



KHAN FOUNDATION

In Special Consultative Status with the Economic & Social Council of the United Nations

Report on

Advocacy and Social Mobilization with Policy Level People

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE, FUNDED BY USAID AND IMPLEMENTED BY ARD INC.

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Introduction:

Khan Foundation (KF) is an organization that has devoted itself towards promoting democracy and thus uplifting development. Khan Foundation began its activities during the flood of 1988 in the area of relief works to the flood victims. The Foundation rapidly built its reputation over the country through its activities linking with different levels of government in Democracy, Human Rights and poverty alleviation. Its major focus has been on improving development through democracy for the most disadvantaged groups in the country. All its programs are based upon the funding concept of “Democracy for Development and Development for Democracy”. In the view of that Khan Foundation is implementing multi-faced activities having multiplied effect. The foundation has given its efforts to strengthen and sustain local government constituency through awareness training to grass-roots level representatives. For ensuring the effective participation of the local government representative Khan Foundation is organizing different issue-based seminars, workshops and democracy fairs in different areas of Bangladesh. Some of the programs are financially supported by USAID and implemented by ARD Inc.

In its noble step to ensure smooth decentralization and establish democracy as a result, Khan Foundation organized several regional workshops, national seminars and democracy fairs under the project, “Advocacy and Social Mobilization with Policy Level People” funded by USAID and implemented by ARD Inc. for the last two and a half year.

Name of the Project:

Advocacy and Social Mobilization with Policy Level People.

Duration:

2 years and 6 months.

Objectives:

- To arrange seminars and workshops with members from all the sections and take effective measures to change the local government constituency.
- Trying to build up an effective network by assimilating members from different levels by uniting their common interests.
- Trying to develop a coalition by creating a fusion between the local people and the civil society.
- Helping to formulate a legal and administrative policy reform agenda.
- Generating relevant information on various issues.

Number of Activities:

Under the esteemed project, KF has carried out the following activities:

- 8 National Seminars
- 14 Divisional workshops.
- 3 Regional workshops
- 30 Democracy fairs.

Local level elected representatives, NGO representatives, Lawyers, members of the civil society, administrative officers, Ministers, Journalists and other personalities renowned in their own fields attended them.

Overview of the Key Findings:

The seminars, workshops have been conducted at the divisional, national and regional level. Different issues like good governance and institutionalization of democracy, the role of the local level representatives in strengthening the local government, the role of NGO and different constraints faced by them, different renovation issues were focused on in the

workshops. Various recommendations on those issues are being collected and put forward to the policy level people for policy advocacy. Necessary steps are also taken to implement the approved recommendations. This is the most important achievement.

The most important change that the activities were able to provoke was change in the mind set of the people; people are now more aware. People of all strata have realized that development is unattainable without making the UP stronger. Local level representatives are now being able to place their recommendations before the policy level people facilitating the resolution of the problems. Local Government is now keener on playing the role of a representative rather than a tyrant ruler. The representatives can now voice their demands more prodigiously, specially the women local level UP members and chairmen. People have become more conscious about practicing democracy and they know about the functions of the local government.

Regarding new approaches, KF has introduced Democracy Fair. Democracy fair is a huge platform to gather all sorts of people to inspire the local level representatives and the people about their rights, responsibilities, mutual co-operation etc. At the same time it also served the purpose of informing the students of the schools and colleges about practicing democracy and inspires them as true citizens.

This strategy should be pursued to institutionalize democracy, establishing good governance and ushering in accountability and transparency.

KF has found that the strategies of integrating the NGOs through different meetings, seminars, workshops, trainings and cultural programs could contribute tremendously in making the people and the representatives from the grass-roots level aware. At the same time policy advocacy should be pursued with the policy level people.

National Seminars:

All the National Seminars have been held at the Capital City, Dhaka.

Serial No.	Title	Date
1.	Reform of Local Government in Management	9 th May 2005.
2.	The Development Allocation of the Local Government and its Uses	27 th February 2005
3.	The Activities of the Local Government: Procedural Difficulties	12 th April 2005
4.	Role of MPs in the Local Government	27 th October 2004
5.	Economic Activities of the Local Government: Perspective and Steps	7 th July 2004
6.	The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, 1983: Prospect and Potentials	29 th Februray 2004
7.	Devolution: Key to Strengthening the Local Government	30 th August 2003
8.	Pre-budget discussion of the local level elected representatives	28 th April 2003

Types of Participants:

Ministers (Local Government, Science, Information and Communication Technology, Forest and environment, Relief and Rehabilitation, Women and Children), State Minister (Finance and Planning, Education, Cultural), Whip(Opposition and the Ruling Party),MP

(Ruling and the opposition party), Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Representatives of the donors, High Government Officials, Representatives of the Local Government,

Academicians, Professors of public and private universities, NGO representatives, Lawyers, Journalists and Civil Society Representatives

Achievements:

- The issue of local Government is being discussed at different level with due importance.
- The emergence of the system of block allocation for UP.
- The publishing of the ordinance by the Government about the duties and responsibilities of the women members.
- The empowerment of the local level elected women members.
- Lobbying of the accumulated recommendations with the Government.
- Now-a-day more donors and NGOs are willing to work on Local Government with the help of the local Government.

Divisional Workshops:

Serial No.	Title	Place	Date
1.	Local Government System of Bangladesh: Problem and Resolution	Tangail	13 th March 2005
2.	Effective Participation of the Local Level Elected Women Members in the Local Government	Brahminbaria	6 th April 2005
3.	Aid Dependent Local Government: An Impediment for Prosperity	Chittagong	3 rd January 2005

4.	Local Government Reform: Preferential Sectors	Rangpur	30 th August 2004
5.	Effective Role of the Local Administration in Strengthening Local Government	Natore	20 th October 2004
6.	Role of Civil Society in Strengthening the Local Government	Faridpur	14 th July 2004
7.	Resource Mobilization in Local Development: A Challenge for UP members	Jhenaidah	29 th July 2004
8.	Strengthening Local Governance: Strategy for ensuring Transparency and Accountability	Dhaka	12 th April 2004
9.	The Public Representatives in Ensuring Good Governance at the Grass-roots level	Dhaka	24 th December 2004
10.	Resource Mobilization for Local Development: A challenge for UP Representatives	Pabna	11 th August 2003
11.	Strengthened Local Government System: Complementary to Flourishing of Skilled Leadership Qualities	Sylhet	22 nd October 2003

12.	Resource Mobilization in Local Development: A Challenge for UP Representatives	Comilla	23 rd June 2003
13.	Local Development (Prevention of Trafficking and Violence Against Women and Children): Role of Local Representatives	Rajshahi	27 th July 2003
14.	Effective Role of the Local Administration in Strengthening Local Government	Mymensingh	31 st July 2003

Types of Participants:

Divisional Commissioners, District Commissioners, Police Super, District Nirbahi Officers, LGED Executive Engineers, UNOs, Representatives of the Local Government, Academicians, Professors of public and private universities, NGO representatives, Lawyers, Journalists and Civil Society Representatives.

Achievements:

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- The publishing of the ordinance by the Government about the duties and responsibilities of the women members.
- The empowerment of the local level elected women members.

- Lobbying of the accumulated recommendations with the Government.
- Now-a-day more donors and NGOs are willing to work on Local Government with the help of the local Government.
- Increasing the awareness about preventing repression against women and trafficking of children and women.

Regional Workshops:

Serial No.	Title	Place	Date
1.	Role of Union Parishad Chairmen, Members in Local Government	Barisal	11 th October 2004
2.	The Role of the Media in Strengthening Local Government	Khulna	28 th July 2004
3.	Strengthening Local Government Constituency: The Role of NGOs	Chittagong	18 th June 2003

Types of Participants:

Divisional Commissioners, District Commissioners, Police Super, District Nirbahi Officers, LGED Executive Engineers, UNOs, Representatives of the Local Government, Academicians, Professors of public and private universities, NGO representatives, Lawyers, Journalists and Civil Society Representatives..

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Democracy Fairs:

Serial No.	Place	Date
1.	Bagerhat	23 rd May 2005
2.	Khulna	24 th May 2005
3.	Jessore	25 th May 2005
4.	Shariatpur	29 th June 2005
5.	Chapai Nawabgonj	23 rd June 2005
6.	Barisal	30 th June 2005
7.	Joypurhat	25 th June 2005
8.	Moulvibazar	8 th February 2005
9.	Rajbari	13 th February 2005
10.	Sherpur	17 th February 2005
11.	Madaripur	6 th May 2005
12.	Noakhali	10 th March 2005

13.	Cox's Bazar	30 th March 2005
14.	Panchagar	19 th April 2005
15.	Dinajpur	20 th April 2005
16.	Gaibandha	24 th April 2005
17.	Jhenaidah	26 th November 2004
18.	Natore	2 nd December 2004
19.	Rangpur	21 st December 2004
20.	Dhaka	18 th January 2005
21.	Thakurgaon	31 st October 2004
22.	Comilla	12 th July 2004
23.	Faridpur	23 rd February 2004
24.	Shatkhira	6 th April 2004
25.	Pabna	27 th April 2004
26.	Sirajgonj	19 th January 2004
27.	Kushtia	24 th January 2004
28.	Bogra	14 th October 2003
29.	Rajshahi	15 th October 2003
30.	Shariyatpur	29 th June 2005

Types of Participants:

Ministers, Local Members of the Parliament, the district level leaders of the ruling and opposition parties, Divisional Commissioners, District Commissioners, Police Super, District Nirbahi Officers, LGED Executive Engineers, UNOs, Representatives of the Local Government, Academicians, Professors of public and private universities, NGO

representatives, Lawyers, Journalists and Civil Society Representatives, Students of Schools, Colleges, Universities.

Achievements:

- Taking an oath to strengthen local government and institutionalize democracy.
- Informing the students about local government and democracy.
- Integrating the politicians from both the ruling and the opposition parties in the same platform.
- Inspiring the people to practice democracy.
- Involving the local people and government in the proper resource allocation.

Challenges Combated and Targets Achieved:

Several challenges came in the way of our activities, namely:

- To integrate different administrative officers and the policy level people.
- To bring about leaders of different political belief under the same platform to project the issue of local government with due importance.
- To inspire the members to perform their duties properly.

Irrespective of those, KF has successfully reached the target of hosting 8 National Seminars, 14 Divisional Workshops, 3 Regional Workshops and 30 Democracy Fairs all across the country.