must have a thorough idea about UP and its Standing Committee's function and TOR which eventually helps contributing to the institution and institution-led development initiatives. During survey, respondents were asked about the function and TOR of UP standing committee, the highest formal committee for discussing and selecting local development projects with a view to learning their general conception about it.

### 5.6.1.1 Knowledge about Union Parishad Standing Committee

The Standing Committees of UP need to ensure the participation of local people to engage them with the local level planning as well as local development process. It is the people living in the UPs who know the real problems of UP because they experience those issues on a day to day basis. But the reality is that local people have very less idea about and access in the decision making process of such committees mostly because of its non-functional nature as well as procedural lacking (Haque, 2009). Surprisingly, only 12 percent of the total respondents mentioned that they have heard about UP Standing Committee. Of the male respondents 11 percent from Alampur UP and 20 percent from Jagannathpur UP said that they know about the committee while only 7 percent of the female respondents from Jagannathpur UP mentioned that they heard about it. 50 percent of the respondents who know about UP Standing Committee mentioned that they also know about the TOR of the committee. However, none of the respondents ever attended the committee meeting.

**Table: 5.6**  
**Respondents' Knowledge about UP Standing Committee (n=100)**

Do you know anything about the function/Terms of Reference (TOR) of Standing Committee of Union Parishad?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	11	0	12
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	20	7	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

### **Findings**

The study reveals that most of the respondents (88%) did not know about UP Standing Committee. 50 percent of them did not even hear about the TOR of the committee let alone attending the meeting of it. The extent of knowledge is higher among the respondents of Jagannathpur UP than that's of Alampur UP and the extent of ignorance is higher in case of female respondents.

### 5.6.1.2 Participation in Development Project Planning

Projects are usually undertaken for the improvement of livelihood of local people. Local people's needs and demands, therefore, are assumed to be reflected in the selection of development projects. Their involvement in project planning is a prerequisite for its sustainability. However, during survey 93 percent respondents reported that they never participated in the planning phase of any development projects undertaken by UPs. Hence,

the participation of grassroots people in project planning is only 7 percent. All the respondents who mentioned of participation in project planning belong to Jagannathpur UP.

**Table: 5.7**  
**Participation of Respondents in the Development Planning Process (n=100)**

Did you participate in planning process of any development project in your locality?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	0	0	7
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	20	0	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

### **Findings**

Participation of the respondent beneficiaries in project planning is very low (7% only). Of the two unions studied only 20 percent of the respondents of Jagannathpur UP mentioned of participation in planning phase of projects whereas in Alampur UP, no respondents reported their participation in project planning. From the above mentioned figure, it is evident that participation of local people in project selection/planning level is very insignificant.

#### **5.6.1.3 Participation in Development Project Implementation**

Community people can be involved in development project implementation process in two ways i.e., 1) through direct involvement in implementation process in project area and 2) through including as member of PICs of the projects. As UPs have been running by elected representatives since independence of the nation, it is generally assumed that development projects undertaken by UPs must be implemented by the community people, of the community people and for the community people. However, out of 100 respondents 24 percent respondents mentioned that they have participated in the implementation process of at least one UP-led development project. Comparing to Alampur UP, the participation rate of female respondents is relatively high in Jagannathpur UP.

**Table: 5.8**  
**Participation in Development Project Implementation Process (n=100)**

Did you participate in implementation process of any development project in your locality?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	26	7	24
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	31	20	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

Not only that 60 percent of the respondents who claimed to be participated in project implementation process reported that their opinion on different issues were properly entertained by the UPs during implementation while 40 percent had the perception that their opinion were neither properly sought nor considered properly (Table 5.9).

**Table: 5.9**  
**Respondents' Perception about their Opinion in Project Implementation (n=24)**

Were your opinion considered properly by the concerned persons?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	78	0	60
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	55	33	

Source: Survey Data (Alampur UP n=10; M=9/F=1 and Jagannathpur UP n=14; M=11/F=3)

### **Findings**

Participation of respondents in project implementation stage is low, but is not as low as that of in project planning. Only 24 percent of the respondents said that they have participated in one or more projects implementation process. In this case too, female participation (14 %) is lower than male participation (38 %). The respondents who had taken part in implementation process were mostly from strong socio-economic background. In most cases, the opinions of these participants were entertained and considered by the concerned UPs.

#### **5.6.1.4 Discussion with UP Chairman on Implementation of Development Projects**

Learning project related information is a necessary pre-condition for effective contribution to the implementation process of development project. UP being the grass-root people's platform of hopes and aspirations should disseminate the project details to its beneficiaries. Interaction between elected representatives and community people play a significant role in this respect. The survey data reveals (Table 5.10) that 17 percent of the respondents (male--19% and female--8%) had discussion with UP chairman on different aspects of development projects implemented in their localities.

**Table: 5.10**  
**Discussion with UP Chairman on any side of Development Projects (n=100)**

Did you have any discussion with UP Chairman about any side of development projects?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	17	7	17
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	20	20	

Source: Survey Data (Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

When asked most of them replied that the basis of discussions had been good relations with UP chairman, their superior social position and political involvement. However, some of the respondents of both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP mentioned that UP chairman generally consults people of concerned locality before going for implementation of any project.

### **Findings**

83% respondents feel that project implementation process is not done with participation from all levels of people. However, a small portion (17%) of the respondents mentioned that they had informal discussions with UP chairman. These respondents also happen to be with stronger socio-economic backgrounds compared with the majority of people in the locality.

#### **5.6.2 Factors Influencing the Participatory Process in UP-led Development Projects**

There was a general assumption that several factors like institutional, legal, economic, social, political and cultural factors play a role in influencing on the participatory process in UP-led development projects. To verify the assumption, questions were asked to the respondents keeping an eye to the second research question which later on has been produced the following information.

##### **5.6.2.1 Institutional and Regulatory Framework and Participation**

Development projects are planned, prepared and implemented for the development of local people. As the administrative system and institutional management of Bangladesh from time immemorial are hierarchical and rule bound, strong institutional mechanisms and development focused regulatory framework is utmost necessary to connect the local people into development process. To be involved into development activities, the local people as beneficiary have every possible right to know about the ins and outs of development projects. But with a very few exceptions, the elected representatives were found mostly reluctant to disclose development project related information to common people.

###### **5.6.2.1.1 Perception about existing Structure of Union Parishad**

Many development practitioners opine that LGIs do not promote participation. The institutional arrangements of those institutions hardly encourage popular participation in the decision-making process. Though run by people's representatives, the institutions are still hierarchical in nature and thus the UPs seem to disregard the voices of community people, particularly the poor. Moreover, the UPs also lack in technical capacity to ensure effective participation of people. The existing UP administrative system would not let the local people

know about the details of development projects. In this study, 60 percent respondents opined that the present UP structure should be restructured slightly to reduce time and cost as well as to avoid hassle while the rest 40 percent expressed their satisfaction on it.

**Table: 5.11**

**Respondents' Perception about the existing Structure of Union Parishad (n=100)**

Do you think the existing Union Parishad Structure is conducive to the participation of local people into development projects?	'No' (%)		Total 'No' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	46	53	60
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	71	73	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

**Findings**

On the basis of the opinion stated by the majority portion (60 %) of the respondents of both the studied UP irrespective of gender, it can be said that the present structure of UP hardly promotes grass root people's participation in development process. However, there may be questions in the existing participation mode in development projects but in the implementation stage, local peoples' participation is to some extent visible. In order to address the issue, some respondents suggested for creation of the post of PIO, engineering section and a Union Development Officer (UDO) at UP level. Some emphasized on UP-NGO collaboration for motivating and encouraging community people to be involved in local development initiatives.

**5.6.2.1.2 Perception about the existing Rules and Regulations of Union Parishad**

The people of Bangladesh prefer legal provisions to tradition or own initiatives. Nobody is eager to take any initiatives unless it is being covered by existing rules and regulations, even if it brings something good to common people. Development projects is designed and implemented for uplifting the local people's lifestyle and hence it is assumed that those projects will be planned and guided by them. In reality, participation of rural people in project planning is still a misnomer. During this study it is observed that 58 percent respondents felt that the existing rules and regulations are not conducive to local people's involvement in development process especially in project selection and planning level.

**Table: 5.12****Respondents' Perception about the existing Rules and Regulations (n=100)**

Do you think the existing Laws/Rules of UP are conducive to the participation of local people into development projects?	'No' (%)		Total 'No' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	63	53	58
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	60	47	

*Source:* Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

As there are no government rules and regulations in this regard, UPs hardly invite local people to participate in development project planning process. Rather in absence of any clear-cut policy guideline, personal desire of the UP representatives gets preference. In that case less important issues are being selected over local people's urgently felt issues which eventually provide benefits for a few at the cost of hundreds. Such instances are frequently taken place in UP level which is minutely reflected in the following Case Study.

**Case Study: 1****Construction of Eco-latrines in Mr. Abu Zafor's homestead**

Mr. Abu Jafor is a rich farmer of Komolpur village under Jagannathpur union. As he has good relations with the elected UP member of his ward, he requested to the elected member to construct an eco-latrines in his homestead. Afterward, a project proposal was sent to UZ for approval. 12,000/- was allocated from ADP for successful completion of this project. Following the approval by UDCC, the project was implemented. A five member implementation committee was formed headed by the UP member of the locality, one school teacher, one local imam, one female social worker and the owner of the house as members. Two members who were included in PIC of this project from local elites /common people were interviewed. During the study it was found that only the local elected UP member who also acted as chairman of the PIC and one member who was the owner of the house were consulted during the implementation of the project. Interestingly, the other three members even did not know about the inclusion of their names in PIC. Actually the female social worker, school teacher and local imam were included in PIC merely to fulfill the requirements of rules and regulations. These three members were informed after the completion of the project and were requested by the chairman of the PIC to put down signature on some project documents. However, on repeated requests from the chairman of the PIC, they put down signatures on some papers. In fact, only the owner of the house has been benefited from the project not the community people of the locality.

To culture participatory practices in local development project, there are clear provisions for inclusion of certain number of members in PICs from local elites/community people in different project guidelines. Being compelled by some government rules and regulations, the elected representatives form PICs comprising of local people for each project. During the study it is marked that in some cases such practices are confined to mere official formalities whereas in some others cases like LGSP, participatory culture are being practiced in the truest sense. It is commonly said that beauty of any rules and regulations depends not on its enactment but on its proper implementation. In the study area, local people's participation in project implementation level has been observed though in insignificant number but that is far more than that's of participation in project planning level. Mandatory legal provisions or participation friendly guidelines can be the reason behind it. The following Case Study (Case Study-2) has been focusing on the participatory practices so far cultured in some parts of the study area.

### **Case Study: 2**

#### **Completion of incomplete Bridge at Baniapara amidst Baniapara-Shikarpara Road**

Baniapara- Shikarpara Road is the link road between Alampur and Kursha union. At Baniapara of this Baniapara- Shikarpara Road, a LGED built incomplete bridge was standing over the year which was a matter of snuffles for the villagers of both Alampur and Kursha union. As the work area was under Alampur UP, the people of Alampur UP were vocal about the completion of the bridge. When fund was disbursed to the UP chairman under LGSP, the chairman along with the UP members and local elites consulted about the completion of the bridge at any cost. In line with this view, a project was prepared and sent to UZ for technical assistance. Upazila Engineer estimated the cost for completion of the bridge. Consequently, tender was urged as the costing was estimated to 7, 96,836/-. After finalizing the tender process, the long awaited bridge was completed which redressed the sufferings of the people of Alampur union to a large extent. To monitor the project, a ten member implementation committee, headed by the concerned UP member and comprising of another UP member, one female member, a school teacher, one businessman, a NGO representative, an Ansar and VDP member, an *imam* of a local mosque, a local journalist and a local woman laborer was formed. The committee met several times before and during the implementation of the project. During interview, the members of PIC expressed their satisfaction as regards their involvement in the project implementation process. They also mentioned that their opinions were entertained by the chairman of the committee. The community people were also expressed their satisfaction regarding the UP chairman/member's commitment to them.

## **Findings**

From the Table 5.12, it is observed that the existing rules and regulations are not conducive to local people's involvement in development process particularly in project planning process, though 42 percent respondents felt that the problems for less participation of community people in development initiatives lay not on existing rules and regulations but on its proper implementation process. At the same time, some respondents suggested to incorporate development friendly rules and regulations which would help creating more space to local people in project selection and planning level as well as meaningful involvement in project implementation level.

### **5.6.2.2 Socio-economic Background and Participation**

Generally it is assumed that literate and economically solvent people have easy access to the implementation process of local development projects. Male are more privileged than female to tag into the development project cycle. The study however, reveals a connection between participation and socio-economic backgrounds of the participants.

#### **5.6.2.2.1 Income Level and Participation**

Comparatively rich respondents mostly claimed that there had been involvement of local people in the development process. The following statistics indicate that only 23 percent of the respondents who had lower monthly income (below 8000 taka) claimed of participation in development project implementation while 77 percent of the respondents who claimed of participation in project implementation were found to be economically solvent (at least 8,000/- taka monthly income). Table: 5.13 shows a positive relation between respondents' monthly income and participation.

**Table: 5.13**  
**Relation between Income Level and Participation (n=100)**

<b>Income level (in taka)</b>	<b>Below 2000</b>	<b>2001-4000</b>	<b>4001- 8000</b>	<b>8001- 10000</b>	<b>Above 10000</b>
No. of Respondents	10	28	30	23	9
No. of Respondents Claiming Participation	2	2	3	15	8
%	20	7	10	65	89

*Source:* Survey Data

There was an assumption that higher the income, higher the participation. Pearson's coefficient correlation was conducted to verify the assumption. During statistical analysis a

high degree of positive correlation between income level and participation ( $r = .526$ ) is found which is significant at the 0.01 level. This means that if income level increases, the participation increases as well.

### **Findings**

A positive co-relation is existed between respondent's income level and participation. It is evident that people with low economic condition are not generally invited to participate in PICs of development projects. In other words, it can be said that comparatively rich people avail the opportunities while the poor and the disadvantaged remain outside the realm of participation in local development projects.

#### **5.6.2.2.2 Educational Status and Participation**

Participants claiming participation in project implementation stage especially in inclusion in PICs were mostly retired government officials, established businessmen or school teachers. The study also reveals a relationship between respondents' educational status and participation in project implementation. The following statistics (Table 5.14) indicate that only 27 percent of the respondents with lower education level (less than S.S.C.) claimed of participation in project implementation while 73 percent of the respondents with higher education level (at least S.S.C.) said that they participated in development project implementation especially as members of PICs.

**Table: 5.14**

**Relation between Education Level and Participation (n=100)**

<b>Education level</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	<b>Primary School</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>S.S.C</b>	<b>H.S.C.</b>	<b>Degree and above</b>
No. of Respondents	14	31	26	13	11	5
No. of Respondents Claiming Participation	2	2	4	9	9	4
%	14	6	15	69	82	80

*Source:* Survey Data

It is assumed that a positive relation is existed between education level and participation. During statistical analysis, it is seen that there is a high degree of positive correlation between the two variables ( $r = .568$ ) which is significant at the 0.01 level. This means that if education level increases, it thereby affect the participation.

## **Findings**

It is evident that illiterate people hardly understand the nitty-gritty of a project and thus their illiteracy is a great hindrance to their participation in PICs whereas their number is significant in the implementation stage where the project area is. Illiterate people are often looked down upon as problematic as they more often cannot articulate their demands and put forward their opinions in a systematic way. Hence, their illiteracy is leading them to non-participation. Education is therefore, considered as a prime factor for promoting meaningful participation. During the study, only educated respondents were found knowledgeable about the functions and TOR of UP standing committee.

### **5.6.2.2.3 Gender and Participation**

In Bangladesh, traditionally and culturally it is assumed that male group's participation in rural development activities is higher than that's of female folk. The inconsistency was clearly marked between male and female respondents' participation in development process. The study also points out an inconsistent relationship between respondents' gender and participation in project implementation. Table 5.17 shows that 38 percent of the male respondents have participated in the implementation of at least one development project undertaken by UPs while this percentage is only 14 in case of female respondents.

**Table: 5.15**

**Relation between Gender and Participation (n=100)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>No. of Respondents Claiming Participation</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	70	26	38
Female	30	4	14

*Source: Survey Data*

## **Findings**

From the above table, it is observed that male respondents avail more opportunity than female in the implementation of development projects and by which the vulnerability of female folk to the involvement in project activities has been clearly visible. In fact, it is evident that gender influences much on participation in rural development projects.

### **5.6.2.3 Politico-cultural Factors and Participation**

The backgrounds of people significantly determine participation. Politico-cultural background of the people plays a dominant role in shaping the participation outcome. From

time immemorial rural politics in Bangladesh is dominated by the local elites who are directly or indirectly involved in power politics. Building up nexus with local administration, these rural elites control the access to local development intervention which ultimately discourages the common people's participation in development projects. The cultural factor i.e. in the name of *samaj* tradition<sup>8</sup>, the hierarchic social system and the patron client relation i.e. benefit sharing tendency between the local elites and elected representatives largely dominates the participation scenario in UP level development projects. Failing to break through the unholy alliance, a portion of local people is becoming unwilling or somewhat dependent on others in taking any decision in case of involving in development project cycle.

### 5.6.2.3.1 Political Influence in Development Project Selection/ Planning

It is evident that projects are usually selected and framed as the expression of political government as part of their commitment to the people. Consequently, it is assumed that project will be selected on the basis of local people's urgent need and demands not to facilitate the ruling party local political leaders or elected representatives closest ones some undue advantages. But 57 percent respondents (Table 5.16) from both community people and elected representatives interviewed in the study mentioned that during development project selection/ planning, UPs had to face to and adjust with the request or influence of local political leaders especially from local MPs and ruling party UZ level leaders. Not only that, most of the respondents during survey said that in every UP, local MP nominated political persons dominated on the selection and planning process of projects and the UP chairmen and members were instructed to work adjusting with them.

**Table: 5.16**  
**Respondents' Perception about Political Influence in Development Project Selection/Planning (n=100)**

Have you seen any political pressure in undertaking any project in your locality?	'Yes' (%)		Total 'Yes' (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	51	47	57
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	66	60	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

<sup>8</sup> Literally "*samaj*" means society which reflects the dominant cultural and societal norms and values accepted and agreed upon by a majority of citizens. *Samaj* in Bangladesh incorporates social values that shape interpersonal relationships such as between father and son, wife and husband, or in general between men and women, rich and poor, landowners and landless, or between senior and junior.

## **Findings**

On the basis of 57 percent respondents' response from both the studied UPs irrespective of gender, it is mentionable that during development project selection and planning process, political intervention has been happened to maximize personal gains both from elected representatives of UP and from local MPs, ruling party UZ level leaders and local MP nominated political persons corner and their compulsion over UP chairmen and members in selection and planning process of the projects has been repeatedly uttered by the respondents.

### **5.6.2.3.2 Political Influence in Inclusion in Project Implementation Committee (PIC)**

Political issues are also responsible for impeding participation. Undue advantage taking attitude of elected representatives makes them reluctant towards participation. The less participatory the projects are the more chances are there for them to maximize personal gains. As the elected representatives view development projects as means of recovering their election costs, they, with a view to maximizing their own profits, try their best to make development projects as less participatory as possible. Mostly they target to limit participation to a few selected ones only. Thus, whatever participation is observed it is mostly limited to those who are socially important – the rural elites or those who enjoy personal relations with the elected representatives. Hence tendency to include the close allies' in PICs is a grave concern for them. During survey 55 percent respondents of both elected representatives and community people mentioned that during formation of PICs, people with strong political background or connivance with local political leaders, got preferences. Furthermore, in most of the cases, people who have good terms with UP chairman or local MP nominated political persons at UP level are privileged to be included in PICs. To avoid tussle with local MPs, UP chairmen had to honor or be obliged by their request.

**Table: 5.17**

#### **Respondents' Perception about Political Influence in Inclusion in PIC (n=100)**

Is there any influence from political party/ party members for inclusion in PIC in your locality?	<b>'Yes'</b> <b>(%)</b>		<b>Total 'Yes'</b> <b>(%)</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>(Male+Female)</b>
Alampur Union Parishad	57	60	55
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	63	67	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

To maximize the personal benefit from development project capturing the PICs with the party men or close allies, the local political leaders and people's representatives of UP always takes an upper hand of the matter. A nexus is being built between local elites and local level elected representatives with a view to keeping the PIC into their grip. So though inclusion of local elites in PICs as part of legal obligation is ensured, it ultimately has resulted in mere formalities. The real spirit of involvement of local people in PICs, therefore, remained in paper not in practice. Case Study -3 has pointed out the vivid pen-picture of that reality.

### **Case Study: 3**

#### **Supply of RCC Ring in different locations**

People living in the low areas of Jagannathpur union had been suffering from water-logging problem for the last few years during the rainy season. They had repeatedly requested to the concerned members of their locality and the chairman of the UP to install some reinforced concrete cast (RCC) pipes in the affected areas. The issue later on was raised in the UP monthly meeting and a unanimous decision was taken to send a project proposal to UZ. The project was subsequently approved by the UDCC. 56,358/- was allotted for the project. A seven member PIC headed by the chairman of the UP was then formed. Concerned UP member, one school teacher, UZ livestock officer, one female social worker, one male social worker and a labour were included as member of the PIC. During the study two members of the PIC and some people lived within the periphery of the project area were asked about their knowledge regarding their involvement and utilization of resources allocated for the project. It was found that most of the beneficiaries' had very superficial ideas about the allocation whether the PIC members gave clear answers. From the beneficiaries' response it was learnt that all the members of PIC except UZ livestock officer were the closest ones of UP chairman and ruling party local political leaders and the work was done with them keeping the local people in the dark. The members, therefore, were well-informed of the project though some of them were not at all participated in any meeting of PIC. Being the close allies of the chairman and ruling party local political leaders, they put down signatures on relevant papers of the project. Under the project, five RCC pipes were supposed to be installed in different locations. But during survey, three out of five RCC pipes were not located. However, beneficiaries living adjacent to the project area informed the researcher that the project so far implemented has immensely benefited them. The water-logging problem thereafter has slightly been reduced there and as rain water now flows smoothly to lower areas, they are now free from the water logging problem to some extent.

### **Findings**

From the survey data and case study, it is observed that people of strong political background or who had good terms with UP chairman or local MP nominated political persons or local political leaders, got preferences in inclusion in PICs. On the other hand, the local elites/ community people who are included in PICs as part of fulfilling legal obligation in most of the cases play the role of silent observer.

Cultural issues are considered as one of the major factors behind non-participation of common people in development process. Traditionally, the principle of hierarchy in interpersonal relationship has been accepted as necessary and moral right in rural Bangladesh. Obedience to the seniors, consult with the guardians/seniors/local elites before taking any decision are an important value in rural society. Such hierarchism fosters conservatism and produces a sense of compliance to others weakening individualism in rural society. So rural people are becoming dependent on their elders, group leaders or local elites in terms of decision making. Likewise unwillingness of socially enlightened class in terms of involving against the existing rural development process weakened the participatory development culture at rural level.

### 5.6.2.3.3 Unwillingness to be involved in Development Projects

In this study one hundred cross sections of people are interviewed. Of them 18 percent respondents (male--15% and female--16%) especially the socially enlightened section like high school/primary school teachers, traders and well-to-do farmers mentioned that they are not interested to be involved in development activities though they feel that they should.

**Table: 5.18**  
**Respondents' Response to Showing Interest or Unwillingness to be involved in Development Project Planning/PIC (n=100)**

Did you ever reject any request or proposal made by UP chairman/members to be involved in project implementation activities or included in PIC?	‘Yes’ (%)		Total ‘Yes’ (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	20	7	18
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	23	13	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

The local politics are inflicted with patrons and stouts. Local elites also belong to the same category. So the socially enlightened /conscious person in rural area feels that in the name of participation in development initiatives where their views deem to be not valued, they cannot be a part of that journey. Consequently, they always try to avoid in any sort of engagement in project activities in spite of request from UP Chairman /members even if they are anyhow compelled to be involved in PICs, they simply kept mum. As a result, the community

becomes deprived of their valuable contribution to it. Such instance has been reflected in the following Case Study (Case Study -4).

#### **Case Study: 4**

##### **Reconstruction of a Village *Kacha* Road**

Most of people of Dangamalli village under Alampur union are farmers who mostly grow vegetables and potatoes in their lands. Due to lack of well-constructed road in the area, these vegetable-growers had been facing problems in carrying their products to nearby markets. As a result, they brought the issue into the notice of the local UP member who later on raised it in the UP meeting. The Parishad took a decision to send a project proposal for repairing the *kacha* road in Dangamalli village. UDCC approved the project and allotted 12 M. Ton food grain for its implementation. A seven member PIC headed by the locally elected female member was formed. The committee members included was one local businessman, one primary school teacher, one imam, one farmer, one rickshaw puller and a female social worker. Three members who were included in PIC of this project from local elites /common people were interviewed. Some beneficiaries' were asked about their involvement and opinion about the project. It is revealed from their response that the PIC did not disclose necessary information to the local people about the progress of the work and utilization of resources let alone involve the community in the planning and implementation process. It was also found that none of the committee members were consulted during the implementation of the project. The members also even did not know beforehand the amount of money allocated for the project. The primary school teacher, the businessman and the female social worker who were the member of PIC of the said project during interview mentioned that the local UP member requested them to be involved in the PIC of the project but they disagreed. Despite their unwillingness their names were included in PIC by the concerned UP member which they were informed at the completion of the project. At first when some project documents were submitted to them for signing, they simply ignored to do that. Afterwards on repeated request from the UP member, they put their signatures on some related papers. However, during survey it is seen that the road is almost on the way of extinction. The local people during discussion expressed their dissatisfaction about the project, its PIC and the concerned UP member's commitment. When the latest picture of the project work was raised to the members of PIC so interviewed, they also expressed their dismay about it as they felt that by unwillingly putting signature on the project document they made themselves a party of the misappropriation of the project fund and mentioned the very reason behind their unwillingness in involving into the PIC.

#### **Findings**

It is found from the survey data and case study that the socially enlightened /conscious persons in rural area like high school /primary school teachers, traders, and well off farmers generally tries to avoid involving in project activities in spite of request from UP Chairman /members. This section of people is dead against the pattern of participation existed in the

implementation process they termed as ‘meaningless’, which had to practice by the UPs to maintain merely official /legal formalities.

#### 5.6.2.3.4 Level of Spontaneous and Dependent Participation in Project Planning/ Project Implementation/ Inclusion in PIC

It is a common belief that rural people are guided by the *samaj* tradition. The concept of *manno kara* (obedience) and *shradha kara* (deference) produces a sense of compliance to the seniors, local elites and group cohesion. Due to this *samaj* tradition or hierarchical social structure, the rural poor people are generally dependent on their elders, group leaders, wealthy neighbors or local elites in terms of decision making. During the survey 25 percent respondents (male--14 % and female--20%) said that before accepting the request of inclusion in PIC or involving in development project planning/implementation activities, they discussed the local elites and elders.

**Table: 5.19**  
**Respondents' Nature of Participation in Project Planning and Implementation Process and Inclusion in PIC (n=100)**

Did you consult/ seek suggestion from any local elite/leader before participating in any project planning/implementation activities/ being involved in PIC?	‘Yes’ (%)		Total ‘Yes’ (%)
	Male	Female	(Male+Female)
Alampur Union Parishad	17	53	25
Jagannathpur Union Parishad	11	47	

Source: Survey Data

(Both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP n=50; M=35/F=15)

#### **Findings**

Meaningful participation of community people in development initiatives can only be possible when people judged anything with their own prudence and reasons. But during the study it is observed that 25 percent respondents were involved in project implementation process not for their own idea but being guided by existing *samaj* tradition or hierarchism i.e., by the local elites and elders or being inspired to serve group interest which ultimately blocked community people’s individual contribution to the community.

#### **5.7 Comparative Overview of People’s Participation in the Studied Union Parishads**

It has already been mentioned that in this study two UPs have been selected from two regions to assess whether there is any diversity regarding educational status and economic condition

among the people of these two study areas that affect the mode of development process, practices and participation. After analyzing the union profiles (Table 5.1), it is seen that the literacy rate of Jagannathpur UP (70%) is relatively ahead than that of the Alampur UP (40%). Not only that the diversity in source of livelihood has also been noticed between the inhabitants of the selected UPs. The majority people of Alampur UP are dependent on agriculture whereas a larger portion of population of Jagannathpur UP are engaged in industrial work, small-scale business or somehow gainfully employed. A noticeable portion of them are migrant workers too. Such occupational variations seem to have some impact on the mind set and behavioral pattern of the resident of Jagannathpur UP, who are relatively economically well-off. The reflections of such variations seem to have influenced the overall mind set, world view and social interaction process of the respondents of both Alampur and Jagannathpur UP. The following table (Table 5.20) represents the reflection of such subtle differentiation between the two studied UPs.

**Table 5.20**

**Comparative Picture of Participation status between the Respondents' of Studied UPs**

<b>Participation Status /Idea /Perception</b>	<b>Alampur UP (%)</b>	<b>Jagannathpur UP (%)</b>
Idea about UP Standing Committee	--	12
Participation in Project Planning	--	7
Participation in Project Implementation	10	14
Perception about UP Structure (not conducive)	26	14
Perception about Rules and Regulations of UP (not conducive)	20	22
Perception about Political Interferences in Project Selection/Inclusion in PICs	25	32
Nature of Participation Unwilling /Spontaneous /Dependent	40	42

*Source:* Survey Data

From the above table it is evident that the people of Jagannathpur UP are a bit aware of the functions and TOR of UP Standing Committee. Such knowledge is very important for meaningful contribution to UP-led development activities. 7 percent of the total respondents who claimed to have participated in project planning level during this survey belong to Jagannathpur UP. Moreover, the percentage of respondents' involvement in project

implementation is relatively high in case of Jagannathpur UP than that of Alampur UP. Perception of the respondents as regards structure and rules and regulations of UP are more or less same, however respondents' perception regarding political interferences in project selection or inclusion in PICs and nature of participation (unwilling /spontaneous /dependent) varies significantly between the respondents of the two UPs. Another noticeable matter is that the perception of female respondents interviewed from Jagannathpur UP is more open and they seem to be more conscious about the participatory process of local development program as compared to Alampur UP.

In the final analysis, it is evident that economic status and educational level have considerable influence in the process of development management and participation between the resident's of the studied UPs. As a consequence of such differentiation some participatory practices have already been introduced to some extent in Jagannathpur UP. Introduction of participatory budgeting, arrangement of open meeting for identification of local priorities bears the testimony of such participatory practices. But no such initiatives are visible in the context of Alampur UP during this survey and by which eventually the initial assumptions (i.e. income and education matters) has to a great extent empirically validated.

### **5.8 UP Chairman/Members' Response on Participation in Development Projects**

UP members being the representatives of grass root or ward level people have a prime role to raise grass-root people's demands to UP meeting. According to government instructions, UP members under LGSP mandatorily and for other development projects possibly works as the chairman of PIC. As a result, as par law, UP members, are the key actors to connect people in both project planning and implementation level. So during this survey, the researcher feels the necessity of collecting UP chairman/member's view regarding local people's involvement, contribution and pains and pleasure on planning, implementation and monitoring level of development projects in order to feel the ground reality in this respect.

Twenty (14 male and 6 female) UP members and two chairmen of Alampur and Jagannathpur UP were interviewed on different aspects of development projects during the study. 100 percent of them were found knowledgeable of the number of projects undertaken in their respective UPs. All the respondents mentioned that discussion on development projects is taken place in UP meetings before sending those to UZ for approval. The respondents (18) of Alampur and Jagannathpur UP mentioned that local people are not engaged in planning but they participated in implementation stage. In Jagannathpur UP, local people are consulted by

the respective member before a project is sent to UZ for approval. Sometimes, meetings are also called by the UP chairman where priorities of local people are identified. In both Alampur and Jagannathpur UPs studied, committees comprising of local people are formed for implementing the approved projects. However, most of the respondents (90%) said that selection of the committee members depends mainly on the discretion of chairman of the committee, who happen to be a UP member.

100 percent respondents, both male and female mentioned that they had been members of project PICs and 60 percent of them viewed that their opinion were generally entertained and considered properly. But 40 percent respondents mentioned that local MP/ local MP engaged political person in each UP influences in selection and implementation process of development projects, in preparing beneficiaries cards for 100 days Employment Generation Program for hardcore poor ignoring UP Chairman /members' request in many cases. The respondents, in their interview mentioned directly or indirectly that they are instructed by the local MP to work adjusting with his nominated political persons. So influence of political parties in selection and implementation of projects is a stark reality at UP level.

UP's elected representatives feel that UPs as LGIs need to open up to increase common people's participation in decision-making as well as development process. They suggest that UPs should follow the practices of LGSP where local people are widely consulted about local needs and priorities before taking any project. The respondents feel that existing rules and regulations of UP are not susceptible to people's involvement in the planning process of development projects. 20 percent respondents further mentioned that the rules and regulations should be open and accessible to the socially enlightened person to join in the roadmap of development scheme.

### **5.9 UZ level elected representatives and government official's response on participatory process at UP level**

Union Parishad is the lowest tier of LG in Bangladesh under which development projects are processed and implemented at the grass root level. UP can exercise its authority independently on project selection and project implementation as per Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009. But as per instructions of different project guidelines, UPs need UZ's assistance for project assessment, in some cases, project approval and technical assistance. So UZ and UP have to work altogether for co-ordination, monitoring after all, successful completion of development project at local level. To learn the views from all

quarters relating to overall project management at UP level, UZ chairman, UNO, UZ engineer and PIO of the study area were interviewed.

UZ has no authority on projects taken under LGSP and direct funding program except providing technical assistance on the basis of UP's requisition. But in ADP funded projects and projects taken under relief and rehabilitation program, UZ conducted the assessment study. As per guideline, an official from UZ level are attached in each of the project committee who are called 'tag officer'. UZ engineer plays a vital role in supervising ADP funded projects and PIO plays a crucial role in supervising projects taken under relief and rehabilitation program. Of late the chairmanship of UDCC goes to UZ chairman.

All the respondents interviewed at UZ level mentioned their views to the researcher. The key points are as follows-

- ❖ Projects should be selected, designed and implemented by the community people of the locality where the projects are assumed to be implemented.
- ❖ All UZ level officers interviewed except UZ chairman opine that funds should be directly transferred to UP like LGSP. Such process of fund disbursement helps avoiding undue hassle for UPs.
- ❖ Political interference in project selection, inclusion of likeminded persons in PICs and distribution of allocated fund among the UPs, should be stopped for the sake of proper utilization of allocated fund.
- ❖ Stakeholder analysis should be done before taking any project. In addition, participation of key stakeholders in development planning must be ensured in order to make development projects sustainable and viable.
- ❖ To integrate the beneficiaries and to encourage their extensive involvement in the project activities, the participation focused guidelines should be framed in line with LGSP guideline.
- ❖ Nobody is interested to know about the project outcome, once project period is over. Project evaluation system, in a word, is inactive at local development project. Consequentially, whether the key stakeholders were involved in the project design and implementation activities; whether projects were implemented according to guideline or not; allotted funds utilized properly or not—all these are remained

unevaluated and unattended. So evaluation system of each project needs to operationalize for the sake of identifying irregularities and mistakes so that repetition can be stopped in future and transparency be ensured.

### **5.10 Factors influence on the participatory process in UP-led Development Projects**

During the survey respondents both community people and UP level elected representatives were asked to mention the factors restraining the local people from involving into local level development projects. The respondents mentioned series of factors which hinders the appropriate planning and better implementation process of development projects at UP level.

#### **❖ Political intervention in project selection or inclusion in PICs**

Political intervention in project selection is a common phenomenon in UP level development projects. It was observed in Jagannathpur UP that the respective MP allotted sixty percent of the total grant for Food for Works Programme (FWP) to only one project by ignoring the UP which has created conflict among national and local level politicians. Not only that this project was implemented by those who had close tie with local MP. The beneficiaries' participation on the project cycle was almost absent. In this way the common people of the UP are deprived of sharing in the development process. Political consideration in selection of members of PICs is an inevitable factor in UP level which eventually hinders cross section of people's participation in PICs.

#### **❖ Locally elected representative's personal interest**

Sometimes some projects are selected by the locally elected representatives not on the basis of community demand but for attaining personal gain. In order to do that, they set up close allies in project implementation process keeping the original beneficiaries in the dark. Such kind of personal benefit sharing attitude ultimately prohibits the common people to be involved in development project implementation process.

#### **❖ Lack of dissemination of project related information**

Projects are undertaken for the development of local people. So projects should be selected, designed and implemented in consultation and with the help of local people. The project beneficiaries have the right to know and be known about the project related information. But the practice of disseminating project related information to the beneficiaries is almost absent in UP level which acts as a hindrance to local people's participation in development initiatives.

❖ **Nexus between elected representatives and local elites**

In rural Bangladesh from time immemorial the local development initiatives are mostly captured by local elites who are economically well off and have strong link with ruling party political leaders. The local elected representatives have built up an unholy alliance with those local elites on the basis of mutual benefit sharing strategy. It is very hard for the common people to break through this vicious cycle. Subsequently, the participation of the poor and the marginalized in UP-led development projects in most of the cases remains a far cry.

❖ **Lack of participation friendly guidelines in project selection or planning level**

Existing legal provision or policy guidelines needs to be people friendly and well clarified. In the existing project guidelines local people's inclusion is clearly incorporated in project implementation or formation of PICs level but not in project selection or planning level. The elected representatives, therefore, avail the opportunity to non-integrate the common people in project planning. Such practices are limited in LGSP due to participation friendly guidelines and effective monitoring, evaluation and audit system.

❖ **Lack of strong monitoring and evaluation process of development projects**

Transparency and sustainability of development projects largely depends on not only beneficiaries' attendance but also on proper and effective monitoring, evaluation and audit system. In most of the development projects at UP level, the monitoring and evaluation system is very poor. The audit system is not up to date. Beneficiaries' participation is almost absent. In some cases where participation is visible, effective realization of that participation is not felt. All these irregularities encourages UP elected representatives to keep the beneficiaries away from the development projects and to gain undue or personal benefit keeping local people in the dark.. Whereas in LGSP, due to effective monitoring, evaluation and audit system, the projects are run and implemented with the minimum satisfaction of the beneficiaries.

❖ **Absence of active local civil society or watchdog organizations**

Institutionalization of participatory practices at UP level is still in nascent stage. In this backdrop local civil societies strong role can help ensure transparency, accountability and people's participation and thereby culturing participatory practices in LGIs. So strong Local Government Institutions (LGIs)-Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) interface is a crying needs for nurturing participatory practices at UP level.

❖ **Socially enlightened/ conscious class's avoiding tendency**

Participatory practices in development project cycle can only be flourished through the meaningful participation of beneficiaries into it. In UP level project selection process, either the local MP/ UZ level ruling party political leaders or UP chairman/members' personal choices got preferences to local needs. To fulfill that desire, PICs are formed with the likeminded people avoiding the representation of cross section of people. Government instructions are obliged in black and white but the spirit of representation of cross section of people become meaningless. This malpractice discourages the socially enlightened/ conscious persons to be involved in local level development projects.

❖ **Lack of local peoples' awareness about their rights, roles and responsibilities**

No development initiatives can gain ground unless the beneficiaries become aware of their rights, roles and responsibilities. In rural Bangladesh, majority people are illiterate and involved in cultivation. They are used to keep body and soul together. They feel that voting is their only duty to the state. Still many of them are ignorant of their potentiality whether to contribute to the nation in involving in development initiatives or not. So to bring the majority local people into the wave of development, massive awareness building program should be initiated, if necessary in collaboration with local NGOs.

### **5.11 People's Participation: A Quantitative Summary**

Participation as process is complex depending on the context of the society. In the present study 'people's participation at UP level development projects' has been taken as dependent variable whereas 'institutional and regulatory framework (structure and rules and regulations)', 'socio-economic factors (gender, educational status and income level)' and 'politico-cultural factors (number of political interferences and unwillingness in participation)' are identified as independent variables. At the outset, there were some general assumptions that higher the incomes level higher the participation, higher the educational condition higher the participation, existing structure and prevailing rules and regulations of UP, gender, political interference and unwillingness of the conscious community people may instigate or impede the community people into the participatory process at UP-led development projects. With a view to examining the initial assumption, survey was conducted among cross-sections of community people; some development projects have been studied in this study. The collected data has been analyzed through SPSS for statistical generalization and validation of relationship between dependent and independent variables. Table 5.20 presents the relationship found between different variables and participation.

**Table 5.21****Relationship between Variables with Participation**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>'r'</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
<b>Institutional and Regulatory Framework</b>		
• Structure	.661	0.01
• Rules and Regulations	.608	0.01
<b>Socio-economic Factors</b>		
• Income Level	.526	0.01
• Educational Status	.568	0.01
• Gender	.238	0.05
<b>Politico-cultural Factors</b>		
• No. of Political Interference	-.437	0.01
• Unwillingness in Participation	.438	0.01

Pearson's coefficient correlation has been conducted to verify the initial assumptions. From Table 5.21 a high degree of positive correlation is observed between existing structure ( $r=.661$ ) and rules and regulations of UP ( $r=.608$ ) and participation which indicates that the existing structure and rules and regulations of UP are the two very significant factors that affect participation. Moreover, a positive relation is found between income level and participation ( $r=.526$ ) and educational status and participation ( $r=.568$ ). This means that if income level and educational status increases, the participation increases as well. In case of political interferences and participation a high degree of negative correlation ( $r= -.437$ ) has been observed through which it has been established that higher the political intervention in participatory processes of development projects, lower the scope of participation of beneficiaries into it. From the above table, it is seen that there is a low degree of correlation ( $r=.438$ ) (though significant) between unwillingness of community people and participation. This means that generally the majority portion of community people is interested to be involved into local development projects /activities. But the smaller section including school teacher, social worker, *imam* etc. who have a clean image in rural society are usually unwilling to be involved into development projects. As regards gender, during correlation testing it was difficult to quantify the persons. Subsequently, a low degree of correlation between gender and participation ( $r=.238$ ) in 0.05 level has been observed. But during Chi-

Square test surprisingly a significant relationship between gender and participation has been found ( $\chi^2=5.669$ ). So it is evident that gender matters in the context of participation. In synthesis, it is clear that all the indicators taken in this study to assess the level of participation as well as to determine the major causes behind less or non participation has been proved to be more or less significant.

### **5.12 Conclusion**

Mapping the level of participation of local people in UP-led development projects is one of the prime objectives in this research work. In addition, from the study several factors have been identified which help determining the nature of participation at the grassroots level. The case studies and survey produces some interesting findings. The level of participation in development projects in the study area is very insignificant. Participation in rural Bangladesh seems to be limited only to people with strong socio-economic backgrounds. The poor and the marginalized, characterized by economic, social and political backwardness are badly deprived of involving in local level development projects. The study further reveals that the elected representatives are keen on maximizing benefits from development projects. People's representatives also seem to have enduring ties with the local elites and thereby sharing mutual benefits. This unholy alliance between people's representatives and local elites keeps the poor and the marginalized outside the development process. Furthermore, in some cases it is observed that people's representatives at UP level are under tremendous pressure to be obliged by the directions of local MP engaged political persons in selection of projects and in inclusion of members in PICs that eventually made rift in the lute amidst the elected representatives of UP and local MP.

Besides the above mentioned factors, the structure of UP, participation unfriendly rules and regulations, high rate of illiteracy among rural poor, socially enlightened classes' unwillingness and other socio-economic issues like gender, economic condition and ignorance of rights and responsibilities are identified as main reasons behind non-participation.

Despite some limitations and drawbacks, it seems that some participation takes place sporadically in various forms in local development. Hence, some silver lining is seen where under Local Governance Support Project (LGSP) the local people are getting more opportunities to be involved in project selection and implementation level; one UP (Jagannathpur UP) amongst the study area has started practicing participatory budgeting of its

own accord. In some rare cases, open meetings are also held for identification of local priorities. But, the initiatives are very few and do not have significant impact on the overall development process. In most cases, these initiatives are rather personal than institutional. However, day by day community people are becoming more conscious as citizens and as a result, voices are growing from the civil society organizations as well as citizens' groups for participatory governance at local level for better and sustainable management of public resources. Yet it is evident that participatory practices are still in nascent stage in the UP level and needs to be institutionalized.

## Chapter – 6

### **Conclusion: Finding a Way Forward**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

The role of decentralization has long been recognized in development. In fact, sustainable development largely depends on how decentralization is designed and implemented. Since its independence successive governments in Bangladesh have taken various reform measures with a view to ensuring development for all, but these reform initiatives have not significantly fulfill the declared objectives. It is now commonly alleged that the reform initiatives lacked clear political will and hence did not integrate all walks of people in the development process. Development decisions, which affected the lives of millions, had been monopoly of a powerful few. The unholy nexus between the rent-seeking politicians and self-seeking bureaucrats stifled, in many ways, development of self-reliant local government. Local government as a decentralization strategy has continued but mass people's integration in it has remained a mirage. Consequently, development programs at the local level did not include those for whom those were meant. Customarily the poor and the marginalized have remained outside the development interventions. The disadvantaged groups have been mere observers. Their voices hardly had any impact on the decisions that greatly affected their lives. After decades of experimentations the pervasive feeling now is that unless participatory practices are institutionalized, development programs cannot fulfill the stated objectives nor they can bring in the desired outcomes. It is widely acknowledged that a local government system, which ensures participation of all levels of people in the decision making, can only guarantee success of local level development interventions. Keeping this in consideration the present study aims at exploring the level of mass participation in the decision making process at all stages of project cycle.

The research, conducted in two unions located in different regions of Bangladesh, attempts to address two research questions, the first of which is – ‘To what extent the local people are involved in the decision making process of union level development projects?’ and the second one is ‘What are the factors/barriers that influence on and/ affect the participatory process in Union level development projects?’ In response to the first question, on the basis of empirical data it is found that participation of common people in development project

planning in the study area has been found to be significantly low (7%) whereas the percentage is a bit high (24%) in the implementation stage though it is mainly managed, guided, directed and maneuvered by patron-client relations, mutual benefit-sharing and personal relations. In fact participation is limited to the rich and socially influential persons, without whom the elected representatives cannot think of their political successes. The rural elites and the elected representatives seem to have established an unholy understanding among them in mutual benefit-sharing, which is consistent with prevailing patron-client relationship scenario. Consequently, the poor and the marginalized are still outside the domain of governance and different participatory processes.

In response to the second research question, both qualitative and quantitative data shows that some socio-economic factors like gender, low literacy rate of rural people and shabby economic condition seem to have been exerting considerable influence in shaping participation in rural Bangladesh. In addition, the very structure of the LGIs in rural Bangladesh, participation unfriendly rules, regulations and guidelines, undue political intervention from local MP, UZ level political leaders and MP nominated political persons in project selection process or in inclusion in PICs, mutual benefit-sharing tendency of elected representatives, nexus between elected representatives and local elites i.e., patron-client relations, self-exclusion of socially enlightened class largely hinders participatory practices. Furthermore, lack of dissemination of project related information, absence of strong and effective monitoring and evaluation system, absence of local civil society or watchdog organizations and lack of local peoples' awareness of rights, roles and responsibilities eventually discourages cross-section of people's participation in development projects.

In this study two UPs had been selected from two regions with a view to mapping whether there is any diversity regarding educational status and economic condition among the people of these two study areas that affect the mode of development process, practices and participation. After analyzing the union profiles and survey data, it is seen that economic status and educational level have considerable influence in the process of development management and participation between the resident's of the studied UPs. As a consequence of such differentiation some participatory practices have already been introduced to some extent in Jagannathpur UP. Introduction of participatory budgeting, arrangement of open meeting for identification of local priorities bears the testimony of such participatory practices. But no such initiatives are visible in the context of Alampur UP during this survey

and by which eventually the initial assumption (i.e. income and education matters) has to a great extent empirically validated.

It is a fact that the research work has have based broadly on the comprehensive model developed by Cohen and Uphoff's (1980) as regarding people's and community participation, with further augmented by Khwaja (2004). In synthesis it is found that for ensuring meaningful participation of community people as well as for the sustainability of development projects social inclusion i.e., cross-section of people's participation irrespective of gender, family status, educational status, income level which Cohen and Uphoff articulated in their model has been proved very significant in the context of Bangladesh. Furthermore, the model shows how historical, politico-cultural and socio-economic factors influence on shaping the participatory practices on development program. This concept has been truly reflected in the present study where the socio-economic factors (income level, educational status and gender), politico-cultural factors (political interference and unwillingness of socially enlightened/ conscious class) and institutional and regulatory framework (structure, rules and regulations) – all these variables and indicators have been emerged not only as dominant factors in shaping or impeding the participatory practices at grass-root development projects but have been found to be significantly correlated. One mentionable point is that comparing to the influence of other two factors (institutional and regulatory framework and politico-cultural factors), the influence of socio-economic factors (income level, educational status and gender) on participatory process at UP level development projects has been significantly felt.

Community Participation theory stands for the general assumption that higher the community participation in a decision; lower the likelihood of the interferences of external organizations on that decision. Greater community participation ensures transparency in decision making process, enhances accountability of the key actors to their clients. In the present study, this theory has been rightly proved to some extent especially in case of Local Governance Support Projects (LGSP). Due to participation focused policy guidelines, community people's participation in selection/ planning process, implementation and monitoring level of development project has been ensured quite successfully in LGSP. As a result during survey, community people expressed their satisfaction about projects taken under LGSP, its PICs and the commitment of their leaders (UP chairman/ members) and by which their ownership has been established more than that of other projects (ADP, Relief and Rehabilitation Program

and Direct Funding Program). However, the necessity of culturing participatory practices in each stages of project cycle were highly felt by the respondents and thereby the ownership of the beneficiaries' has been expected to be gradually established which eventually help reducing the external agencies penetration in development project cycle.

In fact, development projects are generally framed in response to personal desires of influential local leaders and their vested interests; popular needs are only secondary considerations. Of late a silver lining is being observed in case of projects taken under LGSP where participatory practices are cultured in the truest sense. Moreover, there are some positive signs which indicate a tendency towards participatory development in some areas in the form of participatory budgeting though the achievements are not very significant yet. There is still a long way to go. The policymakers must come up with comprehensive policy guidelines with a view to freeing the LGIs from unnecessary political and bureaucratic controls and strengthening them by integrating people from all walks of life in the development as well as governance process.

### **6.1 Recommendations**

The main contention behind people's participation in development is that real development must be people-centered. Jazairy (1989) notes that projects conceived and implemented by outside organizations have failed because adequate consideration was not given to the importance of local participation. So project beneficiaries or the community people should be included in all phases of development projects – from the process of needs assessment for the design and development of a project, through project implementation to project monitoring and evaluation. Several decades of development initiatives of Bangladesh have shown that without meaningful participation of the local people in the development process, sustainable improvement in the standard of living of the people cannot be achieved. In view of the findings of the study, some recommendations are proposed to make the development process in this country more people-oriented:

- ❖ The poor and the disadvantaged, characterized by social, economic and political backwardness, are traditionally and culturally neglected in planning and implementation of development projects. Some structural changes can bring awareness and power among the marginalized groups breaking the traditional patterns. However, desired outcomes may not come overnight. In this context, local NGOs working with the marginalized section in the rural areas need to be included in

the local development process through public opinion mobilization, design and planning process. This may gradually help to institutionalize the participatory practices in the development process.

- ❖ Technical skills regarding project design, pre-assessment of projects of UPs need to be increased. Effective measures should be taken to build capacity of the UPs so that they can undertake and carry out local development activities independently.
- ❖ UPs should be conferred with meaningful autonomy. Interference from any quarter i.e. from local MP, UZ level political leader, MP nominated political persons or local touts must be stopped. At the same time UPs should be kept outside the complex bureaucratic procedure as far as possible. Therefore, necessary reforms of the legal framework should be made.
- ❖ The elected representatives at UP level are mostly unaware about the benefits of participatory development approach. Lack of knowledge in this regard on their part may have contributed to their misunderstanding and misconception. Launching training programs or workshops may help change the mindset of the elected representatives regarding participatory practices in development interventions.
- ❖ Now-a-days funds are distributed in favour of UPs under LGSP and direct funding program from Local Government Division. The UPs now being the fund management authority have been more responsible and committed to the local people. As part of that commitment, project information, amount of disbursement, name of the members of PICs are displayed in the notice board of UPs. Public meeting are arranged by the UP for project selection and members of PICs are finalized on the basis of public choice. Considering the outcomes of this practice, the government should initiate the process of disbursing funds of various development projects directly to the UPs.
- ❖ Participatory budgeting needs to be introduced in UP with a view to integrating community people in the development project cycle. In this context, representatives from different social groups should be trained so that they can articulate their demands properly and make meaningful contributions to local development planning.
- ❖ Stakeholder analysis should be done before taking any project. In addition, participation of key stakeholders in development planning must be ensured in order to

make development projects sustainable and viable. NGOs could be mobilized to help UP in such initiatives.

- ❖ Evaluation of each project should be done on regular basis so that loopholes can be identified and mistakes are not repeated. In evaluating the projects, opinions and perceptions of the key beneficiaries should be sought. In this regard, performance audits of UPs can also be done. DDLG should undertake sample based intensive evaluation of the UP level development projects.
- ❖ “Citizen based Monitoring Team” can be introduced to promote and to ensure participatory development practices at the union level. In line with this view, a committee may be formed in each UP comprising of civil society members, local media, school teachers and socially enlightened persons, which would work as a watchdog and recommend measures to improve participation level. The committee would not directly interfere in the activities of UPs, but ensure that development projects are taken on participatory basis. The committee would also make sure that key stakeholders have been consulted before taking up any projects and have been included in the implementation process.

## **6.2 Scope for Further Research**

Upon completion of the research with the given research questions and the scope, it is observed that some critical and relevant issues have not been covered by this research. To map the level of beneficiaries’ participation in local development projects, in this study the prime focus is given only two stages of project cycle i.e. planning and implementation stages whereas the other stages like project appraisal, monitoring and evaluation stages remained untouched which can be a relevant and interesting areas for future research.

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# Appendix

# Appendix- A

Դրանք Ծագած շնորհակալությունները Ռեզյումեի Կրկնաշարի համար  
(Դրանք Ռեզյումեի համար)

Շնորհակալություններ

e՝ՄՀ Հ՝Մ՝

Բնակչությունը -----  
 Կիսը -----  
 Կրթությունը -----

## Այլ ծանոթություններ

1| Կրթություն

- |                                     |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Երկրորդ    | <input type="checkbox"/> Գերակարգ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Այլ      |

2| Կրթության տեսակ

- |                                     |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Կրթություն |

3| Կրթության տարի

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2000 Կրթություն         | <input type="checkbox"/> 2001 - 4000 Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> 4001 - 8000 Կրթություն |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8001 - 10000 Կրթություն | <input type="checkbox"/> 10000 Կրթություն       |   |

Կրթության տեսակի մասին

4| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

5| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

6| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

7| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

## Կրթության տեսակի մասին

8| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

9| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն
1	2	3	4	5

10| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

- Կրթություն  Կրթություն

11| Կրթության տեսակի մասին

Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն	Կրթություն
1	2	3	4	5

Dbəb cKí cwi Kí bv I ev<sup>-</sup>evqtb AskMñY kxl R avi Yv

- 12| Avcub wK tKvb Dbəb cKí cwi Kí brq KLtbv AskMñY Kti tQb?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 13| Avcbvi Gj vKvq Dbəb cKí ev<sup>-</sup>evqtb i tKvb KvR KLtbv AskMñY Kti tQb wK?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 14| 12+13 bs cKí tKí DÈi 0 n<sup>w</sup>0 ntj --Avcbvi gZvgZ „i“ZmnKvti wetePbv Kiv ntqtQ wK?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 15| Avcub wK gtb Kti b Avcbvi Gj vKvq ev<sup>-</sup>evqZ Dbəb cKí mgn mKtj i AskMñYi wfiEiZ ntqtQ?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 16| Avcbvi Gj vKvq BDvbq cwi l t i Avl Zvq ev<sup>-</sup>evqZ/ev<sup>-</sup>evqbxv Dbəb cKí vbxq Rbmavi tYi AskMñYi mweR wcl qutK Avcub wKfvte gj<sup>-</sup>vqb Kti b?

Lp Kg		tgvUvgU		AtbK tekx
1	2	3	4	5

- 17| tKvb cKí i wcl tQ BDvbq cwi l t i tPqvi gv<sup>-</sup>vtbi mvt\_ Avcbvi Avtj vPbv ntqtQ wK?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv

vbxq Dbəb cKí cwi Kí bv I ev<sup>-</sup>evqtb ivR%wZK cfi ve wcl qK

- 18| tKvb cKí tbqvi tKí tKvb ivR%wZK `j cfi ve w<sup>-</sup>ti Kti wKbv?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 19| DÈi 0 n<sup>w</sup>0 ntj Dbəb cKí tbqvi tKí ivR%wZK `tj i cfi ve w<sup>-</sup>ti i wcl qutK Avcub wKfvte gj<sup>-</sup>vqb Kti b?

Lp Kg		tgvUvgU		AtbK tekx
1	2	3	4	5

- 20| cKí ev<sup>-</sup>evq KigUtZ AšF<sup>3</sup> i Rb<sup>-</sup> ivR%wZK `j ev ivR%wZK `tj i m<sup>-</sup>m<sup>-</sup>iv tKvb Pvc cQvM Kti wKbv?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 21| DÈi 0 n<sup>w</sup>0 ntj Dbəb cKí ev<sup>-</sup>evq KigUtZ AšF<sup>3</sup> i Rb<sup>-</sup> ivR%wZK `j ev ivR%wZK `tj i m<sup>-</sup>m<sup>-</sup>i Pvc cQvMi wcl qutK Avcub wKfvte gj<sup>-</sup>vqb Kti b?

Lp Kg		tgvUvgU		AtbK tekx
1	2	3	4	5

vbxq Dbəb cKí cwi Kí bv I ev<sup>-</sup>evqKvth<sup>3</sup> AskMñYi tKí msv<sup>-</sup>wZK cfi ve

- 22| BDvbq cwi l t i cZwv KZR Abti va Kivi ci l tKvb Dbəb cKí ev<sup>-</sup>evqtb AskMñY ev ev<sup>-</sup>evq KigUtZ AšF<sup>3</sup> tZ ivRx nbv -- Ggb ntqtQ wK?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv
- 23| DÈi 0 n<sup>w</sup>0 ntj tKí Avcub Avcbvi gvbmK Ae<sup>-</sup>vb<sup>3</sup> wKfvte e<sup>-</sup>vL<sup>-</sup>v Ki tēb?

tgvU AvMñx bq		tgvUvgU AvMñx		AtbK tekx AvMñx
1	2	3	4	5

- 24| BDvbq cwi l t i Avl Zvaxv tKvb Dbəb cKí cwi Kí bv ev ev<sup>-</sup>evqtb AskMñYi tKí ev ev<sup>-</sup>evq KigUtZ AšF<sup>3</sup> i e<sup>-</sup>vcvti vbxq „YxR<sup>3</sup>bi mvt\_ Avtj vPbv ev ci vgk<sup>3</sup> Avcub MñY Kti tQb wK?  
 n<sup>w</sup>             bv

\*\*\*mn<sup>3</sup>hwMZvi Rb<sup>-</sup> Avcb<sup>3</sup>K ab<sup>-</sup>ev<sup>-</sup>\*\*\*

**English Version of the Questionnaire**  
**Participation of People in Local Development Projects: Role of LG Institutions**  
**(For Local People)**  
**Questionnaire – ‘Ka’**

**Personal Information**

Name-----  
Sex----- Age -----  
Address-----  
-----

**Socio-economic Status**

1. Occupation

- Agriculture       Business       Service  
 Labor       Teaching       Others

2. Educational Status

- Illiterate       Primary School       Secondary School  
 S.S.C.       H.S.C.       Degree and Above

3. Income Level (in Taka)

- Below 2000 Taka       2001 - 4000 Taka       4001 - 8000 Taka  
 8001 - 10000 Taka       Above 10000 Taka

**General Idea about Union Parishad**

4. Do you know anything about the functions/TOR of the Standing Committee of UP?

- Yes       No

5. Did you ever participate in the Committee meeting?

- Yes       No

6. If the answer is ‘Yes’, did you participate in the discussion?

- Yes       No

7. If the answer is ‘Yes’, were your opinions considered properly?

- Yes       No

**Knowledge about Institutional and Regulatory Framework**

8. Do you think the existing Laws/Rules of Union Parishad are conducive to the participation of local people in development projects/development activities?

- Yes       No

9. If the answer is ‘No’, please rank how far the structure of UP conducive to local people’s participation in development projects/development activities?

Not conducive		Moderate		Highly conducive
1	2	3	4	5

10. Do you think the existing Union Parishad Structure is conducive to the participation of local people in development projects/development activities?

- Yes       No

11. If the answer is ‘No’, please rank how far the structure of UP conducive to local people’s participation in development projects/development activities?

Not conducive		Moderate		Highly conducive
1	2	3	4	5

**Idea about Participation in Planning and Implementation of Development Project**

12. Did you participate in planning of any development project in your locality?  
 Yes       No
13. Did you participate in implementation of any development project in your locality?  
 Yes       No
14. If the answer is 'Yes' in respect of 12+13, were your opinions considered properly?  
 Yes       No
15. Do you think that the development projects undertaken in your locality have been implemented through participation of all?  
 Yes       No
16. How do you rank the level of participation of community people at UP-led development project?
- |        |   |        |   |         |
|--------|---|--------|---|---------|
| Lowest |   | Medium |   | Highest |
| 1      | 2 | 3      | 4 | 5       |
17. Did you have any discussion with UP Chairman about any side of development projects?  
 Yes       No

**Political Intervention on Planning and Implementation of Local Development Project**

18. Have you seen any political pressure in undertaking any project in your locality?  
 Yes       No
19. If the answer is 'Yes', please rank the level of political intervention into the development projects undertaken in your locality?
- |        |   |        |   |         |
|--------|---|--------|---|---------|
| Lowest |   | Medium |   | Highest |
| 1      | 2 | 3      | 4 | 5       |
20. Is there any influence from political party/party members for inclusion in Project Implementation Committee (PIC) in your locality?  
 Yes       No
21. If the answer is 'Yes', please rank the level of political intervention into the inclusion in Project Implementation Committee (PIC) in your locality?
- |        |   |        |   |         |
|--------|---|--------|---|---------|
| Lowest |   | Medium |   | Highest |
| 1      | 2 | 3      | 4 | 5       |

**Cultural Influence on Participation in Local Development Project**

22. Did you ever reject any request or proposal made by UP chairman/members to be involved in project implementation activities or included in PIC?  
 Yes       No
23. If the answer is 'Yes', how far do you assess your state of mind behind such contention?
- |                  |   |              |   |                |
|------------------|---|--------------|---|----------------|
| Highly unwilling |   | less willing |   | Very satisfied |
| 1                | 2 | 3            | 4 | 5              |
24. Did you consult/ seek suggestion from any local elite/leader before participating in any project planning/implementation activities/ being involved in PIC?  
 Yes       No

**\*\*\*Thank you once again for you kind cooperation\*\*\***





**English Version of the Questionnaire**  
**Participation of People in Local Development Projects: Role of LG Institutions**  
**(For the Elected Representatives of Union Parishads)**  
**Questionnaire – ‘Kha’**

Name----- Age-----  
Sex----- Educational Status-----  
Address-----  
-----

1. Are you involved in direct politics?  
 Yes       No
  
2. If the answer is ‘Yes’, do you hold any position in any political party?  
 Yes       No
  
3. Do you know how many development projects have been undertaken in your union in the financial year 2008-2009 and 2009-2010?  
 Yes       No
  
4. Does any discussion take place in the UP before taking any project?  
 Yes       No
  
5. Are the local people involved in project planning and implementation?  
 Yes       No
  
6. If the answer is ‘Yes’, how the local people are involved?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Have you ever been the member of any project implementation committee?  
 Yes       No
  
8. Are your opinions considered properly in project planning as well implementation?  
 Yes       No
  
9. Do the local political institutions exert any influence in selecting as well as implementing development projects?  
 Yes       No
  
10. Is there any influence from political party/party members for inclusion in Project Implementation Committee (PIC) in your locality?  
 Yes       No

11. How do you determine the priorities of development projects in your union?
12. Do you think the existing Laws/Rules of Union Parishad are conducive to the participation of local people in development projects/development activities?  
 Yes       No
13. If the answer is 'No', why?
14. Do you think the existing Union Parishad Structure is a barrier to local people's participation in development activities?  
 Yes       No
15. If the answer is 'Yes', why?
16. Is there any evidence- where local people disagree/reluctant in participation of project implementation activities or inclusion of Project Implementation Committee after being requested by the Union Parishad representatives?  
 Yes       No
17. If the answer is 'Yes', why?
18. What are the factors that influence in participation of local people in development projects?
19. What are the factors that influence in non-participation of local people in development projects?
20. What are your suggestions to incorporate all walks of people in the development process?

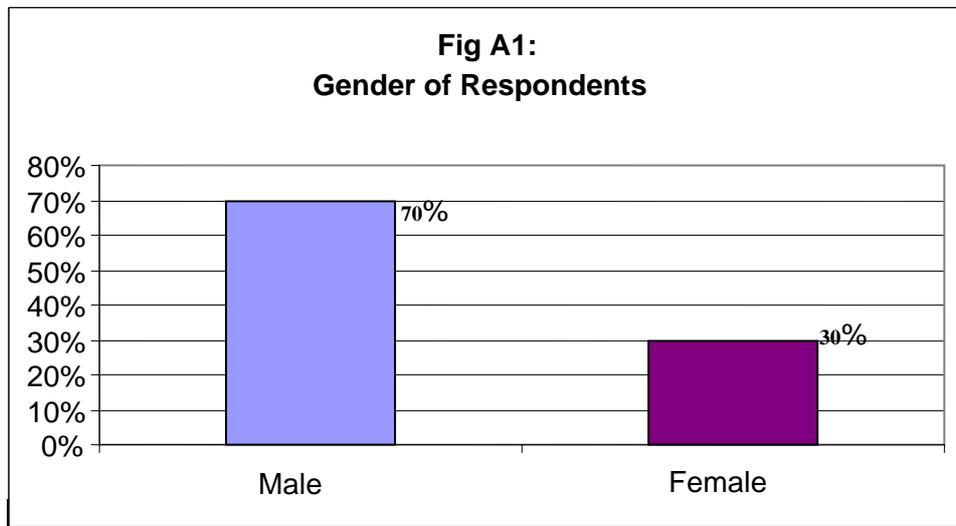
**\*\*\*Thank you once again for you kind cooperation\*\*\***

## Appendix – C

### Socio-economic Profile of the Respondents

#### Gender Ratio of the Respondents

Because of limited time only 100 randomly selected people were interviewed for the purpose of the study. Among them seventy were male and the rest thirty were female. Following Figure shows the gender of the respondents.



Source: Sample survey

#### Age of the Respondents

Table-A1 shows that most of the respondents (35%) belong to the age group of 21-30 and then the age of 28% respondents varies in between 31 and 40 years. The rest belong to other age groups as shown in the table.

**Table-A1:**

#### Distribution of Respondents as per Age Group in the study area

Age Group	Number of Respondents		Total
	Alampur Union	Jagannathpur Union	
Below 20	5	8	13
21-30	17	18	35
31-40	15	13	28
41-50	10	6	16
Above 50	3	5	8
Total	50	50	100

Source: Sample survey

### Professions of Respondents

By profession majority portion of the respondents (31 %), as shown in the Table-A2 are involved with agriculture, while eighteen percent of them are daily-labour, twenty three percent are businessmen, eight percent of them are teachers of different categories and the rest (20 %) are either housewives or involved in other occupations.

**Table-A2:**

**Distribution of Respondents by Profession in the study area**

Name of Union	Profession Category						Total
	Agriculture	Business	Service	Labor	Teaching	Others	
Alampur	22	8	5	10	3	2	50
Jagannathpur	9	15	10	8	5	3	50
Total	31	23	15	18	8	5	100

Source: Sample survey

### Educational Status of the Respondents

Only a moderate portion (13 %) of the total respondents, as shown in Table-A3, is illiterate, while the bulk of them (30 %) them have attended primary school followed by twenty-five percent of them attending secondary school. The rest (32%) is at least S.S.C. pass.

**Table-A3:**

**Distribution of Respondents by Education in the study area**

Name of Union	Number of Respondents						Total
	Illiterate	Primary School	Secondary School	SSC Pass	HSC Pass	Graduation & above	
Alampur	9	18	14	4	4	1	50
Jagannathpur	5	13	12	9	7	4	50
Total	14	31	26	13	11	5	100

Source: Sample survey

### Income Level of the Respondents

Table-A4 shows that nineteen percent of the respondents are very poor with less than two thousand taka monthly income, while twenty-seven percent of them are poor with average monthly income falling in-between 2001 and 4000 taka. Twenty-two percent of the

respondents have moderate average monthly income, while the rest (32 %) are comparatively rich in the context of rural Bangladesh with at least eight thousand taka as their monthly income.

**Table-A4:**

**Distribution of Respondents by Income Level in the study area**

Name of Union	Profession Category					Total
	Below 2000	2001-4000	4001-8000	8001-10000	Above 10000	
Alampur	8	20	11	9	2	50
Jagannathpur	2	8	19	14	7	50
Total	10	28	30	23	9	100

Source: Sample survey