

**STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT
IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF THE
KHAN FOUNDATION
ON
EFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF ELECTED WOMEN MEMBERS
IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE :
A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH
(A STUDY OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AT THE GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Effective Involvement of Elected Women Members in the Local Government Structure : A Participatory Approach

With the conviction that democracy and development cannot be sustained without the empowerment of women who are the backbone of society, KF initiated in 1994 a nation wide training project “ Effective Involvement of Elected Women members In the Local Government Structure”. The aim of the project is to create strong and competent local bodies by ensuring effective participation of Elected Women Members (EWM) at all levels of administration, and in the process to promote good governance at the grass roots level and thus strengthening democracy and sustainable development nation wide.

Women in Bangladesh constitute almost half of the population. But their representation in the political arena and participation in the local government bodies are yet far from satisfactory. Despite the lapse of more than hundred years since the foundation of Local Government Act in British India was laid in 1870, the holding an elective position on the part of women in the local government bodies is only recent phenomenon. They marginally represent only 12 % per cent in the service of the Republic of Bangladesh. In all consideration they still constitute a vulnerable and disadvantaged group in society despite there being provisions in the constitution and consequent enactment in the local government laws in favor of women’s representation in the local bodies, the Union Parishad is still dominated by the male counterparts in the society. As all developmental activities in UP are steered through people’s representatives, EWMs are indispensable to be equipped with sufficient knowledge to conceive, initiate and administer the responsibilities they are entrusted with. But ironically, current training institutions have major weakness both in terms of their priority and ability to provide training beyond their traditional recipients, i.e., the selected chairmen of the rural and urban units of Local Government. Therefore, the EWMs virtually remained outside any scope of institutional training. It not only helped create situation whereby they were socially neglected and institutionally undermined by their counterparts, but more importantly, the EWMs were not being able to play any decisive role for the development of the deprived majority of rural women as their level of courage and confidence were not up to the mark.

Against this backdrop KF’s intervention in the development of capacity of Elected Women Members (EWM) through training project “Effective Involvement of Elected Women Members in the Local Government Structure” in order to obtain their active participation in the decision making at the Union level, to strengthen local government, and institutionalize democracy from the grassroots level in Bangladesh, is an august and timely move in this direction. It is a unique strategy of Khan Foundation (KF), which is expected to ensure social and economic empowerment of the poorest of the poor and lead them to participate effectively in the local government, local level planning as well as in different facets of the democratic process. Toward this commitment KF organized One day “ short “ and Five - day “in – depth” training programs under this project with far reaching objective in view. The workshop provided unique opportunity for these women to be able to discuss and comprehend critical issues for the efficient

discharge of the duties they are entrusted as first ever-elected women members of the UPs. KF training project is likely to serve as the basis of institutional support and capacity building of the LG institution in general and gender balance and women's development in particular that KF has already focused in its earlier report in 1995.

With this objective in view this study has made an attempt to evaluate the post – training impact on the EWMs and its consequent development in the management of Union Parishad's organizational and development programs. In this report the effectiveness of the KF's training programs is assessed against the objectives/ indicators set in the project.

Findings of this study shows that recently image and involvement of the women in society have undergone a considerable change. They are no more confined to rearing of children and household activities. Findings show that almost hundred percent respondents have formal education and many of them are involved in socio-economic and income generating activities. Analysis of the perceptions about the KF training and its impact on organizational management of UPs shows that hundred per cent of the respondents held the view that they derived direct benefit in matters relating to understanding official responsibilities of the UPs, dealing with local administration and raising the level of consciousness among the members of the UPs, knowing about women and children rights, project activities and new matters that they did not know before.

Findings of the report demonstrate that following the KF training 44.63 % respondents have increased their confidence in the UP activities such as participating in the UP official meetings, understanding socio- economic issues and problems and put forward suggestions to resolve them. EWMs are now equipped with efficient knowledge to conceive, initiate and administer the responsibilities they are entrusted with. Majority of the respondents said that they applied their knowledge in the formation of UP Committees, dispensation of justice / shalish in the Gram Adalat, and other myriad of activities.

The areas where EWMs have noticeably improved their capacity after KF training are: capacity to participate in the UP meetings, preparing various development projects, undertaking fresh socio – economic activities, and exchange of views and communication skills with women groups regarding local issues and problems and conflict resolution. Respondents held that highest degree of improvement had taken place in the area of participation. 95 % respondents held that they had opportunity to participate in the local projects in different capacities on different occasions. 92.5% held that local representatives were involved in the project implementation committee in the Ups. 87.5% said that projects were prepared by the Union Parishad and the planning was right. The project was implemented by the project implementation committee. 90% of the respondents opined that local people should be considered before initiation of the Union Plan.

More than 70% respondents mentioned that after KF training their skill of communication with other members and women groups have increased, their neighbor and other women members in their locality are giving more attention than before. More than 60% respondents expressed that they have developed a clout to influence decisions and carry through their ideas in identifying, selecting, preparing and implementing development plan and projects in UPs after receiving training from KF.

The induction of Khan Foundation training has substantially increased the level of knowledge and raised consciousness of EWMs in respect of oppression on women and women rights, child rights, deprivation and oppression on them. More than 60% EWMs have learnt about the composition, powers, functions and jurisdiction of Gram Adalat after the Khan Foundation training. 61% EWMs opined that Khan Foundation training have benefited them moderately to play a positive role in the disposal of cases in the Gram Adalat while 24% confirmed that role in this sphere has been substantially improved.

Findings of the study suggest that almost 70% EWMs held the view that children rights are being infringed. In this regard 42.27% held that they had taken part in the salish / arbitration on women and children trafficking and oppression. 57.45% EWMs held the view that they have learnt about the environmental pollution and its protection from Khan Foundation training.

The consciousness of EWMs has increased significantly having been associated with KF activities specially by reading its Magazine “Trinomul”. Trinomul focuses on the local issues and problems and disseminates the skills and knowledge of how local problem can be solved by the elected women leaders. This report reveals a very encouraging picture of EWMs so far as the regular subscription and the reading of Trinomul are concerned. More than 90% EWMs said that they are regularly in touch with this magazine and almost 80% confirmed that they read Trinomul regularly. More than 60% mentioned that the issues addressed in Trinomul are concerned with local problem solving activities.

Khan Foundation training generated enthusiasms among the EWMs to be personally self – reliant and induce others to be self – reliant by increasing savings, borrowing credits from NGOs and involving in new kinds of income generating activities. Findings show that 50 % respondents sought to increase their income level, more than 40% helped other women to undertake income generating activities, about 25 % mentioned that they made request to NGOs to operate micro – credit in their locality and 45% respondents confirmed their involvement in group formation, savings, mobilization, borrowing credit from NGOs.

Khan Foundation’s present endeavor is a modest attempt to invigorate the Union Parishad as a democratic institution in order to grooming democracy from the grassroots. In this respects it is too much to expect a sea change in the total complexion of Union Parishad in a short - term training of one day or five days. But in this venture the achievement of KF training is more than satisfactory. It is a big stride in the far – reaching mission of establishing “ democracy for development and development for democracy”. The relations between the two are symbiotic. The foregoing discussion earlier demonstrates the improved scenario of the UPs in all the spheres, which it intended to achieve through their institutional programs.

From the analysis of the findings of the data in the report and the picture presented in the SMART matrix, it is obvious that KF has proved to be an efficient organization and the training program that it launched was a commendable success, both in terms of qualitative and quantitative assessment so far as the achievement of goals against set target are concerned. The efficiency and effectiveness of the Khan Foundation training programs in the project “Effective Involvement of EWMs in the Union Parishad can be demonstrated through a matrix called SMART

SMART	OBJECTIVE	ORGANISATION	INDICATOR	TOOL
S	Specific: Enhancing Effective Involvement of Elected Women members in the administration of Union Parishad	Khan Foundation Program: Imparting Training to EWMS for enhancing capacity and leadership qualities in order to participate in the decision making process in the administration of UP	Performance Target in a year: increasing awareness, consciousness, confidence about women and child rights and oppression on them, disposal of cases in Gram Adalat, expanding income generating activities, increasing communication skills, protecting environment and disseminating a sense of knowledge and obligations to the Ups, as EWMs for over all improvement of rural life situation of the community at large	Rapid Random Appraisal(RRA). Structured Interview. Customer / stake holders' Survey.
M	Measurable	Number of participants in one day and five day in-depth training at districts and Headquarter of khan Foundation. -	.Extent of participation coverage: All that was intended in the program For one day 10,500 and for in depth five day 4,440	Sample Survey 300 UP members and
A	Achievable: Likely to be achieved in stipulated time and given situation.	Distribution of Training participants in three phases : For one day 10,500 For five day 4,440	Stakeholders Opinion / observation. Good. Sixty percent of what they expected	RRA Sample Survey.
R	Realistic In a given situation under all odds and constraints	Completion of the total project by overcoming the internal and external constraints.	Stakeholders reactions. Satisfactory/ average / below average. Situation as such quite satisfactory On average above 60% of the target is achieved.	RRA Sample Survey.
T	Time Resulted	Completion of the project in stipulated time frame, partially or fully? Fully	Stakeholders satisfaction More or less satisfied at this stage	RRA Sample Survey Project Completion Document

Recommendations

Short Term Recommendations

- Training should not be an one-time event in the course of Union Parishad Elected Women Members. It should be a continuous process. Opaque areas should be identified through follow-up and monitoring mechanism of Khan Foundation. And weakness Should be compensated/minimized by supplementary training.
- Specially tailored training programme should be arranged/moduled for those Elected Women Members who have elected for the first time in the Parishad as member/chairman.
- Training programme as provided by Khan Foundation should be expanded both horizontally and vertically in all the districts.
- Some areas in the Union Parishad deserve special in-depth training. For example, adjudication process in the Gram Adalat, particularly with regard to disposal of cases through salish/arbitration needs to be revamped through specially designed training programme.
- Participation on the part of the community at large by EWMs should be invigorated by close motivation. Preparation of any development plan should be preceded by consultation with local people to ensure bottom-up planning in the real sense of the term. Opinion of the stakeholders should be manifestly reflected in the preparation and execution of the Union Parishad development planning.
- Office Management should be transparent rules and regularly should be transparent and rules and regulations should be transparently adhered to by all concerned. Any default in any area should not be allowed to recur.
- All committees should be constituted on time as per rules.
- Laws and order have to be enforced strictly so that chadabaz/extortionists can not jeopardize any development plan at the implementation stage.

Long Term Recommendations

- Present training arrangements need to be refurbished and reinvigorated. Training should be more in-depth and one-day and five-day training should be prolonged.
- Training should be provided by specific trainers in special cases like judicial matters in the Gram Adalat, preparation of development project and performance appraisal of the project.
- Impact of training on development should be assessed on the basis of stake-holders satisfaction.
- Khan Foundation undertakes another project on “ Impact assessment on Development of Union Parishad: Post training Scenario”. This project would emphasize on degree of development taking place rather than individual capacity of EWMs.
- The Khan Foundation should have more logistics and training materials like micro bus (four wheeler), audio-visual equipment, photocopy machine, computer, overhead projector etc. The KF should also make use of these logistics and materials for a more effective implementation of its project. With these logistics/equipment and instructional staff, the KF will be in better position to prepare training materials, manuals and newsletters. It would also be able to efficiently produce updated information and other papers on local government and development.
- KF should publish a quarterly or half-yearly ‘newsletter’ for circulation among the EWMs. This will help the EWMs to acquire more knowledge and ideas on leadership/management/development issues.
- Sustainability of the KF’s present project is a crucial issue. Once donor agencies withdraw its support from the project and the KF fails to attract new development partners, it will be difficult to keep the project going. But the need to continue a project such as this one is enormous. The KF effort to train new EWMs and provide follow-up support to already trained EWMs for enhancing their leadership qualities and capabilities must therefore continue for the greater interest of local democracy and rural development in Bangladesh.

For long term sustainability of the project, therefore, the KF in future should start charging concerned ministry (Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives) or the UPs for training and training materials including newsletters. In order to make payment toward such training cost, the like other government/semi-government organizations, must have provisions in their respective budget to meet such expenses in future.

- The status of the Khan Foundation could be raised from NGO to an Institute in view of its growing success in the target areas of Local Government in reasonably short span of time. Despite there being a National Institute of Local Government providing training to the local government functionaries at the sub national level, its impression in the target areas discussed in this study and amongst the stakeholders are not noticeably felt. Against this backdrop it is not too much to expect that Khan Foundation can well serve the purpose of imparting training to the EWMs for enhancing efficiency and effectiveness and thus contribute to decision making process and institutionalize democracy at local level. Khan Foundation as an Institute can easily train up EWMs the Local Government level to an optimum degree and prove itself a success in raising consciousness and building awareness among the stakeholders at far flung remote areas of the country provided they are motivated by and supported with the facilities of a full fledged training institute of Local Government.

EMPOWERMENT OF ELECTED WOMEN MEMBERS IN THE UNION PARISHAD

Background of the Study : Nature of Inquiry

Khan Foundation starts off to a long journey to establish and strengthen sustainable representative democracy from grassroots and to improve the conditions of country's disadvantaged people through pursuing and promoting effective social and economic development programmes. In a very short span of time it has been able to emerge as one of the few NGOs linking different levels of government in democracy, human rights and poverty alleviation. Khan Foundation pursues massive activities across the country with motto “**Democracy for Development and Development for Democracy**”.

With the conviction that democracy and development can not be sustained without the empowerment of women who are the backbone of society, Khan Foundation initiated in 1995 a nation – wide training project entitled “ Effective Involvement of Elected Women Members (EWM) in the Local Government Structure”. This project is a unique combination of local government and women's issues. The project involves the new EWM of the Union Parishad. The aim of the project is to create strong and competent local bodies by ensuring effective participation of EWMs at all levels of governance, and in the process to promote good governance at the grassroots levels and thus strengthening democracy and sustainable development nation – wide.

Propagation for participation of women in the activities of national life for steering rapid socio – economic development is as old as the thinking of Greek philosopher, Plato. He is the first man to conceive of emancipation of women and their participation in the national life for development along side the men with equal intellectual capacity and status. But after three thousand years down the track, it is more a dream than reality for women in many developing countries of the world including Bangladesh. As such only 12 percent of the female population somehow participate in the public services of the Republic of Bangladesh despite many safeguards and protections enshrined in the constitution and laws passed by the Parliament.

For women to hold an elective position in the Local Government bodies in Bangladesh is only very recent phenomenon. More than hundred years have passed since the foundation stone of the Local Government Chowkidari Panchayat Act, 1870, was passed. But during this long period the functionaries of UP have always been the males. Women were not even eligible to cast their votes in election to rural local bodies until 1956, when for the first time election was held on the basis of universal adult franchise. Women have been excluded from the areas of decision making and therefore, from effective participation. Their potentials remain largely unrecognized and their contributions are often overlooked. In the traditional societies like ours, they have been assigned secondary roles. Political participation which is an important area of contribution towards building the society is monopolized by men. Bangladesh is committed to bring about necessary changes to enhance women's participation in political life. The State Minister for the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs stated that “**women should not be perceived as passive beneficiaries of economic growth and social and economic development but as key**

players and participants in their own rights”. And by all social and economic criteria women community in our country is a disadvantage group. As such it is an imperative for all concerned to bring them in the mainstream of decision making process in the country for accelerating rapid socio - economic growth.

Local government generally provides services and facilities to the people of a specified area. Women being half of the human resources should also be the contributors to and the beneficiaries from such services. Local bodies being a sub system of National Government, women’s empowerment is especially vital from political point of view. It is found that between 1973 and 1984, only eleven women out of over 4000 could be elected as chairperson. Provision for two nominated women members in each UP was incorporated in 1976 by Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance, 1976. Later it was raised to three since 1983. In consequence the number of nominated members in Union Parishad stood up to 4403 in Bangladesh. But given the fact that women constitute half of the nation’s population their representation compared to men is still grossly insignificant.

Rational of the Study

The importance of mobilizing women as political force and increasing their participation in the decision making process at all level of society, in the family, community and national decision making process is vital in changing their status quo as well as increasing the dynamism of the society as a whole. Participation in politics and decision making is vitally important as it is through such endeavor women can either influence or be a part in policy formulation and decision process which have direct bearing on their lives. Involvement in politics can help disadvantage groups to acquire power for bringing about necessary changes in their social status.

Due to the nature of nomination and grossly under representation, they were unable to exert any influence on the activities of the Union Parishads. Subsequently, in the celebrated case of Kudrat – Elahi Panir and others vs. Bangladesh 44 DLR (AD 319, the Appellate Division directed the Government in July 1992, to update Local Government legislation to bring them in conformity with 59(1) of the constitution replacing non -elected persons by elections. In pursuance of that direction Local Government legislations have been changed and updated.

Local level political arena usually serves as ‘recruiting grounds’ for future leaders and human resource development. If they are to cater to the needs of the people as agent for rural women and serve as recruiting pool the present system needs to be changed without delay. Now it is a realization common to all national policy analysts and donor agencies that rapid development in the socio – economic sectors is impossible without involving the women in the development process.

Objectives of the Study

With a view to obtaining women's participation in decision making at the local and national level to strengthen local government, and institutionalize democracy at the grassroots in Bangladesh Khan Foundation aims at achieving the following specific objectives:

- To increase EWM's awareness of their rights and responsibilities as members of the Union Parishad.
- To reinforce leadership skills and confidence of Union Parishad members so that they can take part in decision making and development activities.
- To facilitate and build partnership and co – operation among women and male members of the union Parishad.

Constitutional/Legal Framework of Union Parishad

The constitution of the people's Republic of Bangladesh not only made provision for the local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible, to peasants, workers and women, but also made special provision in article 10 of the constitution that "steps shall be taken to ensure participation of women in all spheres of national life". Article 19 of the constitution envisaged equality of opportunity to all citizens. Article 19(2) states that the state shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality between man and man and to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens, and of opportunities in order to attain a uniform level of economic development throughout the Republic. And articles 28 and 29(2) of the constitution unequivocally state that "the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth". No citizen shall, on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office in the service of the Republic, article 29(2) of the constitution.

Reorganization of Union Parishad: Legal Basis

Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1976 promulgated by General Ziaur Rahman brought about a fundamental changes in LSG particularly in the structure of the Union Parishad. The total membership was raised to 13. Of them 9 were elected by the voters , two were nominated women members and the rest two were among the peasants. The inclusion of women members were the novel feature. As women constitute half of the population of the country it was thought in correct perspective that they should be brought in the mainstream of politico- socio- economic activities of life. In 1983 General HM Ershad slightly reorganized the Union Parishad by inducting one more female member. Hence forth three women members are associated with Union Parishad. National Committee to Review Local Government Structure under the second phase of the BNP government headed by Khaleda Zia suggested that Union Parishad was to be split into 9 wards and each ward would elect one member. Each UP will elect three women members but not more than one woman member will be headed by a chairman

directly elected by the people. In 1994 about 14000 women were indirectly elected as UP Members, from all over Bangladesh.

Awami League government headed Shiekh Hasina appointed a Local Government Commission in 1996 which also suggested that the Union Parishad would consist of 9 members from 9 wards, 3 women members, one chairman and all be directly elected by the people. And for the first time in history three women members were directly elected in 4461 in 1996. Thus in 1997 the process became more challenging and about 14000 women were elected by direct vote. This was a sure step towards empowerment of women, but considering that these women were responsible as community leaders for the first time, it was important that they know their own rights and duties. Their election came about not as a favour but as a right, they had to acquire and hence essential that they exercise it with responsibility and conscience.

Lacuna of the Existing Training System

But ironically, current training institutions have major weakness both in terms of their priority and ability to provide training beyond their traditional recipients, i.e. the selected chairmen of the rural and urban units of LG. Therefore, the EWMs virtually remained outside any scope of institutional training. It not only helped create a situation whereby they were socially neglected and institutionally undermined by their counterparts, but more importantly, the EWMs were not being able to play any decisive role for the development of the deprived majority of rural women as their own level of conscientisation, courage, and confidence were not up to the mark. Participation in the democratic process is unthinkable unless the representatives of the people are fully aware of their responsibilities, rights and duties in a democratic system. The newly elected women members derived information about local government structure, their responsibilities in the Union Parishad, its mechanisms, major concerns, through the workshop organized by the KF.

Khan Foundation Endeavor

Against the backdrop said afore the KF's intervention in the development of capacity of Elected Women Members (EWM) through the training project **“Effective Involvement of Elected Women Members in the Local Government Structure”** in order to obtain their active participation in the decision making at the Union level, to strengthen local government, and institutionalize democracy from the grass-roots level in Bangladesh is an august and timely move in this direction. It is a unique strategy of KF which is expected to ensure social and economic empowerment of the poorest of the poor and lead them to participate effectively in the local government, local level planning as well as in different facets of the democratic process. Toward this commitment KF organized one – day “short” and five – day “in – depth” training programs under the project with far reaching objectives in view. The Workshop provided unique opportunity for these women to be able to discuss and comprehend critical issues for the efficient discharge of the duties they are entrusted as first ever elected women members of the UPs. KF training project is likely to serve as the basis of institutional support and capacity building of the LG institutions in general, and gender balance and women's development in particular that KF has already focused in its earlier report in 1995.

With this objective in view this study will evaluate the level of post – training changes and effectiveness of the involvement of EWMs in UP activities and programmes and measure its consequent impact on women’s socio-economic development and empowerment. The identification of such linkages may have considerable policy relevance both for poverty alleviation and sustainable women’s development. The impact of the project will also examine the necessity and modality of further resource mobilization for continuing the vital programmes. It will also help the KF in re – examining its implementation strategy to explore and make appropriate adjustments in future.

Under this project KF organized one-day and five-day workshops at the district headquarter town for the women members of the UP, with the following objectives:

- Conscientization of elected women members (EWM) about their roles and responsibilities in the society at large and at the local government structure;
- Effective involvement of EWMs in promoting women and children related issues;
- Empowerment of women through promotion of gender perspective;
- Leadership development enabling WEMs to take part in various national development program
- Involvement in income generating and poverty alleviation activities;
- Involvement of EWMs in creating awareness and confidence to eliminate violence against women;
- Adopting measures for women’s equal participation and equitable representation at all levels of political process and public life;
- Reinforcement of leadership skills of the UP members in order for them to take part in the design, implementation and evaluation of development policy and activities;
- Encouragement and facilitating women’s active participation in decision making at the local level as well as national level;
- Creating a forum for the exchange of views on the positive aspects and difficulties experienced by EWMs in the performance of their duties;
- Develop a monitoring mechanism to oversee the management of the UP and secure the full participation of EWMs in their work;
- Developing a network of EWMs who will keep in close amongst the UP’s all over the country and develop action as well as cooperation strategies;
- Further their knowledge on Union Parishad management and development related issues;
- Learn from one another across the country through the exchange of experiences occurred in the discharge of their UP duties and
- Develop future plans of action.

The details of one-day and five-day in-depth training programmes are shown in Annex-1.1 and Annex-1.2.

Monitoring/Overseing Mechanisms:

Monitoring Cell constitutes the arm of implementation mechanism and overseeing the progress of on going programmes on and off the KF Headquarter. Monitoring Cell provides EWMs with permanent instrument to denounce irregularities or gender discriminating practices of their union parishad. It helped them organize more strongly, make more capable of taking effective decisions and finding solutions to the problems they encountered in the performance of their duties. Through the monitoring cell EWMs came close to each other and sense of isolation is removed and easily advanced their ideas across the country. In this connection the network of EWMs that the Foundation has created will promote and support women issues within the scope of the UP and beyond. All EWMs will be invited to become members of such network. Therefore as part of such monitoring mechanism, the KF intends to establish a Division for the support of EWMs within its secretariat. A staff person reporting directly to the Executive Director will coordinate the Division. The KF will initially act as the focal point of the network coordinating initiative and liaison with its members. At the same time it will also strongly encourage members Of the network to assume responsibilities in the benefit of the Centre group. The first task of the Division will be to make operative the EWMs network. In this connection it will first develop the list of thana representatives and district coordinator chosen by the networks. These members will be contacted at least once a month to report developments and coordinate activities. The monitoring cell will be run under the supervision of the Executive Director of the KF and lawyers and specialists as well.

Women Member's Forum

The forums act as network for watchdoging and learning craft of leadership for resolving problems at the union level. Forums try to redress grievances once irregularities and problems have been reported to the division by a EWMs by taking one or more of the following actions:

- Direct contact with the Chairman of the UP
- Contacts with the District Commissioner, Thana Nirbahi Officer, Assistant Director of LGED and Chairman of UP
- Contact with the press and other media sources at the local and national levels.
- Mobilization of the Network to call attention in their own communities on the irregularities reported and adopt “ pressure Strategies” to get the problems resolved at the local and national level.

The success of democracy lie in its proper implementation of development policy, and proper implementation can only be possible when there is an awareness among those who are conferred with the responsibility of democratization. KF stronly believes that true democracy involves participatory democracy by the people at all levels so that people have a voice in the decision making process at the higher policy level as well. Democracy is possible when people's empowerment and participation at the grassroots and other levels with responsive and accountable process and institutions at both the local and national level is ensured in an appropriate sense of the term.

With this realization, KF initiated the Nationwide Program of organizing District Level Participatory Workshops for the newly elected women members of the UP which dealt with the issues that are directly or indirectly related to the effectiveness of their participation in the local government structure.

Methodology

Though Bangladesh manifest homogeneity in its socio-economic conditions in general, it represents certain diversities in the degree of development in the rural area of the country. Therefore, selection of research areas pose problem in itself. The districts that were selected in this study are Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Gazipur, Sylhet, Chandpur, Manikganj, Comilla, Khulna, Kushtia, Munshiganj, and Laxmipu so that they represent an all round view of Bangladesh from geographical point of view. For practical reasons the study under this project could impinge on 64 districts of the country for time constraint, but areas have been selected deliberately from different regions so that findings represent a general picture of the problems / potentials prevailing in the rural areas of the country.

Sampling

The Khan Foundation so far imparted training to 10,500 EWMs for one day and 4,440 in five day in – depth training across 57 districts. A sample of 300 EWMs were selected from 11 districts. In preparing the sample frame from the trainees, the study applied both **random and stratified sample techniques**. The purpose was to address diversity of the situation and cover some important variables. The variables such as education, age, income, occupation and previous experience in LG activities have been taken into consideration, so that a general picture of Bangladesh rural community as well as district wise comparative scenario are represented.

Tools of Data Collection

Field survey was the most important method of data collection and analysis. Through this method of research , the effectiveness and impact of the project EWMs' conscientisation about their role and responsibility , level of development , management skill , awareness, gender balance, income generation and participation in the stipulated responsibilities such as dispensing justice and settlement of disputes through Gram Adalat, Nari Nirjaton Nirodh Committee (NNNC) and other responsibilities called upon to discharge as member of different standing committees in particular were examined. Addressing the specific objective of this study necessarily warranted in – depth field study. To facilitate collection of data, a combination of various directive and non-directive tools were adopted.

Questionnaire Survey

A set of questionnaire both close-ended and open-ended were prepared by field workers. Field data were collected by a set of professional field researchers. The questionnaire survey was carried out to elicit the opinion of EWMs on a variety of issues ranging from the methods of training, training curriculum and materials used to effectiveness and impact of training on the conscientisation, awareness, promotion of gender development and leadership of UP outside. Keeping in mind that questionnaire survey would not adequately clarify the implications for training other methods were also employed in order to gain more substantive information.

Formal and informal Discussion Khan Foundation

For assessing the effectiveness of total training program detailed training curriculum and materials used by Khan Foundation were gathered and consulted in this report. Detailed discussion with KF on its experience and problems faced with while imparting training to this vast majority of the EWMs were held in an attempt to understand all intricate issues pertaining to Khan Foundation's effective Involvement of Elected Women Members in the LG project.

Secondary Sources of Data

This report made appropriate use of all secondary sources of information such as Khan Foundation's Project Plan, documents, training modules, and leaflets produced in order to carry out its program at the field level. These documents were reviewed and consulted with a purpose of getting particular facts about KF and the Project. In addition, LG laws, Manuals, related books and articles have been consulted in order to constitute a legal framework for this study and demonstrate a continuity of development in the projected area.

Study period

The study was spread over a period of one month. Three months were spent at the field for the collection of data. Another three months have been spent for processing of data. And finally, six months are concentrated on preparing the draft of this report.

Findings of the Field Data

The findings of the research undertaken by KF on the Empowerment of Women unfolded the fact that a deep rooted belief 'women in Bangladesh are only confined to the rearing and welfare of children and their domestic activities' is no longer true but also their efforts are extended to the multifarious activities such as business, service, agriculture, and other income generating activities, though their numbers are not very high as yet. More than fifty percent of the respondents in the study areas (11 districts) are seen to have lived a simple life of 'housewife'. District wise picture in the Table-1 shows that rural women in our country are no more drowned

in the darkness of illiteracy. Hundred percent of the respondents are seen to have some kind of formal education varied from a wide range of Class V – Degree level (BA/ BSc) education. Of course, literacy level up to Class VIII constitutes the largest majority amongst the women members in the Union Parishad. Moreover, a good number of respondents have SSC and a few have HSC and Bachelor degrees. The district wise exact socio – economic and educational status of women in the Union Parishad areas is presented in the Table-1 and Table-2

Table-1

Age, Occupation, Land Ownership & Marital Status of Elected Women Members (Figures in %)

District	Respondent	Age Status			Marital Status			Occupational Status			Own Land	
		20-30	31-45	46+	Married	Un-Married	Widow	House wife	Service	Business	Yes	No
Rajshahi	62	45	50	5	82	15	3	77.4	12.90	9.7	82	18
Gazipur	5	60	40	-	80	20	-	60	20	20	100	-
Sylhet	26	31	65	4	100	-	-	92	8	-	50	50
Chadpur	45	24	71	5	100	-	-	80	20	-	80	20
Manikganj	30	—	80	20	90	-	10	93	7	-	100	-
Comilla	2	50	50	-	100	-	-	100	-	-	100	-
Khulna	12	42	58	-	83	8.5	8.5	50	42	8	92	8
Khustia	14	21	79	-	78	7	15	100	-	-	79	21
Munshiganj	20	30	70	-	100	-	-	80	10	10	70	30
Laxmipur	23	22	78	-	87	4	9	78	-	22	78	22
Dinajpur	61	30	70	-	100	-	-	100	-	-	100	-

Table-2**Educational Qualification of Women Members (Figures in %)**

District	Respondents	Up-to Class-V	Up-to Class-VIII	SSC	HSC	Degree
Dinajpur	61	33	60	-	5	2
Rajshahi	62	40	50	10	-	-
Laxmipur	23	52	43	5	-	-
Munshiganj	20	40	40	20	-	-
Khustia	14	21	58	21	-	-
Khulna	12	-	67	33	-	-
Comilla	2	-	100	-	-	-
Manikganj	30	30	50	20	-	-
Chadpur	45	31	69	-	-	-
Sylhet	26	50	31	19	-	-
Gazipur	5	-	40	20	20	-

Induction of KF training has generated a sense of zeal in the involvement of socio-economic and income generating activities amongst the women members of the union parishads and uplifted confidence in the minds of the EWMs to participate in the UP meetings/ proceedings. **They are now in a position to take initiatives, understanding socio-economic problems and render advice and suggest solutions to the problems encountered by the female in the rural community.** The Table-3 below demonstrates the position of EWMs following the induction of KF training.

Table-3

Do you think that following the KF training your confidence has been increased in participating in the UP meetings/initiating/understanding socio-economic problems and tender suggestions to resolve these problems?

SL	District	Yes	No	No response
1.	Rajshahi	55%	32%	13%
2.	Gazipur	40%	40%	10%
3.	Sylhet	52%	28%	20%
4.	Chadpur	48%	26%	26%
5.	Manikganj	45%	40%	15%
6.	Comilla	50%	50%	-
7.	Khulna	38%	42%	20%
8.	Khustia	40%	38%	22%
9.	Munshiganj	35%	45%	20%
10.	Laxmipur	36%	48%	16%
11.	Dinajpur	52%	32%	16%

Findings from the Table 3 demonstrates that on average 44.63 percent of the EWMs have increased their confidence in the Union Parishad activities such as participating in the UP official

meetings, understanding socio-economic issues and problems and put forward suggestions to resolve them. **As all developmental activities in the UP are steered through peoples' representatives, EWMs are indispensable to be equipped with sufficient knowledge to conceive, initiate and administer the responsibilities they are entrusted with. And in this regard Khan Foundation training has brought about commendable success in a short span of time.**

Table 4. shows that instillation of knowledge by the KF training has enabled 46 per cent EWMs on average to be in a position to comprehend and resolve the problems in Union Parishad in a moderate way that the female members in the rural community now encountered. The district wise independent picture is presented in Table-4.

Table –4

The extent improvement in the participation and resolution of women problems

District Rating	Raj shahi	Gazi pur	Sylhet	Chad pur	Mani kgonj	Comilla	Khulna	Khustia	Muns higonj	Laxm ipur	Dina jPur
Slightly	17%	20%	37%	38%	52%	50%	42%	18%	48%	40%	20%
Moderately	44%	60%	46%	50%	38%	50%	42%	45%	39%	40%	52%
Substantially	28%	20%	17%	12%	10%	-	16%	37%	13%	20%	24%

The training imparted by the Khan Foundation has **substantially increased the level of knowledge and raised consciousness in respect of oppression on women and women rights, children rights, deprivation and oppression on them.** The respondent's view on the questions whether their knowledge has increased in general, and raised consciousness level regarding oppression on women and women rights in particular, following the induction of KF training, are presented in the Table-5 and Table-6 below:

Table-5

Do you think that your level of knowledge and consciousness have increased following the KF training?

SL.	District	Yes	No	No Response
1.	Rajshahi	70%	10%	20%
2.	Dinajpur	72%	10%	18%
3.	Gazipur	63%	22%	15%
4.	Sylhet	73%	2%	25%
5.	Chandpur	71%	6%	23%
6.	Manikganj	66%	14%	20%
7.	Comilla	83%	17%	-
8.	Khulna	75%	10%	15%
9.	Kushtia	70%	9%	21%
10.	Munshigonj	68%	8%	24%
11.	Laxmipur	65%	16%	19%

The Table clearly demonstrates that 56.54 per cent EWMs have increased their level of consciousness after Khan Foundation training. And 30.36 per cent respondents said that they had moderately improved their level of consciousness following Khan Foundation training.

Table-6

The extent of increase in the level of Consciousness (Figures in %)

District Rating	Raj shahi	Dina jpur	Gazi pur	Sylhet	Chan dpur	Mani kgonj	Comilla	Khulna	Khus tia	Muns higonj	Lax mipr
Slightly	14	12	10	10	8	20	0	20	15	15	10
Moderately	28	29	30	25	24	30	50	25	28	40	35
Substantially	58	59	60	65	68	50	50	55	57	45	55

The Table-7 clearly shows that on average the level of Knowledge and consciousness with regard to the issues relating to women rights, violence on them, children rights, oppression and deprivation on them have increased 76.9%. The extent of increase is presented in the Table-7. It clearly shows that after Khan Foundation training 60 per cent of the respondents said that their knowledge and consciousness have substantially increased. Table-6 shows that 47.6 percent respondents have expressed that their knowledge and level of consciousness have increased substantially.

Table-7

Do you think that the KF training has increased your knowledge and raised level of consciousness regarding oppression on women and women rights? The degree of increase is shown in the table below

District	Yes	No	No Response
Rajshahi	70%	20%	10%
Dinajpur	75%	21%	4%
Gazipur	80%	15%	5%
Sylhet	78%	13%	9%
Chandpur	72%	16%	12%
Manikganj	76%	14%	10%
Comilla	100%	-	-
Khulna	74%	18%	8%
Kushtia	72%	17%	11%
Munshigonj	68%	20%	12%
Laxmipur	72%	16%	12%

The degree of increase in the level of knowledge and consciousness in respect of woman rights and oppression is shown in Table-8

Table-8

How much the KF training did help you increase your knowledge and level of consciousness on women rights and oppression?

District	Rajshahi	Dinajpur	Gazipur	Sylhet	Chandpur	Manikgonj	Comilla	Khulna	Kushtia	Munshigonj	Laxmipur
Rating											
Slightly	14%	10%	10%	6%	10%	20%	-	22%	18%	14%	20%
Moderately	48%	50%	40%	42%	32%	25%	50%	24%	26%	47%	38%
Substantially	38%	40%	40%	52%	58%	55%	50%	54%	56%	39%	42%

Khan Foundation training has equally contributed to the enhancement of knowledge and level of consciousness regarding child rights and oppression and deprivation on them. And the majority of respondents have opined that KF training has substantially increased their knowledge and level of consciousness in this respect. The real picture following the KF training is shown the table-9 and Table-10.

Table-9

Do you think that KF training has increased your knowledge and raised your level o of consciousness regarding child rights and oppression on them?

District	Yes	No	No Response
Rajshahi	76%	17%	7%
Dinajpur	78%	14%	8%
Gazipur	80%	12%	8%
Sylhet	77%	15%	8%
Chandpur	82%	18%	-
Manikganj	76%	13%	11%
Comilla	100%	-	-
Khulna	78%	11%	11%
Kushtia	76%	16%	8%
Munshigonj	82%	14%	4%
Laxmipur	74%	18%	8%

In this respect it is noticeable that in Comilla district hundred per cent respondents of the EWMs opined that Khan Foundation Training has increased their knowledge and consciousness with regard to child rights and oppression on them. In other 10 districts 79,9 per cent acknowledged the benefit of Khan Foundation training in the above mentioned areas. Table-10 suggests that almost 47.36 per cent of the EWMs have been able to increase their knowledge substantially in these areas of action.

Table-10

How much did the KF training help you to increase your knowledge and level consciousness on child rights, deprivation and oppression? (Figures in %)

Districts	Raj Shai	Dinaj pur	Gazi Pur	Sylhet	Chad pur	Manik Ganj	Comilla	Khulna	Khus tia	Muns higanj	Laxm ipur
Slightly	9	18	10	14	18	14	-	14	10	18	17
Moderately	39	32	40	28	34	40	50	26	28	35	28
Substantially	52	50	40	58	48	46	50	60	62	47	55

The substantial number of members of the Union Parishad held the view that they have learned a lot about environmental pollution from KF training programme. Their exact view is shown in the Table-11. The table shows that on average 57.45 per cent of the EWMs held the view that they have learnt from Khan Foundation training about environmental pollution. District wise separate picture is presented in the **Table-11**.

Table-11

How you have learned about the environmental pollution from the KF training? (Figures in %)

District	Raj Shahi	Dinaj pur	Gazi pur	Sylhet	Chan dpur	Mani kgonj	Comilla	Khulna	Khus tia	Muns higonj	Laxm ipur
Rating											
Slightly	17	16	25	15	14	22	20	18	15	21	12
Moderately	23	24	25	30	28	30	25	20	25	25	28
Substantially	60	60	50	65	58	48	55	62	60	54	60

Khan foundation training has noticeably equipped the women members about composition, powers, functions and jurisdiction and procedure of work in the Gram Adalat. And the knowledge learnt from the KF training has moderately helped them to play a positive role in disposal of cases through trial/shalish/arbitration. The respondent's views are reflected in the Table-12 and Table-13.

Table 12. This Table indicates that almost 60.45 percent EWMs have learnt about the composition, powers, functions and jurisdiction of the Gram Adalat after the Khan Foundation training. District wise position in the state learning is shown in the Table-12.

Table-12

How much have you learnt from the KF training about composition, power, functions and jurisdiction of Gram Adalat? (Figures in %)

District	Raj shahi	Dinaj pur	Gazi pur	Sylhet	Chad pur	Manik ganj	Comilla	Khulna	Khus tia	Muns higanj	Laxm ipur
Slightly	13	14	6	87	12	75	5	84	12	10	8
Moderately	30	28	32	27	24	30	32	26	28	28	36
Substantially	57	58	62	60	64	65	63	58	60	62	56

In case of disposal of cases in Gram Adalat the situation is not satisfactory as in other areas of Union Parishad activities. Here it is noticeable that Khan Foundation Training did not succeed to impart knowledge substantially to play a positive role in the trial of Gram Adalat/Shalish/Arbitration cases. Only 24 per cent EWMs had said that they could play positive role in the trial of cases in Gram Adalat. **Almost about 61 per cent EWMs opined that their role in this sphere has been moderately improved.** Only in the district of Comilla 68 per cent respondents had expressed that they have been moderately benefited to play a positive role in the disposal of cases in the Gram Adalat. District wise actual position is demonstrated in Table-13.

Table-13

How much benefit have you gained from the KF training that helped you play a positive role in the disposal of cases in the Gram Adalat? (Figures in %)

District	Raj shahi	Dinaj pur	Gazi pur	Sylhet	Chand pur	Mani kgonj	Comilla	Khulna	Khus tia	Muns higonj	Laxm ipur
Rating											
Slightly	13	19	26	20	14	20	7	14	16	12	15
Moderately	64	60	50	54	58	53	68	64	60	62	63
Substantially	23	21	24	26	28	27	25	22	24	26	22

Almost seventy five percent of the women members of the Union Parishads expressed the view that children are being oppressed and their rights are infringed. And Union Parishads have lot of things to do in way of controlling child/ women trafficking and reducing oppression on them. In this regard 42.27 per cent women members held that they had taken part in the shalish/arbitration on the women and child trafficking and oppression. The Table 14 and 15 represent the views and actions taken by the women members of the Union Parishads on these issues.

With regard to the child rights nearly 70 per cent of the EWMs are unanimous on the point that children are oppressed. Here again, the scenario in Comilla is somewhat different where hundred percent respondents said that the children were abused. District wise actual picture is shown in the Table-14

Table-14

Do you think that our children are oppressed and abused?

SL	District	Yes	No	No response
1.	Rajshahi	73%	20%	7%
2.	Gazipur	40%	40%	10%
3.	Sylhet	65%	28%	7%
4.	Chadpur	69%	25%	6%
5.	Manikganj	72%	18%	10%
6.	Comilla	100%	-	-
7.	Khulna	76%	16%	8%
8.	Khustia	71%	21%	8%
9.	Munshiganj	70%	20%	10%
10.	Laxmipur	68%	22%	10%
11.	Dinajpur	75%	16%	9%

Table-15

Did you participate in any arbitration case (shalish) on women and child oppression and trafficking?

SL	District	Yes	No	No response
1.	Rajshahi	40%	47%	13%
2.	Gazipur	60%	20%	20%
3.	Sylhet	42%	48%	10%
4.	Chadpur	41%	49%	10%
5.	Manikganj	38%	48%	14%
6.	Comilla	50%	50%	-
7.	Khulna	44%	48%	8%
8.	Khustia	37%	47%	16%
9.	Munshiganj	35%	52%	13%
10.	Laxmipur	42%	49%	9%
11.	Dinajpur	36%	52%	12%

Only 42.27 per cent EWMs took part in the Shalish/Arbitration/on the oppression of women and child right cases. The accurate district wise situation is shown in the Table-15.

The areas in which the EWMs have improved considerably after the KF training are :capacity to participate in Union Parishad meetings/proceedings, preparing various development projects for the UPs, undertaking fresh socio-economic activities and, exchange of views and communication skills with women groups regarding local issues and problems and conflict resolution. Table-16 clearly demonstrates the state of development in the areas in which EWMs managed to invigorate their knowledge after from Khan Foundation.

Of all the areas where EWMs have shown satisfactory success after having Khan Foundation training are basically participation and initiating development activities. In the area of participation on average 43.18 per cent EWMs said that they have had improvement. But noticeably 100 per cent respondents in Comilla expressed that they have improved in the area of participation. 25 per cent EWMs held that they have had improvement in initiating/proposing various development projects. In other areas like undertaking socio-economic activities and holding discussions with women groups do not seem to be encouraging. The district wise accurate situation is shown in the Table-16.

Table-16**The areas where the improvement took place (Figures in %)**

District	Raj shahi	Gazi Pur	Sylhlet	Chad pur	Mani kgonj	Comilla	Khu lna	Khus tia	Muns higonj	Laxmi pur	Dinaj pur
Areas											
Participation in UP meetings	39	40	45	55	58	100	48	52	50	42	56
Undertaking fresh / innovative socio-economic activities	17	20	15	10	8	-	18	15	20	13	12
Proposing Various Development projects for UP.	33	40	35	30	25	-	22	20	20	30	20
Discussions with women groups regarding local issues & problem	11	20	5	5	9	-	12	13	10	15	12

But the same set of respondents responded differently to the more or less same questions and which appeared to have been significant improvement in the areas of communication with other members and women members, drawing attention of the local people , initiating development activities in the locality and building clout to influence decisions have been significantly improved in all areas in question after Khan Foundation training. In the district of Comilla hundred percent respondents expressed their views in the positive that they had significant improvement in communication skill, development activities, influencing decision, and drawing attention of the local people. But other ten districts represent the improvement at 60 per cent in the respective areas. The district wise independent position is demonstrated in the Table-17 below.

Table-17

The areas where the EWMs improved after the Khan Foundation training

	Do you think that after KF training your communication with other members & the women groups have increased ?		(6.3) Do you think that your neighbor, other group members & women in your locality are giving to your aeration than before?		(6.4) Did you initiate any social or developmental activities in your locality after training's?		(6.5) Do you think that after retaining you can now influence any decision or induce your ideas up to the division talent UP?	
District	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Rajshahi	70%	80%	57%	43%	70%	30%	63%	37%
Gazipur	60%	40%	40%	60%	60%	40%	60%	40%
Sylhet	68%	32%	42%	58%	65%	35%	62%	38%
Chadpur	65%	35%	45%	55%	68%	32%	65%	35%
Manikganj	64%	36%	48%	52%	62%	38%	68%	32%
Comilla	100%	-	100%	-	100%	-	100%	-
Khulna	72%	28%	50%	50%	69%	31%	70%	30%
Khustia	74%	26%	52%	48%	72%	28%	74%	26%
Munshiganj	68%	32%	44%	56%	62%	38%	58%	42%
Laxmipur	70%	30%	46%	54%	70%	30%	66%	34%
Dinajpur	72	28	52	48	72	28	72	28

Significant improvements in the leadership qualities are very much discernible in the EWMs after receiving training from KF. **After receiving KF training the EWMs are now in a position to effectively communicate socio-economic problems and other issues with other members and social groups which deserve immediate attention of the community at large. Khan Foundation training has lifted their morale and confidence that they are aware of the rules and regulations important for effective participation in the Union Parishad activities. They can now draw attention of neighbors, group members in the locality and advance their views more than ever. After KF training they have developed a clout to influence decision and carry through their ideas in identifying, selecting, preparing and implementing development plan and projects in the Union parishads.** The Table-17 demonstrates the impact of KF training on the qualitative development of women leadership.

Level of consciousness of elected women leaders

The consciousness of elected women leaders has increased significantly having been associated with the Khan Foundation activities specially by reading its magazine **Trinomul**. It focuses the local issues and problems and disseminates the skills and knowledge of how local problems can be solved by the elected local women leaders. **Trinomul is not only limited to the dissemination of local problems and moulding public opinion about it but it also focuses on**

legal and administrative issues relating to the functions of Union Parishads, recent changes that have taken place and any change being contemplated in the policy circle of the government that relates to the organization and procedure of Union Parishads. The reading of Trinomul helped the EWMs comprehend the gravity of the local problems and make them capable of applying their knowledge instilled by the KF training for resolving those problems. This is how EWMs became informed about the local issues and problems and tried to find solutions in consultation amongst themselves. By solving local problems by themselves the EWMs acquire the craft of leadership and lay the foundation of democracy from the grassroots. **This report reveals a very encouraging picture of the EWMs so far as the regular subscription and the reading of Trinomul is concerned.** The Table below demonstrates the judgement of the EWMs with regard to the Trinomul and their attachment with it.

Table-18

Level of consciousness of elected women leaders

District	Are you getting the magazine trinomul regularly?		Do you read trinomul regularly		Do you consider the issues addressed in trinomul are concerned with local problem solving activities?	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Rajshahi	90	10	83	17	67	33
Dinajpur	92	8	85	15	65	35
Gazipur	94	6	75	25	60	40
Sylhet	95	5	72	28	58	42
Chandpur	92	8	76	22	64	36
Manikganj	92	8	76	26	62	38
Comilla	100	-	100	-	100	-
Khulna	93	7	70	30	56	44
Kushtia	95	5	80	20	70	30
Munshigonj	90	10	74	26	68	32
Laxmipur	80	20	80	20	60	40

The Table-18 clearly demonstrates a conspicuous success in regard to subscribing Trinomul by **EWMs and adjudging its value in its proper perspective.** Hundred per cent respondents from Comilla expressed that they regularly get Trinomul, read it, and consider it a magazine concerned with their own interest. In other districts also the situation is very satisfactory. The Table demonstrates the encouraging picture of EWMs' attachment with Trinomul in its totality. All kinds of oppressions and violence on women in our country emanates from a number reasons such as illiteracy, backwardness, economic insolvency, and lack of self- reliance. **Of all the reasons, the most important, which makes them easy prey to abuse and violence, is the economic dependency on the male counterpart in society, as women at large do not involve themselves in income generating activities in the family/ society. Khan Foundation undertook this project with a view to generating spirit of self-reliance among the women members in the community by involving them in lot income generating activities.** The Table below shows the sign of growing enthusiasm among the EWMs after receiving training from KF

to be personally self-reliant and induce others to be self-reliant by increasing savings, borrowing credit from the NGOs and involving in new kinds of income generating activities initiated by the NGOs at the local level so that they can stand on their own feet and contribute to the society vis-a-vis male counter parts as equal partners.

Table-19

Impact of training on economic emancipation of women (after training). (Figure in %)

Did you make any effort to increase your income?				Did your help any women or a group of women to undertake income generating activities?			Did you make any request to NGOs to operate micro-credit in your area?			Are your involve in group formation, savings, mobilization and borrowing credit from NGOs ?		
Districts	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response
Rajshahi	53	27	20	40	33	27	27	53	20	47	43	10
Dinajpur	52	26	22	42	33	25	25	53	22	45	43	12
Laxmipur	50	25	25	38	38	24	18	56	26	30	56	14
Munshiganj	55	25	20	45	35	20	28	54	18	48	44	8
Khustia	54	28	18	46	32	22	24	56	20	46	44	10
Khulna	56	24	20	40	40	20	20	62	18	38	52	10
Comilla	100	-	-	100	-	-	-	-	100	100	-	-
Manikgonj	58	24	18	48	34	18	32	53	15	52	40	8
Chandpur	45	31	24	35	37	28	18	57	25	34	54	12
Sylhet	48	27	25	45	29	26	22	54	24	30	56	14
Gazipur	40	40	20	60	-	20	40	40	10	60	40	-

The Table 19 clearly shows that hundred per cent respondents in the district of Comilla said that they made efforts to increase their income, did help other groups of women to undertake income generating activities, did request to NGOs to operate micro credit in their locality and they got involved in group formation, savings, mobilization and borrowing credit from NGOs. **In ten other districts 51.1 per cent EWMs said that they made efforts to increase their income, 43.3 per cent helped others to undertake income generating activities, 25.4 per cent did request the NGOs to operate micro credit in their locality, and 43 percent held the opinion that they got involved in group formation, savings, mobilization and borrowing credit from NGOs.** The percentage of respondents who did not take part in emancipating women from economic bondage are shown in the Table 19.

Table-19

Confidence/Awareness/Conciousness Building

Confidence/Awareness/Conciousness Building	Increased substantially	Increased moderately	Increased Slightly
Confidence in participation	19.03 percent	56.54 percent	34.72 percent
Conciousness regarding oppression on women	47.63 percent	38 percent	14 percent
Conciousness regarding child rights and oppression	51.63 percent	34.54 percent	23.2 percent
About environmental pollution	56.54 percent	25.72 percent	17.72 percent

In this section of this chapter the overall improvement in the major areas of the Union Parishad, which EWMs are called to discharge and Khan Foundation aimed at in their objectives of the project are demonstrated at a glance.

The table-20 clearly demonstrates that in the areas of oppression on women and child rights and oppression on them conciousness of EWMs has substantially increased. It amounts to 47.63 and 51.63 percent respectively. **Conciousness of EWMs on environment pollution has also been significantly increased.** But confidence about participation has not substantially increased moderately, amounts to 56.54%.

Table-21

Increase in the ideas and knowledge about Gram Adalat	Increased Substantially	Increased moderately	Increased Slightly
Its power and functions	60.45	29.18	29.63
Role in the disposal of cases in the Gram Adalat	24	57.81	14.72

Khan Foundation Training is a remarkable success in conciousness building with regard to the power, function and composition of Gram Adalat. Table-21 shows that 60.45% EWMs have increased their knowledge and ideas about Gram Adalat. Their role in the disposal of cases in Gram Adalat has also been moderately increased. It amounts to 57.81% as the table indicates.

The Table-22 shows that 42.27% EWMs have participated in the Shalish/Arbitration cases in the Gram Adalat. 71.18% EWMs have increased their communication skill with other women group. 51.18% respondents said that they could draw the attention of the community. 68.90% EWMs had the clout to influence decision. And 70% EWMs had been involved in Developmental activities.

Table-22**Impact of KF Training on Development** (Figures in %)

Participation on the shalish/arbitration case in Gram Adalat	Yes	No
	42.27	41.36
Communication with other women group	71.18	33.36
Drawing public attention	51.18	47.45
Influencing decision	68.90	35.63
Initiating development activities	70	34.36

Table-23**Awareness and conciousness Building Through Trinomul** (Figures in %)

Subscribing Regularly	Yes	No
	94.81	7.9
Reading Regularly	79.18	19.90
Considering It Concerns Local Interest	66.36	33.63

Respondents views indicate that Trinomul- a magazine of Khan Foundation registered a conspicuous success in moulding public opinion about local problem and creating a Espirit de' corps among the EWMs and local community at large. **The Table-23 shows that 94.8% EWMs regularly subscribe Trinomul. 79.18% regularly read Trinomul. 66.36% EWMs considered that it concerned local problems and issues relating to the development of local community at large.**

EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME:

Efficiency and Effectiveness

Any organization, governmental or non- governmental does not deserve the right to exist unless it produces “value for money” in the society. The existence of any organization depends on how efficiently and effectively it attained the extent of its intended goals against clearly set objectives. Here in this Chapter we would try to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of KF training against the set objectives / programmes it aimed to achieve. Here for convenience of understanding the two core terms “ efficiency” and “effectiveness” should be defined in the sense in which they are used in this context.

Efficiency is often understood in two relatively strict senses. First, efficiency, technically speaking, refers to an output/input ratio in real terms, i.e, it can be measured in terms of the ratio of resource inputs to outputs , and is maximized when for a given input/cost the output/services could be reasonably be higher. Efficiency in this sense is a economic concept and its major use is in productive activities. Measuring outputs for technical efficiency in public service has always been difficult, though staff costs, the inputs , can roughly be measured. Second, efficiency is also understood in general terms as expeditious and accurate performance in the sense of whether an administrative system is actually doing what it is supposed to do. And effectiveness criteria measures the extent to which the objectives of a programme are achieved. The degree of success or failure of any organization / programme, therefore, can be viewed from the perspectives of efficiency, effectiveness and satisfactory discharge of services to the customers/ stakeholders:

In this study efficiency and effectiveness of the training programme would be measured against the objectives set by the Khan Foundation. At the outset we have mentioned that KF undertook this project with a view to achieving a broader objective of **Democracy for development and Development for Democracy**. With this mission in view the KF aimed at achieving certain specific objectives like

- Reinforcing the leadership skills of the UP chairmen and members and enhancing overall capacity of the Parishad to be efficient and effective in the disposal of business like planning, implementing and evaluating development plans at the Union level.
- Achieving administrative decentralization and facilitating bottom – up planning to ensure people’s participation in the policy making and developmental activities at the local level.
- Generating awareness among the community at large about their rights
- Enhancing commitment to towards the rural community
- Achieving accountability and transparency in all spheres of union parishad activities.

Against this backdrop the efficiency and effectiveness of the KF training program be would measured against the following indicators:

1. Increase in knowledge, consciousness and awareness of Union Parishad members and Chairman;
2. Increase in the level of participation in all spheres of policy making and implementation of development plans;
3. Application of the new knowledge imparted by the KF training in efficient designing, planning, implementation and evaluation of the development plans of the Ups;
4. Ensuring accountability and transparency in the discharge of official business; and
5. Ensuring stakeholders' satisfaction.

As the report is divided into number chapters in order to focus its different dimensions of the project, varying indicators will be used in each chapter to testify its varied objectives. Organizational success should be measured in terms of the degree of result it achieved against the set objectives/ intended targets.

Analysis of the perceptions about the KF training and its impact on organizational management of UPs shows that hundred percent of the respondents held the view that this kind of training that KF imparted for increasing knowledge, awareness, and eagerness to apply them in he discharge of their official responsibilities efficiently and effectively. They derived direct benefit in matters relating to understanding official responsibilities of the UPs, dealing with local administration and raising the level of consciousness among the members of UPs, knowing about women rights, project activities and new matters that they did not know before.

Hundred percent respondents mentioned that induction of KF training to the members and chairmen resulted in better management of office procedures. Hundred percent respondents held that they taken oath in time, of whom 90 percent took oath in the UP office together. Eighty percent respondents held that monthly meetings took place regularly on specific dates. 87.5 percent held the view that after KF training, the proceedings of general meetings are prepared on time, hung in the notice board, dispatched to the higher authorities up in he order. Participation of the members in the monthly general meetings has increased after KF training. Majority of the respondents said that they app,lied their knowledge in the formation of UP Committees, dispensation of justice/ shalish in the Gram Adalat, and other myriad of activities.(see Table No. Para)

Khan Foundation training has enabled the members and chairmen of Ups to directly participate in the myriad of activities like child care, violence on women, dowry, shalish, village development, project activities, handicraft and cottage industries etc.

Participation constitutes the bedrock of any democratic system. 95 percent of the respondents held the view that they had opportunity to participate in their local projects in different capacities on different occasions (see Table 5.2). Some of the respondents said that they had involvement in the UP activities as project labor, ration dealer etc before being elected in the Union Parishad. Picture in this study shows that 67 percent respondents had involvement in UP activities before being elected. 92.5 percent respondents held that local representatives were involved in the

project implementation committee in the UPs. 87.5 percent respondents said that projects were prepared by the Union Parishads and the project of the planning was right. The project was implemented mainly mainly by Project Implementation Committee. But 55 percent of the respondents opined that they had problems in he implementation of the projects for local chandabaz / extortionist. Of course, a few said administrative complications and sometimes chairmen themselves caused problems.

Though the KF training has created a kind of enthusiasms among the members of the UPs to participate in their activities, it is still a half way through, so far as the participation of people/ stakeholder is concerned. 90 percent respondents opined that local people should be considered before initiation of the Union Parishad Plan. Table 5.1 shows that only 37.5 percent respondents said that local people were consulted before a development plan was prepared. And 7.5 percent respondents said that local people were not consulted.

72 percent respondents had participation in budget discussions. Of those who had received KF training before budget meeting 59 percent of them participated in he discussions. 40 percent of the respondents expressed that they did not participate in the budget meeting because of lack of information. This should be considered as lapse on the part of UP officials that should not have taken place.

So far as the procedural transparency is concerned the study does not represent a satisfactory picture. Only 55 percent respondents said that minutes of the general meetings were sent to the TNO and DC regularly. 55 percent respondents hang their income and expenditure statements for public supervision and scrutiny. And 63 percent said that any objection / complaint from the public was entertained. Of course, 85 percent respondents opined that they had submitted statement of property after being elected in the Ups. But the scenario is gloomy in case of the formation of the Standing Committee as per rules. Here only 52.5 percent respondents held that Standing Committees were not constituted as rules (see Table 6.2).

Impact of development in this study is measured in terms of process development i.e. the functional ability of the UPs members and chairmen, rather than increase in outputs as the project basically aimed at increasing leadership skills to motivate people to take part in development activities at the local level. Nevertheless the induction of KF training generated a lot of enthusiasms among the UP members to utilize local resources for development of environment and improvement of general living conditions by introducing plantation program, income generating activities like development of piciculture, cooperative cultivation of khas land etc (see Table 7.1).

Khan Foundation training has generated an esprit of interactions and awareness amongst the UP members and the community at large. Respondents' views show that 42.5 percent UP members held meetings with local people 1 – 5 times in a month. Even 12.5 percent respondents said that they held 5 – 10 meetings with people in a month. Consequently the flow of information has become an ongoing process and exchange of views about the activities and policies of Union Parishads have been molding through multi –facet channels. Consequently people have been constantly aware of the programs that the UP members and chairmen are undertaking, which in turn help ensures accountability and transparency in the discharge of official business on the part of UP functionaries

The pace of follow up activities such as reviewing state of education in the primary school has increased after KF training compared to previously existing situation. It is true that members of the UPs used to act as member of the village courts before they underwent KF training. But after receiving KF training the degree of interest and the commitment to be involved in the proceedings of the village courts has considerably increased that has been demonstrated in the Table 7.4 in the previous chapter.

Also in the spheres of registration of marriage and birth in the locality a satisfactory picture is seen to have existed after KF training. The improvement in the situation is presented in the Table 7.6 in the previous chapter. The post training situation with regard to settlement of cases under “Family Law” such as divorce, second marriage, early marriage, living cost after divorce, dowry etc is quite satisfactory. 50 percent of the respondents opined that they had settled disputes under family law in different manner on different grounds (see Table 7.8).

Democratic institution does not grow in a vacuum in isolation. It is the final outcome of successful interplay of many interdependent variables such as devolution of authority both in terms of administrative and financial powers and functional ability of functionaries who are called upon to carry out the responsibility of translating the mission into action. For no institution/ administration can be better than the men and women who administer it. Khan Foundation’s present endeavor is a modest attempt to invigorate the union parishad as a democratic institution in order to grooming democracy from the grassroots. In this respect it is too much to expect a sea change in the total complexion of union parishad in a short term training of one day or four days. But in this venture the achievement of KF training is more than satisfactory. It is a big stride in the far reaching mission of establishing “democracy for development and development for democracy”. The relations between the two are symbiotic. The foregoing discussion clearly demonstrates the improved scenario of the Union Parishads in all the spheres which it intended to achieve through their institutional training programs.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the Khan Foundation training programs can be demonstrated through a matrix called SMART

SMART	OBJECTIVE	ORGANISATION	INDICATOR	TOOL
S	Specific: Strengthening UP by enhancing capacity/leadership qualities of Chairmen and members	Khan Foundation Program: Training Union Parishad Chairmen and Members	Performance Target in a year: increasing awareness, consciousness about rights and obligations of Ups, commitment to improve rural life situation of the community at large(among 100 UP chairmen and members	Rapid Random Appraisal(RRA). Structured Interview. Customer /stake holders' Survey.
M	Measurable	Training UP Chairmen & Members in five districts and eight upazilsa in stipulated time year 1996 – 2000-	Extent of participation coverage: All that was intended in the program For one day 912 and for in depth five day 912 respectively	Sample Survey 300 UP members and
A	Achievable Likely to be achieved in stipulated time and given situation.	Distribution of Training participants in three phases : Phase 1... Phase 2... Phase....3	Stakeholders Opinion / observation. Good. Sixty percent of what they expected	RRA Sample Survey.
R	Realistic In a given situation	Completion of the total project by overcoming the internal and external constraints.	Stakeholders reactions. Satisfactory On average above 60%	RRA Sample Survey.
T	Time Resulted	Completion of the project in stipulated time frame, partially or fully? Fully	Stakeholders satisfaction More or less satisfied at this stage	RRA Sample Survey Project Completion Document

From the analysis of the findings of the data in the previous chapter and the picture presented in the in the SMART matrix, it is obvious that KF is proved to be an efficient organization and the training program that it launched was a commendable success, both in terms of qualitative and quantitative assessment so far as the achievement of goals against set targets are concerned.

Recommendations

Short Term Recommendations

- Training should not be an one-time event in the course of Union Parishad Elected Women Members. It should be a continuous process. Opaque areas should be identified through follow-up and monitoring mechanism of Khan Foundation. And weakness should be compensated/minimized by supplementary training.
- Specially tailored training programme should be arranged/moduled for those Elected Women Members who have elected for the first time in the Parishad as member/chairman.
- Training programme as provided by Khan Foundation should be expanded both horizontally and vertically in all the districts.
- Some areas in the Union Parishad deserve special in-depth training. For example, adjudication process in the Gram Adalat, particularly with regard to disposal of cases through salish/arbitration needs to be revamped through specially designed training programme.
- Participation on the part of the community at large by EWMs should be invigorated by close motivation. Preparation of any development plan should be preceded by consultation with local people to ensure bottom-up planning in the real sense of the term. Opinion of the stakeholders should be manifestly reflected in the preparation and execution of the Union Parishad development planning.
- Office Management should be transparent rules and regularly should be transparent and rules and regulations should be transparently adhered to by all concerned. Any default in any area should not be allowed to recur.
- All committees should be constituted on time as per rules.
- Laws and order have to be enforced strictly so that chadabaz/extortionists can not jeopardize any development plan at the implementation stage.

Long Term Recommendations

- Present training arrangements need to be refurbished and reinvigorated. Training should be more in-depth and one-day and five-day training should be prolonged.
- Training should be provided by specific trainers in special cases like judicial matters in the Gram Adalat, preparation of development project and performance appraisal of the project.
- Impact of training on development should be assessed on the basis of stake-holders satisfaction.
- Khan Foundation undertakes another project on “ Impact assessment on Development of Union Parishad: Post training Scenario”. This project would emphasize on degree of development taking place rather than individual capacity of EWMs.
- The Khan Foundation should have more logistics and training materials like micro bus (four wheeler), audio-visual equipment, photocopy machine, computer, overhead projector etc. The KF should also make use of these logistics and materials for a more effective implementation of its project.

With these logistics/equipment and instructional staff, the KF will be in better position to prepare training materials, manuals and newsletters. It would also be able to efficiently produce updated information and other papers on local government and development.

- KF should publish a quarterly or half-yearly 'newsletter' for circulation among the EWMs. This will help the EWMs to acquire more knowledge and ideas on leadership/management/development issues.
- Sustainability of the KF's present project is a crucial issue. Once NORAD and USAID withdraw its support from the project and the KF fails to attract new development partners, it will be difficult to keep the project going. But the need to continue a project such as this one is enormous. The KF effort to train new EWMs and provide follow-up support to already trained EWMs for enhancing their leadership qualities and capabilities must therefore continue for the greater interest of local democracy and rural development in Bangladesh.

For long term sustainability of the project, therefore, the KF in future should start charging concerned ministry (Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives) or the Ups for training and training materials including newsletters. In order to make payment toward such training cost, the like other government/semi-government organizations, must have provisions in their respective budget to meet such expenses in future.

The status of the Khan Foundation could be raised from NGO to an Institute in view of its growing success in the target areas of Local Government in reasonably short span of time. Despite there being a National Institute of Local Government providing training to the local government functionaries at the sub national level, its impression in the target areas discussed in this study and amongst the stakeholders are not noticeably felt. Against this backdrop it is not too much to expect that Khan Foundation can well serve the purpose of imparting training to the EWMs for enhancing efficiency and effectiveness and thus contribute to decision making process and institutionalize democracy at local level. Khan Foundation as an Institute can easily train up EWMs the Local Government level to an optimum degree and prove itself a success in raising consciousness and building awareness among the stakeholders at far flung remote areas of the country provided they are motivated by and supported with the facilities of a full fledged training institute of Local Government.
