

Gender and good governance issues in local
government of Bangladesh:
A Baseline Report

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Summary

The study mainly describes the pre-intervention situation of women leadership capacity in local government system of Bangladesh. Data came from the 16 upazilas (sub-district) of 4 districts in Khulna division, where the Gender and Good Governance Programme was in operation. A total of 434 women union parishad (UP) members were interviewed in February-March 2003. Findings reveal that the typical women UP member is someone who is around 35 years old, has secondary or SSC level education, mainly working as homemakers.

Thus, the typical elected women UP member do not have much history of formal involvement in activities pertaining to the public domain. Subsequently, it is thus not surprising that they had weak participation in many public activities, such as, infrastructural development, relief and rehabilitation activities, women and child development, communication and linkage with others. On the other hand, they were very active in setting up hygienic toilet, plantation, arsenic awareness creation, attendance of the social justice, and finally the relationship with elites. However, the weakest involvement of women UP members has been in formal committees through which resources are allocated and decisions are made.

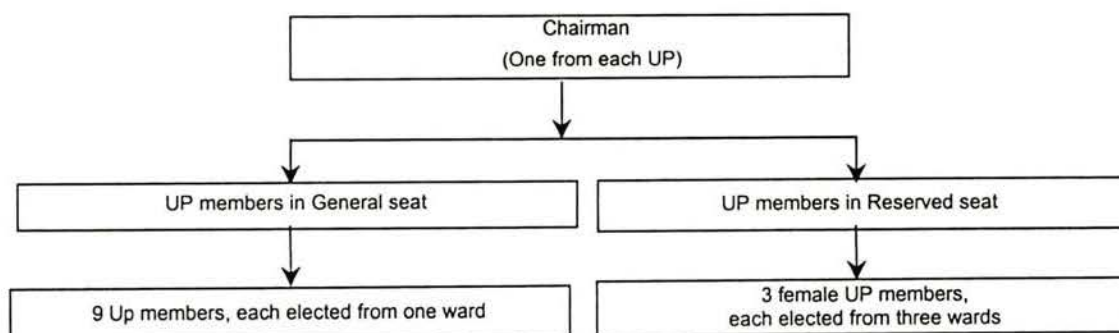
The observed significant positive association of involvement in developmental activities of women UP members with their age and economic condition indicates that there may have been inadequate opportunity for young women from poorer background to participate and influence developmental work.

I. Introduction

1.1 Background

Bangladesh is divided into six administrative divisions—Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, and Sylhet and each division includes a number of districts, which are the largest and most important units of local government (LG) in the country. Sixty-four districts are comprised of thanas or sub-districts (490), which in turn are made up of unions or groups of villages with elected councils or union parishads (BBS 2001). The present LG structure is shown in the following diagram:

Figure 1: Current LG Body (Union Parishad)



The UP and municipal body are the most important and lowest tier at local government level. These are elected bodies, which facilitate people's participation, plan and implement development projects, and help resolve local social and/or economic disputes. In Bangladesh, at the UP level, 30% of seats are reserved for women, numbering about 1200 all over Bangladesh. It is known that 41% of these women UP members come from poor households, and most of them are organised into community-based organization by NGOs (Inception report 2002).

Women's participation in local government bodies in Bangladesh is, however, a recent initiative. But their access to public offices at the local level, participation in administration and decision-making bodies are very limited (ADB 2001). In most cases the elected women members are systematically discriminated by male, verbally abused, always assigned to a specific development committee, and excluded from arbitration committee etc. (ADB 2001). Capacity building of the women UP members that empowers them to engage more effectively within the existing structure, is thus of paramount importance. Such engagement is also an extremely important pre condition for subsequent structural changes needed.

1.2 Profile of BRAC and Shushilan

BRAC, a national private development organization, was established as a relief and rehabilitation organisation in 1972 after the Bangladesh Liberation. Over the years BRAC has gradually evolved into a large and multifaceted development organisation with the twin objectives of alleviation of poverty and empowerment of the poor. BRAC has been characterized as a learning institution, learning from experience and through a responsive and inductive process. Adjusting its strategy to prevailing circumstances, it does not pursue any rigid development model.

BRAC diagnoses poverty in real human terms. Prospects of a 'quiet revolution' have been recognized in the economic role of women in the world of poverty. Women with social, cultural, technological and structural constraints have been able to organize as contributors not only to their families' well being but to national production and development as well by increasing their access to economic and social resources with the assistance of BRAC. Recently, BRAC promotes income generation for the poor, mostly landless rural people of Bangladesh, through micro-credit, health, education and training programmes. BRAC is now implementing a programme for Integrated Development in Afghanistan in the field of education, health and income generation under the umbrella of BRAC-Afghanistan since June 2002. The goal of the programme is to support the war-affected Afghan people. The components of this programme are: Education and Health programme

In order to achieve its goal, wherever necessary, BRAC welcomes partnerships with the community, like-minded organizations, governmental institutions, the private sector and development partners both at home and abroad.

Shushilan is a local development organization working in the Southwest coastal region since 1991. The organization came into being in the face of degrading socio-ecological reality of southwest coastal region with specific mission to sustain natural resource base livelihood and food security for the resource poor and uphold human right for the socially disadvantaged community with focus on women. Shushilan's emergence in coastal development scenario is not an accident— it is in fact out of socio-ecological necessity of southwest coastal region that Shushilan has emerged. Poverty alleviation, sustainability of resource base, gender & good governance, are all inter related issues and form the mainstream agenda of Shushilan's development programme.

1.3 Gender and Good Governance Issues in Local Government Project

This project is designed and funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). One component of the project, viz. "*Capacity Building of Women Union Parishad Members*", was assigned to Shushilan for implementation. It was arranged that Shushilan would implement its part in close collaboration with BRAC. Accordingly Shushilan executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BRAC. Following this arrangement BRAC has been carrying out specific activities of the project as per terms of reference of the MOU. Duration of the project is 18 months and started in July 2002.

Poverty reduction is the overarching goal of ADB. Experiences of Bangladesh amply demonstrate that it is the women who manage poverty at the household level and their participation at the grassroots level organisations can have a large impact on poverty alleviation. It is also recognised that good governance and gender equity are critical for poverty reduction. Without these two, many of the interventions cannot yield good results. The issues of governance and gender thus become very important in the context of local government.

Gender is a cross cutting concept, it is about development and also rights. The project primarily aims to build the capacity of grassroots level women leaders in local governments to perform more efficient and transparent public service delivery. This in turn is expected to develop effective linkages between gender, poverty reduction and good governance in local government in Bangladesh.

II. Objective and methodology

2.1 Objective

The purpose of this study was to make assessment of the baseline situation of the women UP members in terms of their involvement and participation in regular development activities in order to design intervention strategy that would improve this capacity and enable more effective participation of elected women UP members in local governance.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Study area and data collection

This study was conducted in the 16 programme upazilas (sub-districts) of 4 coastal districts- Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira and Jessore in the south Bangladesh. All female UP members of 144 unions from 16 upazilas were included in the sample. The total sample size was 434 for this study. Two types of questionnaire were developed for this baseline survey- one on leadership capacity of women in the UP level (Cap quest hereafter) and the other on the socio-economic profile of women UP members (SE quest hereafter). Five qualified field organizers of BRAC and Shushilan project, collected data using structured questionnaires following the face-to-face interview method. Three focus group discussions (FGD) were also conducted separately in the study areas in which 41 women UP members participated (17 women from Bagerhat, 11 from Khulna and 13 from Satkhira). The last UP election was held during January-March 2003 and the survey was conducted towards the end of the election.

2.2.2 Data

As mentioned, this baseline survey contains two data sets, one for the background characteristics and another for developmental activities. 434 members could be matched and the matched sample data is used for the analysis.

Table 1: Baseline sample data description

Sample description	Size
Cap Quest only	453
SE Quest only	441
Both Cap Quest and SE Quest	434

2.2.3 Analytical procedure

In this study, the basic facts of the women leadership capacity were examined in UP level. The capacity level was mainly assessed by level of participation in six areas of involvement, (a) infrastructure development, (b) relief and rehabilitation, (c) health and environmental, (d) women and child development, (e) social justice and (f) communication with government department and local stakeholders. Data on several confounding variables that can influence the level of participation of elected women UP members in these domains, such as age, education, family income, husband or father's income, NGO involvement, UP membership status (whether new or repeat), district and political involvement were also collected. In the analysis, the actual scenario of leadership capacity in various aspects by the project area is presented. Then simple bi-variate relationships between the measures of leadership capacity and the socio-economic variables are discussed.

2.2.4 Limitation

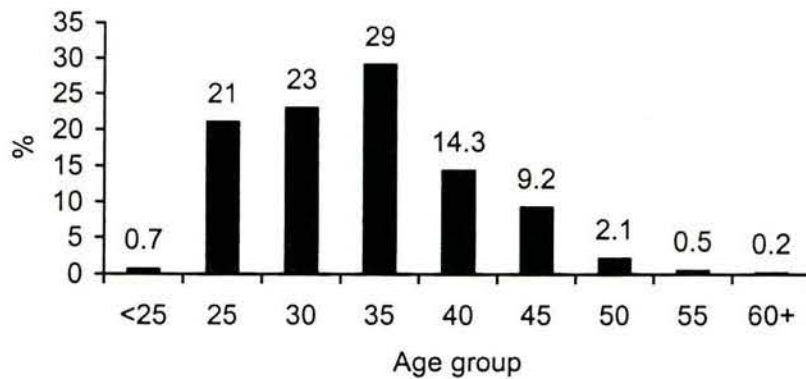
Project personnel collected the data of women members directly from the women members. RED researchers were not involved in design, training or quality control of the data collection.

III. Findings

3.1 Profile of the women UP members

Almost all women came from the reproductive age group with an average age of 35 years (Table 2). Nearly three quarter of women's age ranged from 25 to 39 years while the remaining had the age either below 25 or over 39 years (Figure 2). The distribution of sample women by age was found to be almost the same in the four districts. The level of education of the members was quite good—there were no UP women member who had not completed at least one year of schooling. Nearly half of them had completed the SSC level. The average year of schooling among the members was 8.8 years. There was no significant difference in education level of the members between districts. In most cases, the women were home-makers (60.6%) and over one fifth of the women reported to be social workers. Over one third of the women's husband or father were engaged in business and about a quarter were doing the agricultural work (labourer or own cultivation). A few of the women's husband or fathers were involved in salaried profession, such as, doctor, teacher, advocate, service etc. Almost half of the members reported NGO participation.

Figure 2. Age distribution of women UP members



3.2 Economic condition

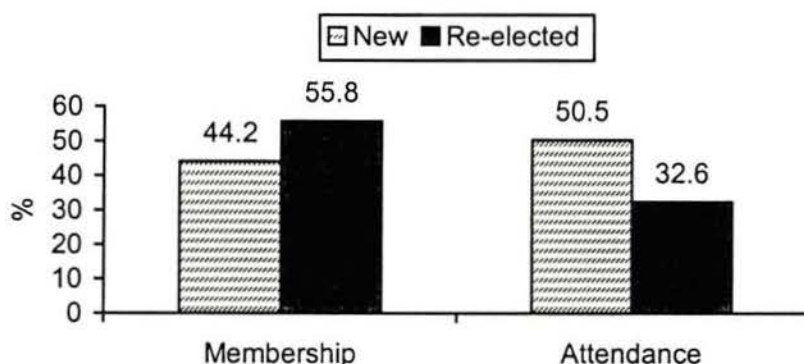
Economic condition is one of the very sensitive indicators, which can be measured in various ways. None of these statistics alone is a reliable indicator of overall economic condition. In this study, the household monthly income was collected to assess the member's economic condition. Over a quarter of the women members' monthly family income was below three thousand and about 40% of the women members' monthly family income ranged from 3000 to 5000 Tk. with the average monthly income of about more than four and a half thousand taka (Table 3).

3.3 UP membership and monthly meeting

Membership duration is a significant indicator to assess the capacity for participating in local government bodies. Nearly fifty six percent of the women were found to be re-elected UP members in the study area (Table 4). The re-elected members were very high in all districts except in Sathkhira. No new UP members were found in Jessore district. Data also revealed that a sixth of the women or any persons of her family were politically involved. The political involvement of women UP members was highly associated with the better economic condition measured in terms of family income (Table 14).

Active participation in the various UP meetings is an important factor for the female member's effective participation at local government and this may be assessed by the monthly meeting attendance. Though, over two-fifth of the women reported that they usually attended the monthly-meeting, less than a fifth of the women reported that they attended the monthly UP meetings regularly (Table 4). The attendance in monthly UP meeting amongst the new UP members was significantly ($p < 0.001$) higher than that of re-elected members (Figure 2).

Figure 3. UP membership status and monthly attendance



3.4 UP women member's participation in various developmental activities

In this study we examine the participation of women UP members in six public/developmental activities (a) infrastructural development, (b) relief and rehabilitation, (c) health and environment, (d) women and child development, (e) social justice, decision making in village court and (f) communication with public and private sectors etc. We examine participation in these activities from two perspectives—one, informal involvement and two, more formal involvement through the various relevant committees.

3.4.1 Infrastructure development

Less than a quarter of the women UP members reported participating in infrastructure development activities (Table 5). We also find that the UP members did not participate in all areas of infrastructure development equally. Most of the women participated in these works as members (10.4%) and chairmen (8.5%). A very small proportion of women participated in the more technical role of infrastructure development works of the villages as supervisor (1.2%) or counsellor (0.9%). The bi-variate analysis shows that the aged, women from high earning families, and re-elected women UP members were significantly more likely to be involved in infrastructure development work (Table 12).

3.4.2 Relief and rehabilitation activity

About a fifth of the women UP members reported involvement in relief and rehabilitation activities (Table 5). Their participation in such activities was mostly as members. One-sixth of the women members also reported their involvement in selecting the VGD/VGF cardholders. From the bi-variate analysis it can be inferred that the VGD/VGF card selection and relief or rehabilitation activities were highly significant among the women UP members who were aged, came from high economic family condition and those who were re-elected in the UP election (Table 12).

3.4.3 Health and environment

Awareness creation among the people for hygienic toilet set up, tree plantation and safe water drinking habits were the most important involvement of the women members in the union parishad. A large proportion (63.4%) of the women leaders were involved in setting up and building awareness for hygienic toilet (Table 7). Environmental activities including plantation and awareness creation about the danger of arsenic contaminated water were also reported as a very important work for them.

Counselling and providing motivational support were the prime role for women in the health and environmental activities. It can be interpreted from the bi-variate analysis that, better off members and those who were homemakers were significantly more involved in environmental activities (Table 12). Even though the new UP members were more involved in arsenic awareness work, re-elected members were more likely to be involved in the sanitation activities.

3.4.4 Women and child development

Level of capacity in preventing violence against women, a key challenge for women's empowerment seemed to be weak among the women UP members (Table 7). Only 34% of the members reported taking part in activities to prevent violence against women. One-fourth of the women conducted meeting with both parties in preventing violence. Besides these, other activities that the members were involved in to prevent violence against women include, arbitration or *Shalish* (15.7%), boosting up awareness through meeting (12.4%), conducting case or informing police (2.3%) etc. 32% of the women reported being involved in mobilizing financial assistance for the vulnerable women. Involvement in activities to socially rehabilitate vulnerable women was weak (13.4%). Bi-variate analysis shows (Table 13) that re-elected and more aged members were more likely to participate in activities pertaining to women's development and their social protection.

About two-fifth of the women UP members reported participation in various child development activities (Table 7), mostly in creating awareness about children's education. Very weak involvement was reported in mobilization for child immunization, and promoting child nutrition. Bi-variate analysis suggests that members coming from better off families, home-makers and re-elected women UP members were more likely to be involved in child development related activities (Table 13).

3.4.5 Social justice, and law and order

42% of the members reported being involved in social justice related activities such as shalish, arbitration, etc. (Table 8). When asked about the types of role they played in these activities, over a quarter reported their role as the judge and a sixth of them was in the role of counsellors. Nearly one-fifth of the women UP members also took part as a member of jury in the village level courts. About half of the women UP members reported taking part in suppressing crime in their locality. More than two-fifth of the women reported their participation in crime suppression through arbitration. Generally, the aged with more education were significantly more likely to be involved with activities related to social justice

(Table 13). The UP members who were older, better off, and re-elected were much more likely to be participated in the decision-making role as a member of the jury.

3.4.6 *Communication and linkage*

Over one-fifth of the women reported having communication with the health department (Table 9). Only 11% of women leaders had communication with the Directorate of Women. However, their relationship with local level actors was strong. Over half of the women members reported having some linkage with the elite persons and a third reported linkage with local health workers. Half of the women reported relationship with the various NGOs working in the rural areas to develop the society. Over quarter of the women UP members had the relationship with BRAC, about 3% of them had the relation with Shushilan and over a fifth of the women maintained the relation with other NGOs. The women UP members who were homemakers, came from better off families, and re-elected were significantly more networked (Table 14).

3.5 Committee involvement

Involvement in different formal committees is an important prerequisite for more effective participation in decision making of local governance. This was very weak for the women UP members (Table 10). Moreover, in almost all the committees they played a very marginal role as members. About a tenth of the women UP members reported their involvement in three or more committees (Table 10). Except the family planning activities, their participation in all developmental work was remarkably higher than what their committee involvement would suggest (Table 11). Thus, despite quite active participation in the various activities of the various UP committees, the women UP members were marginalized in terms of their involvement in actual decision-making platforms. The committee involvement was found to be significantly higher among the more aged women, coming from better off family and re-elected (Table 14).

3.6 Insights from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In order to gain a better understanding of the baseline leadership capacity and constraints, several FGDs were organized. In these FGDs, more than 80% of the participants thought that they had lack of knowledge on several issues, like, socio-economic problems of the poor, the amount and category of the local resources, condition of women in society, laws in favour of women, etc. They also reported lack of knowledge on government resources, such as, allotment and distribution system of relief, food for work, VGD cards, old age allowances and health, and agriculture facilities at the union level. All women members agreed that they should know in more detail about their responsibilities as well as be better informed about government facilities and how they could access them.

In FGDs it was observed that more than 70% interviewees said that they could not explain UP and its functions, were not aware of their exact position in the UP, weak in communication, linkage, liaison and co-ordination. The same percentage of participants said that they were afraid of solving problems and resolving conflicts because they were not experienced enough

to handle problems and conflict; and they were not skilled enough to develop any income generating project. Over 80% of interviewees expressed their views that they lacked the skill to conduct meetings or shalish. In fact, most of the time they were dependent on male members present in the shalish. They also spontaneously admitted that the women UP members talk a lot but without much effect as they are not well informed. On the other hand, it was also revealed from FGDs that more than 50% of interviewees thought that they had good leadership qualities.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the baseline situation of elected women UP members' involvement in various public and social activities and some preliminary bi-variate exercise, we highlight the following main observations:

- Typically, the women UP members are young and modestly educated. They also feel that they have good leadership qualities. More than half of them are re-elected and thus had previous exposure to the functions of the UP.
- They are involved in various public and social activities, though not equally in all domains. However, their involvement is mostly informal and they tend to be excluded from the various formal committees of decision-making. Even in instances that they are involved in the committees, their position is marginal.
- The women UP members who were more aged, came from better off families and were re-elected were significantly more involved in the various activities and the committees.
- The FGDs revealed that the women UP members felt that they lacked knowledge and information on the overall functions of the UP, their roles and responsibilities as UP members, government resources, such as, allotment and distribution system of relief, food for work, VGD cards, old age allowances and health, and agriculture facilities at the union level.

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VI. Appendix

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics by district

Indicators	District				Total
	Sathkhira	Khulna	Bagerhat	Jessore	
Age (years)					
< 25	0	2	1	0	3 (0.7)
25-29	10	17	43	21	91 (21.0)
30-34	28	24	26	22	100 (23.0)
35-39	41	22	41	22	126 (29.0)
40-44	22	15	15	10	62 (14.3)
45-49	10	10	16	4	40 (9.2)
50-54	2	2	4	1	9 (2.1)
55-59	0	0	1	1	2 (0.5)
60+	1	0	0	0	1 (0.2)
<i>Mean</i>	36.6	34.6	34.5	33.7	34.9
<i>SD</i>	6.8	6.5	6.9	6.3	6.8
Year of schooling					
Primary	13	3	18	8	42 (9.7)
Secondary	46	32	63	37	178 (41.0)
SSC	43	52	54	25	174 (40.1)
HSC +	12	5	12	11	40 (9.2)
<i>Mean</i>	8.6	9.2	8.7	8.8	8.8
<i>SD</i>	2.3	1.6	1.9	1.9	1.9
N	114	92	147	81	434 (100.0)

Note: Parentheses indicate the percentage

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics by district (Contd...)

Indicators	District				Total
	Sathkhira	Khulna	Bagerhat	Jessore	
Occupation					
HH work	95	63	40	65	263 (60.6)
Social work	0	9	85	0	94 (21.7)
Service	8	9	6	7	30 (6.9)
Professional	2	5	9	4	20 (4.6)
Skilled	2	4	4	5	15 (3.5)
Other	2	1	2	0	5 (1.2)
NR	5	1	1	0	7 (1.6)
Husband/Father's occupation					
Agriculture	24	20	37	31	112 (25.8)
Business	56	30	56	27	169 (38.9)
Professional	8	15	13	8	44 (10.1)
Service	3	14	21	11	59 (13.6)
Skilled	4	4	3	2	13 (3.0)
Other	7	9	17	2	35 (8.1)
NR	2	0	0	0	2 (0.5)
N	114	92	147	81	434 (100.0)

Note 1: Parentheses indicate the percentage; NR- Non response

Note 2: Professional- doctor, teacher, advocate, etc; Skilled- tailor, *dai*, nurse, driver, mechanic etc; other- business, contractor/student, old-age, *chowkider*, etc

Table 3. Economic condition of female UP members

Economical status (in Tk.)	District				Total
	Sathkhira	Khulna	Bagerhat	Jessore	
Family income/month					
< 3000	29	33	20	35	117 (27.0)
3000-5000	60	32	60	23	175 (40.3)
5000 +	25	27	67	23	142 (32.7)
Mean	4361.4	3830.4	5393.2	3960.5	4523.5
Median	3441.2	3466.7	4277.7	2941.2	3500
Mode	3000	4000	3000	2000	3000
Skewness	6.6	1.9	5.1	4.6	5.9
Kurtosis	50.9	4.7	29.6	27.7	44.4
N	114	92	147	81	434 (100.0)

Note : Parentheses indicate the percentage

Table 4. Membership position in the Union Parishad

Indicators	District				Total
	Sathkhira	Khulna	Bagerhat	Jessore	
Membership status					
New	106	34	52	0	192 (44.2)
Re-elected	8	58	95	81	242 (55.8)
Politically involved (Self/family members)	23	12	30	8	73 (16.8)
Attend UP meeting	105	8	38	25	176 (40.6)
Attendant type					
Frequently	9	6	28	22	64 (15.0)
Occasionally	92	2	10	0	104 (24.0)
Rarely	4	0	0	3	7 (1.6)
N	114	92	147	81	434 (100.0)

Note : Parentheses indicate the percentage

Table 5. Social development activities of women UP members

Indicators	N	%
UP members involved in infrastructural work	101	23.3
Participated as		
Member	45	10.4
Chairmen	37	8.5
Counsellor	4	0.9
Supervisor	5	1.2
Other	10	2.3
II. Selecting VGD/VGF cardholder	73	16.8
III. Relief and rehabilitation activity (operated by Govt/NGO)	83	19.1
Participated as		
Chairperson	12	2.8
Member	63	14.5
Counsellor	1	0.2
Other	7	1.6
N	434	100.0

Note: Multiple responses considered

Table 6. Environmental activities

Indicators	N	%
UP members involved in:		
I. Sanitation activities	275	63.4
Type of involvement		
Counsellor	109	25.1
Motivator	139	32.0
Supervisor	15	3.5
Co-ordinator	2	0.5
Other	10	2.3
II. Plantation	210	48.4
Participated as		
Counsellor	149	34.3
Motivator	17	3.9
Plantation and take caring	29	6.7
Other	15	3.5
III. Arsenic awareness programme	209	48.2
Participated as		
Counsellor	99	22.8
Motivator	88	20.3
Providing safe water	7	1.6
Supervisor	2	0.5
N	434	100.0

Table 7. Women welfare and child development activities

Indicators	N	%
UP members involved in:		
I. Preventing violence against women	149	34.3
Participated as		
Meeting with both parties	109	25.1
Arbitration or <i>Shalish</i>	68	15.7
Awareness creation through meeting	54	12.4
Sought assistance from Chairmen	26	6.0
Cooperation to police/case	10	2.3
Counselling/providing advice	2	0.5
II. Financial assistance for vulnerable women	137	31.6
Type of financial help		
Providing own money	35	8.1
Assistance from NGO	48	11.1
Assistance from government	32	7.4
Other	22	5.1
III. Social rehabilitation for vulnerable women	58	13.4
Participated as		
Member	23	5.3
Chairman	15	3.5
Counsellor	15	3.5
Organizer	3	0.7
Other	2	0.5
IV. Child development activities	161	37.1
Type of activities		
Awareness creation for education	139	32.0
Inspiration for immunisation	50	11.5
Encouraged for sports	15	3.5
Advised guardian for nutrition	13	3.0
Awareness creation for health	12	2.8
Cleanliness programme	3	0.7
N	434	100.0

Note: Multiple responses considered

Table 8. Social justice, decision-making and crime suppression role

Indicators	N	%
UP members involved in:		
I. Social justice (Salish/arbitration etc)	182	41.9
Participated as		
Ordinance	7	1.6
Judge	122	28.1
Counsellor	73	16.8
Organizer	2	0.5
II. Decision making as a member of jury in village court (<i>Gram Adalat</i>)	81	18.7
III. Crime suppressing rule	209	48.2
Crime suppressed through		
Meeting	59	13.6
Arbitration	191	44.0
Police	55	12.7
N	434	100.0

Note: Multiple responses considered

Table 9. Communication and linkage of female UP members

Indicators	N	%
UP members involved in:		
I. Communication with Govt. department	94	21.7
Communication with		
Health department	89	20.5
Directorate of the women	48	11.1
Agriculture officer	34	7.8
Directorate of fisheries	30	6.9
Land officer	22	5.1
II. Linkage with stakeholders	434	100.0
Linkage with		
Local health worker	143	32.9
Social worker	75	17.3
Political worker	64	14.7
Project implementation officer	82	18.9
Local elite person	244	56.2
III. NGO activities	216	49.8
Name of NGO		
BRAC	112	25.8
ASA	20	4.6
Grameen Bank	23	5.3
Shushilan	12	2.8
Other	49	11.3
Participated as		
Member	106	24.4
Chairperson	85	19.6
Other	25	5.8
N	434	100.0

Note: 1. Multiple responses considered
2. Other- Health worker/Service/Worker/School supervisor/ BRAC community nutrition promoter/School teacher etc

Table 10. Distribution of committee involvement of UP members

Indicators	N	%
Involvement with committees	50	11.5
Committee involvement		
One	4	0.9
Two	5	1.2
Three	20	4.6
Four & above	21	4.9
N	434	100.0

Table 11. Involvement of different committees by women position

Name of committee	Activities of committee	Involvement in activities (%)	Committee involvement (%)
1. VGD/VGF	Selecting VGD/VGF cardholder	16.8	8.5
2. Water & sanitation	Sanitation	63.4	2.3
	Arsenic awareness activities	48.2	
3. Women & child	Preventing violence against women	34.3	6.4
	Child development	37.1	
4. Education	Awareness creation for education	32.0	9.4
5. Disaster/relief management	Relief and rehabilitation activities	19.1	1.8
6. Nutrition	Child nutrition	3.0	0.2
7. Health & family planning	-	0	2.8
8. Social welfare	Social justice (<i>Salish</i>)	41.9	0.2
	Financial help for vulnerable women	31.6	
	Social rehabilitate to vulnerable women	13.4	
9. Plantation	Plantation	48.4	0.7
10. Law & order	Crime suppressing	48.2	0.9
11. Agriculture	Communication with agriculture dept.	7.8	4.1

Table 12. Association of sociodemographic characteristics with social and environmental development

Indicators	Developmental activities for				
	Infrastructure dev.	VGD/VGF cards selected	Relief/ rehabilitation	Sanitation	Arsenic awareness
All	23.3	16.8	19.1	63.4	48.2
Age in years					
< 30	10.6	3.2	4.3	62.8	37.2
30-39	23.9	17.3	21.7	62.8	48.7
40+	32.5	27.2	26.3	64.9	56.1
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.923</i>	<i>0.024</i>
Year of school					
Primary	16.7	14.3	16.7	66.7	47.6
Secondary	25.8	19.1	20.2	65.7	55.6
SSC	23.0	16.7	19.0	59.8	41.4
HSC & above	20.0	10.0	17.5	65.0	45.0
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.586</i>	<i>0.534</i>	<i>0.945</i>	<i>0.650</i>	<i>0.062</i>
Occupation					
HH work	27.7	23.4	21.3	77.7	66.0
Social work	23.2	15.2	19.4	54.8	38.8
Others	18.2	14.3	15.6	75.3	58.4
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.344</i>	<i>0.153</i>	<i>0.632</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>
Family income/month					
< 3000	24.8	25.0	20.5	63.2	52.1
3000-5000	14.9	8.6	10.3	55.4	34.3
5000+	32.4	23.9	28.9	73.2	62.0
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.001</i>	<i>0.001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.005</i>	<i>0.0001</i>
UP Membership					
New	12.0	1.6	7.3	56.8	56.3
Re-elected	32.2	28.9	28.5	68.6	41.7
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.011</i>	<i>0.003</i>
Relation with NGO					
Yes	23.9	17.0	26.0	63.8	46.8
No	22.7	16.7	17.6	63.0	49.5
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.773</i>	<i>0.932</i>	<i>0.419</i>	<i>0.863</i>	<i>0.567</i>

Table 13. Association of socio-demographic characteristics with societal capacity level

Indicators	Developmental activities for				
	Women dev.	Child dev	Social justice	Decision making in jury	Crime suppression
All	34.3	37.1	41.9	18.7	48.2
Age in years					
< 30	17.0	29.8	18.1	7.4	21.3
30-39	38.1	40.3	43.8	19.9	52.2
40+	41.2	36.8	57.9	25.4	62.3
<i>P-value</i>	0.0001	0.209	0.0001	0.003	0.0001
Year of school					
Primary	28.6	28.6	42.9	14.3	47.6
Secondary	38.8	38.2	50.0	21.3	54.5
SSC	32.2	36.8	35.1	19.5	44.8
HSC & above	30.0	42.5	35.0	7.5	35.0
<i>P-value</i>	0.414	0.591	0.030	0.191	0.093
Occupation					
HH work	41.5	56.4	40.4	26.6	43.6
Social work	31.6	25.9	41.1	15.2	52.0
Others	35.1	51.9	46.8	20.8	46.8
<i>P-value</i>	0.217	0.0001	0.636	0.045	0.529
Family income/month					
< 3000	35.0	39.3	40.2	18.8	47.0
3000-5000	29.7	26.9	37.1	10.9	46.9
5000+	39.4	47.9	49.3	28.2	50.7
<i>P-value</i>	0.190	0.001	0.084	0.0001	0.760
UP Membership					
New	44.8	23.4	43.2	5.7	64.1
Re-elected	26.0	47.9	49.0	28.9	35.5
<i>P-value</i>	0.0001	0.0001	0.627	0.0001	0.0001
Relation with NGO					
Yes	30.3	34.4	42.7	19.3	49.1
No	38.4	39.8	41.2	18.1	47.2
<i>P-value</i>	0.074	0.243	0.758	0.746	0.698

Table 14. Association of socio-demographic characteristics with communication, linkage, and committee involvement

Indicators	UP members capacity in		
	Communication with LG department	Committee involvement	Political involvement
All	21.7	11.5	16.8
Age in years			
< 30	14.9	3.2	17.0
30-39	21.7	12.8	18.1
40+	27.2	15.8	14.0
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.101</i>	<i>0.012</i>	<i>0.632</i>
Year of school			
Primary	16.7	48.0	14.3
Secondary	27.0	12.4	19.7
SSC	17.8	14.4	14.9
HSC & above	20.0	2.5	15.0
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.161</i>	<i>0.086</i>	<i>0.625</i>
Occupation			
HH work	41.5	13.8	25.5
Social work	13.3	11.8	14.8
Others	26.0	7.8	13.0
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.458</i>	<i>0.036</i>
Family income/month			
< 3000	23.9	13.7	10.3
3000-5000	14.9	6.9	13.7
5000+	28.2	15.5	26.1
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.013</i>	<i>0.039</i>	<i>0.001</i>
UP Membership			
New	17.2	2.6	17.7
Re-elected	25.2	18.6	16.1
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.044</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.660</i>
Relation with NGO			
Yes	17.4	11.5	15.1
No	25.9	11.6	18.5
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.032</i>	<i>0.972</i>	<i>0.346</i>

Table 15. Characteristics of leadership capacity by district level

Indicators	Developmental activities				
	Women dev.	Child dev	Decision making in jury	Communication capacity	Committee involvement
All	34.3	37.1	18.7	21.7	11.5
Sathkhira	58.8	10.5	5.3	0	4.4
Khulna	19.6	32.6	18.5	22.8	10.9
Bagerhat	33.3	49.7	26.5	30.6	8.8
Jessore	18.5	56.8	23.5	34.6	27.2
<i>P-value</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>	<i>0.0001</i>