

Quarterly Update Local Governance Cluster

UNDP, Bangladesh

July-September 2008



Improved and participatory local governance can contribute to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation by assisting to build capacity of local government bodies to plan, finance and manage basic development activities in a responsive and accountable manner.

National Workshop on 'Resource Mobilization of Union Parishad

Local Government Division and UNDP jointly organized a national workshop, titled 'Resource Mobilization of Union Parishad' under Local Government Support Project- Learning & Innovation Component (LGSP-LIC) on 11 September 2008 in Dhaka Hotel Sheraton.

Professor Nick Devas, University of Birmingham presented the findings of his study titled 'Local Revenue Sources for Union Parishads' to the workshop, where he examined and analyzed current UP revenue assignments with a view to identify possible and appropriate increases in their revenue base, to assess current UP performance with regard to the administration and collection of own-source of revenues, to make recommendations and develop a provisional strategy for enhancing the revenues.

Mr. Md. Anwarul Iqbal Hon'ble Adviser, Ministry of LGRD&C, Labour & Employment and Jute & Textile graced the workshop as the Chief Guest. Emphasizing the need for strengthening the financial capabilities of local bodies, the adviser asserted that the government has already identified certain steps, so that local bodies could generate some funds from local sources including providing a certain portion of the value added tax (VAT) and income tax to them. He also added that the imminent Local Government Commission would take firm decisions regarding this issue. Ms. Reneta Lok Dessallien, UN Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative, H.E. Dr. Stefan Frowein, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, European Commission and Mr. Shaikh Khurshid Alam, Secretary, Local Government Division were present as Special Guests. Mr. Md. Nojibur Rahman, Joint Secretary (Admin), Local Government Division and Focal Person, LGSP-LIC presided the workshop. Mr. Swapan Kumar Sarkar, DG, LGD, and NPD, LGSP-LIC delivered the welcome speech. More than 200 guests including representatives of the Union Parishads, government officials from both the local and central levels, journalists from electronic and print media, members of civil society and academicians attended the workshop and provided their valuable inputs through open discussion sessions and group works to identify new revenue sources and methods to improve the existing taxation administration.

Hon'ble Adviser Md. Anwarul Iqbal giving his speech



Workshop on Participatory Development

Workshop on the 12th Praxis Commune on Participatory Development has taken place on 19-28 August, 2008 at Kila Campus, Thrissur, Kerala, India. This is an international event where the development workers interact with people of like minded from across the world and acquaint themselves of the latest tools, techniques and trends in the field of participatory development. The Government of Bangladesh with the support of UNDP Bangladesh sent a team of six government officials to join this workshop.

Study Tour on Participatory Budgeting and Planning

The Local Government Division and UNDP Bangladesh with the support from the International Poverty Centre and UNDP Brazil organized a study tour for a team consisting four Bangladeshi government officials from 18-22 August, 2008 at Brasilia and Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The team went to gather experience on participatory budgeting and planning. The team included Mr. Swapan Kumar Sarkar, Director General, Local Government Division; Mr Arastoo Khan, Joint Secretary, Finance Division; A.M. Badrudduja, Joint Secretary, Economic Relations Division and Saleh Ahmed Mujaffor, Senior Assistant Secretary, Local Government Division.

Upazila Level Workshops

41 workshops are determined to be organized at Upazila level under LIC project in six districts by mid- October. These workshops are arranged for the government officials at the Upazila level and UP chairmen to make them aware of the objectives and activities of LIC as well as their role within the project. Already four workshops are conducted in Feni, one in Narsingdi and the rest will be done by October 15, 2008.

Training Sessions for Upazila Cooperative Officers

For LGSP-LIC project, the Upazila Cooperative officers are performing the role of front-line support and mentoring officers for UPs on behalf of the Local Government Division. With this view in mind, UNDP, Local Government Division and LGSP-LIC project arranged a three day long training session for Upazila Cooperative Officers (UCOs) from 19-21 July at National Institute of Local Government (NILG). The sessions were facilitated by the senior officials of LGD, the project staff of LIC as well as by the trainers of NILG. The UCOs were given a brief introduction of LGSP-LIC, its objectives, activities and the role UCO in assisting the UPs. Mr. Larry Maramis, Deputy Country Director (P), UNDP was present in the inauguration of the training as special guest and delivered lecture, which was highly appreciated by all.

Formation of UPPC, WDC, SSC

According to the Project Manual of LGSP-LIC, in each Union Parishad, 9 Ward Development Committee (WDC), 9 Scheme Supervision Committee (SSC) and 1 Union Parishad Planning Committee (UPPC) are to be formed consisting the local citizens and UP Chairman and members. Following the regulation, 79 UPPCs, 711 WDCs and 711 SSCs have been formed in 79 unions. These committees play vary vital roles to select, prioritize, implement and supervise the quality of the schemes under the LIC project.



UPPC, UFT, WDC & SSC Committee Formation meeting, Narsingdi

Participatory Planning & Scheme Implementation

540 Participatory Planning (PP) sessions were organized and around 48,000 persons participated in those sessions. Almost 30% participants were women and 30% schemes have been prioritized by the women. For the first time, these unions have organized PP sessions at ward level. The initiative created interest among the community. Finally, 790 schemes have been approved by 79 UPs and most of the schemes are completed.

Module Development Workshop

A workshop was arranged for LGSP-LIC staff at Cox's Bazar from 21-22 August, 2008 to develop four modules: Module 1: Module for Upazila Level workshop, Module 2: Module for Union Level Workshop, Module 3: Module on TOT for UFT and Module 4: Module on Participatory Planning and Scheme Implementation for SSC, WDC and UPPC.