

Forest Governance at the Local Level:
A study on Social Forestry Institutions in Dhaka Forest Division, Bangladesh

A Dissertation
by
Ruhul Mohaiman Chowdhury
ID 04262009



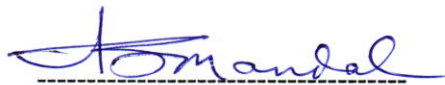
Submitted to the Development Studies Program, BRAC University
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Master of Development Studies

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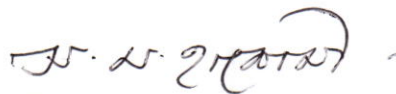
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Approved by:



Supervisor

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Certification

This is to endorse that this dissertation work entitled "Forest Governance at the Local Level: A study on Social Forestry Institutions in Dhaka Forest Division, Bangladesh" is done by Mr. Ruhul Mohaiman Chowdhury, bearing student ID: 04262009 for the partial fulfillment of the Master of Development Studies (MDS) course under BRAC University, Dhaka. This study has been completed under my direct supervision and guidance.

I do certify that this is an original piece of study and appreciate its style and contents. This exhibits a partial scenario of Social Forestry Programme in Bangladesh and focuses on the local level social forestry institutions developed under the auspices of Forestry Sector Project, Bangladesh Forest Department.

Dr. M. A. Sattar Mandal
Dissertation Supervisor
Dhaka; November 2008

Declaration

I, Ruhul Mohaiman Chowdhury, hereby declare that the masters dissertation entitled, "Forest Governance at the Local Level: A study on Social Forestry Institutions in Dhaka Forest Division, Bangladesh" is developed and written by myself for the partial fulfillment of the Degree in Master of Development Studies (MDS). I have thoroughly complied with the directions of my supervisor, Professor M. A. Sattar Mondal, collected primary data from my study site and reviewed literatures.

This is a distinctive study and devoid of any other previous work already presented at any academic institute of higher education.



Ruhul Mohaiman Chowdhury
MDS Student ID: 04262009
Dhaka; November 2008.

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I do humbly recognize supports from my family.

Acronyms

ADB	:	Asian Development Bank
AIGAs	:	Alternate Income Generating Activities
BWDB	:	Bangladesh Water Development Board
CCF	:	Chief Conservator of Forests
CHT	:	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CFUGs	:	Community Forest User Groups, Nepal
CFM	:	Community Forest Management, Vietnam
DCC	:	District Coordination Committee
DFO	:	Divisional Forest Officer
FAO	:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FD	:	Forest Department, Bangladesh
FENTC	:	Forestry Extension and Nursery Training Centre
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
FGLG	:	Forest Governance Learning Group
FSP	:	Forestry Sector Project
GOB	:	Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
ICFOR	:	International Forestry Research
IDRC	:	International Development Research Center
IIED	:	International Institute for Environment and Development
JFM	:	Joint Forest Management, West Bengal
LCOs	:	Local Community Organizations
LGRD	:	Local Government Department
NFA	:	National Forest Assessment, Bangladesh, 2005-2007
NGO	:	Non Governmental Organization
NPD	:	National Project Director
MC	:	Management Committee (Social Forestry Management Committee)
MoEF	:	Ministry of Environment and Forests
PBSAs	:	Participatory Benefit Sharing Agreements
PROFOR	:	Program on Forests
RHD	:	Roads and Highways
RECOFTC	:	Regional Community Forestry Training Center,
SFMC	:	Social Forestry Management Committee
SFIs	:	Social Forestry Institutions
SFRs	:	Social Forestry Rules, 2004
TCC	:	Thana Coordination Committee
TFF	:	Tree Farming Fund
UCC	:	Upazilla Co-ordination Committee
UEFDC	:	Upazilla Environment and Forest Development Committee
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Program
UNECE	:	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNO	:	Upazilla Nirbahi Officer
UNESCAP	:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

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Executive summary

Since early 80s Social Forestry has achieved special focus in Bangladesh forestry sector. It has brought a significant shift in forest management through bringing both the conservation of forest reserves and poverty reduction in development strategies. National policy papers viz. national forest policy 1994, forestry sector master plan 1993, The Forest (Amendment) Act 2000 and Social Forestry Rules 2004 unanimously put emphasis on people-oriented forestry programme. Many scholars and development practitioners also recognized the crucial role of local people in natural resources management (Marks, 1984; McCay and Acheson, 1987; Ostrom, 1990; Poffenberger, 1990; Hecht and Cockburn, 1990; UNFAO, 1990; Blockhus et al., 1992; Bromley et al., 1992; Ascher, 1995; Agarwal, 2000). Hence in pursuance of social forestry programme in Bangladesh, local level social forestry institutions like participants' groups, social forestry management committee (SFMC), tree farming fund committee, upazilla environment and forest development committee (UEFDC) were founded during early 90s. These institutions are playing vital role to implement Social Forestry (SF) programme in association with the existing local level FD institutions namely forest ranges and forest beats. On the other hand, Forest governance, as a recent development discourse, entails clarifying the relationships, rights, responsibilities and incentives among various actors on the direction and nature of forest uses in a sustainable way (Recoftc, 2005) and IIED (2005) views it as decisions and actions that remove the barriers and install the policy and institutional systems, which spread local forestry success.

The study focuses on the legal foundations and performance of the local level forestry institution, their compliance to the principles of good governance and overall implication of forest governance in sustainable forest management. This study is contextual to the social forestry programme in Sal forests of Bangladesh.

Study reveals that two local level social forestry institutions viz. social forestry management committee (SFMC) and upazilla environment and forest development committee (UEDFC) have the potentiality to ensure governance in forest management through collaboration of local forest dependent communities, local public agencies, NGOs, civil societies and forest department as legal custodian of forest reserves. At this point, these actors demonstrate a structured initiation in ensuring governance through

participation of a wide range of stakes, in a visible consensus manner, towards some set strategic visions, and effective mechanism of guaranteeing rule of law. The study also reveals that the committees display a positive drive through their efficiency, accountability and transparency in transactions with the stakeholders. However, there are some challenges yet to be resolved. These are selecting right and the most eligible local dependents as SF participants, building capacity of both the rights holders and duty bearers, conflict resolution and devolution of financial and administrative power to these institutions. It is largely evident that FD as land owning agency and local elites (administrative and political) still play dominant role in SF programme implementations, which often impede ensuring good forest governance. Furthermore, though the tree farming fund (TFF) is acknowledged for sustainability of SF programme, the institutions in practice, are neither capable to handle the funds nor transparent in its transactions.

The study concludes with ranking the institutions in a gauge of 1-5¹, with respect to five principles of good governance (adopted from Graham et. al. 2003) and found that UDEFDC achieved an aggregate rank of 2.5 i.e. right in between good (2) and moderate (3) and the SFMC ranks at 2.69, i.e. closer to moderate (3). This implies that UDEFDC's performance is better than the SFMC in ensuring good forest governance through the social forestry programme. Consequently, more emphasis should be given to make the SFMC more functional and effective since it paves the basis of SF programme as well as the most vital starting point towards ensuring forest governance. However, the progress so far achieved in the SF programme in the country is a reflection of external backstopping from donors, project supports and policy makers; and made the space for local actors to create demand for further refinement, update and improving social forestry to meet their needs as well as preserving biological diversity in the forest reserves.

Although the study exhibits a fragmented scenario of social forestry programme and localized in context, it may be a food for thought for the actors in social forestry programme and would be useful for directing further research by the academicians.

¹ Scale of 1 to 5; where : 1 = optimum, 2 = good, 3 = moderate, 4 = bad and 5 = no idea

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Preface

People-oriented forestry can offer high potential routes towards good forest governance and lead eradicating rural poverty of forest dependent communities and simultaneously can ensure biodiversity conservation in degraded forest reserves. IIED (2002) views that forestry can contribute to food security; provide resource safety nets and sometimes enterprise opportunities where little else exists. Forests have also proven to be fertile ground for pioneering good local governance. In practice, declaration of forest reserve largely denies the usufruct rights of the local poor, which is treated as threats to their livelihood. This also leads to deforestation and loss of biodiversity. Sal forests in Dhaka Forest Division is one of the prime examples of reserved forests which on the one hand refutes local peoples' needs over forests and on the other hand witnesses deforestation and biodiversity loss due to hostile relationship with the local poor and elites. However, recent social forestry programme has opened up a route to people-oriented forestry in Bangladesh whereby new forest management regime has been evolved. The traditional forest administration is now aided by the local institutions like Management Committee, composed of social forestry participant groups and Upazilla environment and forest development committee (UEFDC), comprised of local level public administration and civil society members. Further, the Forest Policy 1994 and Social Forestry Rules 2004 paved the legal foundation for involving local people in forest management. With the advent of policy supports and emergence of local level institutions, it is expected to remove the barriers that prevent forests and trees from contributing to the livelihoods of rural poor through ensuring good forest governance in emerging opportunities for sustainable local forest management. Chowdhury (2008) viewed that multi-stakeholders' involvement frames the base for good institutional governance as well as efficient management regimes. The study analyses the compliance of local level social forestry institutions with the principles of good governance while the study site meanwhile experienced more than 10 years practicing social forestry.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Studies revealed that people living in and at the neighbourhoods of forest reserves are highly dependent on it for their livelihood (Fernandes et. al. 1988, Falconer and Arnold 1989, Cavendish 2000, Gunatilake 1996, Reddy and Chakravarty 1999, Bahuguna 2000, Takasaki *et al* 2001). With the increasing pressures from multi-fold factors like increasing population, indiscriminate landuse transformation, frequent natural disasters, growing inequality in socio-economy etc. brought the biological hotspots under huge threats. As such mere declaration of reserved forests and fences-and-fines approach of conservation cannot arrest the steady loss of valuable biodiversity from forests (Sharma et. al. 2005). In light with the National Forest Policy 1994, Forest Department (FD) implemented people-oriented social forestry programme under the Asian Development Bank (ADB) financed Forestry Sector Project (1997-2006). Local poor people are brought into legal framework to participate in afforestation as well as conservation programme under the benefit-share agreement. Social Forestry Rules 2004 is formulated to strengthen and sustain the social forestry programme, which gave strong ground to local level committees for active functioning.

Implementation of a people-oriented programme, which is a major shift of power from existing patron-client arrangement, requires adequate policy supports, strong commitments of FD for devolution of power to local institutions, well organized rights holder communities, an active civil society and above all necessary supports (knowledge and financial) to materialize this shift. The new collaborative management platform with multiple stakeholders supposedly brings good governance at local level, as a precondition for poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation. Though a number of studies are conducted on various dimensions of social forestry and recognized the configuration of local level social forestry institutions, the functional modality of these local institutions is not assessed empirically, with particular reference to Bangladesh forestry sector. The study focuses mainly on the field level functionality of the local social forestry institutions (SFIs) in the frame of good governance principles.

1.3. Rationale of the study

Forestry and biodiversity conservation is not merely biological focus rather it's socio-cultural and economic dimensions are getting more and more prominent in today's development agenda. In-depth study in silviculture of some species, adequate research on the issues of tenure and collective rights, livelihood of forest dependent communities, stakeholder analysis on stake and power etc. are also needed. Accordingly forestry sector of the country also took the challenges of institutionalize people-oriented forestry rather than mere involving local people to benefit-sharing afforestation programme whereby they used to remain as passive participants and benefit recipients. Since FD has appreciated formation of local SFIs, its functionality needs proper guidance with action research supports. Here, all the ways of SFIs functionalities including active participation of key stakeholders; efficient, responsive and accountable local committee; a process of mass consensus orientation and ensuring the rule of law are focused in the study.

The findings of this study provide a state of affairs and functionality of local social forestry institutions and have implications for improvement and future planning. Moreover, the study widens the scope for future researches in the field of participatory social forestry.

1.4. Objectives of the study

The broader objective of the study is to assess the compliances of good governance principles in local level social forestry institutions and their functionalities, towards poverty reduction as well as biodiversity conservation.

Some specific objectives are:

- i. to review the legal status and formation of local level social forestry institutions (SFIs);
- ii. to assess the extent at which good governance principles are reflected in the functionalities of local SFIs; and
- iii. to explore the implications of good governance in sustainable forest management.

1.5. Limitations of the study

Due to limitation of time and budget, the study is confined in the Sreepur range under Dhaka Forest Division. This is a site-specific study that concentrates merely in a portion of Sal forests area and participatory social forestry activities have completed the first rotation during its implementation. Hence this study does not represent the state of Social Forestry in Bangladesh, in general.

Furthermore, the study could not focus on the biophysical performance of social forestry programme and socio-economic return of the social forestry programme and/or participants. Due to diversity in forest types, livelihood dependency on forests and socio-economic condition of people, the finding of the study might require some local level adaptations during replication.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. General Background

Weak governance gained popularity as an explanation for environmental degradation with the drastic decline of flora and faunal resources from forests (Myers 1979; Hecht & Cockburn 1990; Gibson 1999). Similarly interests have been growing in the effect of government quality on economic, political and environmental outcomes whereby Tendler (1997) mentioned that an efficient bureaucracy with better governance could produce more effective policy. Indeed, several policies emanating from donors, watchdog non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups seek to incorporate explicitly measures to encourage better governance of forest resources (Barrett *et al*, 2005). For example Transparency International's Forest Integrity Network, the International Tropical Timber Organization's policy forum on criminal activity in the forest sector, the U.S. Government's Congo Basin Initiative, the Center for International Forestry Research (ICFOR)'s newly created forest governance division and The World Bank also emphasizes the role of good governance within its forest sector strategy as well as more broadly in its poverty reduction programme (World Bank 1997, 2002). Furthermore, there are some research initiatives like the Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG), International Development Research Center (IDRC) and Program on Forests (PROFOR) etc. also demonstrate growing concern about forest governance for people's well being as well as biodiversity conservation. FGLG is an informal alliance of independent agencies, aims to exchange learning and develop ideas on forest governance, is currently active with an attempt to connect the marginalized communities from forest governance to those controlling it, and to help both do things better (FGLG 2008). ICFOR sets the overall goal of the Forests and Governance Programme is to promote good forest governance based on social justice, equity, accountability and transparency (ICFOR 2008). IDRC (2008) views the fresh perspectives in integrating knowledge and governance in natural resource sectors. PROFOR supports initiatives that aim to align government, private sector, and civil society interests and responsibilities, and promote equitable and efficient forest management practices (PROFOR 2008). Recent studies from these sources manifest that there exists a complex conceptual link between governance and natural resources, which requires in-depth studies at local level.

In the context of study focus, Sal Forests of Bangladesh originally had a wider domain from Dinajpur to Mymensingh Tangail and Dhaka Forest Divisions. The flagship tree species in this forest is Sal (*Shorea robusta*). Bhawal Garh, Modhupur Garh and Atia Reserved were the well-known Sal Tracts of the country. With the promulgation of the 'Private Forest Ordinance 1949 and elimination of landlordship, Government acquired these Sal Tracts and adopted scientific management as Reserved Forests. Chowdhury M.R. 1957 pointed that since 1940s Sal (*Shorea robusta*) forest was enriched with Sal and a group of associated species. Over time, the resource users and the poor living in and around the Sal forests, to meet their immediate needs and aspiration to increase their 'current income flows', excessively exploited Sal illicitly. During the war of independence, in 1971, these forests were mostly devastated. Subsequently there were restrictions on felling in the forests and no systematic management was done thereof. Later Sal forests faced tremendous pressure of over exploitation, encroachment and landuse conversion.

With the advent of donor-assisted development programme since early 1980s, these forests are brought under enrichment programme through community forestry approaches. Among these endeavours 'Community Forestry Development Project (1981/82-1986/87), Thana Afforestation and Nursery Development Project (1987/88-96/97), Coastal Green Belt Project' (1997-2002), Forestry Sector Project (1997/98-2005/06), Nishorgo Support Project (2004-2008), Forest Policy 1994, Forestry Sector Master Plan (1995-2015) and Social Forestry Rules 2004 are the milestones towards people-oriented forestry programme in the country. These programmes and masterpieces have developed several bodies, from grass-root to regional and national level, gained policy supports and eventually reached to institutional forms. At this stage, it is required to evaluate the performance and effectiveness in ensuring the goals of social forestry.

This study mainly deals with the structure, formation and functionality of local social forestry institution developed under the auspices of Forestry Sector Project. This institution has a local focus and mandated to ensure forest governance in sustainable forest management along with strategies for poverty reduction and conservation of biological diversity. The study confines in-depth analysis of local institutions in Sreepur Range, Dhaka Forest Division. Participating farmers in the Social Forestry Programme are the main driving force of the study whereby participants' selection regime,

participation modalities, socio-economic improvement and their collective actions towards sustainable forest management is extensively appraised. Eventually the local institutions are evaluated regarding their achievements in promoting good forest governance over a decade.

2.2. Social Forestry: context and evolution in Bangladesh

The discourse of Social Forestry is originated through a process of felt necessity to combine modern natural sciences and social sciences for effective forest management. The term 'Social Forestry' was first coined by an Indian Forester Mr. Westoby in the 9th Commonwealth Forestry Conference, 1968. He defined it as 'Forestry is not merely an issue relevant to tree only, but an issue relevant to man'. Since 8th World Forestry Conference social forestry theories, methodologies and practices spread and developed rapidly in the world, particularly in the Southeast Asia. During this period it is understood that social forestry has the potential to be developed comprehensively with ecological, social and economic sound (Pikun and Weichang, 1998). FAO (1978) defines Social Forestry as ". . . any situation which intimately involves local people in a forestry activity". Ramaswamy (1988) pointed that objectives of Social Forestry is

"to raise the standard of living of the rural dweller, to involve him in decision-making process, which affects his very existence, and to transform him into a dynamic citizen, capable of contributing to a wide range of activities than he was used to and of which he will be the direct beneficiary. Its ultimate objective is not physical but human. The physical goals, which will be set towards achieving the objective of enhancing the lives of human beings".

However, it is evident that social forestry is often named as 'Participatory Forestry', 'Community Forestry', 'Joint Forest Management', 'Collaborative Management', 'Village Forestry' or 'Peoples' Forestry' etc. based on context and locations. For instances, in the Asia Pacific Region, Social Forestry evolved in diverse forms viz.

Box-1: Co-management PAs in Bangladesh

In 2004, Bangladesh Forestry sector launched 'Nishorgo Program for Protected Forest Area Management' a model of collaborative management platform whereby local key stakeholders have voice in management decision-making (Fox *et al.* 2007).

community forest management (CFM) and joint forest management (JFM) in India, community forestry in Nepal, integrated social forestry in the Philippines, collaborative management in protected areas of Bangladesh and prosperity approach in Indonesia. Since early 1980s this region, Bangladesh in particular, has been practicing social forestry programme and meanwhile has achieved commendable experiences thereby.

In Bangladesh, ADB financed 'Community Forestry Development Project (1981/82 to 1986/87) is the first social forestry project and implemented over 23 northern countries. Successively two more social forestry projects namely 'Thana Afforestation and Nursery Development Project' and Coastal Green Belt Project' (1997-2002)' are also taken. Finally, the 'Forestry Sector Project, FSP (1997/98-2005/06)' is taken with a nationwide coverage, aiming to several main objectives, namely i. to prevent the degradation of forest; ii. to increase the production of forest resources; and iii. to enhance conservation of forests in selected protected areas and establish sustainable management of forest resources through local poor landless community participation. Under the FSP about 64,000.0 hectares of degraded forests, encroached and marginal fellow lands are brought under new plantations whereby about 85,000.0 beneficiaries have been involved. In the fiscal year 2005-06, six thousand six hundred and nine (6609) participating beneficiaries received Tk. 9,954,000.0 as their share from social forestry plantations (FD 2006). Furthermore, a network with different land owning agencies, including Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB), Roads and Highways Department (RHD), Bangladesh Railway and Local Government Department (LGRD), local stakeholders including neighbouring communities, local administration, civil society; is developed with Forest Department as lead agency. Since then on the process is being continued with adequate policy supports and brought significant changes in forest management regime while *fencing and policing* approach is identified as the traditional way. Hence, social forestry can be marked as a way out to address peoples' aspiration for their livelihood as well as a means of conserving biodiversity in forest reserve through coordinated efforts. At this stage of maturity, about two decades of practice, it is justified to evaluate SF programme in the context of a change-making institution. This study will confine in appraising local level social forestry institutions in Bangladesh and degree of compliance towards good forest governance.

2.3. Concept of forest governance

Governance is not synonymous with government. It is partly about how institutions and other social organizations interact, how they relate to people, and how decisions are taken in a complex society. Thus governance is a process whereby societies or organizations make their important decisions, determine whom they involve in the process and how they render account.

United Nations Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) remarked good governance as an ideal, which is difficult to achieve in its totality; and very few countries and societies have come close to achieving it. To ensure sustainable development, actions must be taken to work towards achieving this ideal. UNESCAP (2007) identified eight (8) major characteristics of good governance regimes, namely participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and following the rule of law.

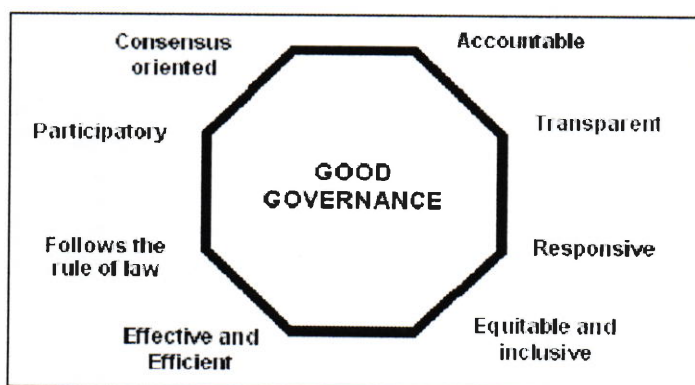


Figure 1: Principles of good governance (UNESCAP 2007)

Good forest governance is a relatively recent expression of good governance in forestry sector. Asian Alliance for Good Forest Governance facilitated by the Regional Community Forestry Training Center, RECOFTC (2008) for Asia and the Pacific notes that “good forest governance is achieved by clarifying the relationships, rights, responsibilities and incentives among (civil society, forest users and government actors) on the direction and nature of how forests are used”. The Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG), steered by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), has a working definition of good forest governance – “the decisions and actions that remove the barriers and install the policy and institutional systems which spread local forestry success” (IIED 2005). With slight variations, the United Nations Development

Program (UNDP, 1997) expresses a set of nine (9) principles that have a claim to universal recognition. These are, participation, consensus orientation, strategic vision, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, transparency, equity, and rule of law. These principles are defined as below:

Participation – all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively; **Consensus orientation** – good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the group and, where possible, on policies and procedures; **Strategic vision** – leaders and the public have a broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development, along with a sense of what is needed for such development. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded; **Responsiveness** – institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders; **Effectiveness and efficiency** – processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources; **Accountability** – decision-makers in government, the private sector and civil society organizations are accountable to the public, as well as to institutional stakeholders. This accountability differs depending on the organizations and whether the decision is internal or external; **Transparency** – transparency is built on the free flow of timely and reliable economic, social, and political information, which is accessible to all relevant stakeholders. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned with them, and enough information is provided to understand and monitor them; **Equity** – all men and women have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being; and **Rule of Law** – legal frameworks should be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights (UNDP, 1997).

Graham *et al.* 2003 grouped the UNDP's characteristics of good governance under five (5) broad themes and recognized that these principles often overlap or are conflicting at some point, that they play out in practice according to the actual social context, that applying such principles is complex, and that they are all about not only the results of power but how well it is exercised. The 5 themes are Legitimacy and Voice, Direction, Performance, Accountability and Fairness.

Table 1: Five (5) principles of good governance

5 Characteristics Graham <i>et al.</i> 2003	Corresponding UNDP Principles, 1997	Corresponding UNESCAP Principles, 2007
Legitimacy and Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Consensus orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Participatory <input type="checkbox"/> Consensus oriented
Direction	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic vision	
Performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness and efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsive <input type="checkbox"/> Effective and efficient
Accountability	<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency	<input type="checkbox"/> Accountable <input type="checkbox"/> Transparent
Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Rule of Law.	<input type="checkbox"/> Equitable and inclusive <input type="checkbox"/> Rule of law

(Source: Graham *et al.* 2003).

However, the principles of good governance are often overlapping and each strengthens the other. Here, 5 principles developed by Graham *et al.* 2003 are identified and their presence is studied in social forestry programme implementation in general and in the local level social forestry institutions in particular.

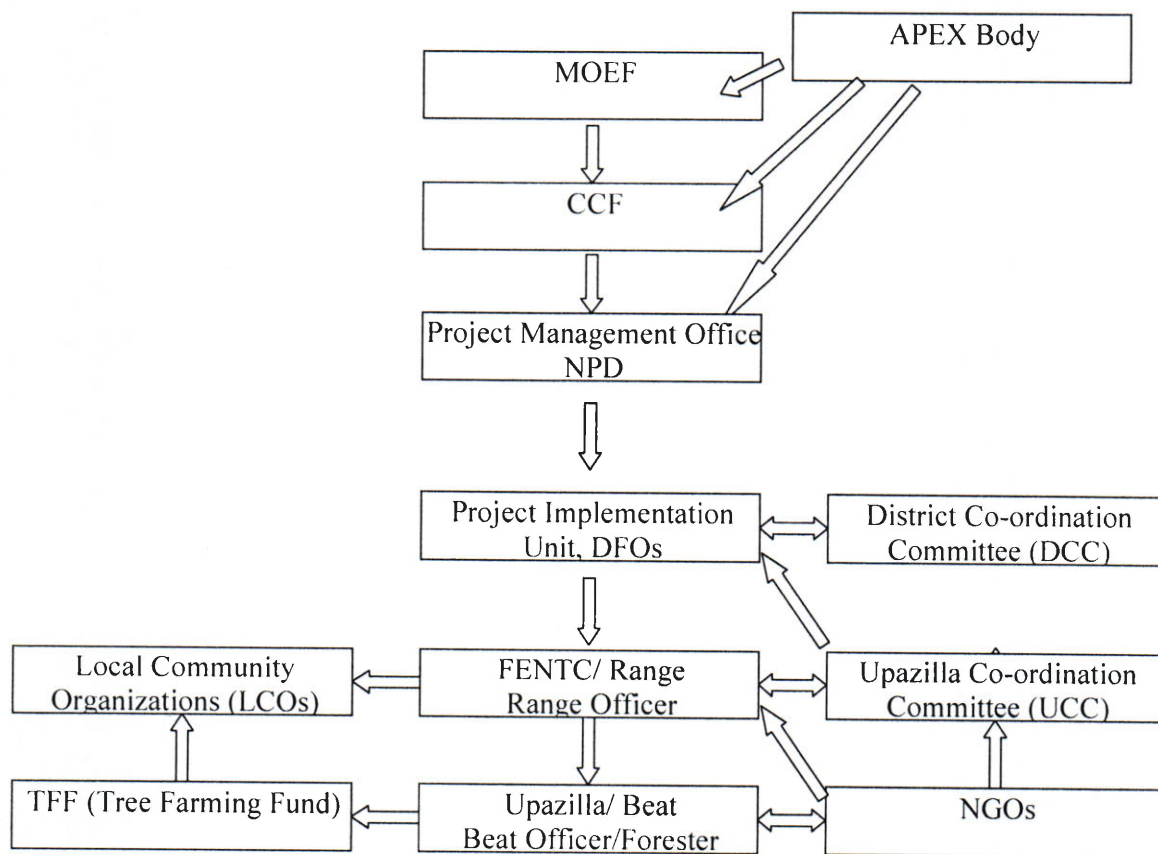
2.4. Social Forestry institutions in Bangladesh

The Forest (Amendment) Act 2000 and subsequent Social Forestry Rules 2004 paved the legal footings for social forestry institutions in the country at local, regional and national level. These institutions are developed under the auspices of ADB financed Forestry Sector Project (1997/98-2005/06). The social forestry institutions developed are an Apex body at the national level, followed by regional level District Coordination Committee (DCC), Thana Coordination Committee (TCC) at local level and Participants' Groups and Management Committees at grass-root level.

The apex body was designated to perform the chief supervisory role, and was functional during the Forestry Sector Project, led by the Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, whereby the National Project Director (NPD), Forestry Sector Project was the Member Secretary. Another 14 members of the committee were representatives from high-level Government agencies and NGOs including the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) and the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) with leading roles. The apex body was responsible for overseeing the progress of project implementation, identify and address constraints, resolve conflicts, ensure that no duplication or overlap among various project activities occurs and that the implementation follows the predetermined schedule.

The District Co-ordination Committees (DCCs) were headed by the Deputy Commissioners and concerned Divisional Forest Officers acted as Member Secretary. District level officials from GOB as well as NGOs were members of this committee and perform similar duties, at district level, like the Apex body. However, the apex body of the FSP project and that of the DCC are beyond the scope of this study. At Upazilla level, coordination of social forestry programme were facilitated by Upazilla Co-ordination Committee (UCC) whereby the concerned Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Forest Range Officer acted as the Chairman and Member Secretary respectively. UCC was formed with representatives from Upazilla level concerned public offices and NGOs.

Figure 2: Management Setup of Forestry Sector Project



Social Forestry participants form the local community organizations (LCOs) namely Participants' Groups and Social Forestry Management Committees (SFMCs), which are the main driving forces of the social forestry programme. The members of these LCOs form the Tree Farming Fund (TFF) committee to handle the financial activities dealings of the LCOs.

2.4.1. Social Forestry Participants

Social Forestry participants are people from neighboring or forest villagers of public forests. Forest Department selects participants in consultation with the local government institutions and local participating NGOs. Participants are selected having following criteria (FD 2004):

- i. People living nearest (within 1 km) to the plantation sites;
- ii. Landless;
- iii. Owner or occupants of less than 50 decimal of land;
- iv. Destitute women and
- v. Ethnic minorities.

The participants are under a contractual agreement with Forest Department named 'Participatory Benefit Sharing Agreement (PBSA) and are responsible for required planting, maintenance including climber cutting, cleaning, double stem cutting, pruning and thinning, and protection from any damage or pilferage; operate the tree farming fund; harvesting of intermediate and final products; contribute in the re-establishment costs. The participants get benefits as per PBSA and usufruct rights on the forestland, which is not transferable except to his legal heirs.

2.4.2. Participatory Group and Management Committee (MC)

A group of 10-25 persons among social forestry participants form participants' group. The participating group members select and form a Management Committee having following members:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| i. 1 x Chairperson | iv. 1 x Assistant Secretary |
| ii. 1 x Vice Chairperson | v. 1 x Treasurer |
| iii. 1 x General Secretary | vi. 4 x Members and |

Two Advisors: One from FD and another from participating NGO.

The Management Committee has following functions (GOB 2004):

- i. Assist FD for implementing project activities;
- ii. Protection and maintenance of social forestry plantations;
- iii. Management of TFF;

- iv. Ensuring implementation of terms and conditions mentioned in the PBSA and solving any dispute arises during implementation of the project in consultation with representatives from FD and NGO;
- v. The Committee will conduct a meeting in each month and maintain 2 Registers, one for keeping records of meetings and resolutions taken (by the General Secretary) and one for maintaining accounts (by the Treasurer).

2.4.3. Tree Farming Fund (TFF) Committee

Social Forestry Programme in Bangladesh has developed a committee for management and operation of the tree-farming fund for each social forestry units. This committee is named as Tree Farming Fund (TFF). The formation of this committee is as follows:

- a) Chairperson, vice-chair of the Management Committee, ex-officio
- b) General Secretary, General Secretary from the Management Committee ex-officio and
- c) Member Secretary, Treasurer of the Management Committee, ex-officio
- d) Advisor, concerned FD personnel, for example Forest Beat Officer.

The responsibilities of a TFF committee are (GOB 2004):

- Each Social Forestry region/ unit maintains a fund named Tree Farming Fund;
- Deposit the fixed portion (10%) of final harvest from social forestry plantations;
- The TFF will be used for all activities relating to the 2nd rotation plantations and their maintenance;
- Utilization of the surplus funds of TFF, after raising 2nd rotation plantations, for forest based activities and social welfare activities, like nursery raising, for the beneficiary participants;
- Tree Farming Fund (TFF) would be deposited to a Short Term Deposit (STD) A/C in a local government affiliated bank and this account is maintained by joint signature of the General Secretary and Treasurer of the TFF committee. The fund is taken from the Bank in line with the proposal of the committee members and advisors;
- Maintain records and will preserve all books, particulars, documents for the participants and the advisors.

2.4.4. Upazilla Environment and Forest Development Committee (UEFDC)

In order to ensure participation of local level administration, civil society and NGOs the Social Forestry Programme involved all the stakeholders at local level and formed a Upazilla Coordination Committee during the Forestry Sector Project, which is eventually named as Upazilla Environment and Forest Development Committee (UEFDC). This committee is formed by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) vide memo no. MoEF(Sha-3)/committee/48/97/712 dated 14/07/2004 and it is mainly responsible for coordination of environmental and forestry development programme at local level, smooth implementation and ensuring people's participation in these activities. The committee is composed as follows:

Table 2: Composition of the UEFDC.

	Hon'ble Member of the Parliament	Advisor
1.	Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Chairperson
2.	Assistant Commissioner (Land)	Member
3.	Upazilla Agriculture Officer	Member
4.	Upazilla Engineer, LGED	Member
5.	Sub-Divisional Engineer/Asstt. Engineer RHD	Member
6.	Sub-Divisional Engineer /Asstt. Engineer, BWDB	Member
7.	Sub-Divisional Engineer, Bangladesh Railway	Member
8.	Upazilla Education Officer	Member
9.	Project Officer, Secondary Education	Member
10.	Upazilla Rural Development Officer	Member
11.	Assistant Director/ Upazilla Youth Development Officer, Youth Development Directorate	Member
12.	Officer in Charge (Concerned Police Station)	Member
13.	Upazilla Ansar and BDB Officer	Member
14.	NGO Representative (Nominated by the UNO)	Member
15.	Chairman, All Union Parishad	Member
16.	Upazilla College/Secondary School/ Institution Head from Senior Madrassa (Nominated by the UNO)	Member
17.	Representative of Press Club (Journalist)	Member
18.	Representative of Bangladesh Scouts and Bangladesh Girls' Guide Association	Member
19.	2 (1 female) Local enthusiastic Civil Society member (Nominated by the UNO)	Member
20.	ACF/ Range Officer, Forest Department	Member Secretary

The scope of work of the Upazilla Environment and Forest Development Committee (UEFDC) is as follows (GOB 2004):

- ❑ Popularizing the tree plantation movement and Organize tree fairs
- ❑ Implementation government decision regarding polyethylene ban
- ❑ Implementation of the government decisions regarding wildlife conservation and prevention of killing migratory birds.
- ❑ Preventing timber burning in the brickfields and implementation of 'Brick Burning (Control) Act 1981' and 'Brick Burning (License) Rules 1989'.
- ❑ Programme planning and implementation for the conservation of biological diversity
- ❑ Assist local nurseries in promoting medicinal, indigenous timber and fruit trees and arrange publicity programme;
- ❑ Undertake effective measures to stop hill cutting;
- ❑ Take required measures to control black smoke of vehicles and sound pollution;
- ❑ Undertake effective measures to conserve endangered or extinct plant/animal species;
- ❑ Prevent and discourage the activities which can hamper the balance in terrestrial and water ecosystem;
- ❑ Inform all concerned regarding plantation and environmental development programme/project and provide necessary coordination and assistance for programme implementation;
- ❑ Provide guidance in selecting social forestry plantation sites and participants;
- ❑ Undertake other assignments given by the government
- ❑ Organize bi-monthly meeting and inform the concerned authority regarding programme.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1. Conceptual framework of the study

People-centered forestry is yet to be institutionalized in Bangladesh. The efforts are more visible to make forestry programme as a people-oriented ones in line with the mandate of Forest Policy 1994 and Forestry Sector Master Plan (1995-2015). A number of public, private, NGOs, corporate, development partners, education and research institutions etc are concerned in poverty alleviation as well as environmental management efforts. Each of these actors have their own mode of involvement and contributions; but have a common sentiment that a local level institutions with good governance in programme implementation can ensure environmental sustainability and alleviate poverty from the society.

As such the study precisely identifies local level social forestry institutions in the gauge of good governance principles. The key actors in these institutions and beneficiaries of the SF programme are interviewed. Special attention is given to review formation of SFIs at study area and their compliance with five principles of good governance viz. i) Legitimacy and voice, ii) Direction (strategic vision), iii) Performance, iv) Accountability and v) Fairness in equity and the rule of law.

The Study Framework is identified as follows:

Graham <i>et al.</i> 2003	UNDP 1997	Criteria
Legitimacy and Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Consensus orientation	Participation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provision of information; 2. listening to public opinion; 3. people's participation in decision-making; 4. development of people's capacity for participation. Consensus orientation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provisions to mediate differing interests to reach a broad consensus 2. The role of UEFDC/SFMC in consensus building with supporting policies and procedures
Direction	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic vision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building leadership among the stakeholders 2. Vision (broad and long-tem perspective) on good governance and human development 3. Understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities of the vision

Performance	<input type="checkbox"/> Responsiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness and efficiency	<p>Responsiveness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UEFDC/SFMC is responsive to its stakeholders 2. The process of response is developed 3. Limitations of the EFCC in responding to the stakeholders' needs <p>Effectiveness and efficiency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UEFDC/SFMC identifies their responsibilities and scope of works towards the nature and people. 2. The institute plays significant role in decision-making 3. Administrative and financial regulation is complementary to the FD management 4. Success stories
Accountability	<input type="checkbox"/> Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency	<p>Accountability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the establishment of joint ownership by the working units; 2. clarity of purpose; 3. efficient administration; 4. systems for monitoring and evaluation; 5. measures to deal with those who do not perform; 6. contingency plans. <p>Transparency</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. transparency of the working system structure; 2. transparency in the reward system; 3. transparency in the punishment system; 4. transparency in disclosure of the working system.
Fairness	<input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input type="checkbox"/> Rule of Law.	<p>Equity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholders are well-designated and inclusive 2. Stakes, i.e. dependency over forest resources, are adequately appreciated 3. Voice of the most marginalized are heard by the UEFDC/SFMC <p>Rule of Law</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the principle of division of power; 2. protection of rights and liberty; 3. commitment to the law; 4. performance of duties in accordance with the content of the laws; 5. freedom of decision-makers to perform their duties; 6. adherence to the principle "not guilty and no punishment without law"; and 7. performance of duties within the regulations.

3.2. Study site profile

Within the frame of Forestry Sector Project (FSP) social forestry is adopted throughout the wide geo-locations in Bangladesh from northern plains, central sal tracts to the south and eastern hill tracts. The study is purposively conducted, for closer proximity, in the sal forests of Dhaka Forest Division, which is composed of four forest ranges namely Sreepur, Rajendrapur, Kachighata and Kaliakoir (FD 2002).

Figure 3: Administrative structure of Dhaka Forest Division.

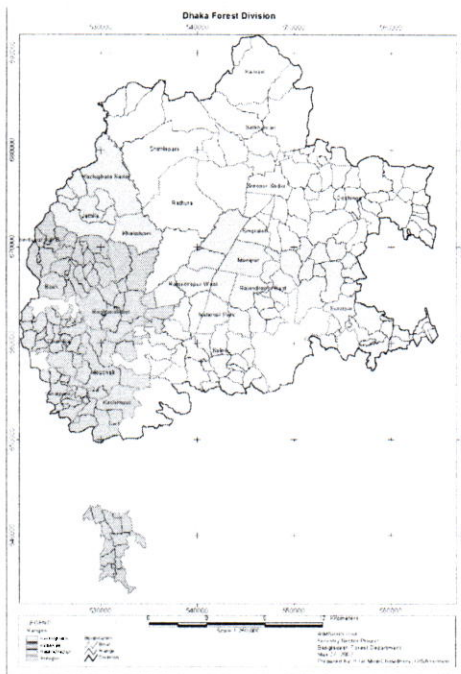
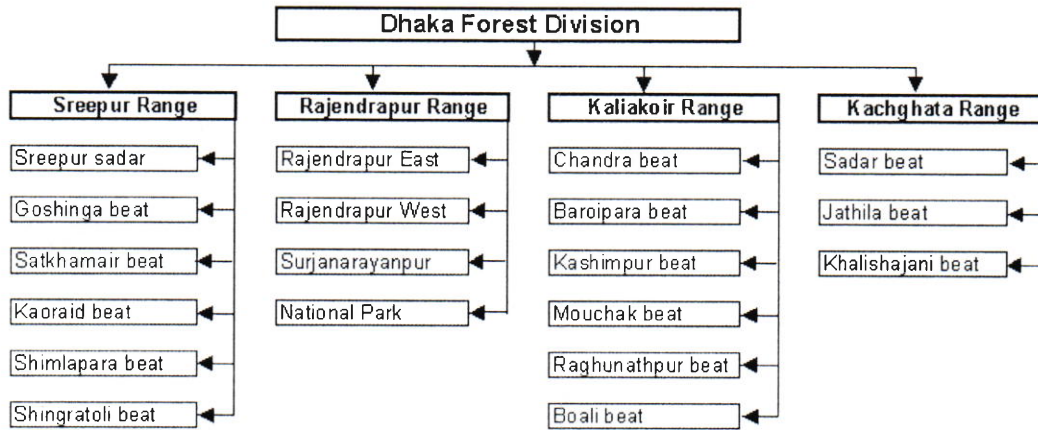


Figure 4: map of Dhaka Forest Division.

In almost all the ranges, social forestry programme, at local level, are similar in nature i.e. local poors are engaged in rejuvenating degraded sal forest lands, woodlot type of plantation, has completed the first rotation and the participants have already received their due share from final sale proceeds, similar local level institutions like Management Committee (MC), TFF committee and Upazilla Environment and Forest Committee (UEFDC) exists. At finite level, the study sites are selected from five forest beats from Sreepur range under Dhaka Forest Division.