THE IMPACT OF DECENTRALISATION ON DEVELOPMENT, WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE EXPERIENCE OF BANGLADESH
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BY

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List of Abbreviations

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statitics
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BNA	Basic Nees Approach
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Complex
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSB	Bangladesh Shilpa (Industrial) Bank
BSRS	Bangladesh Shilpa (Industrial) Rin (Loan) Sangstha (Organisation)
BUET	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
CSIR	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
DI	Department of Industry
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
FYP	Five Year Plan
FFYP	First Five Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICB	Investment Corporation of Bangladesh
IDPM	Institute for Development Policy and Management

IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFDA	International Foundation for Development Alternatives
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Programme
LDCs	Least Development Countries
LGEB	Local Government Engineering Bureau
MI	Ministry of Industry
MIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MURP	Master of Urban and Regional Planning
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NICAR	National Implementation Committee of Administrative Reorganisation/ Reform
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NIPA	National Institute of Public Administration
PEMEX	Petroleos Mexicanos
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
REGP	Rural Employment Generation Programme
RIDEP	Regional Rural Integrated Development plans (Tanzania)
RPATC	Regional Public Administration Training Complex
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SFYP	Second Five Year Plan
TFYP	Third Five Year Plan
UHC	Upazila Health Complex
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation

UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UNICEF	United Nations Children Emergency Funds
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDP	Village Defence Party
VGFP	Vulnerable Group Feeding Programme
WFP	World Food Programme

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My wife has withstood the difficult stages of this research. She deserves a lot of thanks.

There is a healthy custom that the author takes all responsibility for such errors that may appear in the respective work. I adhere to that custom.

ABSTRACT

Many Third World countries appear to have suffered in the past from over-centralised development efforts. More recently, many countries have attempted to reverse these trends through a policy of decentralisation. The hope has been that this would overcome institutional weaknesses, enable development to be administered at the local level, and bring greater popular participation. Democratic structures have been prescribed as means of ensuring greater involvement in development, particularly for the rural poor. They should also make local administration more accountable to the people.

Since 1982, Bangladesh has favoured decentralisation, devolving increased power and authority to a democratic local government unit, the "Upazila Administration". The policy has shifted power and authority in local matters, from the traditional district administration, to the lower levels.

In evaluating the impact of decentralisation on development, this thesis concludes that hitherto decentralisation in Bangladesh has not been altogether

effective. It has not been able for example to improve the delivery of basic needs to the rural people, particularly to those who live under extreme poverty. There are reasons to believe, however, that given the oppotunity to continue democratic local institutions over a longer period, and following the constitutional route, decentralisation will gradually bring about better results.

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of Thesis

Outline of Research

An Overview of Conclusion

Objectives of Thesis

Over the last three decades many developing countries have adopted a policy of decentralisation, in planning and administering national development. Initially in the 1940's and 1950's countries tended to follow a centralised policy in national development. Decentralisation was later attempted as an alternative approach, in the face of apparent failures in development policy.

From recent studies of decentralisation, it is possible to deduce that decentralisation has both positive and negative connotations. No Third World country has achieved complete success in decentralisation. The experience of decentralisation has been mixed, bringing successes as well as failures.[1]

Complete devolution of power to lower levels of the administrative structure has never been possible in Third World countries. For a variety of reasons, including the desire to retain administrative and political control over the entire geographical area of the nation, central governments, in their policies of decentralisation, have always kept a large degree of

power. National leaders and policymakers, strongly backed by central bureaucrats, tend to favour <u>partial</u> decentralisation of development administration.[2] At local community level, it is difficult for decentralisation policies to break through the traditional political and social structures which have historically benefitted the rich, the powerful and the influential.

Bangladesh is a typical example. Since 1982, local institutions at the lower levels of the administrative hierarchy, have been given greater power and authority in an attempt to involve the rural population, and to integrate administrative structures, in order to promote rural development. Rural peoples are enjoined to embrace the decision-making process, to bring about development. Rules have been set up to make the administration accountable to the people.

It is argued in this thesis, however, that long-standing weaknesses in local administrative and political structures have been a serious obstacle to achieving the development objective of satisfying the "basic needs" of the people, especially those of the rural poor. The major problem has been in <u>putting the last first</u> (Robert Chambers, 1983).[3] Reforms have failed to tackle this issue. The rural poor, as

Chambers argues, are in a <u>deprivation trap</u>. They are poor, powerless, isolated, physically weak and vulnerable to other difficulties. The diagram below illustrates how these problems are interrelated.
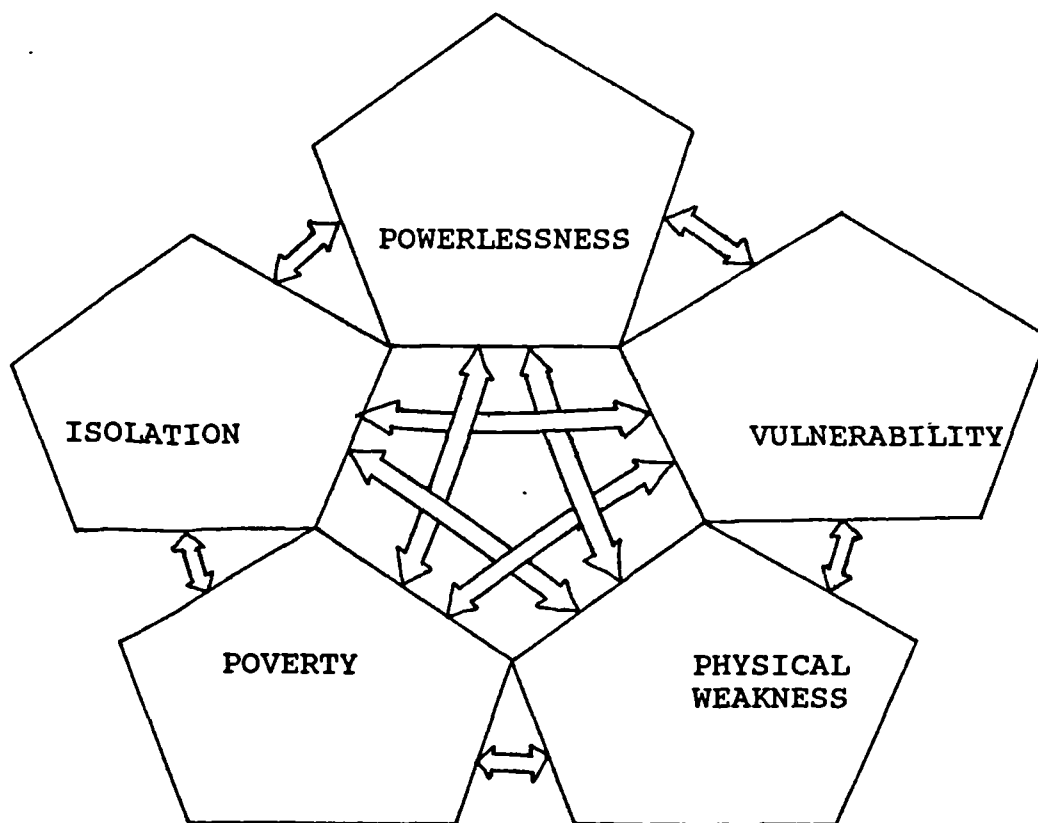
<u>The "Deprivation Trap"</u>[4]

<u>Poverty</u> is at the heart of all these problems. There are two broad explanations of rural poverty.[5] <u>Political Economists</u> see it as the consequence of a process which concentrates wealth and power.[6] <u>Physical Ecologists</u> interpret rural poverty in terms of what is

physical, visible, technical and statistical.[7] Food
shortages and environmental degradation, the population
explosion, and poor resource management appear as
pricipal causes in this latter explanation of rural
poverty. Chambers (1983) argues that the prescriptions
for rural development drawn up by both groups are
partial, because they concentrate on one, or at the
most a few, explanations. Professional reorientation is
necessary in re-thinking and researching rural poverty.
The focus must be on "putting the last first."

Poverty makes the rural poor physically weak
and lowers their economic productivity. They become
vulnerable to economic losses in their struggle for
survival. Power is held by traditional elites in the
rural areas. A breakthrough is difficult to achieve.
The powerlessness of the poor deprives them of the
opportunities of obtaining their legitimate share of
benefits from rural/local development efforts.
Isolation rules out the poor from contact with the
means of development, and the provision of basic needs.
Facilities for development, such as rural credit,
health care, and education, do not reach them in the
way they should, in a democratic society. Chambers
maintains that many forces centralise not only power,
but also the professionals themselves and development
resources in the urban cores. He maintains that the

centralisation tendency in development is encouraged by national, urban and class interests; by communications, markets and facilities; by distrust of the periphery and of those lower in the political and administrative hierarchies; by personal interests of convenience, the availability of services and promotion; and by the sheer weight of political and administrative influence. He argues that :

"New investments, buildings, industries, and even agricultural processing are sited centrally, and scale, capital-intensity, and high cost correspond with the size and importance of the core where they are placed. Rural goods, taxes and people are sucked inwards, drained from the rural periphery more strongly and consistently than the opposite flow of goods and services is pushed or drawn outwards. If the economy falters, or goods are scarce, it is the periphery and the poorer people at the periphery who go short and pay more."

In theory, decentralisation should help to overcome these problems of development. It should benefit the rural poor, ensuring their legitimate shares. For Chambers decentralisation is key to spatial reversals necessary for development. He argues that :

"With strong leadership or strong local demands, it is possible, though difficult, to force funds outwards, to give more local discretion, to decentralise agricultural processing and small-scale non-agricultural production, to disperse, in short, parts of the cores towards the peripheries."

I will show in this thesis, however, that in the experience of different countries, both the concept and the practice of decentralisation vary. Evaluation of decentralisation policy, therefore, is a complicated problem for the researcher.[8]

This thesis focuses on the impact of decentralisation on development, with special reference to the experience of Bangladesh since 1982. The specific objectives of thesis are :

i) to examine decentralisation and its impact on democratic institution-building at the local level. Can it bridge the gap between the administrative structures and the people?

ii) to examine the impact of decentralisation on the satisfaction of "basic needs" of the rural poor. Can decentralisation help deliver "basic needs" to the poor?

To achieve the specific objectives of thesis, a field survey at local (village) level has been carried out in Bangladesh, with the aim of exploring the benefits, if any, of decentralisation for the last, the rural poor. The fieldwork is set in the general context of the theory and practice of decentralisation, and the broader experience of Bangladesh.

Outline of Research

The thesis is presented in three parts. Part I consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 is devoted to a discussion of the scope and definitions of decentralisation, necessary when viewing decentralisation as a reseach problem. Chapter 2 looks at some theoretical aspects of the concept of decentralisation. Chapter 3 discusses certain pertinent examples of decentralisation policies as they have functioned in practice, in a number of developing countries. Chapter 4 discusses the criteria which can be developed for evaluating decentralisation policy.

Part II which looks at the broad experience of Bangladesh, and comprises four chapters. Chapter 5 provides a historical account of decentralisation in the Indian sub-continent before the Independence of Bangladesh in 1971. Chapter 6 discusses in detail the evolution of "Upazila Administration" as a decentralised local democratic institution in Bangladesh. It considers current changes in the administrative and political structures, at the Upazila level. Chapter 7 opens the debate about the relationship between political structures and economic issues.

Part III of thesis consists of two chapters. Chapter 8 presents and analyses the fieldwork results of the impact of decentralisation on institution-building process at local level. Chapter 9 evaluates the impact of decentralisation, and the "Upazila Administration", on the satisfaction of the "basic needs" of the rural people.

The concluding summary and remarks on principles, method and practice, are provided in chapter 10.

An Overview of Conclusion

Given the circumstances of the Third World, it is tempting to regard decentralisation as being of enormous help in creating democratic institutions at the local levels. In practice, however, decentralisation does not ensure participation, or bridge the huge gap between the administration, and the people. Current efforts at decentralisation in Bangladesh are no exception, at least in the short-run.

Given that experience in the Third World has shown that rural development tends to benefit the rich, the powerful, and the influential, it is unlikely that institutional decentralisation of itself will deliver "basic needs" to those who need them most. The current practice of decentralisation, involving "Upazila Administration" in Bangladesh, has not helped deliver "basic needs" to the rural poor, at least in the short-run. There are signs, however, that in the long-run, if continuous efforts are made to establish links with the rural poor within the local political-administrative structures, greater participation may result, with all that this promises for improved delivery of goods and services to the poor.

NOTES

1. For more information on the experience of decentralisation, see, Rondinelli, D.A., J.R. Nellis and G.S. Cheema : <u>Decentralisation in Developing Countries : A Review of Recent Experience</u>, World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 581 (Washington, D.C. : The World Bank, 1984).

2. Partial decentralisation is considered primarily to retain some control at the centre. Practically, recentralisation is sometimes done by the national government. For details, read, Apthorpe, R. and Conyers, D. : "Decentralisation, Recentralisation, and Popular Participation : Towards a Framework for Analysis" <u>Development and Peace</u> Vol. 3 (Budapest, 1982), p. 50.

3. For a detailed study of the forces leading to the deprivation of the rural poor (the last), see, Chambers, R. : <u>Rural Development : Putting the Last First</u> (London : Longman, 1983).

4. Chambers (1983), ibid. pp. 111-114.

5. For details, see Chambers, ibid. pp. 145-148.

6. Political economists form a broad group of political scientists, economists, public administrationists, sociologists, social anthropologists, human geographers.

7. Physical ecologists include environmentalists, soil scientists, physical geographers, experts on water resource management, and those who are involved in life science disciplines and health services.

8.   Difficulties in evaluation also arise due to
the diversified meaning and dimensions of
decentalisation.

Conyers maintains that there are three aspects
relating to discussions of decentralisation by
topic : (1) the disciplinary origin, (2) the
orientation and variety of authorship, and (3)
the meaning and forms of decentralisation. For
detail, see, Conyers, D. : "Decentralisation and
Development : A Review of the Literature", <u>Public
Administration and Development</u>, Vol. 4, (London :
John Wiley, 1984).

The relationship between central and local
governments in respect of decentralisation can be
analysed with reference to four dimensions : (1)
the organizational problem, (2) the economic
problem, (3) the political problem, and (4) the
ideological problem. For more information, read,
Saunders, P. : "Rethinking Local Politics", in
Boddy, M. and Fudge, C. (eds.) : <u>Local Socialism</u>,
(London : Macmillan, 1984).

PART I

<u>**DECENTRALISATION : THEORY, PRACTICE AND EVALUATION**</u>

Chapter 1

SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

1.1   Decentralisation : Definitions and Scope

1.2   A Working Definition of Decentralisation
for Purposes of the Present Research

1.1   Decentralisation : Definitions and Scope

It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the different forms   decentralisation may take, before undertaking a detailed discussion of the theoretical issues and practices of decentralisation. This chapter covers definitions appropriate to a study of decentralisation, and discusses the scope of the various concepts.

Definitions Appropriate to Decentralisation

(1)   Deconcentration is the handing over of some amount of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries or agencies (Rondinelli,Nellis and Cheema, 1984; Mawhood, 1983). It redistributes administrative power within the central government. Objectives of deconcentration are :

a) to shift the workload from centrally-located officials, to staff or offices outside of the national capital.

b) to give discretion to field agents to plan
and implement programmes and projects, or to adjust
central directives to local conditions, within
guidelines set by central ministries or agencies.

.

Centralisation concentrate experience in the
national capital, and contribute little to developing
local leadership and initiative (USAID, 1979).
Deconcentration is argued to give opposite results.
Decentralisation in the form of deconcentration has
been practised in many Third World countries in the
past decades.

(2) Delegation is the transfer of managerial
responsibilities for specifically defined functions, to
organizations that are outside the regular bureaucratic
structure and that are only indirectly controlled by
the central government (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema,
1984). Although the delegated agent is given broad
discretion to carry out certain specific functions, the
ultimate responsibility lies with the sovereign
authority at the centre. In developing countries,
responsibilities are delegated to different authorities
such as public corporations, regional development
agencies, special function authorities, semi-autonomous
project implementation units and a variety of
parastatal organizations. Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema

(1984) observe that the delegation of responsibilities to these organizations is usually viewed in three ways:

a) In some countries, delegation is looked upon as a way of removing important functions from inefficient government bureaucracies;

b) In some countries, delegation has been viewed as a way for the government to provide indirectly, goods and services which are not effectively provided by the civil service; and

c) In some countries delegation is used as a means of maintaining public control over highly profitable or valuable resources.

(3) <u>Privatization</u> means transfering functions from the government to voluntary organizations or private enterprises. The characteristic features of privatization in developing countries are :

a) Governments may transfer responsibility to organisations such as national industrial and trade associations, professional groups, religious organisations, political parties, or cooperatives; and

b) Governments may shift the responsibility for producing goods and supplying services that were previously offered by parastatal or public corporations, to privately owned or controlled enterprises.

An important aspect of privatization in developing countries is that governments may transfer responsibilities to organisations that <u>represent various interests in society</u> (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema, 1984). Ralston, Anderson and Colson (1981) observe that in developing countries, a number of organizations which include farmers' cooperatives, credit associations, mutual aid societies, village development organizations, trade unions or women's and youth clubs, do respond to privatisation programmes by the government. Decentralisation can be found in this context, implicit in the concept of debureaucratisation.[1]

(4) <u>Devolution</u> is the creation or strengthening, financially or legally, of subnational units of governments, the activities of which are substantially outside the direct control of the central government (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema, 1984). Sherwood argues that :

"... the strong association between devolution and economic and technological factors tends to validate the generally held position that diverse structures within a system can be tolerated only when the integrity of the system itself is not in question. That is, national unity seems to be a necessary precondition for devolution." (Sherwood, 1979, p. 75).

Degree of devolution, however, depends on the range of services to be decentralised, the kind of activities to be undertaken by local authority staff, and the political organization and life to be developed in the local authority area.[2]

1.2   A Working Definition of Decentralisation for
        purposes of the Present Research

        Given the diverse meaning and definitions of
decentralisation, it is necessary to have a working
definition of decentralisation for the present
research. The primary focus of decentralisation in this
study is devolution. The other forms of
decentralisation, especially privatization, have been
considered only to a limited extent. Local government
is a local institution which has at least some degree
of independent authority for development. This
corresponds to devolution, and the intention of this
research is to examine the possibility of local
government being given greater power and authority for
development administration.

        Tordoff (1987) argues that pressures to
decentralise stem from a variety of causes, including
the need to disperse the management of state functions
throughout a network of local and regional offices, and
to accommodate the different demands of different areas
within the territory of the state. Under devolution of
administration, local administrative units are
autonomous or independent and their legal status makes

them separate and distinct from the central government. Examples from the Third World, however, suggest that the central government frequently exercises indirect or supervisory control over these units of administration. Rondinelli and Cheema (1983) and Smith (1985) maintain that devolution of authority at local level, requires :

1) a clear and legally recognised geographical area to exercise an exclusive authority, to perform explicitly-granted or served functions;

2) a corporate or statutory authority to raise revenues and expenditures;

3) an organisation perceived by local citizens as providing services and satisfying their needs and aspirations over which they have some influence; and

4) a reciprocal and mutually benefiting relationship with the central government.[3]

The policy of devolution is important and quite pertinent, in that it empowers the local level administration with the capacity to interact reciprocally with other units of government in the political system of which they are a part. Rhodes (1981) maintains that the 'partnership model' of central-local relations of government entails that local authorities and central government are co-equals

under parliament.[4] Such inter-governmental relationship

apears to be prominent in the process of devolution of

power to local level administration.

NOTES

1. On bureaucratisation and decentralisation, see Alford, R.R. and Friedland, R. : <u>Power of Theory : Capitalism, the State and Democracy</u> (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1985).

2. Decentralisation being pursued in one local authority area and the form it takes may be considerably different from that being pursued in another. For more information, see, Fudge, C. : "Decentralisation : Socialism Goes Local", in Boddy, M. and Fudge, C. (eds.) : <u>Local Socialism</u>, (London : Macmillan, 1984).

3. For a devolution policy to work effectively, a cordial central-local relationship is the principal political objective.

4. For more information on the "Partnership Model", see, Rhodes, R.A.W. : <u>Control and Power in Central-Local Government Relations</u> (London : Gower, 1981).

Chapter 2

DECENTRALISATION : SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 A General Discussion of Theoretical Considerations Appropriate to Decentralisation

    2.1.1 Economic Interpretations

    2.1.2 Marxist Interpretations

    2.1.3 Intergovernmental Relations

2.2 Local Government and Liberal Democracy

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2.4 A Working Hypothesis for the Present Research

2.1 A General Discussion of Theoretical Considerations Appropriate to Decentralisation

Decentralisation is an alternative to centralised and bureaucratic forms of government.[1] Decentralised institutions, which broadly speaking practise development administration through democratic norms, are the central focus of this study.

In the context of political theory, it is assumed that decentralisation is of the political variety, and that decentralised government, for those concerned with the normative evaluation of forms of political authority, involves two fundamental conditions (Smith, 1985):

    i) that the territorial subdivisions of the state have a measure of autonomy; and

    ii) that those institutions are democratically constituted.

It does not follow that the first condition implies the second condition. A community might well be self-governing through hereditary kingship, feudal institutions or other forms of government. This was the

case with the forms of indirect rule practised by imperial powers in the 19th and 20th centuries, in their colonies in different continents.[2] In practice local government was defined in such a way as to make it incompatible with democratic processes. This was influenced by some proponents of local self- government who specifically rejected democracy as a way of governing local affairs. Notable were Von Gneist, the nineteenth century Prussian idealist and Toulmin Smith in England in the mid-nineteenth-century (Smith, 1985). Von Gneist believed in local government as a necessary condition of the ideal state, but rejected representative institutions and political equality in favour of the appointed members of the propertied classes. Toulmin Smith also rejected democracy in preference to an earlier tradition of parochial government by selected officials (Hill, 1974, p.26).

Modern views of local government, however, differ greatly from the earlier traditions. It is generally accepted that self-governing territories within the nation-state should be democratically organized, though there is clearly room for differences of opinion as to how far a given set of institutions and procedures fulfil democratic requirements. There are too, differences of opinion as to how necessary democratic, local, self-government is to the political

health of the modern democratic state. Mawhood (1984)

in studying the development impact of decentralisation

in the Third World countries observes that :

"... the national governments incorporate various
arrangements to secure local representations in the
decision-making process, but are never, or virtually
never, left to run the local administration by
themselves. A generalist civil servant plays broadly a
political role, representing the state and is
ultimately responsible for law and order in his area."

Smith (1985) offers an insight into

theoretical issues of decentralisation based on social

theorists' views of the modern state. He has identified

three major approaches to decentralisation :

i) Those which interpret local government in
terms of liberal democratic principles;

ii) Those approaches which offer "economic"
interpretations of local government; and

iii) Approaches which are based on Marxist
interpretations of the state at the
local level.

iv) Approach which stress intergovernmental
relations.

The analytical underpinnings of this thesis

fall largely in the first category, though it is

important to be aware of other theoretical bases, and indeed, the insights offered by them, can be reflected in the overall liberal democratic approach adopted in the thesis.

2.1.1 "Economic" Interpretations

The neoclassical economic theory of induced institutional innovation, emphasizes the fact that institutions can be _induced_ to increase the impetus for development.[3] Institutions are thus endogenous to the development process.

Decentralisation is said to improve the efficiency with which demands for locally provided services are expressed and public goods provided(Shepard,1975). Decentralisation is also said to reduce costs, increase output and more efficiently utilise human resources (Hart, 1972). If approached from the perspective of theories of public choice and collective goods, decentralisation becomes an important medium for increasing personal welfare. Since the public choice approach proceeds from the assumption that a diversity of individual preferences needs to be matched by a diversity of goods and services, it is assumed that the citizen is informed of the alternative

packages available. In a purely competitive market organization, the interests of the individuals and society would be attained by making use of profit and loss incentives based on the price mechanism, and by suitably selected means for income distribution (Lefeber,1975, p.286). In political systems, it has to be expressed through voting and other political activities - lobbying, petitions, public inquiries, opinion polls, demonstrations and so on.

The "economic" approach to decentralisation, has on the face of it a number of attractions. In particular, it may be seen as being strongly linked to the issue of economic development, in two important respects. First, there is the well-known argument put forward a number of years ago by the economist H. Myint, that LDCs are simply "too poor to put up with any preventable waste of resources". Any system which promises increased efficiency in this respect, and a reduction in bureaucratic wastages, will be seen as having a number of advantages in the present-day economic and political climate. Secondly, the emphasis in the economic approach, on providing people with information, improved choice, and hence a higher level of welfare, may be seen as offering a counterbalance to development approaches from the top downwards, which have not in the past always delivered what people want,

at the right time, place, and price. I have not in this thesis, however, looked in detail at the economic approach in terms of fieldwork, or from a broader philosophical viewpoint. This is because on closer examination, the economic issues discussed above are complex and difficult to evaluate. In particular in a poor Third World nation where the market system operates imperfectly, it is not easy to apply the economic approach. Some of the ideas implicit in the approach, however, may produce results, such as the need to improve local planning skills and the stress on participation and choice in development. These aspects are important for economic management at the local level, and can be incorporated within the liberal approach to local administration, which is the one used in this thesis. For example, some economists have used fiscal figures as a measure of the degree of centralisation/decentralisation. This approach was used by Oates in the early 1970's (Oates, 1972). Local and municipal expenditures have been measured in relation to central government expenditures to assess the degree of centralisation. The extent to which local government revenue is <u>independent</u> of central government transfers is also important in this respect. Simple measures of this type, associated with an economic approach, can be brought into the liberal democratic approach which is the underlying analytical framework of this thesis.

2.1.2   Marxist Interpretations

In recent times, Marxist writers have offered increasingly more complex explanations of the state at subnational levels. They have concentrated efforts on aspects such as capital reproduction, collective consumption and the interests of the working class in local government. In my opinion these interpretations are more related to industrialised and urban western societies. It is not easy to assess their relevance to peasant communities in the Third World.

The Marxist approach argues that democratic ideology requires majoritarian government at the local level. Theoretically this should place local power in the hands of the numerically predominant class, and local authorities should come under the control of political parties representing this class interest. In theory this should increase the responsiveness of the government to local problems, like the basic needs requirements of the poor, and issues of increased income and employment. These same issues can be addressed in the liberal democratic approach. In this thesis, too, Marxist influences are reflected in that we have tried to assess the degree to which powerful classes and elites may attempt to capture the benefits of

decentralisation. This is a line of thought which follows directly on from Marxist philosophy.

However, as Smith (1985, p.37) argues that the main _theoretical_ advances associated with the Marxist approach have resulted from the attempts to identify the specific roles of the local state, and to integrate these into a dialectic of intergovernmental relations. This is a large theoretical area and may be considered as a separate approach for purposes of the study of decentralisation. It is discussed briefly in the next section.

2.1.3 Intergovernmental Relations

The local state cannot be separated from the national economy. In the case of decentralisation policy the functional relations between central and local governments, therefore, become important. Rhodes maintains in his "Partnership Model" of intergovernmental relationships, that central and local governments are co-equals. He empasizes the role of joint actions in national development. Smith argues that the local state, acting as the political agent in the provision of roads, water supplies, energy, communications, physical planning and urban redevelopment, blurs the dual-state distinction. In practice, state functions take place in a central - local continuum. The degree of decentralisation varies in this continuum (Vieira, 1966; Smith, 1980). Decentralisation relates to functions and powers. Legislation and constitutional measures change the level of decentralisation in the state. Smith (p.40) maintains that this perspective on the state at the

local level, requires a new interpretation of intergovernmental relations, one that offers an explanation of centralisation in terms of class interests and conflicts and moves away from seeing different levels of government as cohesive forms of authority in conflict with each other, independently of the interests represented and in conflict at each level. Centralisation has been interpreted as a reflection within the state apparatus of the needs of monopoly capitalism.

In his later work (1986), Rhodes modified his earlier view that local governments are field agents or equal partners with central government, and suggested that governmental organizations are in fact interdependent. He maintains that there is a set of organizations at the national level serving the interests of local government and it is as important to understand the relationships between those organizations as it is to explore the role of any particular organization. Local government professions have close ties with their appropriate central service department, for example, education, health, and fire. These networks are the channels of communication. Changing relationships within the local government system are moulded by central intervention. The relationship between the central and local government

is not so much a variety of relationships, but rather relationships between a constitutionally superior and its subordinate, in which the centre has differential disposition and ability accross different services and activities, to set parameters which vary in their tightness and consequently varying in the discretion they permit (Rhodes,1986 quoting Page, E., 1983). When levels of local government are embedded in complex networks, the scope for unilateral influence upon the policy process is limited.

Dunleavy maintains the pluralist's view of national and local politics, that governmental institutions are responsive to the wishes of citizens through the mechanisms of representative government, such as electoral competition an extensive interest group process, and the safeguards built into the recruitment and socialisation of political leaders. Political power is concentrated in the hands of elected officials, who themselves operate in legally defined contexts (Dunleavy, 1980, p.116). He argues that the survival of local government is an unintended by-product of the development of liberal democracy, which retains the potential for furthering social change favourable to working class interests.

There are, however, methodological problems in measuring decentralisation within the state machinery with a high degree of precision (Fesler, 1965). The first is <u>linguistic</u> - the definition of centralisation and decentralisation tends to dichotomize our thinking. The second is a problem of <u>measurement</u> and the inherent weakness of indices of decentralisation. The third is the problem of <u>differentiating</u> in terms of decentralisation between the regions of a single country. An obvious test of decentralisation relates to the functions and powers of subordinate governments. Delegation of authority, revenue-raising power, economic dependency, the size of the area under jurisdiction, and party politics may form some interesting areas in which to consider the extent of decentralisation in a state. In this context, grants dependency may not always be contradictory to decentralisation.

This thesis has not aimed for an indepth study of the issue of intergovernmental relations. Emphasis has been placed in this research, on the study of a particular level of local government which has already been given, in theory, substantial power and authority. The main objective of the thesis was to see whether in practice the local administration which emerged has helped to build participatory institutions, to the

benefit of the disadvantaged people in the rural areas. The liberal democratic approach was felt to be both a more appropriate theoretical basis, and an approach in which the empirical demands were more manageable. It was not possible to carry out the type of detailed investigation of the workings of the central and local administrations, required for a full study of intergovernmental relations. Nevertheless the intergovernment approach is one which has merits, and could be incorporated in a future wider programme of research on decentralisation.

2.2   Local Government and Liberal Democracy

For policymakers, perhaps the most straightforward and democratic manner of making public policy is to follow public opinion. Edward and Sharkansky argued that the policymakers:

"would base their decisions on the preferences of the majority. This would require that the public actually have policy preferences and that its preferences be discernible to policymakers; it would also require that policymakers be willing to follow public opinion and that the views held by the public not be moulded by policymakers" (Edward & Sharkansky, 1978, p.17).

Decentralisation works only if individual private and institutional decision-makers can be induced to behave voluntarily in a way that is consistent with social welfare criteria (Lefeber,1975). In other words, conditions must be created to make it desirable for participants to act in the social interest. The aims of participatory organizational democracy are to enlarge the roles that individuals can play and extend the degree of autonomy that they can enjoy (Smith, 1988, p.192). Greater control over and responsibility for one's work is assumed to enhance satisfaction and develop the capacities of the individual. Haynes (1987, p.13) argues that accountability is associated with democratic control.[4] Control by locally elected representatives is central

to the concept of local self-government. Local self-government in that sense, implies some degree of local autonomy and local responsibility.

There are two major categories of opinion in respect of local government through a liberal democratic system - (a) that which claims local government is good for national democracy, and (b) that which emphasizes the benefits of local democracy to the economic and socio-political well-being of the people within the local government area. These categories are interrelated. Some see local government and local democracy as the appropriate means of administration under a democratic national government. Indeed those who believe in stronger local government regard it as a necessary condition for a healthy national democracy. These views date back to the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s, and are reflected in present trends and practices, despite mixed results in practice.

2.2.1   Training for Political Leadership

The traditional arguments for local government can be summarised as i) local knowledge for local affairs ii) ready contacts between representatives, administrators and people iii) the development of a training ground for representatives and electors alike in the realities of democratic government (Maddick, 1963, p.58). Maddick observes that for the benefits of development to accrue to a large number of people, the real requirement is "to develop citizenship in economic and administrative sub-states as a condition of ensuring that the conduct of the states within the state will work approximately in public interest."[5] Smith (1985, pp.20-23) sees that local elections and the continuing process of local politics between elections, as generating political information. Local government provides a valuable training ground for national legislators. Democratic decentralisation of national administration thus contribute to 'the breeding of better societies' and the establishment of social harmony, community spirit and political stability.

2.2.2   Citizen Participation and Political Equality

Local democracy contributes to political equality and greater participation, which means greater political equality. Participation at the local level secures a greater measure of political equality than politics at the national level. Local government is said to reflect and be a continuation of a prior and more natural form of democracy than national democracy.

Studies of local government, however, suggest that decentralisation too often stresses its virtues as a training ground in democracy and representative government, and too rarely indicate how privilege and exploitation can be maintained and strengthened through local politics. Decentralisation is too readily transformed into a value in its own right by romantic idealization.[6]

2.2.3   Democratic Accountability

There is some truth in the proposition that local democracy provides for greater accountability and control than field administration, public corporations or appointed agencies. The processes involved in local

government make accountability more meaningful because of the elective element linking bureaucrat and citizen. The political activities inherent in local government - elections, rule making, political pressure, publicity and public debate close the gap between the citizen and the administration and provide opportunities for grievances to be aired and wrongs remedied.

2.2.4   Government Responsiveness to Local Demands

Local government is responsive to what people demand. In this sense, it is an efficient way of managing local affairs and providing local services. Local opinion acts "more forcibly" on local administrators when their authority depends on the will of the local public.

Local knowledge and information are seen as prerequisite of responsiveness and flexibility in the determination of local priorities. Central government is generally based on functional specialization and departmentalism. Sectorally based development is often followed, which lacks inter-departmental or inter-sectoral functional coordination. In contrast to this, the mixture of services and functions required at local or sub-state levels varies from community to community.

The democratic practice of decentralisation accelerates a two-way flow of information between the local government and the local people, and thus favours the local development process.

2.3   Some Comments on the Applicability of Liberal Democracy in Third World

In the context of Third World nations the argument is that democracy, as an alternative to bureaucracy, will provide better results. International bodies have stressed the need for greater democratic reforms in the Third World to make public administrators directly accountable to the people. Democratic decentralisation is viewed as an alternative to bureaucracy. It is sought as a remedy for the congested, ponderous and inflexible decision-making characteristics of large, centralised bureaucracies in the states of the Third World (Smith, 1988, p. 214).

This leads on to questions about the forms of democracy and democratic institutions to be adopted at national and local levels. Direct democracy in practice, is to be found virtually nowhere in the Third World at present, whereas representative democracy is well-accepted in western developed nations.[7] The norm of democratic practice is to rely on majoritarian consent but the practice of democracy in poor Third World nations, varies greatly, according to the character of the national leaders. Democracy, it is argued, does not always correspond with the concept of

the nation state. There are differences of opinion as to democratic consent translates into the actions of the public administrators and representatives.[8]

2.4   A Working Hypothesis for the Present Research

Decentralisation cannot work in isolation. It performs in the continuum of centralisation - decentralisation. In this continuum, the degree of decentralisation varies depending on different factors.[9] Drawing up a working hypothesis on decentralisation is not easy, because of the diversification which charaterises the concept and practice of decentralisation in development administration.

The real world situation, however, suggests that decentralisation works better in managing the local problems, because of the closeness of the government to the people. The benefits of decentralisation, however, may not be perceptible in a short period. Moreover the success of decentralisation is likely to depend more on the political will of the national government, than on the decentralised institution itself. The hypothesis which informs the work of this thesis is that given political will in the national government, decentralisation will help create more democratic/participatory local institutions. The benefits of such local institutions, however, may well be difficult to attain in the short run.

NOTES

1. For details on the concept of decentralisation a
    and its relationship with centralisation and
    bureaucracy, see Landau, M. & Eagle, E. : <u>On the
    Concept of Decentralisation</u> (Beverly : University
    of California, 1981). Also, see Fesler, J.W. :
    Approaches   to   the   Understanding   of
    Decentralisation", <u>Journal of Politics</u>, Vol. 27,
    1965.

2. For more information, see   Smith, B.C. :
    <u>Decentralisation : the Theoretical Dimension of
    the State</u> (London : George Allen & Unwin, 1985).

3. On   the   theory   of   induced   institutional
    innovation, see Grabowski, R : "The Theory of
    Induced Institutional Innovation : A Critique",
    <u>World Development</u>, Vol. 16   No. 3 (Oxford :
    Pergamon Press, 1988) p. 393.

4. See Haynes, R.J. : <u>Organisation Theory and Local
    Government</u> (London : George Allen & Unwin, 1987).

5. See Maddick, H. : <u>Democracy, Decentralisation and
    Development</u> (Bombay : Asia Publishing House,
    1963).

6. See Fesler (1965), op cit.

7. See Chandler, R.C. and Plano, J.C. : <u>The Public
    Administration Dictionary</u> (Oxford : ABC-CLIO,
    1988)

8. On democratic consent and democratic obligation,
    see McCormick, P.J. : <u>Social Contract and
    Political Obligation : A Critique and Reaprisal</u>
    (London : Garland Publishing Inc., 1987).

9. Vieira's thesis concluded that the degree of
    decentralisation varies among different group of
    countries. For details, see Vieira, P. : <u>Toward a
    Theory of Decentralisation : A Comparative View
    of Forty Five Countries</u>, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis
    (Los Angeles : University of Southern California,
    1967).

Chapter 3

DECENTRALISATION IN PRACTICE

3.1   Introduction

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3.3   Comments on Decentralisation in Practice

3.1   Introduction

Empirical studies of developing nations suggest that the experience of decentralisation in the Third World is diverse. In the last two decades, many Third World countries have adopted different forms of decentralisation :- deconcentration, delegation, privatisation and devolution.

Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema (1984) found that:

"Some governments have used all four types, simultaneously or at different times. Some began with one approach and later shifted to another after assesing initial results. Other governments have used various combinations of the four. A number of countries have devolved development management responsibilities to local governments but have maintained strong indirect controls over them. Privatization has usually evolved from situations in which private sector firms began offering goods and services that government provided poorly, or not at all, or only in some parts of the country, rather than from deliberate efforts by governments to divest themselves of public functions."

Relatively few developing nations, in practice, have regarded a decentralised administration as a way of achieving national development goals.   Few prefer democratic local institutions. Glynn Cochrane (1983) argues that most developing countries have instead highly centralised governments, that   concentrate on their role in development, in isolation from local government.[1]

Decentralisation became a policy objective particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, as governments in LDCs sought to create more socially equitable patterns of economic growth, to meet the basic needs of the poor (Rondinelli 1983, World Bank 1983). The international donor agencies have also argued that the ability of rural communities to influence the priorities of public agencies and to obtain efficient services, depends on effective local organisation.[2] The former World Bank President Robert S. McNamara[3] noted in this context that:

"If governments are serious about distributing the benefits of development more equitably, then experience shows that there is a greater chance of success if institutions provide for popular participation, local leadership and decentralisation of authority."

But the degree to which power and responsibility for planning and administering development activities has in practice been transferred from central government agencies to other organisations, is limited. This chapter examines briefly some Third World experiences of decentralisation policies.

3.2   Some Third World Experiences of Decentralisation Policies

3.2.1   East and North African Experiences

In East Africa, decentralistion policies were promulgated widely during the 1970s, most notably in Kenya, Tanzania and Sudan. Nevertheless the development planning and administrative system of these countries remains in practice highly centralised (Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema, 1984). Rondinelli (1983) claims that the success of decentralisation in East Africa depends on finding ways of increasing local resources, through intergovernmental transfers, or by assisting communities at the local level to raise the revenues needed to carry out their new responsibilities.

The East African case also illustrates the importance of creating environmental conditions conducive to decentralised governance. Improvements in the physical infrastructure are essential for effective participation in the developmental process through decentralised institutions.

During the 1970s, there was also a growing
realization in <u>North African</u> countries that
centralised policies had not brought any improvement
in output or distribution, and had not contributed to
administrative efficiency (Nellis, 1983, p.140). By the
end of the 1970s, the international aid agencies, North
African intellectuals, opposition politicians, and
middle - and low - level field bureaucrats in Morocco,
Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, had coalesced informally
into an increasingly vocal lobby for the presumed
benefits of decentralisation. However, this lobby has
nowhere succeeded in overcoming the forces supporting
centralised rule.

Nellis (1983) maintains that it would be unwise
to discount entirely the prospects for
decentralisation. Empirical study by Rondinelli, Nellis
and Cheema (1984, p.34) shows in the case of Algeria,
Libya and Tunisia that :

"... the performance and impact of decentralised
administrative units have been positive in some cases,
but have not always matched the goals of
decentralisation policies. Control over financial
resources continues to be centralised; local and
regional organizations continue to have severe
shortages of qualified personnel, and they lack the
capacity to carry out the responsibilities transferred
to them."

Their empirical study, however, shows that
despite the slowness with which it has come about,

decentralisation has increased the access of local communities to centrally controlled resources in Morocco.

Other countries have also attempted decentralisation in national development administration. In Ghana, neither central nor regional bureaucrats have given decentralisation full political support : those at the centre evidently are reluctant to accept any diminution in their decision making powers, while regional officials show signs of wanting to retain control over their own field officers (Tordoff, 1980 p.387).

Long delays in setting up local government may be the result of a lack of political commitment to new structures. Cautiousness in implementation, staff shortages, the uncertainty of benefits, and retention of central control over finances are found in many countries in Africa. In Nigeria, local governments have been able to undertake a large number of projects. Inadequate release of allocated funds, however, has ultimately been a major problem. Often the funds that are allocated to local governments are not all distributed. And constant delays in delivering those funds force local governments to slow down construction or to cancel some projects entirely (Idode,1980).

3.2.2. Tanzania's Experience of Regionalism

Since 1967, Tanzania has attempted a complete break with the institutional legacies it inherited at Independence. Most important in this context has been the attempt to create an extensive, disciplined, and ideologically committed political party from the apex of the political system down to the grass roots, for the purpose of mobilising the country's population to achieve socialist development, thus increasing their participation in the governance of their society.[4] This has resulted in the sub-ordination of all other institutions, especially the administrative agencies of the Tanzanian government, to the authority of the party; and the public takeover and constriction of the private sector of the economy (Barkan,1984, pp. 10-13). The country has sought to reduce systematically and eventually to eliminate, inequalities between individuals of different socio-economic status or class, and between the residents of those rural areas that are already moderately developed and integrated into the national economic system, and resident of those that are not, in order to achieve a classless and less exploitative society.

Tanzania is divided into 20 administrative Regions, of which 19 are rural and only one, Dar es Salam, is urban. A Region is divided into Districts, which are further divided into Divisions and Wards. The Ward is the smallest administrative unit, usually comprising of 3-5 villages. Dodoma is the capital, but Dar es Salaam is the chief commercial and industrial centre of the country.

In 1972, an administrative reorganization took place and under this policy, the decentralisation of administration created a strong impetus to regional and rural development planning in Tanzania. The new administrative changes aimed at giving the local people more power in decision-making in matters affecting their welfare.[5] Planning offices were established both in the regions and districts. This entailed posting senior officers in the regions and districts to speed up decision-making and improve local representation.

In the mid-seventies, however, it became clear that the decision-making power in the local representative bodies was severely limited. There was too much centralisation of power in the regions, as opposed to the districts. As a result, in 1982, an Act of Parliament was passed reintroducing local government institutions. These had greater decision-making power

at the local level, including that of revenue collection. In the same year, another Act was passed, reintroducing cooperative unions. It has been evident that the role of cooperative unions in popular participatory decision-making, has been very significant indeed.

As a result of decentralisation policy, regional rural integrated development plans (RIDEP) have become a common annual feature of rural development in Tanzania. The Prime Minister's office (PMO) is the coordinating and supervising office of all rural development activities in the regions. The RIDEP strategy was designed to overcome the tendency to treat regional development as secondary to centrally-initiated and managed development. In the past, Ministries had a clear advantage over the regions, in securing funds from donor agencies and countries for regional projects. Donor agencies and countries prefered working with national institutions, rather than with regional authorities. Regional projects, which were usually small, had little appeal for them. With the RIDEP policy, however, PMO hoped that donors would be interested in financing development projects which were identified and implemented by the regional authorities in collaboration with the rural people. The RIDEP strategy was designed to enable regions to secure

funds for large-scale, multisectoral development projects which would bring about the improvement of the quality of life of the rural people.

At the time of the launching of the decentralisation programmes, the government committed itself to the recommendation of the management consultants, McKinsey Inc., that Regions should be allocated 40 percent of the national development budget.[6] But in practice that target was never achieved. The highest expenditure ever attained by the Regions was 17.2 percent in 1975/76. Although some commentators on Tanzanian development blame the national leadership's lack of commitment to the original Mckinsey recommendation, or even their commitment to rural development for this poor performance, one plausible explanation is that the original target was too high (Ngasongwa, 1988). It can be argued that this target was arrived at somewhat arbitrarily, since there were no useful data on which to gauge past expenditure trends in the Regions.

3.2.3.   <u>Development from the Middle : The Unhappy</u>
<u>Experience of Papua New Guinea</u>

Papua New Guinea inherited at Independence, a strong centralised bureaucracy. The designation 'bureaucratic polity' was apt (Tordoff, 1987). After Independence in 1975, the national government adopted some objectives which emphasized increased self-reliance, greater inter-regional and inter-personal equality, and a decentralisation policy in government decision-making.

Between 1976 and 1978, Papua New Guinea devolved to provincial governments full legislative and management responsibilities, for a wide range of local functions, and considerable responsibility for others that were concurrent local-national functions. (Rondinelli and Nellis,1986, p.8). In each province an elected assembly and executive council, headed by a Premier, were given control over a wide range of matters. Under the new system, the provincial governments could levy and collect taxes. In addition, they received refunded revenues from licenses, fees and royalties collected by the national government in the provinces, and a 'derivative grant' equivalent to 1.25 percent of the value of export goods produced in the

province. Moreover, provincial governments received an annual unconditional grant from the national government to offset administration costs of functions devolved to them (unconditional grants are mainly used to construct and maintain public works). Conditional grants were also available for the functions which were previously the jurisdiction of the national government, such as the general hospitals, now managed by the provincial governments. Since 1979, sectoral programmes in health and education have been added to provincial responsibilities.

Devolution in Papua New Guinea indicates that the introduction of provincial government has increased participation in government and provided a much greater opportunity for people to participate in decision-making in their own areas (Conyers,1981, p.223). The policy of devolution created 19 provincial governments, which improved the planning, management and coordination capacity of provincial administrators and also attracted skilled professionals to return to work in their provinces.

Devolution has been, however, less successful in ameliorating provincial inequalities and disparities in levels of development (Hinchliffe, 1980). Decentralisation has weakened the central government's

ability to stimulate the country's economic growth. The provinces lack local sources of revenue, and per capita administrative costs are high because of the need to create new public services. Tordoff (1987) found that there had been financial mismanagement in the provinces. For these reasons provincial governments have been suspended on a number of occasions. Tordoff maintains that the present arrangements are unsatisfactory, both in monitoring provincial performance, and in helping provinces to improve their financial management capacity, the planning and preparation of projects, and general administration. National agencies have often failed to consult provincial governments about projects to be undertaken in the provinces. Audit reports have been delayed because of staff shortages in the Auditor General's department, and provincial annual reports have not been analysed by the Department of Provincial Affairs at the centre.

3.2.4. Devolution in Latin America

Experts suggest that decentralisation of government administration in Latin America is a complex and multifaceted issue. Harris (1983) indicates that the proliferation of public corporations, and quasi-public institutes in Latin America have in practice expanded the power and control of the national government, at the expense of local governments. He argues that the concentration of decision-making within central government ministries, often referred to as overcentralisation, is a fundamental characteristics of Latin American governments. The study by Harris indicates that contradictory forces work within the political system, particularly in the bureaucracies, and strong centralising tendencies coexist with certain forms of bureaucratic decentralisation.

The tendency of national bureaucrats in developing countries is to retain power in their own hands. They prefer central decision-making. Subnational and local units of administration either become powerless, or have only partial authority in governmental decision-making. In the case of Latin America, an inflexible bureaucratic structure has required the creation of more flexible forms of

organization and management, modelled quite often on those of the private sector, particularly for government activities that parallel or substitute for private enterprise.

In recent time, nearly all larger countries in Latin America, and in particular Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela, have emphasized regional deconcentration of traditional ministries and autonomous administrative entities. Venezuela's regionalization reforms are the most ambitious. They seek to establish a new level of government that can plan and coordinate the activities of all government units within each region. Argentina offers an interesting example of the devolution of functions to provincial governments. It has transferred the responsibilities of public health, education, public utilities and public works to the provincial governments. It is also in the process of transferring federal personnel, facilities and equipments to the provinces. Bolivia has adopted the policy of delegation in its development administration (Rondinelli & Nellis, 1986, p.8).

Whatever form of decentralisation policy is adopted, Harris (1983) maintains that because of the dominant centralising tendency and premature bureaucratization of the Latin American political

systems, the prospects in general are not very favourable for successful implementation. It is expected, however, that the influence of the international agencies, and recent efforts to promote integrated rural development, may pave the way for greater political and administrative decentralisation. There is also the possibility of more rapid transition to democratic forms of governance.

In Latin America, Mexico probably has the largest number of autonomous government agencies. The Mexican federal government has created an expanding array of public corporations, mixed enterprises with both state and private capital, marketing boards, credit and loan institutions, research organizations, state holding companies, social service agencies, educational institutions, and regional development commissions. These agencies widely vary in size. The federal government groups them into two categories : decentralised organizations and parastatal enterprises. There are over 100 decentralised organizations including the giant state petroleum corporation, Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX) and over 400 parastatal enterprises which include banks, hotels, industries, airlines, mines, insurance companies, construction companies, the national telephone company, newspapers, television channels, and so on (Harris, 1983). The

parastatal enterprises operate under commercial law
much like private corporations, except that they have
government representatives on their governing boards.
The decentralised organizations have their own legal
personality, property, funds and special governing
boards, but they fall under special provisions of
administrative law. However, current administrative
reforms in Mexico are attempting to consolidate and
reduce the number of autonomous agencies and to place
them under the supervision of a federal ministry.

3.2.5. Decentralisation as Bureaucratic Instruments : the Experience of Asia

In most Asian countries, local governments still function as bureaucratic instruments of the central government, rather than as generators of alternative values, preferences, and aspirations. Local organizations cannot easily nurture political or administrative goals. They act merely to extend centrally established priorities and controls. Friedman (1983) argues that local leaders are seen by central government officials as communicators and solicitors of support for national policies, rather than as channels through which the conditions and needs of local communities are made known to central planners and policy makers, or as mobilizers of local resources for promoting development from the 'bottom up'.

Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema (1984) observe that despite the apparent concern for decentralisation in South and South-East Asia, the results have often led to greater dependence of local administrative units on the centre. They maintain that innovative decentralisation programmes have been centrally created, and not linked to established local organizations and sources of political and financial

support.   Authority is commonly delegated to local
organizations, but they are not given the resources to
perform their new functions.

In Malaysia, nearly all extension, irrigation,
health, education, and land development activities and
some credit processing and marketing functions are
provided in rural areas through the staff of central
and state departments at district level. Similar
functions are performed by field officers of central
ministries or by subnational units of the central
administration in the Phillipines, Sri Lanka and
Turkey. Provincial administrators in Indonesia help
develop subnational programmes for agriculture, public
works,   and   rural   finance;   formulate   district
development plans; play a major role in setting local
tax rates; and provide irrigation and extension
services. In Thailand, the Rural Employment Generation
Programme (REGP) was found to be very successful in the
province of Lampang, but not as successful elsewhere
(Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema, 1984, p.36).

In Pakistan, the Integrated Rural Development
Programme (IRDP) in Manwala Markaz and Harrappa Markaz
was found to be very successful (Rondinelli, Nellis and
Cheema, 1984). In both areas, the Markaz Councils were
active and they formulated and carried out local

development projects. The number of Markaz increased over the years. The provincial governments provided much of the financing for local projects, but in each Markaz the people themselves made a contributions. However, local representatives of the national ministries lacked the capacity to coordinate their agencies' activities and received little encouragement from their national headquarters to do so. Khan (1982) maintains that much of the success of the IRDP programme was attributable to the project managers' extraordinary personal ability to get local leaders to work together on self-help projects for which guidelines were clear and funds were readily available.

3.3 Comments on Decentralisation in Practice

While decentralisation is often justified as a way of effectively managing national economic development, Third World nations rarely embark on a course of decentralisation primarily for economic reasons. Rondinelli, Nellis and Cheema (1984) observe that decentralisation is ultimately an ideological principle, associated with objectives of self-reliance, democratic decision-making, popular participation in government activities and accountability of public officials to citizens. As such it is pursued as a desirable political objective in itself.

Although a policy of decentralisation aims to solve problems at both national and local levels, there are difficulties in designing and implementing such a policy. Empirical studies indicate that even where programmes have been relatively successful, not all of the anticipated benefits have accrued either to central or to local administrative units. Difficulties originate in national political objectives, and recurrent political conditions. The policy of decentralisation is ultimately a reflection of country's political process.

The constraints of decentralisation in developing countries may also be viewed in the light of complexities in the process of implementing decentralisation policies, such as:

- the perspective from which a particular programme or process is viewed (political objectives often lead to economic failure);

- the relationship between the formulation of policies or plans, and their implementation;

- the characteristics of the substantive area in question (the geographical area of a decentralised administrative unit, may not form a rational basis for successful operation of decentralised functions);

- the nature of the functions which may or may not be decentralised; and

- the structure of the institutions to be considered for decentralised functions.

There are other complexities, such as the relationships between centralisation, decentralisation and political power, and their implications for popular participation. Apthorpe and Conyers (1982) argue that:

".. the strong tend to centralise in their own hands as much power as they can; they then delegate to the weak only as much power as they must. In this perspective, centralisation and power of the key agent are assumed to coincide, and concentration of information flow and decision-making responsibilities means both power and centralisation."

They further maintain that :

".. although power can affect central control, the reverse holds to a much lesser extent. Thus centralisation does not necessarily enhance or even maintain the key agents in power. Increased centralisation will not necessarily help the decision-makers to get more."

The implementation of a successful policy requires the interaction and coordination of a large number of public organisations at different levels of government, complementary actions by nongovernment organisations and groups of intended beneficiaries (Rondinelli and Cheema, 1983 p.27). The effectiveness in the implementation of decentralisation policies, depends, they maintain on :

- the clarity and consistency of policy objectives, and the degree to which they give implementing agencies clear direction to pursue activities that will lead to their achievement;

- the appropriate allocation of functions among agencies, based on their capacities and resources;

- the degree to which planning, budgeting, and implementation procedures are standardised and thereby minimise conflicting interpretations that make programmes and policies difficult to coordinate;

- the accuracy, consistency, and quality of interorganisational communications that enable organisations involved in policy implementation to understand their roles and tasks and to complement the activities of others; and

- the effectiveness of linkages among decentralised administrative units that ensure interaction among organisations and allow coordination of activities.

These conditions indicate that the successful implementation of a decentralisation programme, depends on the resolution of many conflicting issues between the central and local governments. The impact of decentralisation policy on development is weakened where there is no strong national policy on decentralisation, supported by political will and commitment.

Despite its problems, the policy of decentralisation has been in popular demand, both in developed and developing nations. Rondinelli and Cheema (1983, p.14) argue that :

".. the growing interest in decentralised planning and administration is attributable not only to the disillusionment with the results of central planning and the shift of emphasis to growth-with-equity policies, but also to the realisation that development is a complex and uncertain process that cannot be easily planned and controlled from the centre."

Smith (1985 p.2) argues in his work that the need for some form of decentralisation appears to be universal, and that even the smallest states have some kind of local government with some degree of autonomy. As the pressures for larger organisational units, national minimum standards and central planning capabilities mount, so the concern for local autonomy grows (Kuroda, 1975). We can presume that local needs often outstretch local resources in both developed and

developing societies, and that these needs are best met through strengthening functional operation by local institutions.

The attraction of decentralisation is not merely that it is opposite to centralisation and thus makes it possible to overcome the local problems. Rather it is due to a the fact that decentralisation has a positive side, and its values seem to have a wide range of appeal, regardless of ideology and political theory. It is associated with a wide range of economic, social and political objectives in both developed and developing societies. This includes the views of modern institutionalists and Marxist intellectuals who emphasize the role of state in administering development through structural and procedural changes in government administration.

The national governments in the Third World are often accused of being psychologically and physically remote from their people. A policy of decentralisation it is claimed can bridge this gap and strengthen national integration, political skills and accountability. It can promote liberty, equality and welfare (Hill, 1974), and therefore can be elevated to the role of guardian of basic human values (Van Putten, 1971).

Thus the popularity of a policy of decentralisation among the national leaders in developing countries, is influenced both by political and non-political factors. In most cases, however, the outcome of decentralisation policies has not been very satisfactory. As Nellis (1983) observes, decentralisation will continue to be seen as an attractive goal, since it is an alternative sufficiently vast and vague to appeal to everybody who is dissatisfied with present events.

NOTES

1. See Cochrane, G. : <u>Policies for Strengthening Local Government Policies in Developing Countries</u>, World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 582 (Washington D.C. : The World Bank, 1983).

2. See USAID : <u>Managing Decentralisation</u>, Project Paper (Washington D.C. : USAID, 1979).

3. See Rondinelli, D.A. : "Decentralisation of Development Administration in East Africa" in Cheema, G.S. and Rondinelli, D.A. (eds.) : <u>Decentralisation and Development</u> (Beverly Hills : SAGE, 1983).

4. For details, See Barkan, J.D. (ed.) : <u>Politics and Public Policy in Kenya and Tanzania</u> (New York : Praeger, 1984).

5. See Lundqvist, J. : "Tanzania : Socialist Ideology, Bureaucratic Reality and Development from Below" in Stohr, W.B. and Taylor, D.R.F. (eds.) : <u>Development from Above or Below</u>? (London : John Wiley, 1981).

6. See Thiele, G. : "The State and Rural Development in Tanzania : The Village Administration as a Political Field" in <u>The Journal of Development Studies</u>, Vol. 22 No. 3, 1986.

Chapter 4

EVALUATION OF DECENTRALISATION POLICIES

4.1   Criteria for Evaluating Decentralisation Policies

   4.1.1   Achievement of Political Objectives

   4.1.2   Administrative Effectiveness

   4.1.3   Efficiency of Economic Management

   4.1.4   Government Responsiveness to Local Needs
           and Demands

4.2   Methodology Adopted in This Research to Evaluate
       the   Impact   of   the   Current   Practices   of
       Decentralisation Policy in Bangladesh

4.1   Criteria for Evaluating Decentralisation Policies

Evaluation of decentralisation is not an easy task. There may be wide variations in evaluation criteria, and in the methodology of evaluation.[1] Vieira has claimed that small scale community-based case studies of specific countries, provide the best way of evaluating the impact of decentralisation. This thesis aims in this direction, with the field work which can be found in Part III.

Nevertheless, the relationship between policy-setting and policy implementation at the macro-level is an important one. In particular, we may look at the overall effects of decentralisation in four respects :-

a. the achievement of political objectives;

b. its administrative effectiveness;

c. its efficiency in terms of economic management; and

d. government responsiveness to local needs and demands.

Self-determination, self-reliance, and the appropriateness of the means by which policies and programmes are designed and carried out, are further criteria which could be adopted in evaluating decentralisation policies. These are not, however, given specific attention in this study, though in a broader context they do illuminate the other aspects.

4.1.1 Achievement of Political Objectives

One of the broad political objectives of decentralisation policies in Third World is to gain the people's support for policies and programmes undertaken by the national government. In a politically turbulent society, achievement of political stability becomes a prime concern.

Politicians in Third World are aware that centralisation frustrates the distribution of benefits to the rural masses,and a good number of them consider it politically expedient to strengthen local government and thereby increase the ability of the centre to meet rural needs. Cochrane (1983) maintains that local governments are not included in national development plans because politicians of the centre do not wish to share their power or may even be anxious to avoid empowering entrenched local elites. But interestingly, even the most authoritarian military regimes, for example, Nigeria and Pakistan that have guarded power jealously, have also promoted local government reform.

When the national government looks to achieve political support for its policies and programmes, through a local government system, the institutional structure at local level must be assumed powerful and

efficient enough to carry-out political objectives. Local institutions must also be democratic in order to effect public participation. The logic of democratic participation is that the state is subjected to popular demands for public programmes and benefits. The more social relations are democratised, the more rights of participation are extended into different institutions. Alford and Friedland (1985) maintain that citizens come to demand participation not only in the selection. of candidates for public office but also in the internal decision of public agencies.

It is difficult to evaluate how far decentralisation achieves political support of the population for the national government. The study of public opinions and attitudes may be useful in this respect. Mass communication media, such as newspapers, television and radio programmes, political leaflets, etc. may be effective in an evaluation. Participation in elections launched for national and local representation, opinion polls, referenda, public debates and meetings form some useful ways of measuring popular participation. A Study by Rogers describes politicising developments in the village of Sungai Raja in Malaysia, in the period 1966 and 1978.[2] He examined the continuity and change in the Malays' political awareness, their concern about politics, their

political participation and their political opinions.

It is, however, difficult to predict how much political participation tells us about support for national policies and strategies. Rogers' (1985) study provides insights into the changing pattern of political involvement in the rural Malay community. It indicated that growing political participation of the villagers increased their level of expectations. The study showed that with the political support of the population, the political party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), achieved political dominance by institutionalising the party's control of the government, and promoting programmes to raise the Malays' standard of living. The UMNO endeavoured to increase its political support by encouraging mass membership, establishing the party as the key channel for securing government aid, and by promoting political participation within carefully prescribed and controlled limits. It appears to have used its extensive grass-roots organisations to develop a subjective sense of participation, whilst in practice denying the population any substantial influence on public policy and administration.

Political participation does not always mean support for national economic and social policies and

objectives. In the Third World context, where among other problems, large sections of the population are not educated and culturally advanced, mere political participation in limited political activities cannot be justified as the support for complex national issues. However, it is generally believed that a strong institutional framework at local level, together with policies for mass education, will create an environment for better public knowledge and understanding on a variety of national issues. "Democratic decentralisation is said to contribute to the breeding of better societies" (Sharpe, 1981).

Smith (1985) maintains that democratic decentralisation contributes to the establishment of social harmony, community spirit and political stability. This embodies a vision of local government as a political educator. Experience of local politics enables people to choose leaders they can trust. Trust in government is a necessary condition for stable democracy.

Thus democratic decentralisation is generally believed to contribute to political stability. Many countries, however, can be identified that have experienced political instability after a period of active local government. It may be argued that their

systems of local democracy were not functioning properly. Had they done so, instability would have been less likely to occur. Smith's observation in this case is that we do not know what constitutes 'proper' local government, and in what sense one system of local government be said to be better than other system of local government. He further argues that it is probably impossible to single out the effect of local government on national political stability, from the multitude of other pertinent factors. The relationship between local democracy and national stability can be only a matter of faith.

4.1.2   Administrative Effectiveness

Third World countries often take it for granted that the existing institutional capacity is enough to administer new development programmes at the local level. They take no steps to ascertain the strength of institutional capacity. In many cases, persons lacking even basic managerial skills, are placed in very senior administrative positions, with responsibilities for development. Berg (1971) argues that :

"... a large increase in the size and character of the tasks imposed on a weak administrative system does not simply mean that the capacity to perform declines marginally. Rather it tends to set into motion forces that erode the whole decision-making machinery and destroy the capacity to execute and control."

Mathur (1986) argues that funds meant for various development schemes often remain unutilised, simply because of administrative weakness to undertake the required initiatives within the time available. The United Nations adds in this context, that :

"the importance of public administration for national development has been frequently stressed by national and international entities, the measures taken and resources available to effect improvement have seldom been commensurate with what was needed and possible ... The erroneous notion persists that the cost of administration and even of administrative improvement is intrinsically unproductive and wasteful."3

There are those who would argue that the effective constraint on development in Third World is not technological or indeed even financial, but is essentially organisational and administrative. Emphasising the critical importance of management for development, Ramphal declares that "development is all management". Toulmin and Chandradhat (1967) maintain a similar view. They argue that:

"Good public management ... is vital to development. If other prerequisites are present to a sufficient degree, and public management is generally good, then there will be developmental progress. If, however, other prerequisites are present but public management is poor, there will be less progress and perhaps none at all."

People communicate better with local officers, than they do with visitors from the centre. The man on the spot can talk, can explain, can discuss, can invite questions on government policies and clear up difficulties. Devolution provides an opportunity to have such officials available within local institutions.

A clear job description for each person involved in local administration is an important prerequisite. Education and training are essential in order to make staffs in local administration fully aware and capable of their duties. In poor nations, where the political situation is not stable, they

require leadership qualities, moral courage and a clear vision on rural/local development. Strong motivation and commitment are required of local government staffs working in local situations.

It is not easy to evaluate the impact of decentralisation on administrative efficiency, in the context of development. In the present research, attention is largely focused on major issues such as structural change, conflicts and corruption, and co-ordination and co-operation in local administration. Other related issues of administration may, however, appear by way of discussion.

4.1.3   Efficiency of Economic Management

The central rather than the local government,
has always been important for decision-making and
development planning within the nation-state in the
Third World. Cochrane (1983) argues that "much of the
literature on local government has little to say about
the development role of local authorities in the
achievement of national objectives or about the
prospects for expanding that role". [4] One of the
serious threats to the successful reform of local
governments in developing countries is the politically-
motivated and too often poorly-planned decentralisation
exercises, that fail to provide sufficient resources to
enable local governments to meet local needs and fulfil
their aspirations.

Though governments in most Third World
countries, actively promote development, and while much
has been written on planning methods for development,
the administrative dimension for economic management
has remained until comparatively recently a neglected
area. But the issue of administration for development
has now begun to attract attention.

Decentralisation offers the hope of opening up the central bureaucracy, and giving more access for the people to the government. It could even stimulate the whole nation to participate in national development plans. Mawhood (1984), however, points a different picture :

"... experiments with local government that end in chaos and bankruptcy; 'decentralised' structures of administration that only act as a more effective tool for centralising power; regional and district committees in which government officials make decisions while the local representatives sit silent; village councils where local people participate but have no resources to allocate. Too often the word seems to convey only what the public relations department wants it to mean".

Mawhood stresses that a decentralised local body should have, among other characteristics, its <u>own</u> <u>budget</u> and the <u>authority to allocate substantial</u> <u>resources</u> to carry out its functions. Along with financial resources, the decentralised local institutions also require <u>staff resources</u> for diversified functions.

Writing from the donor perspective, on institutional capacity-building at local level through the Integrated Rural Development Project (IRDP), (Hambantota district in Sri Lanka) Dale (1988) has said that "a basic consideration behind all efforts at promoting institutional capacity and competence has

been to obtain the best possible fit between capacity and competence and the work tasks at hand." It is believed that this would increase the relevance and efficiency of the institution building measures. Conyers and Warren (1988) argue that "it is very difficult, if not impossible, for IRDPs to develop an institutional base for local multi-sectorial planning and implementation unless there is "meaningful" decentralisation of government to the local level". "Meaningful" decentralisation apparently encompasses devolution of power to local bodies for controlling financial resources, authority for policy-making on local issues.

Participatory decision-making produces a better fit between what people want and what the development agencies offer, and thus is more effective in accomplishing the project goals. A study by Samuel Paul (1983) showed that :

"It is not uncommon that facilities and services are created and offered to the people, who then fail to use them satisfactorily. Drinking water supply schemes have been set up, but the women, the traditional water carriers, do not use the costly pumps installed by the programme agency. Rural housing is often built which people refuse to live in... This happens when decision-making processes exclude the participation of those affected".

Mathur (1986) argues that the objective of development, in the Third World context, is not just to

expand material wealth; it must emphasise the development of all men and women to their full potential.[5] He indicates that the West is in no position to provide an example of development to the Third World. In the Third World even the undernourished people still live by socio-cultural values which technologically advanced societies have tended to discard. Development goals should be defined by the developing countries themselves.

Devolution favours a better distribution of development over the national geographical area. An integrated approach in development planning can arguably be carried out through a decentralised framework. Johnston and Clark (1982) maintain that effective development strategies emerge from practical knowledge of the problem situation.

Though it can be argued that decentralisation is appropriate for economic management, and cost-effective for development, this is difficult to measure, especially where development programmes are heavily dependent on public spending and subsidies, and where public money is deliberately misused by the dishonest and professionally unskilled civil officials.

Quantitative analysis of the economic effects of decentralisation is beyond the scope of most researches. Instead the impact of local economic management is evaluated in qualitative ways. These tend to include the availability and allocation of resources for development, the degree of mobilisation of local resources for development, the identification and distribution of development projects and schemes, and the scope of villagers, particularly the rural poor, to participate in the planning process.

4.1.4   Government Responsiveness to Local Needs and

Demands

Decentralisation means looking at local problems more closely, and with a deeper understanding of the needs and demands of the people. This study assumes that in the Third World context, the needs and demands of the people, particularly those of the rural poor, can be seen in terms of "basic needs", food, housing, clothing, primary health care, literacy and access to the institutional process of development. Theorists emphasise that crucial social objectives (e.g., health care, education, safe water and sanitation) are more likely to be met by government investment in public goods which are targeted for poor communities.[6] Weigel (1986) states that :

"the rationale behind the public goods approach is based on the fact that the poor do not have sufficient effective demand to stimulate the supply of these goods through the market system."

Despite many problems associated with the basic needs approach, many Third World nations have adopted it as a major objective in their development programmes over the years, and particularly in the last decade. It is also significant to note that the policy of administrative decentralisation in Third World nations has frequently been targeted towards achieving such an objective.

The evaluation of decentralisation in relation to such an approach is a difficult task because of BNA's multiple objectives of public welfare. The typology of basic human needs, shown in table 4.1 below, demonstrates the complexities of Basic Needs Approach (BNA).[7] There is also no agreement regarding minimum basic human needs, and of how to measure the impact of BNA in a particular situation.

Despite many criticisms, however, BNA has a special appeal to decision-makers and to political leaders and administrators of Third World nations. Such needs, in poor Third World countries, are perceived as being mainly related to rural problems. It is also likely that problems in congested and overcrowded urban areas are also increasing because of the growing pressure of migrants from rural areas, seeking employment in urban areas.

Table 4.1 : A typology of Basic Human Needs.

Core attributes of human life	Universal set of basic needs (BN)	Time-relative BN bundle
Existence	food,water,air,retention of body heat, sleep,mechanism for communal protection	minimum nutrition, safe water/sewerage, primary health care, shelter,clothing, energy,transportation, municipal protection, national defence
Intelligenc	communication, informal education	basic education/ literacy,access to uncensored information media, access to contraceptive technologies
Sociality	freedom of expression,freedom of association	absence of political repression

Source :   Wiegel, 1986.[8]

Many basic needs appear more urgent in periods of crisis, from floods, cyclones, drought, and political disturbances. There may be an economic depression due to large-scale natural calamities, or in consequence of some national or international crisis. There are other issues, such as employment for men and women in gainful activities, and welfare for the aged, disabled and children. A balanced society also has cultural needs to be met.

This study looks at how decentralisation can respond to different local needs and demands. How can local people influence local institutions, and undertake measures to meet these needs? This is another way of looking at the problem. By so doing we examine the impact of decentralisation on the "satisfaction of basic needs." This is, however, a vast area for research. The present study selects some major aspects, food, housing, clothing, health care, literacy, and access for the rural people to information.

4.2   Methodology Adopted in this Thesis to Evaluate

the Impact of the Current Practice of

Decentralisation Policy in Bangladesh

A holistic approach in social science
research, assumes that an understanding of a
programme's social and political context is essential.
for evaluation. Evaluators using qualitative methods
strive to understand programmes and situations as a
whole, and search for the totality, the unifying nature
of particular settings.[9]

The present research aims at a holistic
approach in dealing with the various issues of
decentralisation. It   takes into account a wide range
of issues of local administration, socio-political
structures, and planning and decision-making for
economic management. The aim is to address diversified
local issues, solutions for which are sought in the
current decentralisation policy in Bangladesh.

Fieldwork was carried out in Bangladesh for a
period of five months, between November 1988 and April
1989. In Bangladesh, the winter months are generally
most suitable for fieldwork, though we remember the
warning by Chambers, that this may not be the season in
which rural deprivation will be most apparent.

The research methodology adopted for Bangladesh was as follows :

(a) A critical examination of available literature on issues of decentralisation in Bangladesh.

(b) Documentary evidence from different sources such as daily newspapers, weekly magazines, and official reports. This helped in conceptualising different issues associated with decentralisation policy in Bangladesh.

(c) Personal interviews were conducted, in an attempt to understand the complexities, performance, problems and potential of the decentralised institutions at Upazila level. The interviewees included academics, bureaucrats at central and local levels, reseachers in related fields, and many people at local level. In addition, in order to find out about the practice of planning and decision-making in the "Upazila Parishad", regular monthly meetins of the "Upazila Parishad" were attended by the researcher.

(d) Field data were collected through 2 questionnaires (Questionnaire A and Questionnaire B). Questionnaires were pre-tested and edited before preparing them for the final survey.

It is important to note that care needs to be taken in fieldwork to avoid what is called by Robert Chambers, "survey slavery". It must be admitted that there were difficulties in carrying out the fieldwork. The research covered diversified issues, and answers from the respondents were sometimes ambiguous. But in the fieldwork, particular care was taken to avoid two eventualities :- (a) the better off, influential and corrupt-minded people might manipulate information in their favour; and (b) the poor and less influential might not freely express their views on their problems, for fear of any unforeseen consequences.

Respondents were interviewed individually for both Questionnaires. The interviewers who were employed were all University-graduates, who were aware of the problems. They were directed and supervised personally by the researcher. The Questionnaires were administered in Bengali, and the answers recorded in English. Copies of the Questionnaires are in the Appendix. Interviewers were expected to take time with the respondents - half a day per respondent was not unusual, and were instructed to avoid in terms of appearance and attitude, the "urban" bias which developmentalists have warned against.

Our approach has been the sample survey approach. We recognize that there are alternatives. For example, we could have focussed on the detailed workings of one or two local government units, attending meetings, interviewing participants, and evaluating outcomes. This methodology is particularly suited to the approach outlined in Chapter 2, which focuses on inter-organizational aspects of decentralisation. It is a methodology with many advantages, in particular in focusing on the practice of decentralisation. It was not, however, the research methodology adopted in this thesis - although the researcher did attend Upazila meetings. The reasons why it was not adopted are :

i) Because of the demands it makes on the reseachers time and resources;

ii) Because of the wish to cover a wide geographical area for research; and

iii) Because of the decision to canvass opinion on decentralisation, as being a valid objective of itself. The researcher was particularly interested in distinguishing what the participants themselves felt about decentralisation, in view of the controversy surrounding the policy at the present time in Bangladesh.

With the above qualifications, I have reasonable confidence in the empirical analysis, and the findings of the fieldwork. It is prudent, however, to be aware of the problems and potential pitfalls.

Questionnaire A

This survey was conducted among three major categories of respondents :

(i) Administrators, i.e. the officers of various government departments in the "Upazila Administration";

(ii) Representatives, i.e. the Upazila Chairmen, the Union Chairmen (elected representatives to the "Upazila Parishad"), the nominated members of the "Upazila Parishad" and the village members who represent the "Union Council"; and

(iii) Local educated elites : political leaders, lawyers, businessmen, contractors, doctors, college and school teachers.

These respondents were interviewed at the Upazila headquarters. The Questionnaire aimed to find out if current decentralisation policy has favoured institution-building at local level. The Questionnaire

included questions on political, administrative, and development planning aspects. The representatives from different unions and villages were available at Upazila headquarters on most the weekdays. The set of Questionnaires was filled in by the researcher himself, in view of the many complex issues of "Upazila Administration".

Questionnaire B

A similar approach was followed, with a different set of Questionnaires, to study the impact of decentralisation through "Upazila Administration", on the satisfaction of basic needs in rural areas. The respondents for this survey were different, and included different income groups of village people. The Questionnaire had questions on major "basic needs" _ food, housing and clothing; health care; literacy and access to information on government policies, and assistance during the natural disasters.

More information on the fieldwork is provided in Part III of the thesis. It is necessary at this stage to explain to the readers why this research has not made more use of published data and documented records. As a general explanation, in poor Third World

nations like Bangladesh, there is an acute shortage of relevant data for that type of research methodology. There is also the problem of data reliability. Moreover, decentralisation has been operational for a relatively short duration, little detailed information is available. These problems have been recognized by other reseachers. For example, Huque's Ph.D. thesis on local government reforms in Bangladesh was also obliged to adopt a case study methodology in view of data problems. However, in the present research, where relevant data from secondary and documentary sources were available, they have been used.

Finally, there is the question of research methodologies which involve participant observation, such as those associated with the study of inter-governmental relations. It has already been argued that the time and data demands of this approach, and the desire for a wide geographical coverage ruled out its use in the case of this thesis. There is, however, another consideration. In the context of Third World countries, it is difficult to retain objectivity, reliability and neutrality. This has also been argued by Mahbubullah (1987) in relation to village studies. He does not support participant observation and conscientization as a research methodology for village studies. He argues that there is a tendency for the

researcher to interpret actions according to his or her vision, notion and meaning. These research methodologies suffer from subjectivity, and I have concluded, would not be appropriate in this study of decentralisation.

NOTES

1. On criteria for evaluating decentralisation policies, see Rondinelli, D.A. and Cheema G.S. : "Assessing Decentralisation Policies in Developing Countries : The Case for Cautious Optimism" in <u>Development Policy Review</u>, Vol. 4 Part 1 (London : SAGE, 1986).

2. For details, see Rogers, M.L. : "Political Involvement and Political Stability in Rural Malaysia" in <u>The Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics</u>, Vol. XXIII No. 3 (London : Frank Cass, 1985).

3. See Mathur, H.M. : <u>Administering Development in the Third World : Constraints and Choices</u> (New Delhi : SAGE, 1986).

4. See Cochrane, G. : <u>Policies for Strengthening Local Government Policies in Developing Countries</u>, World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 582 (Washington D.C. : The World Bank, 1983).

5. See Mathur (1986), op cit.

6. For details, see Weigel, V.B. : "The Basic Needs Approach : Overcoming the Poverty of Homo Oeconomicus", <u>World Development</u>, Vol. 14 No. 12 (London : Pergamon Press, 1986).

7. See Max-Neef, M. and Others : "Human Scale Development : An Option for the Future", <u>Development Dialogue</u> (Uppsala : The Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1989).

8. See Weigel (1986), op cit.

9. On the use of qualitative methods in social science research, see Patton, M.Q. : <u>How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation</u> (London : SAGE, 1987).

PART II

THE BANGLADESH CASE

Chapter 5

DECENTRALISATION IN THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT, BEFORE THE INDEPENDENCE OF BANGLADESH

5.1   Local Self-Government in Ancient India

5.2   Decay of the Ancient Village Institutions During the British Period

5.3   Attempts at Decentralisation During the British Period

5.4   Participatory Local Institutional Structures in the Post-Colonial India

    5.4.1   Decentralisation of Rural Development Administration in West Bengal

5.5   Decentralisation During the Pakistan Period

5.1   Local Self-Government in Ancient India

The concept of 'local self-government' is not a new one for the people of the Indian Sub-continent. From time immemorial, it was practised in different regions of India, primarily to foster and perpetuate a self-contained rural administration, but also for the purpose of administrative convenience. Mukerjee (1974) argues that :

"The ancient institutions when compared to the self-governing institutions that existed in the British period, and even in some respects when compared to the institutions now obtaining in India, were more widespread, more real and more successful."

A number of studies have provided elaborate historical accounts of local self-government in India. Included are those of Tinker (1968), Maddick (1970) and Mukerjee (1974).[1] Mukerjee maintains that in the ancient past, because of the absence of good communication systems, these institutions were self-contained. They enjoyed power and authority in resolving diversified local issues, with minimum state interference. It is remarkable in this context that in the distant past, when political conciousness was not sufficiently developed, people living in isolated rural areas could exercise their rights and privileges. In spite of the existence of the caste system, the sense of community was real and the village institutions

could function with the participation of the entire village population. Certain duties and obligations towards society, were recognised. Schools, water tanks, charitable dispensaries and prayer places were constructed and maintained, either by individual efforts or by trusts (created by endowments of religious minded people).

In ancient India people were organised into village communities. Residents assembled at a village meeting and transacted all affairs of administration. The headman of the "village assembly" or "council of elders" governed the administration with the consent of the people. This village "panchayat" (Assembly) was supreme in village administration as early as 400 A.D. in the Maurya and Gupta periods.[2] It can be traced in Bihar, Rajputana, Central India, Maharastra and Karnatak. In the Maurya period in the 4th century, when powerful empires were organised and the tendency was for strong central governments, these village institutions, particularly the system of rural justice through village elders, was allowed to remain and operate without interference.

In the Chola period (850-1200 A.D.), improved methods of administration evolved in the light of previous experiences. Justice was administered by

regularly constituted royal courts, in addition to the village courts and caste panchayats. The Cambridge History of India confirms that in the Maratha period:

" Despite its primitive character and its liability to be improperly influenced, the panchayat was a popular institution, and the absence of a decision by a panchayat in any suit was almost regarded as complete justification for a retrial of the issues. The fact must be admitted that among themselves, within the confines of the self-contained ancestral village, the peasantry did obtain a fair modicum of rude justice from the village panchayat".[3]

Elphinstone's Report, submitted to the Governor General in October 1819, mentioned the "village system" that existed in the Deccan during the 18th century :

"From whatever point of view we examine the Native Government in the Deccan, the first and most important feature is the division into villages or townships. These communities contain in miniature all the materials of state within themselves and are almost sufficient to protect their members, if all other governments are withdrawn".[4]

The Report further mentioned that each village had a portion of land exclusively set apart for the use of the villagers. Land and cultivation were under the management of the village and plots were clearly marked. There were traders and artisans who supplied necessities to the village people. There were also certain village officers. The head of the village was the most important functionary in the village. He was the head of the police, of the administration, and of justice. The headman allocated lands to the

cultivators, including those who had no landed property. He fixed the rent and collected revenue on behalf of the government. He also looked to the improvement of cultivation and the prosperity of the village.

The traditional self-government system, however, was not free of problems. There was domination in the system by the influential and elderly village leaders. Mukerjee argues, nevertheless, that these village institutions were able to maintain their existence and even continued their activities until the end of Mughal rule.[5] These indigenous institutions gradually went into decay, side by side with the consolidation of the British empire in India.

5.2   Decay of the Ancient Village Institutions During the British Period

Why did village institutions, that had been operating in many parts of India over hundreds of years, start to decay after the establishment of the colonial administration? There are four possibilities.[6] First, the establishment of a well-organised administration by the British brought even the remotest village under its comprehensive machinery. The provincial government, through its field officials, controlled the entire region, and activities which were formerly carried on by the villagers came to be administered by the agents of government. Second, the establishment of civil and criminal courts, with their jurisdictions extending through the country, struck a fatal blow at the most important function of the village assemblies. Third, there was a rapid improvement of communications which hastened the transition. Fourth, the development of western education slowly and almost imperceptibly, fostered an individualistic tendency among the educated classes.

Over and above these factors, a major blow to the village communities was the increasing demands for revenues, by the central administration. And there were urgent economic problems. No satisfactory industrial

development took place until the middle of the nineteenth century, yet there was steady growth of population. Agriculture was overburdened. Eventually village industries were slowly extinguished in the face of rising industrialisation. The self-contained rural economy no longer existed. A large section of the rural elite left the villages, and migrated in search of employment. Rural health and sanitation were neglected. The Zaminders (feudal lords) mostly lived in the towns and rarely visited their ancestral homes.[7] They were anxious only about their "annual booty", and did nothing to improve village life.[8]

In these circumstances, village people depended more and more on central governmental machinery. Village life was dull, cheerless and a sense of frustration prevailed. In Bengal, a large migration of rural population took place, begining in the early part of the present century, resulting in high concentration of population in the industrial town of Calcutta. The cumulative effect of these factors led to the virtual collapse of the village system.

5.3   Attempts at Decentralisation During the British

Period

British colonial rule in India started with the
grant of the 'Dewani' of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to
the East India Company by Emperor Shah Alam II in
1765.[9] Until 1793, however, there was no established
administrative system in India. Collection of land
revenue formed the chief, if not the only
administrative business during this period. In the
initial period of colonial rule, there was no
initiative to link village level communities through an
administrative mechanism. The indigenous forms of self-
government of the rural communities were left
unaltered. Blair maintains that :

"Hierarchical, top-down administrations sufficed in
pre-modern times, when rural life was for all practical
purposes autonomous and self-sufficient, and the
government's only interest in the countryside was to
collect revenue, prevent insurrection, and hold rural
banditry down to an acceptable minimum. Such was the
situation in the Mughal era and throughout most of the
British period." (1985, p. 1238).

As M. Ali (1983) argues, however, the major
factor during this period, bringing about the decay of
the rural self-contained communities, was the creation
of a feudal class (the Zaminders) by Lord Cornowallis
in 1793 by the Permanent Settlement Act.[10] This Act
made increasing demands for revenue collection from

rural areas. The self-governing nature of traditional rural institutions was, therefore, no longer to remain unaffected.

The first attempt to make the local authority more capable of directing civic affairs, came in the 1840s, when the principle of election was introduced to a very limited extent in the municipal administration in Bombay. Tinker's (1968) study recorded that in the late 1880s, every town of importance in India became a municipality. Over time, the head of the municipalities became elected persons. But the rural areas remained far behind.

The most remarkable innovation proposed by Lord Ripon in 1882 was the establishment of a network of rural local bodies - six years before there were any rural councils in England (Tinker, 1968). Ripon's Resolution stated that the sub-district should form the maximum area to be placed under a local board, the district board was envisaged as a supervisory or co-ordinating authority only. The Resolution outlined the general principles which were to govern the future development of local representative institutions :

"It is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and supported. It is chiefly designed as an instrument of political and popular education" (Tinker, 1968).

The Resolution of 1882 also observed that as education advances there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public spirited men who it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power to fail to utilise. Tinker (1968) maintains in this context that :

"It was necessary to provide an outlet for the ambitions and aspirations which had been created by the education, civilisation and material progress introduced by the British."

Following the Ripon Resolution on local self-government in India in 1882, some other Acts were introduced by the British administration. In the context of Bengal, the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885, the Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Act of 1908 and the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919 were the milestones for developing a local administration, composed of publicly elected representatives. M. Ali (1983) observes that some basic laws framed by the British administration gradually helped the expansion of the administrative network down towards the local level.

Until 1935, however, the central influence in administrative decisions was still dominant. The Act of 1935 for the first time created a federal government in India, at least in form, and distinguished between

federal subjects, provincial subjects and concurrent subjects. But, although in the provincial administration (for transferred subjects), the central government had no legal involvement, the Governor General retained under this Act the special discretionary power which foiled the formal decentralisation of political and administrative powers. M. Ali maintains that the conflicts between the central and provincial authorities were perhaps a major reason for a slow pace in administrative decentralisation in the face of increased societal demands from the growing population. He further argues that local governments, which were popularly elected, had no effective power. But as Tinker (1968) observes, the Resolution of 1882 provided a wide scope for democratic local government systems in India up to the district level, and claims that it was the native leaders and bureaucracy which failed to utilise that opportunity.[11] In most of the provinces, the bureaucrats retained the chairmenships of the district and sub-district councils. Besides, there were communal conflicts over the issue of representation in local authorities. The situation was, however, better in Bengal.

In local administration, the creation of "divisional administration" by Lord William Bentick,

was to supervise revenue administration, but it was also given some discretionary power to control local authorities. This disturbed the district level authorities. Some argue that the functions of the division could well be distributed between the central and the district level authorities.

During the colonial period, the district administration was the most powerful authority at local level. The District Magistrate and the Collector were symbols of awe and authority, and became institutions. Although there was legal provision for elected chairmen of both district and sub-district councils, in most cases, the District Magistrate and the Collector took the chair. The district administration had so much work that there were hardly any meetings of the councils. Also, the district officers hardly visited any villages to observe village level activities. The Zaminders were not sufficiently aware or interested to attend the meetings of these councils, although they were representative members.

Given the colonial context, however, some aspects of the process of decentralisation during the British administration may be better appreciated. Colonial rule in India, at least in its latter stages, was not intended to be permanent. Administrators were,

therefore, motivated to retain some degree of centralisation in administration. Perhaps too, decentralisation in administration was not in high demand at that time among the population. The concept of popular participation in development administration, for the benefit of the people, in the sense that we understand it today, was not a strong consideration during the British period. The major weakness of the administrative network during this period was lack of any linkage between the rural communities and the administration. The district and sub-district administrations had no meaningful communication with village people. The major governmental activities at village level were the administration of the police and the collection of revenue. After the end of colonial rule, the major emphasis in local administration in India was to devolve power to people for development decisions.

5. 4   Participatory Local Institutional Structures in the Post-Colonial India

India offers a model of democracy for the Third World. Patience, tolerance and perseverance, through various phases and political difficulties since Independence, have characterized the Indian case. Vidyarthi maintains that :

"The great traditions of Indian civilisation, i.e. truth, non-violence, liberalism, passive resistance (satya-grah), sacrifice, goodness and self-realisation, have always stood the test of time in the course of her long history. It is under the influence of such great traditions that India, from time to time, produced several leaders who upheld the genius and temper of Indian civilisation and protected the country from the non-Indian traditions of aggression, authoritarianism, repression, hatred, intolerance and selfishness" (1977, pp. 99-101).

Thus Indian political leaders have been able to maintain democratic traditions in politics, a condition which is a pre-requisite for democratic decentralisation of development administration. The political, administrative and development context was changed with the partition of British India into Republic of India and Pakistan in 1947. South Asia which emerged from British colonial tradition found it necessary to change the inherited administrative apparatus, to suit national objectives.

Since Independence, a number of administrative measures have been introduced in India to make administration increasingly participative. In India, however, the political system has been more stable than in any other South Asian nation. Moreover, even in India, no radical changes have taken place except perhaps for some attempts to revitalise the local government system, and provide more democratic foundations. Ali (1986b) argues in this context that:

"In some of the states of India, officers of the status of the District Officer, variously called the Deputy Commissioner, and the District Magistrate and Collector, were made Chief Executive Officers of elected local government institutions at the district level. In the majority of the states, the old District Officer still retains both the law and order and development functions despite the institutions of the Panchayati Raj. In India, there is no abrupt break with the past traditions".

In theory, however, India has strived for democratic control over the local bureaucracy. The major changes in local institutions in India took place during 1959-62. Particular emphasis was placed on participatory development, an approach in which elected representatives would enjoy greater authority over the local bureaucracy in decision-making. Mukerjee claims that the enthusiasm for these changes owed something to Gandhian memories of the Panchayati Raj and their revival by J.P. Narain.[12] The latter's teaching tended to present the Panchayati Raj as

indigenous and traditional, a form of "communitarian democracy", more appropriate than Western notions of "participatory democracy" (Mukerjee, 1974, p. 53).

The three-tier local government system that operates in different states of India can be seen in the following diagram :

<u>State Government</u>

<u>Field Administration</u>   <u>Local Governments</u>

                                          Zilla   Parishads
                                          (district council)
Top Tier   Each containing
——

                                          Panchayat Samitis
Middle Tier   Each containing
——

                                          Gram Panchayats
Bottom Tier   Each containing
——

            Gram Sabhas (Village Organisation
            of all Adults)
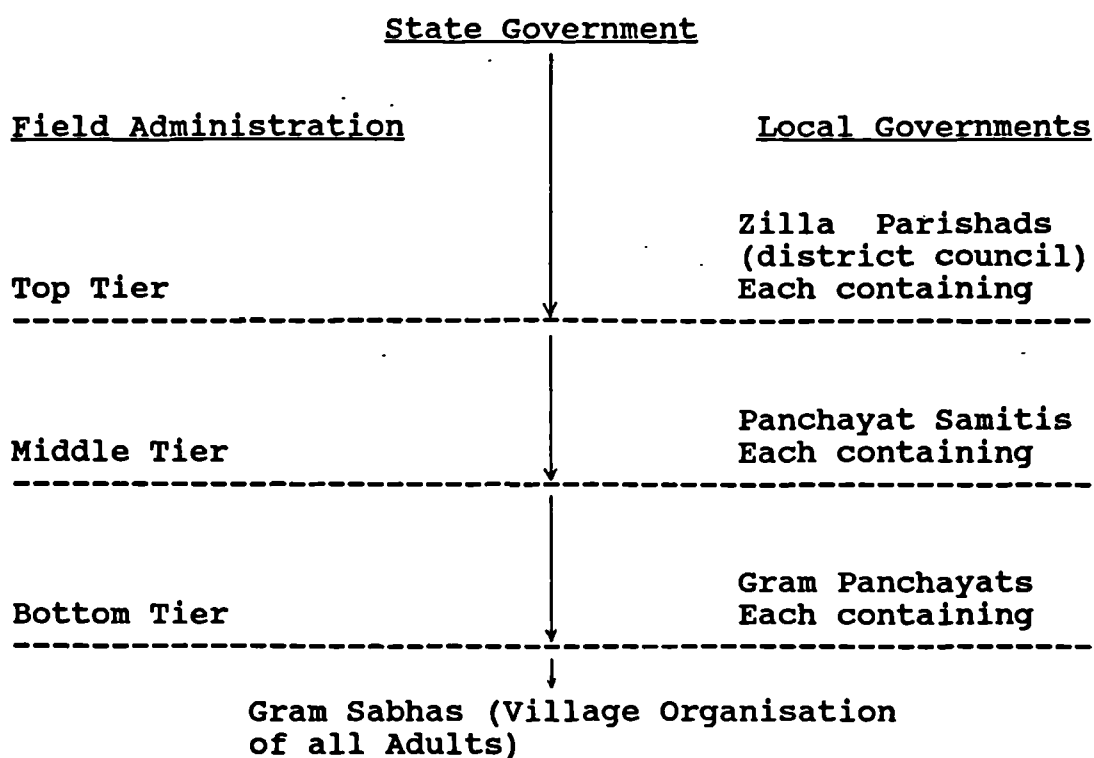
The number of subordinate units in each superior tier varies with the population of each unit. Territorially, every subordinate unit is wholly contained within one superior unit. In the majority of states, the most important unit is the Panchayat Samiti.[13] This is the body with the most functions. It

has the task of interpreting government to myriads of villagers. In theory, the people at the village level and the Panchayats themselves are under the supervision of the staff and the members of the Panchayat Samiti (Maddick, 1970, p. 4). The departmental staff of the Panchayat Samiti in its turn is under the technical supervision of the staff at the district level. The operational efficiency of these local self-governments systems in India, is however, widely debated.

5.4.1 Decentralisation of Rural Development Administration in West Bengal

The "Panchayati Raj" in West Bengal was introduced in two separate Acts (West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1957 and the West Bengal Zilla Parishads Act, 1963).[14] The gulf between the people at the base and the institutional hierarchies above was widening over time and this necessitated the creation of effective local institutions. The change in the local government system was based on the principle of 'democratic decentralisation of power' (Mukerjee, 1974, p. 178). The changes were explained in terms of (i) the need to make provision for proper leadership in the rural sector to sponsor and implement the national development plans; (ii) to counteract the existence of weak rural institutions without strong links with the

rest of the country; (iii) to deal with mounting discontent among the rural population; and (iv) to make good the admitted failures in the national extension and community development programmes. The aim was to create effective leadership, and encourage a spontaneous response at the village level which could be mobilized for village reconstruction work.

West Bengal has a three-tier Panchayati Raj system : (a) Gram Panchayat for a cluster of villages; (b) Panchayat Samiti at Block level; and (c) Zilla Parishad at the district level. These Panchayats are responsible for (i) identifying and selecting beneficiaries under different programmes; (ii) selecting and formulating schemes with the officers of sectoral departments posted at various levels of local government; and (iii) implementing schemes under various programmes with the assistance of government officials (Gangopadhyay, 1987, SAARC Seminar Report).

The practical experience of the "Panchayati Raj" system in West Bengal (and in other states, where similar systems are operating) shows that greater power and authority in the decision-making process, in all the local level institutions, has been placed with the people through their representatives. Local governmental officials, however, play an important role

in the planning and implementation of development programmes by assisting in the process of decision-making and providing technical expertise in project execution.

All three tiers of local institutions are headed by elected persons. They are, however, not directly elected. People have direct participation only in the selection of their representatives at village (gram) levels. The chief of a Panchayat is called the 'Pradhan', one who is elected from amongst the elected representatives at village levels. In the election or selection process of a Pradhan, only representatives of the people at village levels can participate. The Panchayat consists of about twenty to twenty-five villages. Under the provision, any one of the Pradhans of the Gram Panchayats has the chance to become the chief (Sabhapati) of the Panchayat Samiti. In the Zilla Parishad (district council), either a directly elected member to represent the upper or lower house of the state, or a Sabhapati of any Panchayat Samiti within the district, may become the chief (Sabhadhipati).[15] Under this provision, the competition for the post of the Sabhadhipati of the Zilla Parishad is intense, and it is most likely that a competent candidate will win the post. The most striking feature in the local governments system in West Bengal, is that the village

level has been given the top priority. There is also less urban bias in the distribution of power and in selecting the local leadership to carry out development functions.

5.5   Decentralisation During the Pakistan Period

In the case of Bangladesh, which was a part of Pakistan during 1947 - 71, it was expected that a similar experiment to that taking place in India would come about. What actually happened in Pakistan is described briefly in the following paragraphs.

India opted for a democratic structure in politics and administration, but the Pakistan experience was different, for a number of reasons. First, the leaders of former West Pakistan were less committed to democracy. They came mainly from feudal backgrounds. Secondly, West Pakistani politicians, and the civil and military bureaucracy, wanted to dominate East Pakistan. E. Ahmed in his study observed that :

"The bureaucratic elites were an exclusive group not only in societal terms, but also in regional terms, since most of them were from West Pakistan. From the partition, there was an imbalance in bureaucracy in respect of regional representation." (1980, p. 63).

Because the population of East Pakistan was likely to dominate the legislature in a parliamentary form of government, the former West Pakistani leaders preferred to rule the country more or less in the same way as the colonial administrators had ruled India.[18] The evolution of a parliamentary democracy was continuously frustrated in the country. It was,

therefore, not surprising that the first constitution of Pakistan was framed and came into force as late as 1956. In the absence of any written constitution, from August 14, 1947 until March 23, 1956, the central government concentrated powers in its hands and the provinces were only allocated certain delegated powers. Moreover, the constitution commission of 1956 under the domination of West Pakistan, had little faith in popular participation in the decision-making process. This negative attitude was explained by the constitution commission itself, as due to the poor literacy rate, and the absence of a qualified francise in the country. The constitution commission of 1956 recommended that a general election should be held in the country in 1958, but before that date General Ayub Khan seized power in Pakistan and imposed martial law in the country. The constitution of 1962, as framed by President Ayub Khan, was Federal in character and in theory at least, more decentralised than the constitution of 1956.[17] Under this constitution, the railway system, so long centralised, was transferred to the provinces and the Provincial Governments were given relatively more importance.

Since the birth of Pakistan as an independent nation, contradictions and disagreements characterised the relationship between East and West wings over

constitutional matters. During the early years of Pakistan, this created political unrest in both the East and West wings. Because the Bengali population in East Pakistan were in the majority, the West Pakistani leaders never agreed to share central powers on the basis of democratic representation. The declaration of the first Governor General of Pakistan in 1952 that 'Urdu shall be the only state language of Pakistan', was a big blow to the nationalistic feelings of the population in East Pakistan.[18] It created strong political opposition towards West Pakistani leaders. The attempt to make Urdu the only state language of Pakistan did not succeed but it was interpreted as a reflection of the attitudes of West Pakistani leaders. They were regarded as foreign rulers. It was the virtual end of any possibility of political integration.

To legitimize his capture of power, Ayub Khan wanted to improve the economic condition of the country. He was interested in finding out the short-comings of administration, and introduced some administrative reforms to increase the capability of local institutions for implementing programmes of economic development. During this period, however, administrative decentralisation at the lower tiers was not adequately provided for. The Basic Democracies

Order of 1959 had introduced a system of dialogue between the government's officials and the elected representatives by devising administrative councils at local levels.[19] Under this Basic Democracies Order, the representatives of Union Councils were to carry out government policies in rural areas, and provide a source of political support for the national government. There was a massive rural works programme which made local government active and important during this period. Under the Basic Democracies Order of 1959, the Union Councils were entrusted, inter alia, with the following functions :

- Celebration of public festivals;

- Provision of relief measures in the event of any fire, flood, hail storm, earthquake or other natural calamity;

- Relief for widows and orphans, and the poor and persons in distress;

- Promotion of public games and sports;

- Agricultural, industrial and community development; promotion and development of co-operative movement, village industries, forests, livestock and fisheries;

- Adoption of measures for increased food production;

- Provision of first aid centres;

- Provision of libraries and reading rooms.

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The Union Councils were made responsible for cooperation with other organisations engaged in similar activities.

Another important development in the local government system during the Ayub regime, was the creation in 1962 of a "Thana Development Circle" to coordinate development activities within a Thana (the geographical area of a Police Station during the British period).[20] From that point of time development planning, although on a limited scale, began at the local level in Bangladesh. Since the early 1960s, there had been efforts to initiate planning at grass-roots level (based on village communities) to involve people in rural development. There had been a massive rural development effort led by the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla.

Although in the Basic Democracies Order 1959, all local councils had listed functions, these remained mostly on paper.[21] For example, it was observed, in 1964-65, that the Rangpur District Council was performing only 19 functions out of the 26 items on the compulsory list, and only 19 functions out of the 70 items on the optional list. An interesting note was recorded in the minutes of the Rangpur District Council Meeting dated August 22,1963 under resolution no. 4 :

"The main defect of the present system is not the lack of technical staff, but too much centralisation. Moreover, the authority exercised by the Deputy Commissioner as the Chairman and the Assistant Director of Basic Democracies as the Secretary of the District Council made the position of elected Vice-Chairman of the District Council obscure and powerless." (M. Ali & others, 1983)

Because the district administration concentrated authority over local tiers, local expertise in development was undermined.

The Pakistan regime had set up a large number of departmental offices at divisional level. But this tier of administration was not effective for local development. Some studies observed that coordination among these sectoral departments, through the Divisional Commissioner, was weak. Besides, interference by divisional administration in certain cases disturbed local institutions. Several commissions on administrative reforms during the Pakistan period, suggested the abolition of this administrative tier. But, inspite of Commissions and Committees, the concept of decentralisation and people's participation remained beyond the reach of the ordinary people. This was the result of bureaucratic preponderance, and the distrust of the Pakistani rulers for the people, in all spheres of administration.[22]

Though administrative councils at different local levels comprised elected persons, the power was always held by the civil bureaucrats during the Pakistan period. In the first ever general election (parliamentary) in 1970, the Awami League led by Sheikh Mujib claimed victory. But because the Awami League was led by an East Pakistani, and because all of the parliamentary seats won by this party were in East Pakistan, the leaders of West Pakistan did not agree to share state power on a democratic basis. The army crackdown on the civilian population of East Pakistan began in March 1971, eventually leading to war, and the Independence of Bangladesh.

NOTES

1. For more information the on local self-govt
    system, before Partition of the Indian sub-
    continent into India and Pakistan in 1947, see,
    (i) Tinker, H. : <u>The Foundations of Local Self-
    government in India, Pakistan and Burma</u> (London :
    Praeger, 1968); (ii) Maddick, H. : <u>Panchayati Raj
    : A Study of Rual Local Government in India</u>
    (Suffolk : Longman, 1970); and (iii) Mukerjee,
    S.K. : <u>Local Self-Government in West Bengal</u>
    (Calcutta : Dasgupta & Company, 1974, p. 7).

2. "Panchayat" in India means village-based
    organisation, which comprises different
    occupational groups of people. Literally it means
    an "assembly".

3. For details, see Mukerjee (1974), op cit.

4. For details, see Tinker (1968), op cit.

5. For more information, see Huque, A.S. : <u>The
    Problems of Local Government Reforms in
    Bangladesh : The Failure of Swanirvar Gram
    Sarkar</u>, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis (Vancouber :
    University of British Columbia, 1984).

6. For details, see Mukerjee (1974), op cit.

7. The Zaminders were never in good relationship
    with the villagers. They lived in urban areas.
    See Huque (1984), op cit.

8. "Annual booty" was the amount of
    taxes/charges payable to the Zaminders by the
    farmers, for the use lands for one year.

9. "Dewani" means the right given on a property or an
    area. This is a legal status.

10. The method of collecting revenues from rural
    areas by the Zamindari system, disturbed the
    ancient village-government system.

11. Also, see Ali, S.M. & others : <u>Decentralisation
    and People's Participation in Bangladesh</u> (Dhaka :
    NIPA, 1983); and Ali, A.M.M.S. : <u>Politics,
    Development and Upazila</u> (Dhaka : NILG, 1986b).

12. See Mukerjee (1974), op cit.

13.   "Panchayat Samiti" is a sub-district level organisation and is empowered with the responsibility for coordinating and supervising local development.

14.   "Panchayat Raj" is the general terminology for participatory local government organisations.

15.   Both "Sabhapati" and the "Sabhadhipati" mean literally "Chief" or "Head" of the institution.

16.   East Pakistan always had a larger population than West Pakistan.

17.   For details, see Ali, S.M. & others (1983), op cit.

18.   Mohammad Ali Jinnah was then the Governor General of Pakistan. In Pakistan, there was an organized attempt at the cultural subjugation of the Bengalees (People of East Pakistan). See Hauque, A. (1985):"Politics in Bangladesh: conflict and confusion" in Politics Administration and Change, Vol.x, No.1&2, (Centre for Administrative Studies, Dhaka, 1985) PP.1-12.

On nationalism and the Bengalees in East Pakistan, see Jahangir, B.K. : Problematics of Nationalism in Bangladesh (Dhaka : Centre for Social Studies, 1986).

19.   For details, see Ali. S.M. and others (1983), op cit.

20.   For details, see Ali, M.H. : Development Planning at Upazila Level (Comilla : BARD,1987); Sultan, K.M.T. (ed.) : The Comilla Rural Administration Experiment, Fourth Annual Report, 1965-68 (Comilla : BARD, 1967).

21.   For details, see Ali, S.M. and others(1983), op cit.

22.   See Ali, A.M.M.S. (1986b), op cit.

Chapter 6

**DECENTRALISATION OF ADMINISTRATION IN BANGLADESH : A
DISCUSSION OF THE CURRENT PRACTICES OF THE "UPAZILA"
ADMINISTRATION**

6.1   An Overview of the Structural Problems of Local
      Institutions, Prior to the Decentralisation
      Policy of 1982

      6.1.1   Failure of the Mujib Government

      6.1.2   Failure of Self-Reliant Village Government
              Programme of the Zia Government

6.2   The Current Practices of Decentralisation Policy

      6.2.1   Administrative   Dimension   of Current
              Decentralisation Policy at Upazila Level

      6.2.2   Political   and   Social   Dimensions   of
              Administrative   Decentralisation   at
              Upazila   Level

      6.2.3   The Upazila Chairman

6.3   Development Planning in the "Upazila Parishad"

      6.3.1   Scope of the "Upazila Parishad" in Local
              Development Planning

This chapter discusses the attempts which have been made in the post-independence period, to decentralise the administrative system of Bangladesh. First, a brief overview is provided, of the structural problems of local administration, prior to the introduction of the current policy of administrative decentralisation. Then, more detailed discussion is provided of the current policy of decentralisation in Bangladesh. This discussion concentrates on current practices of decentralisation, through the "Upazila Administration", a local government tier which has recently been given substantial authority for development administration at local levels.

6.1 An Overview of the Structural Problems of Local Institutions, Prior to the Decentralisation Policy of 1982

After the Independence of Bangladesh, an urgent need was felt by the government to decentralise the national administrative system. It was argued that the centralised system failed to address the economic problems of the country, and in particular that it failed to satisfy the basic needs of the population in rural areas. For 10 years, from 1972 to 1982, no major reforms had been made in the administrative system, to enable it to address the structural problems of local administrations. The concept of decentralisation remained in the official documents of the central government, but was never implemented.

6.1.1 Failure of the Mujib Government

It should be remembered that both the Awami League and its leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, had overwhelming popular support. It might have been possible for a government, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujib, to restructure the administrative system of the country and build democratic foundations. Unfortunately nothing was achieved during this period

to reconstruct the administration of the country, or to link development in rural areas to the formation of appropriate local institutions.

The first constitution of Bangladesh was adopted by the government, dominated by the Awami League, in 1972. It did provide the legal framework for creating a democratically decentralised administrative system in response to the developmental needs of the country.[1] This constitution held that :

"The state shall encourage 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" (GOB, 1988, p. 9).

But, although a strong commitment was made in the constitution to local representative institutions, the government failed at the time to make any notable progress in this respect. The government introduced an Ordinance on local government reforms in 1972. This Ordinance had no practical results in improving representation at local level, as required by the constitution. It merely changed the name of the Union Board into "Union Panchayat(Assembly)", and this was further changed into "Union Parishad (Council)" by a presidential decree in 1975.[2] In practice, there were no basic changes, nor any reorganisation in local administrations during the period of rule of the Awami

League. The heads of institutions at Union level had generally been elected by the people, prior to the independence of Bangladesh. As in the Pakistan period, all other local administrative tiers above this level were headed either by civil bureaucrats or by other appointed persons. The scheme for appointing "District Governors", which the Awami League introduced in the later phase of administration, was, in fact, an act of recentralisation of authority through district administrations. Thus the Mujib government did not address the need for substantial reconstruction of local administration, to deal with the growing problems of rural communities. The village level was untouched.

6.1.2   Failure of Self-Reliant Village Government Programme of the Zia Government

The first attempt to organize village communities came in June 1980, during presidency of Ziaur Rahman, through his programme of "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" ("Self-reliant Village Government"). This created popular institutions in sixty eight thousand villages of Bangladesh. Its origin can be traced back to the traditional concept of self-reliant rural institutions, when village adults, through a system of

village assemblies, dealt with almost all local problems. The eleven-member council of the Gram Sarkar (village-government) was represented by different occupational groups of the village and headed by a headman (Pradhan), called "Gram Sarkar Pradhan". The responsibility for selecting the members, and the Pradhan, of the Gram Sarkar was given to the villagers themselves. This system, however, faced a number of problems and ended with the assasination of President Zia in May, 1981.

The underlying objective of "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" was to organize people at grass-roots level to carry out development. There was, however, a strong political motive for the government, which aimed to establish a base for political support, especially for the newly formed political party (the Bangladesh Nationalist Party).[3] The Gram Sarkar programme faced strong opposition from traditional rural elites, who were the supporters of other political parties, especially of the Awami League. President Zia, therefore, had to look for a new group of leaders in rural villages. Swanirvar Gram Sarkars were organized in sixty eight thousands villages of Bangladesh within a short period of time. There was in consequence a worrying lack of preparation, both at national political levels, and in the communities themselves, at

the grass-roots level.[4]

The government did, however, utilise the experiences of the "Swanirvar Gram Andalon" (Self-reliant Village Movement), a programme which had operated on the private initiative of one individual, Chashi Mahbubur Rahman.[5] This programme had been going on for several years, without any financial support from the government. It was guided by a "self-help" phillosophy. It aimed to organise people at the village level to solve their own problems through their own initiatives, means and resources. The Zia government provided the office for Chashi Mahbubur Rahman to continue his private programme. Under this programme, people's associations in a large number of villages were organized to carry out village level activities.

The record of this programme shows that a good percentage of villages were successful in launching substantial village development works. The types of village development works the programme undertook were road improvements, the construction of culverts and sanitary latrines, the installation of tubewells, planting trees, drainage of water, education for adults, handicrafts, social security, and so on.

In the face of strong political opposition, and unrest in the armies and civil bureaucracy, Zia hurried to implement his programme of "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" to legitimise his capture of power and to create power bases at grass-roots level. With an Act passed in the parliament, he introduced the "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" and abolished the "Swanirvar Gram Andalon." In most cases, Gram Sarkars were formed in presence of village adults under the supervision of "Thana Circle Officer". This, however, did not prevent clashes between the existing elites and the emerging village leaders under the Gram Sarkar programme. The Gram Sarkars were given similar development responsibilities as were practised under the "Swanirvar Gram Andalon." The government also provided financial resources for these activities. But the "self-help" nature of the earlier programme was undermined by the introduction of governmental resources for village development works. In addition rural credits provided by the commercial banks were also supervised by the Gram Sarkars. This encouraged the traditional rural elites to manipulate the development resources under their control. Most of the officers of the Gram Sarkars were inexperienced in handling development programmes with highly diversified functions.

The record of the Gram Sarkars shows that the only notable success this programme achieved in an immediate sense, were improvements of village level roads. Studies of the Gram Sarkar show that the emerging rural leaders misused development resources. There were, however, some positive results of this movement. It did begin to break the traditional power structure in rural areas. Gradually, however, the traditional elites recaptured the control of resouces. The "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" programme on the whole failed to link village organizations within an institutional framework, which could function smoothly without undue interference.

6.2   The Current Practices of Decentralisation Policy

General Ershad assumed power in March 1982. His policy of administrative reforms came into effect in November 1982. The reforms were implemented between 1982 and 1984. The policy was adopted on the basis of a Report prepared by a committee, the "National Implementation Committee of Administrative Reorganisation/Reform" (NICAR).[6] The major decisions adopted by NICAR were largely administrative, but some of them had political implications. The decisions were related primarily to issues of administrative responsibility for development functions.

6.2.1   The Administrative Dimension of Current Decentralisation Policy at Upazila Level

The policy of administrative reforms which was adopted by the military government of General Ershad, devolved substantial administrative authority towards local governments.[7] The recommendation of the NICAR in this respect, was appropriate and effective, based on the spirit of devolution (Blair, 1985, p.1237). The major changes were that the reforms (i) abolished the administrative tier at Subdivision level, and upgraded

the Subdivisions into districts; and (ii) provided the
"Thana" level with greater authority for local
administration and development. The name "Thana" was
subsequently changed to "Upazila" (sub-district) to
link literally with the "Zilla" (district). The
"Upazila Administration" was given a democratic
foundation through the policy of administrative
reforms, and virtually all local administrative,
developmental and regulatory functions were entrusted
to this local administrative unit. The composition of
the "Upazila Administration" was based on the concept
of "a little republic", operating without any
parliamentary control. Commenting on this approach Ali
maintains that:

"It is in part a doctorinal approach, in part a
political approach and in part an administrative
approach"(1986b, p.1).

In the history of Bangladesh, only the
administrative reforms of 1982 have addressed the
problem of substantially reorganising local
administrative structures and hierarchies. Figure 6.1
shows the position of the "Upazila Administration" in
the national administrative hierarchies, and its links
with lower administrative tiers and village
communities. Bangladesh at present has a three-tier
local government system - the Zilla, the Upazila and
the Union, in place of the previous four-tier system.

Administrative structure
_____

Old	New
Dhaka	Dhaka
|	|
Division (4)	Division (4)
|	|
District (21)	
|	District (64)
	|
Subdivision (71)	
----------------------------	--------
|	|
Thana (470)	Upazila (460)
|	Thana (35)*
----------------------------	--------
|	|
Union (4300)	Union (4300)
|	|
--- -----------------------	--------
Revenue	Revenue
Village (68 thousands)	Village (68 thousands)
|	|
--- -----------------------	--------
|	|
Citizens (95 millions)	Citizens (95 millions)
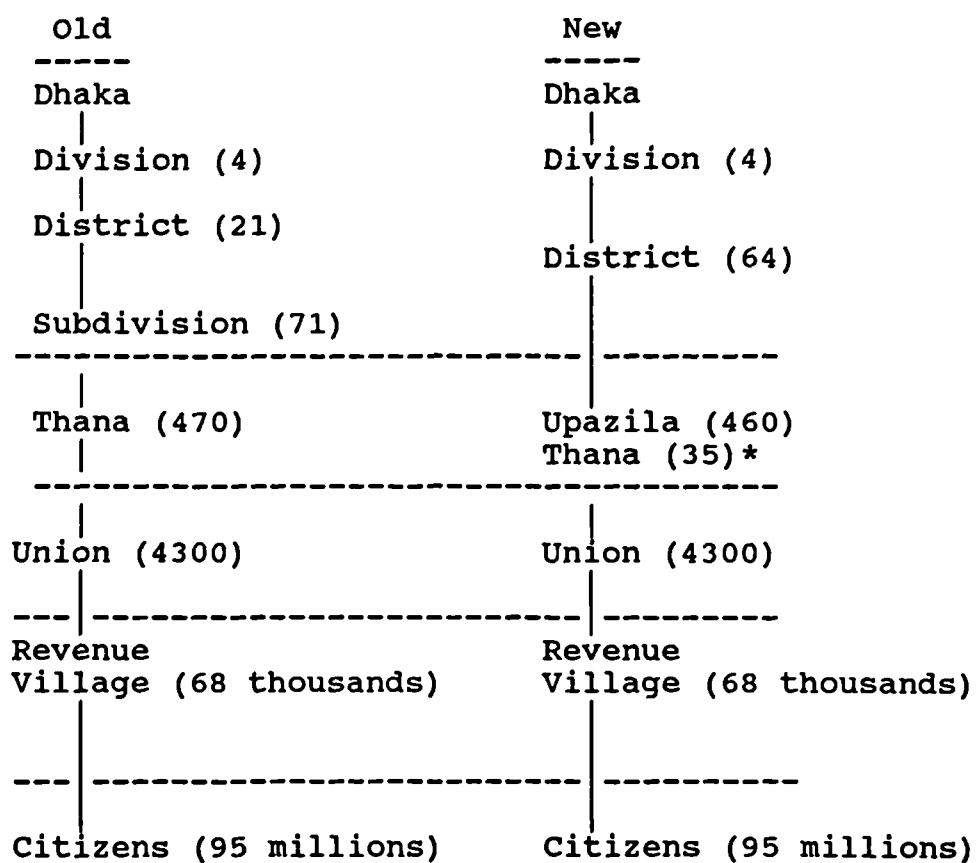
Notes : * Metropolitan Thanas are. not changed.

Numbers in parentheses indicate units in entire country.

Figure 6.1 : Hierarchies of administration in Bangladesh.

With the upgrading of the Subdivisions(Mohokumas) into districts (Zillas), the Upazilas (Sub-districts) have gained a higher status in local administration. The status of the Upazila has increased in terms of local administration, politics and development. The Upazilas are also significant for local development administration, in terms of geographical area, population and socio-political backgroud.

The geographical size of the average Upazila (an Upazila is slightly more than 100 square miles) is considered to be ideal for local level planning in Bangladesh. Without a network of modern means of transport and communications, the geographical size is beneficial both in terms of access for the central authorities to local community level institutions, and the access which the "Upazila Administration" has to the Union and village level institutions and communities.[8] But in terms of population (a Upazila has about 200,000 population), even a Upazila is quite large. Because of this some would argue that an administrative tier above this level, would be ineffective in dealing with rural problems.[9]

The decentralisation policy of 1982 broke the earlier tradition of absolute authority of the district administration, to control the local authorities below

its level. It was thus an important move towards reorganising the local administrations.[10] The major objectives of decentralisation at Upazila level, were :

(i)   To establish "Upazila Administration" as a strong local government, dealing independently with all local affairs; and

(ii)   To bring administration nearer to the people, and make it accountable to the people.

To fulfil the above objectives, administrative control was decentralised, substantially reorganizing the administrative structure at Upazila level (Figure 6.2). In the previous system, the technical officers had to listen to the "Thana Circle Officer" who was the coordinating authority at Thana (now Upazila) level, but they took orders from, and looked for career advancement to, the respective ministries in Dhaka. The devolution placed the entire Upazila staff (about 250 in numbers) under direct supervisory authority of the "Upazila Nirbahi Officer" (UNO), a civil bureaucrat with a status of former Subdivisional Officer. The real key to the administrative side of the Upazila enterprise is that the UNO and all technical officers are under the control and supervision not of the line ministries in Dhaka, but of the elected Chairman of the "Upazila Parishad." The actuating device is simple and eloquent : the Upazila Parishad Chairman writes the personnel evaluation report (called the annual confidential report, or ACR) of the UNO, and the UNO
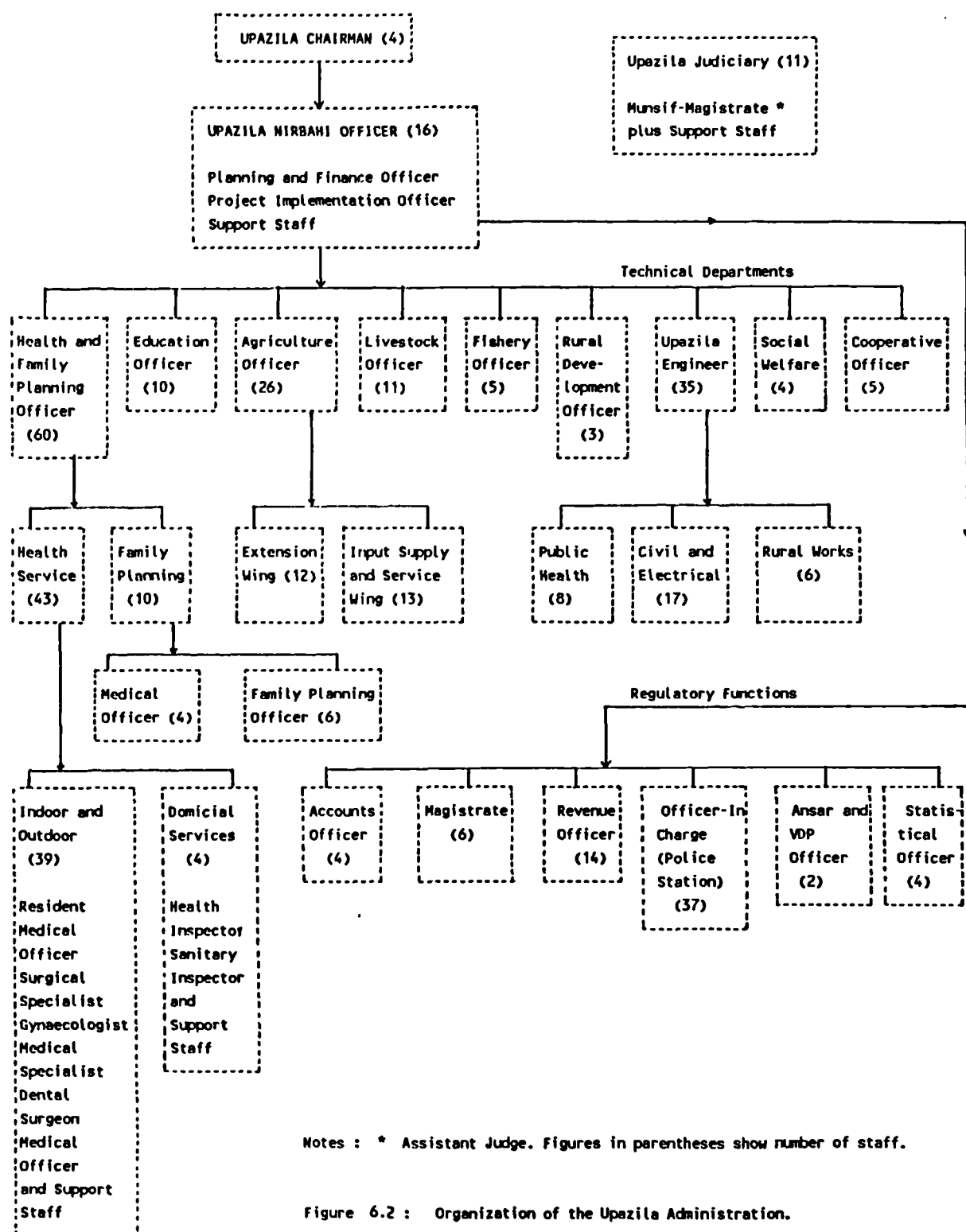
Notes : * Assistant Judge. Figures in parentheses show number of staff.

Figure 6.2 :   Organization of the Upazila Administration.

does the same for all the technical officers.

The democratic council, called the "Upazila Parishad", consists of the elected heads of about eight to ten Union Parishads contained within each Upazila (plus the elected heads of any municipalities within the Upazila). In addition, there are three appointed women members and one other appointed member (apparently to be a freedom fighter from the 1971 war) all with voting rights. The UNO and most of the other technical officers, are also the members, but have no voting rights, in contrast to all the earlier system, in which official members always had at least half the votes. The structure of the "Upazila Parishad" is shown in figure 6.3.

The current decentralisation policy has separately listed the functions of the "Upazila Administration" and that of the central government at Upazila level (Appendix 6.1). In place of earlier unitary control by the bureaucracy, the current administrative practice is dual in nature. The "Upazila Chairman" is a high authority, and coordinates and supervises the operation of the transferred functions to the "Upazila Parishad." To help in the execution of these functions, the UNO acts as the Staff Officer to the "Upazila Chairman", and the Secretary to the

Representative Bodies
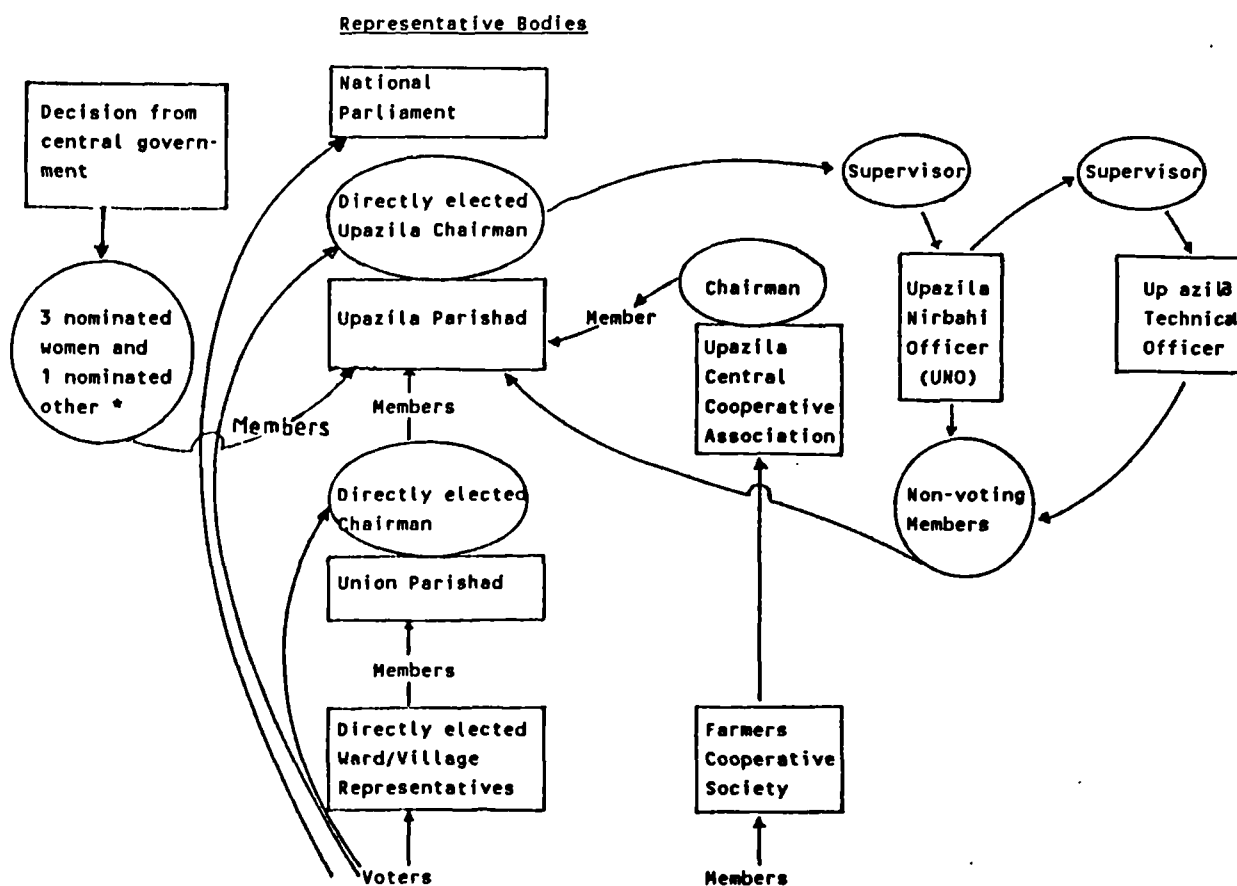
Note : *   Preferably the head of the Muktijodda Sangsad (Association of Freedom Fighters).

Figure 6.3 :   Structure of the "Upazila Parishad".

"Upazila Parishad." The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) has the authority to control the annual budget and supervise the regulatory functions. He is also a counter signatory to the "Upazila Chairman" in almost all the Upazila matters. This suggests that although the Upazila Nirbahi Officer is subordinate to the "Upazila Chairman", in practice he represents an authority closely parallel to the "Upazila Chairman" (Appendix 6.2). Such a distribution of power between the bureaucracy and the local political leadership suggests the likelihood of conflicts in development administration.

6.2.2   <u>Political   and   Social   Dimensions   of</u>
        <u>Administrative Decentralisation at Upazila</u>
        <u>Level</u>

In the history of Bangladesh, reforms in local government have taken place mainly in the context of a patron-client relationship, between the central government and local institutions.[11] The recent reforms are no exception. In view of the precedent set by General Zia, it is not surprising his successor General Ershad shortly after taking over power came up with his own programme of reforms in the local government system, inter-alia to provide a local basis of political support. The introduction of a democratic local institutions at the Upazila level implied a new power base, in control of development administration in rural Bangladesh.

The major administrative reform described in this chapter was adopted without any political consultation in parliament. Non-democratic moves towards administrative decentralisation always create suspicion and distrust among nationally-organised opposition political parties. They see in such a move, a non-democratic attempt to effect the politico-administrative structure. In Bangladesh, opposition

parties have argued that such fundamental changes should not have been brought about by the government, unless it were prepared (a) to lift martial-law, (b) to hold parliamentary elections, and (c) to recognize the constitutional principle of the sovereignty of parliament. The administrative reforms initiated by General Ershad appeared to undermine the very basis of democratic local government. The politicians opposed it on constitutional grounds. The bureaucracy attemted to resist on other grounds. The specialists argued that such a major programme of decentralisation would be difficult to implement without restoring political stability, and carrying out some pilot experiments to examine the feedbacks. The generalists took a moderate views on the issue.

The military government of Ershad implemented the reforms programme during the period, 1982-84, in the face of strong resistance, open or subdued, from different interest groups. The question of the legitimacy of the "Upazila Administration" is now over. The "Upazila Parishad Bill" was passed in parliament by the Ershad government after the general election in 1986. Before this, the elections of the local governments (Upazila and Union) had been held under martial-law. It is important to note in this context, that political parties in Bangladesh have never been

directly involved in local government elections in a formal manner. The Upazila elections were no exception. At the time of the polls in 1984, political activities were banned following the refusal of the opposition parties to participate in elections under military rule. The political parties opposed the polls at Upazila level on the grounds of principle. The election was held under martial-law in the country, and a large number of candidates contested the election for posts of Chairmen of the "Upazila Parishad". No political parties formally participated in the poll, but reports have it that the political parties indirectly supported their candidates.[12] It is, however, difficult to measure the level of political participation by the candidates in the poll. A study by S. Ali (1986) showed that a high number of candidates from different political parties contested for the post of "Upazila Chairman". This study shows that members of opposition political parties won in 55 percent of seats.

Although, the political opposition did not accept the elections to "Upazila Parishad" held under martial-law, it is likely that many opposition leaders wanted political parties to contest the local elections, in order to strengthen the opposition movement against the government's "Janadal Party". As a formal political competition between parties, the poll

could have been the first step towards democratic transition in the country. The Upazila poll, coming as it did without the formal participation of opposition political parties, had some adverse effects. A large number of elected "Upazila Chairmen" who had previously been members or supporters of the opposition parties, contested the poll as independent candidates. Most of these newly elected Upazila Chairmen gradually affiliated themselves with the ruling party or supported the political activities of the government. The elections, therefore, favoured General Ershad, in creating a political power base for his party.[13] The bureaucratic machinery was also active in this transformation. Development programmes, by increasing central funds at the local level, tended to accentuate the support of local representatives for national government.

Thus from the point of view of theory and practice of government, the Upazila concept had much stronger political implications than is apparent at first sight. It involved :

i) the allocation of resources of the state from the centre to the Upazila;

ii) division of functions of the state between the centre and the Upazila; and

iii) an elected local council without parliamentary control and supervision.

These are complicated issues of politics and government, and political parties could not remain unaffected by such moves.

6.2.3   The Upazila Chairman

The post of Upazila Chairman is important and lucrative. He is a symbol of local authority to the people. This political post has diminished the civil bureaucracy below the district level. The power and status of the Chairmen of the "Union Parishad" has also increased due to the provision of voting rights for them (as representative members) in the decision-making of the "Upazila Parishad."

The first term of the office for "Upazila Chairmen", ended with fresh elections held in March 1990. Unlike previous elections, this election was contested by party-based candidates. Together the opposition parties won the majority of seats, while the ruling party came with a majority in the 425 Upazilas in which the elections were held. The ruling party has

won 156 out of 425 Upazilas, amid reports that ruling party rigged votes.[14]

6.3   Development Planning in the "Upazila Parishad"

An important objective behind the creation of the "Upazila Administration" was to achieve development by utilising local expertise, skills and resources.[15] Technical staff who had been available at the Subdivision level are now engaged in development administration in the Upazilas. The hope is that they will spread expertise for efficiently carrying out rural development programmes, and rejuvenate a development spirit in the rural economy.

6.3.1   Scope of the "Upazila Parishad" in Local Development Planning

The list of functions of the "Upazila Parishad" suggests that a large volume of development works are to be carried out by the "Upazila Administration." The second schedule of the Local Government Ordinance, 1982, provided the "Upazila Parishad" with   the following development responsibilities[16] :

   i)   All development activities at the Upazila
        level, formulation of Upazila Development Plans
        and Programmes and implementation, monitoring
        and evaluation thereof.

  ii)   Promotion of agricultural activities for
        maximising production.

iii)   Promotion of livestock, fisheries and forestry.

iv)   Planning and execution of rural public works programme.

v)   Promotion of health, family planning and family welfare.

vi)   Promotion and encouragement of employment generating activities.

In addition, the Upazila Parishads are to be the instruments of decentralisation of development activities undertaken at the national level. Arrangements are made for training officials and staff, through organizations like the Rural Development Academies, Regional Public Administration Training Complexes (RPATCs), and Local Government Engineering Bureau (LGEB).[17] To make the "Upazila Parishad" functionally effective, guidelines from the central government have been issued from time to time, in the form of booklets, manuals, resolutions, orders and circulars. These guidelines highlight the strategy of Upazila development, and provide interesting insights into the working of the "Upazila Administration" as an authority in decentralised planning. The possible economic implications of the current decentralisation policy are considered more fully in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. See Huque, A.S. : <u>The problems of Local Government Reforms in Bangladesh : The Failure of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar</u> (Vancouber : The University of British Columbia, 1984).

2. See Huque, ibid.

3. For more information on "Gram Sarkar", see Ali, A.M.M.S. : "A Collection of Articles on Decentralisation", <u>The Journal of Local Government</u>, Special Issue on Upazila, (Dhaka : NILG, 1986a) pp.4-6.

4. The "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" was set up in isolation, and it lacked linkages with existing local government structures. It came into direct confrontation with the Union Administration, because the government ignored this organisation which had existed over a long period of time, i.e. about one hundred years. For more information, see Ali, A.M.M.S. (1986a), op cit.

5. Chashi Mahbubur Rahman was a civil servant in the administration during Pakistan regime. He also served the Bangladesh Government, before he took the initiative of "Swanirvar Gram Andalon". See Huque (1984), op cit.

6. See GOB : <u>Report of the Committee for Administrative Reorganisation/reforms, 1982</u> (Dhaka : GOB, 1982).

7. For details of the policy of administrative reforms and decentralisation, see Ali, A.M.M.S. : <u>Decentralisation, Development and Upazila</u> (Dhaka : NILG, 1986b).

8. Decentralisation, however, has favoured to a certain links between the Upazila Headquarters with the District Headquarters, and between the Upazilas themselves. See Hyder, Y. : <u>Development the Upazila Way</u> (Dhaka : The University press, 1986).

The present research in this thesis has not indicated any significant improvements in the rural transport system. Rather, sporadic and unplanned construction of unmetalled rural roads, bridges and culverts, has created other problems, such as localised floods by standing water, damage to fisheries and traditional irrigation facilities.

9. For details of local level planning in Bangladesh, see Hye, H.A. : Local Level Planning in Bangladesh (Dhaka : NILG, 1982).

10. It has failed, however, to break the traditional structures of rural elites and corrupt persons, who have always controlled power and resources at the local level.

11. See Ali, A.M.M.S. (1986b), op cit.

12. See Ali, ibid. pp. 84-85.

13. General Ershad has not been able to maintain large scale popular support. This his predecessor General Zia could do, within a comparatively short period. Zia's personal image proved to be an effective element in gaining popular support among the rural people. He was regarded as an honest person by the general population.

14. See Weekly Janamat, A Bengali Newsweekly (London : Janamat Publishers, 30 March - 5 April, 1990).

15. The first attempt to involve people in planning at the grass-roots level was made in 1952 with the introduction of Village Agriculture and Industrial Development (V-AID) programme. Under this programme, however, people's participation was not especially encouraging in the planning process. It was a begining. See Ali, H. : Development Planning at Upazila Level, (Comilla : BARD, 1987).

The rural development efforts gained momentum under the able leadership of Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan, an ICS Officer and the founding Director of BARD. On the basis of the field experiences in Kotwali Thana, Comilla, the government of the then Pakistan accepted and introduced a number of development programmes organised at the village and Upazila levels to serve the rural people.

16. See GOB : <u>An Interim Report on Upazila Development (1982-83 to 1985-86)</u>, (Dhaka : Planning Commission, GOB, 1986), p.2.

17. See GOB, ibid. pp. 2-3.

Chapter 7

ECONOMIC ASPECTS : DEVELOPMENT, DECENTRALISATION AND

BASIC NEEDS

7.1   The Economy of East Pakistan Under the Pakistan Regime

7.2   Failure of National Development Policies, 1971-90

7.3   Increasing Emphasis on Privatization

7.4   Emphasis on Local Level Development

7.5   Basic Needs   Strategies in the Development Plans of Bangladesh

7.6   The "Upazila Administration as an Instrument to Achieve the Objective of "Satisfaction of Basic Needs"

      7.6.1   The   Development Plan of the "Upazila Parishad" and Availability of Resources for Development

Seers (1972) argued that the questions to ask about a country's development are three : "What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality?" If all these problems have become less severe at any point in time, then the country may be said to have achieved some "development".[1] But the condition of the masses in developing countries is not only a matter of poverty and unemployment. It is also compounded by subordination, oppression, exploitation and disregard.[2] Development demands the elimination of fundamental socio-economic malaises.

The distribution of political power reflects and underwrites, the distribution of economic power (Colin Leys, 1975). In Third World countries, development involves, in the ultimate analysis, a "breaking and building" process - breaking the traditional power structure and ownership of resources, and building up a new social order where all persons belonging to different social classes and regions can participate meaningfully in both the productive and distributive processes (Emajuddin,1986).

Economic development in the sense that it involves all the people in productive activities

through a participatory system, is fundamentally
different from economic growth. In theories of growth,
the increase in GNP or per capita income is the main
focus, and the key assumption is that such an increase
will take care of poverty, unemployment, inequality of
income, etc. both at class and regional levels. In
economic development the main focus is on the
elimination of poverty and unemployment and on a
reduction in inequality. It is assumed that
"development" so defined will take care of the problem
of the productive capacity of the society. Economic
development demands that the poorer social classes, and
weaker regions, must have political power; otherwise,
redistribution is not likely to take place. Shourie has
argued that unless the power and interests associated
with a system of production are distributed among all
social classes and regions, even those economic
measures which are meant for the benefit of the poor
and weak may ultimately end up benefiting the rich and
the influential (Shourie, 1973, pp. 340-52).

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The small gap that existed between the two regions of Pakistan at the end of colonial rule, widened very rapidly over the years and in the 1960s took on a critical dimension.[3] A study by E. Ahmed (1980) provides a detailed account of the disproportionate measures which were adopted by the West Pakistani administrators, and which weakened the economy of Bangladesh.[4] The overall average annual growth rate in East Pakistan was 0.2 per cent in the 1950s and 5.4 per cent in the 1960s. In West Pakistan the overall annual growth rate was 3.6 per cent in 1950s and 7.2 per cent in the 1960s. These inequities in growth rates were also reflected in per capita income in the two regions. The per capita income of the two regions of Pakistan, are shown in Table 7.1. In East Pakistan, per capita income declined at the rate of 0.3 per cent per annum in the 1950s. There was an average increase of 2 per cent per annum in per capita income in the 1960s. In West Pakistan, per capita income increased at an annual average rate of 0.8 per cent in the 1950s and at 4.8 per cent per annum in the 1960s. In East Pakistan, the cost of living was 5 per cent to 7 per cent higher on average, comparing 1959/60 with 1968/69.

The interregional disparity in per capita income and output increased rapidly after Independence 1947. Disparity in the allocation of resources, both domestic and foreign, between the two regions, was an inevitable result of the development strategy which was adopted. The approach was based on the assumption of "one-economy". This was the basic feature of the development strategy adopted by Pakistan. Bureaucratic elites defended it on the grounds of efficiency. West Pakistan had a larger stock of social and economic capital in the form of power, transportation and communication facilities. It had a higher ratio of natural resources to population. West Pakistan not only hosted the central government, but held nearly 100 per cent of its key positions.[5] It was thus able to dominate East Pakistan and control the development resources available to the country. The two regions received a differential share of investment. The disparities in investment in the two parts of Pakistan, are shown in Table 7.2. This continued through the three five-year plans adopted from 1955/56.

Other policies disadvantaging East Pakistan were followed in respect of the allocation of foreign aid and loans, and nationalistic feelings among the mass of the population of East Pakistan began to take a strong political shape. This was reinforced by the

historic 'language movement' which began in 1952. The first Governor General of Pakistan attempted to make Urdu the only national language of Pakistan. This was halted in the face of massive political demonstrations in East Pakistan. The demand for political, administrative and economic autonomy grew and ended only with the Independence of Bangladesh, as a separate nation in 1971. Economic disadvantages were at the heart of the Independence movement.

7.2 <u>Failure of National Development Policies, 1971-90</u>

In the face of difficulties, both in the standard of living of the population in urban and rural areas, and in the instability of the political-administrative system, Bangladesh has employed several differentiated development strategies, since its Independence in 1971. None of the strategies has made perceptible inroads into the development needs and the demands of the population.

In the most recent strategy, an attempt has been made to <u>decentralise the country's administrative system</u>, in order to attain greater efficiency in national development, and to utilize local development potential and expertise. This strategy is discussed subsequently in the thesis. It is useful at this stage, however, to provide an overview of the major development plans and objectives as set out in the Five-Year Plans (FYP), which have governed the country since its Independence.

Bangladesh has so far launched three five-year plans and one two-year plan. The Third Five-Year Plan (TFYP) is due to end in June 1990. The country has favoured 'planned development' and its ultimate goal,

as indicated in the current TFYP of 1985-90, is the alleviation of poverty from the society within a quickest possible time-period. The objectives set in the TFYP are as follows :

1) Reduction of population growth;

2) Expansion of productive employment;

3) Universal primary education and human resource development;

4) Development of a· technological base for bringing about long-term structural change;

5) Food self-sufficiency;

6) Satisfaction of basic human needs;

7) Acceleration of economic growth; and

8) Promotion of self-reliance.

The Second Five-Year Plan (SFYP) of 1980-85 had similar objectives. The First Five-Year Plan (FFYP) of 1973-78, however, had a slightly different orientation. The main emphasis in that plan was placed on the gradual transformation of the society, using socialistic structures to alleviate poverty, maintain equity in distribution and minimize the gap between rich and poor.[6] Although the FFYP favoured an egalitarian approach in development, the target objectives of the plan were not achieved during the plan period. The FFYP was seriously affected by the initial stages of war recovery. Zillur Rahman (1986) maintains that because of the world wide energy crisis,

hyper inflation followed by global economic recession, the failure to mobilise internal resources and foreign assistance, and the brutal change of government in 1975, the FFYP remained an academic document rather than the means of achieving development objectives. The national goal of gradual transformation of the traditional Bengali society into a socialistic one, was shattered through the assasination of the country's first elected president, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975. After the fall of his government, the country invoked "planned development" but typically with a "mixed" character of economic policies and strategies.

Although Bangladesh has launched several FYPs, the progress in economic development has been slow. These plans have failed to achieve target goals and objectives. Economic growth rates in different plan periods are not encouraging (Table 7.3). The balance of trade and balance of payment have not been entirely satisfactory (Tables 7.4 and 7.5). Of course economists have long pointed to the failure of planning in the Third World. Therefore the Bangladesh experience is not unexpected. But there have been cautious indications, and warnings from different authorities and experts, that the centralisation tendency in the economic management of the country, is one of the major factors

accounting for such failures. Development has suffered at the implementation stages, because of weak administrative structures at the local level. Hence the government has tended over time to emphasize the need to decentralise the system of development administration in the country.

7.3   Increasing Emphasis on Privatization

Since the mid-1970's Bangladesh has been opening up its economy increasingly to industrialisation. This has also been one of the major areas where greater decentralisation has been taking place. Although it is not the aim of this research to study "privatization" as an issue in decentralisation, some pertinent background information is provided here. Table 7.6 shows that since 1979-80, private sector investment has increased.

In 1972, the bulk of industrial enterprises in Bangladesh were taken over and operated by the government. Within a few years, however, it was realised that the direct participation of the public sector in running industries was not a feasible proposition. Since 1975, government policy has been increasingly to dissociate itself from direct management of industrial enterprises, and increasingly to induce the participation of the private sector, for rapid industrialisation of the country (DI,1987). During the last decade, privatization of the industrial sector has expanded through various measures i.e, disinvestment and denationalisation of industries, withdrawal of ceilings on private investment,

simplification of procedures for industrial concessions, liberalisation of the import system, and a large package of fiscal incentives. The Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB) was established on 1st October,1976 under the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh Ordinance, 1976, with the objective of encouraging and broadening the base of investments. Help in developing capital market and mobilising savings was also sought (DI,1987). The establishment of ICB, therefore, aimed to provide institutional support, to meet the equity-gap of industrial enterprises with public company status.

The Foreign Private Investment (promotion and protection) Act 1980 ensures legal protection for foreign investment in Bangladesh (MI, 1980). Bilateral investment protection agreements have also been signed by the government with many countries. The 1980 Act eased the procedures for approval of foreign investment in Bangladesh. Under this Act, no prior approval is required for foreign investment in joint ventures if the total project cost does not exceed US¤ 3.3 million, and if foreign equity participation does not exceed 49 per cent.

To encourage industrialisation in the private sector, the government has created Export Processing Zones (EPZ). At present one EPZ is in operation near the biggest sea port of the country at Chittagong. The government wishes to set up another EPZ near to the international airport in the capital city. The EPZ in Chittagong provides the necessary fiscal and infrastructural facilities (such as duty free imports of capital goods, raw materials, duty free exports, factory buildings, warehouses, roads, power, water, telecommunications, etc.) for export-oriented enterprises (DI : 1980). To attract foreign investment in the industrialisation process of the country, 100 per cent private share was allowed in the EPZ.

In June 1982 previous industrial policies were reviewed by the government. In order to provide a new dimension and greater thrust to the industrialisation of the country, a new policy was formulated (MIC, 1982). The objectives of this policy, and the classification of industries under public and private sectors, are shown in Appendix 7.1. The new industrial policy placed emphasis on the simplification of procedures for private sector industries, and greater decentralisation of sanctioning powers. The previous sanction limit of the BSB and BSRS was increased at regional and district level, commercial banks were

authorised to finance small scale industries.

Under the new policy, particular emphasis was given to the simplification of licensing procedures for importing raw materials and machinery, improvements in the terms of debt-servicing, incentives for increasing domestic production and exports, promotion of sub-contracting to favour the growth of small industrial units as sub-contractors to the bigger ones, skill development in both public and private sectors and coordination of industrial policy, import policy and tariff rates and taxes. To accelerate the pace of industrialisation, the government announced the Industrial Policy of 1986, with some amendments to policies adopted in previous years. The objectives and strategies of this industrial policy are shown in Appendix 7.1. In the Industrial Policy of 1986, the role of the private sector has finally been recognised as predominent. Except in seven areas, private sector investment has been open, without any ceiling and with few formalities for registration. The policy has sought to encourage foreign investment in Bangladesh and also to support Bangladeshi ventures abroad in activities having a comparative advantage.[7]

The Industrial Policy of 1986 underlined the need for increasing the contribution from the

industrial sector to GDP. It also favours the expansion
of industries in rural areas, agrobased and agro-
supportive industries, to create employment
opportunities in rural areas.

7.4   Emphasis on Local Level Development

Local development plans and strategies, as parts of national development plans and strategies, are important. They provide guidelines for development at local, community and project levels. They expose people to "development". Local development plans can incorporate local hopes and aspirations, and create opportunities for development administrators and the people to participate and cooperate.

A local development framework is considered in this thesis to mean a strategy of development for a small area. In this study, the Upazila is a local development unit administered in Bangladesh at the present time by a local government system which is similar throughout the whole national territory. Local development is used in this study therefore to mean the development within a Upazila. The Upazilas are the places where local and national development activities converge.

In Bangladesh, formal recognition of the need and importance of local-level planning has been slow in coming.[8] This has perhaps been the case in many other developing countries. The adherence to conventional

approaches to national economic planning is very deep-rooted. In Bangladesh it was only in the Draft Second Five Year Plan, 1980-85 that local level planning was officially recognised as an important tool for accelerating the pace of economic development within the overall context of resource constraint, burgeoning unemployment and mass poverty (Hye,1982, p.16).[9]

Wisdom dictates that governments should expand their power base through participatory development, because development is much more than a matter of encouraging economic growth within a given societal structure (Hye,1982). It implies the "modernisation" of that structure, a process of social, economic and political change that requires the remaking of society in its most intimate as well as its most public attributes. The above implies that the economic is not a sufficient definitions of development. Rather, it involves the restructuring of relationships between government and people so that the mass of people can exercise some influence over national policies that affect their own lives.

7.5   Basic Needs Strategies in the Development Plans

of Bangladesh

Bhagwati (1988) argues that there are two economic solutions to poverty : (i) the indirect route, i.e., the use of resources to accelerate growth and thereby the incomes and the living standards of the poor; and (ii) the direct route, i.e., the public provision of minimum-needs-oriented education, housing, nutritional supplements and health, plus other significant components of the living standards of the poor. The first solution appears to have failed so far to improve the conditions of life of those of the population in extreme poverty in Third World nations. For the second, it requires large scale public resources targetted towards the poor, so far slow to come forward. We lack the knowledge to assert with any real confidence, that either of the two explanations is definitive.

The World Employment Conference of 1976 refrained from defining any universal standards of basic needs and emphasized that "the concept of basic needs is a country-specific and dynamic concept" (ILO, 1977, pp. 184-192).[10] The United Nations Secretariat (1981) defined basic needs as the conjoint set between

"objective" needs (identified by planners using technical criteria) and "subjective" needs (identified by the target population through detailed household surveys).[11] As an anti-poverty approach to economic development, the BNA can be effective in improving the quality of life. It does not necessarily come into direct conflict with the growth-led concept of development, but may sugget that structural readjustments are necessary.

Following an egalitarian philosophy, the First Five-Year Plan (1973-78) of Bangladesh was committed to minimising the gap between the richer and the poorer groups of the population.[12] A number of policies were adopted to achieve this objective.

The basic strategy was to concentrate on increasing output in those sectors of the economy using labour-intensive production methods. Agriculture and rural industries were the major targets. Reconstruction and rehabilitation works, which the country needed after the end of the war, also aimed to increase employment.

The plan aimed to raise as many as possible of the poorest people above the "poverty line", by providing essential consumer goods at reasonable

prices. Production plans were oriented towards the satisfaction of the demands of low-income groups. Low-income housing, cheaper varieties of textiles and various kinds of inexpensive consumption items were among these categories of goods.

The plan proposed to set up an institutional framework which would concentrate benefits in the hands of small farmers. It stressed the need for conscious and effective policies to avoid the repetition of past experience whereby richer farmers tended to benefit more than poorer farmers, from such programmes.

To ensure <u>food supplies and nutritional standards among the poor</u>, the plan relied upon food rationing and the distribution of essential goods through "fair price" shops at controlled prices. Because of high overhead costs in publicly-run distribution systems, controlled distribution was limited to a very few items which were in short supply and could be easily managed.

Particular attention was given in the plan to <u>social consumption</u>. Health and education were targetted for high rates of growth. Targets were set to increase hospital beds by decentralisation of health facilities, and higher enrolment in primary schools.

The plan, however, failed to achieve its objectives. The first five-year plan ended with a dismal picture of overall poverty in the economy. The government could not bring about any major structural changes in the economy, nor did it bring about any effective reforms in the political and administrative structures, which had so long been under serious criticism. The economy suffered from poor economic growth. Policies failed to provide basic needs. In the public sector there was poor managememt.[13] At the local level, the distribution of supplies of basic needs was inefficient. There was mismanagement and corruption. With unchanged local government structures, "relief committees" involving the local political leaders and workers, performed dishonestly.

After the dismal decade of 1970s, the 1980s began with the experiments of reforms in local government system with a new hope of development. The general tendency was to free the economy, with better management at local level. The Second Five Year Plan (1980-85) started in July 1980 with the recognition of "Swanirvar Gram Sarkar" as an important vehicle in running the rural economy, with effective distribution and management of resources at grass-roots level. The main focus of the Plan was to reduce poverty through

growth of income and employment. The Plan warned that even if national income were to be equitably distributed, it could hardly afford every individual a decent living. It recorded that more than three-fourths of the population could not afford to meet minimum dietary requirements. There had been a gradual decline in the per capita availability of many daily essentials like cereals, fish, protein, milk and pulses. The poorer section of the population, which earned its livelihood as wage labour, had also suffered most from high inflation rates.

The performance of the "Swanirvar Gram Sarkars" in grass-roots level development activities, was not altogether encouraging. After the take-over of power by the Ershad government, there was further emphasis on decentralisation policies, currently operating at Upazila level for development administration.

The Third Five Year Plan referred to the satisfaction of basic needs as follows :

"Access to food and other basic needs can be continuously ensured to the common man through productive employment. So with the expansion of productive employment output of basic needs will also need to be expanded, particularly of cereal food, fish, pulses, milk, edible oil, cotton textiles, drinking water and housing and health services" (GOB, 1985).

It was recognised in the Plan that while it is only growth of output that can provide a sound

foundation for welfare programme, it would be necessary to continue in the medium term, welfare programmes like food-for-work and vulnerable group feeding, because of the pervasive nature of poverty and the large scale malnutrition prevailing in the country.

Given the objective of increased employment and technological development, <u>education and skill formation</u> have been suggested as the key to alleviating poverty. It was felt that if the family income would be raised through improvements in productivity, it would be likely that school enrolment ratio would also go up. The Plan proposed to increase both development and current expenditures on education.

For <u>health improvement</u>, the Plan aimed to improve and extend health services in rural areas. There were other strategies in the Plan to support the basic needs approach in development. <u>Population control</u> has been an important strategy over the last two decades. The Plan claimed that population size and its growth have direct bearings on the poverty condition.

7.6   The "Upazila Administration" as an Instrument to Achieve the Objective of "Satisfaction of Basic Needs"

A fundamental question is whether the introduction of the "Upazila Administration" system in the country has been a move towards meeting the problems of the rural population. Some authors suggest that "reforms in the interest of the lower income brackets are often no more than bribes to conceal much bigger advantages given to the higher brackets".[14] It is imperative to see whether resources made available to vulnerable groups, through basic needs programmes, actually reach them. Or are they captured by those, traditionally, with influence and power? Falk (1984) argues that change in social, and political organisation, which aim to close the gap between the rich and the poor, are complex, difficult, and perhaps impossible.[15]

Whilst earlier attempts at reforming the administration in Bangladesh, have failed to improve the overall quality of life at grass-roots level, the experiment with the "Upazila Administration" has been different and distinctive. The change of status of the local government system at Upazila level, from a field

agent of the central government, to something akin to "caretaker" of local affairs, has definitely provided an ample opportunity to address local problems, more so than at any other time before. The provision of an independent decision-making authority within the "Upazila Parishad", with greater power for the elected representatives to set priorities in selecting development schemes, and placement of senior tecnical officers and staff under the supervision of a democratic council, are some of the opportunities that can be utilised to achieve the goal of alleviating poverty.

Under present provisions, however, the "Upazila Parishad" has insufficient leeway to allocate resources according to its priorities. The allocation of resources between different sectors of the economy, follows national development priorities. Since, however, national development policy follows an anti-poverty approach, it is likely that in principle at least "Upazila Administrations" will adopt policies which are consistent with the objectives of satisfying basic needs.

7.6.1   The Development Plan of the "Upazila Parishad"

and Availability of Resources for Development

Like the national government, the "Upazila Parishad" formulates five-year and annual development plans, in its development strategies.   For financing development plans the "Upazila Parishad" depends on central grants, made available annually. There is also a flow of other resources for development at Upazila level, e.g. NGO projects, and special and emergency funds from the central government. These resources may vary from year to year, depending on the circumstances.

The allocation of the development assistance fund to the Upazila Parishads is based on four criteria, population, area, extent of backwardness, and performance. Under the present provision, all sectoral funds are placed at the disposal of the "Upazila Parishad." Following the guidelines of the central government, the "Upazila Parishad" allocate resources for development programmes, and evaluates the progress of individual projects, following a project proforma.

It has also been decided that the "Upazila Parishad" may create its own sources of income, by

undertaking income-generating projects. But an Interim Report of the Planning Commission recorded that :

"Efforts of the Upazila Parishads to mobilize local resources for financing a part of their development programme are not yet perceptible" (GOB, 1986).

The "Union Parishad" has some incomes from its own sources, in the form of taxes. The collection of such taxes, however, has never been effective in the face of growing poverty in the rural villages. Growing poverty in rural areas is the reason why the collection of such taxes has gradually deteriorated. The "Union Parishad" has depended traditionally on central grants for carrying out its development programmes. The decentralisation of administration at Upazila level, therefore, has not implied any significant impact on the mobilisation of local resources.

Tables - Chapter 7

Table 7.1   :   Per capita income in East Pakistan and
                  West Pakistan at 1959/60 prices.

(In Rupee)*

Year	East Pakistan	West Pakistan	East-West disparity ratio in percentage
1949/50	287	338	1.18
1959/60	277	367	1.32
1969/70	331	533	1.61

Note : * The monetary unit of Pakistan currency.

Sourch : Ahmed, E., 1980.

Table 7.2 : Per capita revenue and development expenditure in East
Pakistan and West Pakistan, 1950-70 at 1950/51 prices.

Year	Revenue expend- iture (crore)*	Develo- pment expen- diture (crore)	Outside Plan exp (crore)	Total (crore)	Development expenses as percentage of all pak. total	Average population in milion	Percapita estimate (in rupees)	
							Dev.	Rev.

East Pakistan:

Year	Revenue	Develo	Outside	Total	Dev%	Avg pop	Dev	Rev
1950/51- 54/55	171	100	-	271	20	45.3	22.08	37.75
1955/56- 59/60	254	270	-	524	26	52.0	51.92	48.86
1960/61- 64/65	434	925	45	1404	32	59.4	163.30	73.06
1965/66- 69/70	648	1656	-	2141	36	69.0	240.00	70.29

West Pakistan:

Year	Revenue	Develo	Outside	Total	Dev%	Avg pop	Dev	Rev
1950/51- 54/55	720	400	-	1129	80	36.1	108.03	201.94
1955/56- 59/60	898	757	-	1655	74	42.3	178.96	212.26
1960/61- 64/65	1284	1840	211	3355	68	49.1	421.79	261.51
1965/66- 69/70	2223	2610	360	5195	64	57.0	521.05	390.35

Note : * 1 Crore = 10 Million

Source : Ahmed, E., 1980.

Table   7.3 :   Microeconomic changes in the economy of
Bangladesh over different plan periods.

Major indicators		First Five Year Plan (1973-78)	Two Year Plan (1978-80)	Second Five Year Plan (1980-85)
(i)	GDP growth (%)	6.1	3.4	3.8
(ii)	Export growth (%)	1.8	3.2	4.9
(iii)	Import growth (%)	0.5	12.3	4.5
(iv)	Foreign aid growth (%)	-2.1	2.3	3.3
(v)	Invesment as a % of GDP terminal year	13.5	15.9	17.3
(vi)	Saving as a % of GDP terminal year	4.6	4.2	4.2
(vii)	Tax-GDP Ratio (Terminal Year)	7.5	8.0	8.2

Source : GOB, 1985, P.5.

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Table   7.4   :   Balance of trade of Bangladesh.

(In milion Taka)*

Year	Export	Import	Balance	Import as % of Export
1973-74	2,974	7,320	-4346	246.13
1974-75	3,061	10,842	-7781	354.20
1975-76	5,552	14,703	-9151	264.82
1976-77	6,670	13,993	-7323	209.79
1977-78	7,178	18,216	-11038	253.78
1978-79	9,632	22,073	-12441	229.16
1979-80	10,997	30,525	-19528	277.58
1980-81	11,484	37,288	-25804	324.70
1981-82	12,387	38,729	-26342	312.66
1982-83	18,016	45,265	-27249	251.25
1983-84	20,136	50,874	-30738	252.65
1984-85	26,225	68,263	-42038	260.30
1985-86	27,396	62,929	-35533	229.70
1986-87	33,682	68,496	-34814	203.36
1987-88	41,161	91,588	-50427	222.51

Note : * The monetary unit of Bangladesh Currency.

Source :   B.B.S., GOB, 1989.

Table 7.5 : Balance of Payments of Bangladesh.

(In Crore Taka)*

Items	1978-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84	84-85	85-86	86-87	87-88
Current Account :										
Imports (f.o.b)	2307.8	5257.2	3925.5	4834.9	5172.9	5408.0	6122	6353.8	7185.2	8393.2
Exports (f.o.b)	892.3	1150.8	1334.4	1454.5	1860.6	2051.5	2521	2716.6	3064.3	3704.5
Freight and Insurance :										
(a) On Import	279.1	434.1	443.1	556.0	586.4	610.7	708	711.3	778.2	939.6
(b) Earned	-	-	-	-	-	6.1	6	7.6	6.8	5.5
(c) Net	-279.1	-434.1	-443.1	-556.0	-586.4	-604.6	-702	-703.7	-771.4	-934.1
Other goods and services net :	7.2	-16.7	61.1	54.5	65.8	72.4	50	-4.9	-97.6	-34.0
Balance :	1687.4	-2557.2	-2973.1	-3881.9	-3832.9	-3888.7	-4252	-4345.8	-4989.9	-5656.8
Investment income net	-33.5	22.0	-37.0	-194.8	-259.0	-160.8	-172	-376.7	-372.6	-415.4
Transfer by Bangladesh nationals	217.7	325.0	619.6	772.5	1422.4	1376.2	1034	1569.3	1927.4	2461.1
Grants Donations : cash or kind	988.0	1129.0	1099.9	1359.8	1859.5	1840.9	1828	1639.0	2032.4	2578.5
Deficit/ Surplus current Account	-515.2	-1081.2	-1290.6	-1944.4	-810.0	-832.4	-1562	-1514.2	-1402.7	-1032.6

Capital Account :

Aid and loan net	681.6	803.7	931.8	1487.0	1107.6	1385.5	1209	1682.8	1667.7 1474.6
(a) Long term net	714.3	828.5	916.2	1070.6	1440.7	1213.2	1269	1515.8	1887.7 1900.2
(b) Short term net	-33.7	-24.8	15.6	416.4	-333.1	172.3	-60	167.0	-220.0 -425.6
Other capital transaction	-43.9	-252.8	287.7	294.3	-457.4	-463.3	363	-185.1	-127.9 -405.1
Errors and ommisions	52.0	52.1	77.1	163.1	159.8	-89.8	-10	16.5	-137.1 -36.9
Surplus on capital budget	515.2	+1081.2	+1296.6	+1944.4	810.0	832.4	1562	1514.2	1402.7 1032.6

Note :*1 Crore = 10 Millions.

Source : B.B.S, GOB, 1986; & B.B.S., GOB, 1989.

Table 7.6 :   Phasing of financial outlay,1973-74 to 1989/90
                  (Taka in Crore,1 crore= 10 milion).

Year	Total	Public sector	Privater sector	Private Sector as % of total
1973-74	595	525	70	
1974-75	725	645	80	
1975-76	870	775	95	
1976-77	1040	925	115	
1977-78	1225	1082	143	
Sub-total	4,455	3,952	503	11.3
1978-79	-	-	-	
1979-80	2717	2082	635	23.37
1980-81	2962	2112	850	
1981-82	2893	1913	980	
1982-83	3404	2144	1260	
1983-84	3645	2235	1410	
1984-85	4296	2696	1600	
Subtotal	17,200	11,100	6,100	36.16
1984-85	6209	3232	1977	
1985-86	6385	3825	2560	
1986-87	7010	4360	2650	
1987-88	7686	4970	2716	
1988-89	8419	5610	2809	
1989-90	9100	6235	265	
Subtotal	38,600	25,000	13,600	35.23

Source : GOB, 1973, p. 35; GOB, 1983, P. 50.

NOTES

1. For details, see Seers, D. : "What are We Trying
to Measure?" in <u>Measuring Development : The Role
and Adequacy of Development Indicators</u> (London :
Frank Cass, 1972).

2. See Leys, C. : "The Politics of Redistribution",
<u>IDS Bulletin</u>, No. 2 (Sussex : University of
Sussex, 1975), p. 6.

3. For details of segmented economic growth and
development during the Pakistan period, 1947-
1971, see Ahmed, E. : <u>Bureaucratic Elites in
Segmented Economic Growth : Bangladesh and
Pakistan</u> (Dhaka : The University Press, 1980).

4. For about two decades during the Pakistan
period, economic development was influenced
by the Harrod-Domar growth model. For more
information on economic development during
the Pakistan period, see Ali, S.M. & others :
<u>Decentralisation and People's Participation
in Bangladesh</u> (Dhaka : NIPA, 1983).

5. See Ahmed (1980), op cit.

6. The party of the Awami League which governed the
country until August 1975, did not envisage
bringing about significant changes in societal
structure. The Awami League had no such
programme. Politically it represented rich
businessmen (though not the rich industrialists)
and the petty burgeois of the society. For more
information, see Hauque, A. :"Politics in
Bangladesh : Conflict and Confusion", <u>Politics,
Administration and Change</u>, Vol.X, No. 1&2
(Dhaka : Centre for Administrative Studies,
1985).

7. The government of Bangladesh has recently
established the Investment Board with greater
authority in decision-making, to ease the process
of private investment.

8. See Hye, H.A. : <u>Local Level Planning in
Bangladesh</u> (Dhaka : NILG, 1982).

9. Also, see GOB : <u>The Second Five-Year Plan 1980-85</u>
(Dhaka : GOB, 1983).

10.   See ILO : <u>Employment, Growth and Basic Needs</u> (New York : Praeger, 1977).

11.   See Weigel, V.B. : "The Basic Needs Approach : Overcoming the Poverty of Homo Oeconomicus", <u>World Development</u>, Vol. 14, No. 12 (London : Pergamon, 1986)

12.   See GOB : <u>The First Five-Year Plan 1973-78</u> (Dhaka : GOB, 1973).

13.   The Awami League nationalised 85% of industries and 90% of foreign trade. It nationalised banks, insurance companies, a major portion of inland and coastal shipping, airways, and took over 60,000 abandoned houses. It put a ceiling of Taka (monetary unit of Bangladesh currency) 2.5 millions on private investment. For more information, see Hauque (1985), ibid. pp. 6-7.

14.   For details, see Myrdal, G. : <u>Beyond the Welfare State : Economic Planning in the Welfare States and its International Implications</u> (London : Gerald Duckworth, 1960).

15.   For details, see Falk, R. : "Satisfying Human Needs in a World of Sovereign States : Rhetoric, Reality and Vision", in Wilber, C.K. (ed.) : <u>The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment</u> (London : Random House, 1984).

PART III

THE IMPACT OF DECENTRALISATION : EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

A Introductory Note to Part III

The objectives of the fieldwork were twofold :

(i) To obtain information from those who are directly involved in the "Upazila Administration", plus local elites, who could be expected to be more knowledgeable about the impact of decentralisation of the "Upazila Administration". The intention was to see if, in the opinion of professionals and elites, decentralisation had encouraged the creation of local democratic institutions to encourage participation in local development.

(ii) To gather information from rural people, for whom it is claimed that current decentralisation policy in Bangladesh has been actively sought. Particular attention was paid in the fieldwork to the need to listen to the rural poor, to gain information about problems associated with their basic needs, and to see whether decentralisation has brought a better hope of improving their condition.

Two forms of data collection corresponded to the two main objectives of the thesis. Two sets of

questionnaires were used in the fieldwork (Appendix 8.1). The fieldwork was carried out between December 1988 and March 1989, in the most appropriate season. Climatic factors had to be taken into account considering the limited time and resources for the research. The questionnaire covered three Upazilas : Singair (Manikganj District), Jhikargacha (Jessore District) and Madhupur (Tangail District). Maps in Appendix 8.2 show the geographical locations of the three Upazilas, which were selected as being representative of the larger country. The sample did not, however, include the hilly parts of the country, inhabited predominantly by the tribal population.

In chapter 4 a brief preliminary discussion can be found of the field survey using the questionnaires. More detailed information on fieldwork is provided here. Tables showing the results of the questionnaire survey are presented in Appendix 8.3. Some summary results are discussed here. Some information from other sources, for example from the Upazila Parishad office, and published statistics, are also provided to further justify some of the arguments on the impact of decentralisation.

Chapter 8

THE IMPACT OF DECENTRALISATION ON INSTITUTION-BUILDING FOR DEVELOPMENT AT LOCAL LEVEL :   THE FIELDWORK RESULTS

This chapter looks at the impact of decentralisation on institution-building at the local level. The empirical work was guided by three aspects of decentralisation. To recall, these are (i) administrative; (ii) political and social; and (iii) planning and decision-making, based mainly on a survey using Questionnaire A. The survey using this set of questionnaires was difficult. The questionnaire had many sensitive questions. Respondents, especially government officials, had a tendency to bypass direct answers. They were willing, however, to discuss informally aspects of decentralisation involving the "Upazila Administration". This helped in the gathering of opinions on the impact of decentralisation. Strenuous efforts and patience were required to complete this survey over period of about five months. I am confident that the respondents provided reliable information.

In all, 84 respondents were interviewed in three Upazilas. In each Upazila, the sample respondents included 12 government officials, 8 elected representatives (1 nominated member was included), and 8 persons selected from the local elites. Selection of local elites faced the problem of geographical concentration at or arround the Upazila headquarters,

because of the limited means of an individual
researcher to cover a wide geographical area in rural
areas where poor transport facilities hinder movements.
However, this sample represented different occupational
groups, including lawyers and political leaders of the
ruling and opposition parties. Informal discussions
were held with many others.

An Overview

Questionnaire A was used to gather information
from the administrators, representatives and local
educated elites in order to examine, in their opinion,
the effectiveness of the "Upazila Administration" in
local development. In theory substantial power and
authority has been provided for this local government
unit, under the current decentralisation policy. There
is a move away from the traditional power base at the
district level, to the Upazila level. In theory the
"Upazila Administration" is more independent than the
District Administration was, since the former is headed
by an elected Chairman, whereas the latter was headed
by a person nominated by the central government. The
dependence of the "Upazila Administration" on the
central government, on the face of it, is mainly
financial. Authorities can, however, raise revenue from

some sources which were previously controlled by higher authorities. Discretion is also given to create new sources of income.

The question is whether local democratic structures are helping to create local institutions which are responsive to local problems? How are they performing and what are the implications? Responses to these questions in the Questionnaire were generally negative. Many problems were cited by the respondents, and are discussed in this Chapter. It appears that decentralisation has created problems. One element should not be forgotten. The policy of decentralisation has been implemented comparatively recently and this gives only a short period in which to examine its impact. Though there are many problems in the immediate effects of decentralisation, there is, however, demand for the continuation of this local democratic structure. Some positive signs are reflected in other sources of information used in Chapter 9.

Though there is, justifiably, great controversy on the reliability of opinion survey data in the Third World context. The present researcher is confident that the steps which were taken to ensure reliable results enable him to draw valid conclusions from the fieldwork study.

The answers to the questions are discussed under the following headings : administrative, political and social, and planning and decision-making.

Administrative Aspects of Decentralisation

a) Is the new Upazila Administration system better than the previous Thana Administration system?

b) Is the Upazila Administration in practice an independent authority for development administration?

c) Is the policy of decentralisation suffering from dual loyalties, conflicts and corruption?

d) Does the Upazila Administration have adequate cooperation and coordination for local development?

e) Have the rural people benefitted from decentralisation policy?

Political and Social Aspects of Decentralisation

a) Has the policy of decentralisation improved democratic practice at local level?

b) Has the current practice of decentralisation had positive impact on political participation?

c)   Has the current practice of decentralisation involving the Upazila Administration created new political and social pressure groups at local level?

d)   What has been the effect of decentralisation on social transformation?

e)   Does the Upazila Judiciary benefit rural people?

Aspects of Planning and Decision-making

a)   Has there been an improvement in the efficiency of development planning in the Upazila Administration?

b)   Has the investment policy of the Upazila Administration received priority in local development?

c)   Has decentralisation improved the rural development process?

d)   Are there any major problems in the development planning process?

e) Do NGOs perform better than public authorities in rural development?

8.1   The Impact of Decentralisation on Administration

a)   On the question of whether the "Upazila Administration" system is better than the previous "Thana Administration" system, the views of the respondents are shown in Table 8.1. It is evident that there were some problems with the previous "Thana Administration" system. Cited as problems were the lack of authority for development, insufficient staff, and limited resources. The majority (52%) of the respondents were of the opinion that of these, the shortage of staff was the main problem in the "Thana Administration" system. However, the respondents stressed some good aspects of the "Thana Administration". The staff of the Thana Administration were generally regarded as being more honest and neutral than in the new "Upazila Administration".

On the issue of viability for local development, 86 percent of the respondents believed that the "Upazila" is the most appropriate level for local development in Bangladesh. Although this legitimises the claim that the present system is better than the previous one in terms of local geographical unit of administration, in practice the "Upazila

Administration" has not substantially changed
development prospects. 54 percent see moderate gains
for local development. In the subsequent discussions,
it will be evident however, that the "Upazila
Administration" has generated some new dimensions for
development administration in Bangladesh, though it is
difficult to see precise gains.

b) Views on the independence of the "Upazila
Administration" are provided in Table 8.2. The
independence of the local administration under a policy
of devolution is a fundamental issue. Devolution gives
more independent authority for local development.
The national government claims that the "Upazila
Administration" is independent in decision-making. The
fieldwork results show a mixed response to this issue.
The majority (76%) of the respondents agree that the
present system provides an independent authority in
decision-making for development. About 60 percent
maintains that the "Upazila Administration" is a
decentralised authority. But opposite views are also
notable in the results. The results of an alternative
question as to whether the "Upazila Administration" is
a bottom-up approach of the central government, shows
that more than 40 percent of the respondents see the
present system as a bottom-up approach of the <u>central
government</u>. The majority of the respondents maintained

that there are significant external influences on the decision-making of the "Upazila Parishad". These are, however, not always direct or open.

The central government does not in practice consult the "Upazila Administration" in regard to any changes of policies at the Upazila level. A large majority (88%) of the respondents said that in practice, the "Upazila Parishad" has no power to reject any central decisions. Local representatives are, however, gradually becoming aware of these issues. New party-based Upazila elections may help the representatives to exert increasing pressure on the central government for greater independence of this democratic structure.

c) Table 8.3 presents information on whether the policy of decentralisation is suffering from dual loyalties, conflicts and corruption. The fieldwork results indicate that the "Upazila Administration" is dual in nature with serious conflicts between the local political leadership and the bureaucracy.[1] A large majority of respondents (88%) are of the opinion that there are conflicts between the government executives and the elected representatives. Views of the precise nature and origins of these conflicts vary among respondents, depending on whether they are

administrators, representatives or local people. Conflicts in the main, involve a fight for power and status in the local administration, and the desire to win in the decision-making process of the "Upazila Parishad". Conflicts over ideological issues or professional ethics are not, however, prominent. Conflicts also exit among the elected representatives.[2]

Of late the local Parliament Members have been given some authority to grant licences at the Upazila level. People believe that this has created further problems. Parliament Members are now surrounded by groups with vested interests. Many believe that there is also a tendency towards recentralisation, more control of the "Upazila Administration" by the national government and its political organs, in order to make political gains. This undermines the importance of the "Upazila Chairman" and may also dissatisfy other elected representatives and Upazila level officers. Moreover, this may generate group interests and conflicts damaging to local democracy.

The Upazila Chairman is the head of the institution and the Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO) is his subordinate in status. There is serious conflict between these two. They fight to capture power

and status, the outcome of which is detrimental to local development administration. This conflict is due to the distribution of authority between them. Both hold power, and though the UNO is a subordinate to the Upazila Chairman, he has a tendency to prove his administrative superiority. It appears to the present researcher that for a smooth functioning of local development activities, it is important that these two key persons remain in close and cordial relationship. This in turn will influence others to be in accord and have good relations. This should bring greater cooperation and trust, which is lacking currently among the officers and elected representatives. There is also the need for a strong Upazila Chairman, qualified in the management of the local democratic structure. Some officials of the "Upazila Administration" argued that the chairman of the "Upazila Parishad" should not be an elected person. Views on this, however, differ between Upazilas. Officials in one of the three Upazilas were of the opinion that the Chairman should not be elected. Respondents in that Upazila reported that the Chairman adopted one-man rule. In that Upazila, the representatives of the "Upazila Parishad" had passed a resolution of no-confidence in the Chairman and had requested central authority twice to remove the "Upazila Chairman". No decision was given by the central authority, either to continue or

discontinue his office. This generated anger among the representative members of the "Upazila Parishad", since the Upazila Chairman, under such circumstances, has continued in office. It was reported that the Upazila Chairman was an influential member of the ruling party, and considered himself the sole authority for "Upazila Administration", especially in development matters. But to maintain greater political accountability and obligation in the local administration, it is necessary that appropriate actions are promptly adopted by the national government.

There is a gap in the conceptualisation of the duties of the Upazila Chairmen, in that the civil bureaucrats maintain that under the decentralisation policy, the Upazila Chairman is the chairman of the "Upazila Parishad", which comprises the regular government officials, elected representatives and nominated candidates. But Upazila Chairmen consider themselves Chairmen of the Upazila, an all-embracing term which leads to problems. The respondents, however, were of the opinion that a democratic system in the Upazila Administration" must be welcomed by all, and that the Upazila Chairman and other elected representatives should be honest in their duties. The current practice, however, has not yet ensured such a democratic system, and the actions of the elected

representatives are also not beyond suspicion.

Some officials have argued that the existing power and authority of the UNO should be reduced. In their opinion, there is undue interference by the UNO. It is notable in this context that during the implementation of decentralisation policy, strong opposition came from the technical departments against their placement under the control of the UNO, who is a person of the general administrative cadre.

The "Upazila Administration" is suffering from corruption. A large majority (89%) of respondents believe that corruption in different forms has substantially increased in the "Upazila Administration" compared to previous "Thana Administration" period. These corrupt practices in the delivery of administrative services are largely responsible for conflicts in the "Upazila Administration". The majority (71%) of respondents believe that corruption mainly involves the misuse of development funds. It is necessary that the increased flow of resources are efficiently utilised in local development.

d) The "Upazila Administration" has inadequate cooperation and coordination for local development. The "Upazila Administration", being a corporate

authority, requires cooperation and coordination for development programmes. The survey shows that the current decentralisation policy has not been successful in overcoming these shortcomings.[3] The respondents expressed the view that lack of cooperation among different functionaries is at present the main problem of the "Upazila Administration". About 65 percent of respondents believe that there are no coordination problem within a particular department. But about 70 percent of the respondents believe that there are coordination problems in programmes which involve more than one department. This indicates that the officers are not in good relations and they have vested self-interests.

e) The poor has gained little from decentralisation policy (Table 8.4). The current decentalisation policy has merely brought institutional changes to the rural communities. Respondents could not specify any significant achievements of the current decentralisation policy which would have direct impact on the satisfaction of the needs of the people, particularly those of the rural poor. They maintain that decentralisation also has not significantly improved the ideological and professional morale of the staff of the "Upazila Administration", to work for the benefit of the poor.

The majority of respondents, however, regard decentralisation as a significant achievement. But very few were optimistic about the direct benefit of the "Upazila Administration" to the rural poor, in terms of basic needs, in short-run. The staffs of the "Upazila Administration" are not seriously committed to work for the benefit of the people. A similar proportion of respondents (64%) were sceptical about the commitment of staff to their professional duties.

Some of the Upazila level officials reported on the insincerety of the staff in the "Upazila Administration". They maintain that the "office of the Upazila Administration starts on Sunday and ends on Wednesday". In Bangladesh, the official weekly holiday is on Friday. How can this happen? The answer is as follows. The heads of most departments worked previously at the district headquarters. Some of their families live in the district headquarters, though there is family accommodations available in the "Upazila Parishad". Department heads try to spend more time with their families, and somehow convince the head of the institutions to allow this. The arrangement appears to be mutual acceptable, though some individuals do not like such practices. It demonstrates the fact that there is lack of commitment to official duties among many staff.

One Upazila was, however, found to be better in this respect. In the Upazila Jhikargacha, there was better leadership by the Upazila Chairman. Led by an opposition local political leader, this Upazila was judged to have the best performance in the division, after an interim evaluation by the government. This suggests that if local political leadership is improved, there is the possibility that local democratic structures may give better results.

8.2   <u>Political and Social Aspects of the Impact of</u>
      <u>Decentralisation</u>

        a)   Information on the issue of democratic
practice in local administration is provided in Table
8.5. About 70 percent of respondents are of the opinion
that the present democratic practices of the "Upazila
Parishad" should continue. It is evident also that the
majority of the respondents are satisfied with the
present system at Union and village levels. But as they
expressed it, democratic practices are not yet ensured
in local administrations at Upazila level. Increased
efforts are necessary to improve the conditions of
democratic practice in the local administration. It is
important to make administration accountable to people.

        b)   The current practice of decentralisation
has not had any significant positive impact on
political participation (Table 8.6).[4]   The majority
of the respondents (51%) is of the opinion that
political participation has decreased since the policy
of decentralisation was implemented.[5]   22 percent of
respondents believe that political participation has
increased, and another 26 percent regard it as being
unchanged.   People in general believe that
decentralisation has not improved the local political

environment.

In the process of fieldwork the present researcher became aware of a common belief among the rural population, that national politics does not much matter for them. Declining participation in polls at the national level may be explained by the increasing poverty of the rural population, who see no sign of improvement in their quality of life. Local elections, however, still bring about participation of the people. A study by Ali (1986) shows that in the Upazila poll of 1984, about 55 percent of voters turned out to cast votes for the post of Upazila Chairman. This highlights the significance of the local democracy to the rural population.

c) The current practice of decentralisation involving the "Upazila Administration" has created new political and social pressure groups at local level (Table 8.7). The survey reveals that democratic administration is difficult due to pressure from diverse political and social groups. These groups try to obtain privileges from the new administrative system. Generally, pressure from the ruling political party is predominent. But other locally- dominant political and social groups are also active, and take undue advantage of the administration. It is

individuals, i.e. local political leaders, rather than political parties as such, which try to obtain such advantages. These activities are detrimental to the local democracy. It is notable that non-political elites such as rich farmers, rich businessmen, and construction contractors are also active in this respect.

d)   The opinion of respondents on the the effect of decentralisation on social transformation are shown in Table 8.8. In the short-run, decentralisation has been association with a deterioration in the political and social environment at the Upazila level, though opinion on this varies among respondents. They reported that there is political repression both by the ruling party and by locally dominant political and social groups. This has been a historical trend in the case of rural Bangladesh. Agricultural labourers form a major social and economic group. Politically, however, this group is often vulnerable to any change of policies at the local level in respect of development. The urban-based dominant national political stream in Bangladesh does not provide any encouraging avenues for political participation by the poor in rural areas. So, in the dynamics of national politics, they have no direct voice and strength to press their needs. They are the group who are generally exploited in the

interests of the local political and social elites.

Although trade unionism is practised by industrial workers in Bangladesh, the agricultural labourers have no such means of exercising their rights (Atiur Rahman).[6] The central cooperative association of the farmers under the auspieces of the Bangladesh Rural Development Board, which is organised at Upazila level, is perhaps the only place where they have scope to form their organisations, build cooperatives, and distribute rural credits. Rights such as minimum wages, appropriate prices for their products, and security against the actions and attitudes of traditional elites, are not upheld. A great majority (80%) of the respondents are in favour of trade union rights for agricultural labourers. Some of the respondents, particularly among government officials, were against this option. They believed that trade union rights for agricultural labourer would create obstacles in the rural development process (One respondent).[7] This reluctance among the officials to release more power to the poorer section of the people is not healthy.

The opinion of the respondents suggest that the general social environment has deteriorated since the introduction of democratic administrative processes at the Upazila level. Religious and ethnic conflicts are,

however, not of any major significance.[8] This is a healthy aspect of the rural communities in Bangladesh, which may encourage greater participation in activities of social improvement under the decentralisation policy, like literacy drives and mass education. Organization of rural communities requires adequate policies to support such actions.

e) Under the current practice of decentralisation, the judiciary has been instituted at the Upazila level. Previously rural people utilised the judicial facilities which were available at subdivisional or district headquarters. The objective of decentralising the judiciary was to ease the process of delivering justice to rural communities. In Third World countries, the poor and weak often fail to obtain benefit from government programmes. Such programmes are often targetted at the poor, but the benefits may then be captured by the strong and influential. There is strong opinion among respondents as to whether the Upazila Judiciary is benefiting the rural poor or not (Table 8.9). People seem to be satisfied because the close proximity of the judiciary means access to justice. A large majority (77%) of respondents, however, see that there is corruption in judicial services. About 64 percent respondents believe that local elites influence the process of delivering

judicial services, and that this undermines social justice.

Decentralisation of judiciary, however, has had some indirect impact on improving social conditions in rural areas. Before this people had to wait a long period for the settlement of their suits in the Subdivisional or District courts. They used to spend more money and time under such circumstances. The poor found it particularly difficult to obtain justice in such situations. Negotiations between parties in disputes which in the past were performed at the village meetings, are nowadays seldom found. Decentralisation of the judiciary has not removed these problems.

Some facts regarding "security" as a basic need are also evident from the field survey. 72 percent respondents believe that the police force is not playing a proper role in providing security. However, about 80 percent of respondents are of the opinion that in the control of corruption, there is welcome cooperation between the Upazila Magistracy and the police in maintaining law and order at the Upazila level. It must be remembered, however, that the police do not perform their proper duties in maintaining security and law and order in Bangladesh, because they

are constantly engaged in corrupt practices to earn their own living. This issue will need to be addressed in the future, as part of any decentralisation policy. We know, however, that it will not be easy to bring police administration under the control of the administration.

Suggestions made by respondents to improve social conditions at the Upazila level, strongly support the contention that the creation of a stable political system, is an effective way of improving society.[9] Many of the respondents believed that to improve the social environment, the enforcement of law and order needs to be strict and effective. These are not easy tasks for national and local governments, given poverty at an alarmingly high level. These tasks can only be seen as part of the complicated process of development, requiring good central-local relations.

8.3   The Impact of Decentralisation on Planning and Decision-making

a)   Views of the respondents on development planning in the "Upazila Administration" are expressed in Table 8.10. The majority of respondents were of the opinion that the "Upazila Administration" is more suitable for economic management at local level. 65 percent of respondents believe that an advantage of the "Upazila Administration" is increased staff facilities. A significant percentage of respondents (46%) believe that if increased development authority is settled on the "Upazila Administration", this will favour better management of local development. A large majority of respondents (86%) expressed the view that as far as development planning is concerned the "Upazila Administration" is an improvement over any previous administrative system at the Upazila level.

b)   It is important that the investment policy of the "Upazila Administration" distributes the benefits of development to all. Opinion on this is reflected in Table 8.11.   The Upazila Parishad does not offer equitable distribution of investment, income or employment. Given current practices, equity in the distribution of investment is not likely. This issue is

complicated by the fact that decision-makers and planners may not be properly trained. A self-reliant approach in local development depends to a large extent on the exploitation of local expertise. The "Upazila Administration" has not been able yet to utilise sufficiently local skills, or local resources.

c) Opinions of the respondents on the impact of decentralisation on rural development are expressed in Table 8.12. Decentralisation has transformed the Upazila headquarters into a busier place than it has ever been.[10] It is an important centre for political and administrative functions. This, however, has not been translated into a strong impetus for development either within the urban areas, or in rural parts of the Upazila. Nor do national economic conditions over the last few years, provide encouraging signs. 61 percent of people believe decentralisation will encourage the growth of Upazila towns, but they do not believe that decentralisation has promoted rural development.

This study is concerned primarily with the question of whether the "Upazila Administration" has contributed to the provision of basic needs for the rural poor. The empirical evidence shows that the "Upazila Administration" is not aware of such needs, and it has in fact no policies other than the national

programme of "vulnerable group feeding".

d)   There are certain problems in the development Planning Process as expressed by the respondents (Table 8.13). The "Upazila Administration" has been provided with an increased administrative capacity as compared with the previous administrative structure. Nevertheless, about 65 percent of respondents are of the opinion that inefficiency in planning and implementation, lack of coordination in development programmes, and lack of resources, are some of its major problems. These problems need to be strongly addressed by the local authorities . Necessary guidance, supervision and follow-up by the central authorities may help early recovery of the underlying problems.

e)   Opinion of respondents on NGO performance are shown in Table 8.14. Most of the NGO programmes at the Upazila level are related to rural development functions. One of the opposition political leaders has claimed of late that the NGOs are running the country. It is notable that in Bangladesh, a large number of NGOs are working with diversified development programmes.[11] Respondents expressed the view that the performance of NGO programmes at the Upazila level is significant   and at the very least is better than

government programmes offered through the "Upazila Administration".

In this research detailed information on NGO activities at Upazila level has not been collected. The information provided here is simply to make readers aware of the highly significant NGO role in development in Bangladesh. The "Upazila Parishad" has the authority to coordinate NGO activities. It is felt by both government officials and elected representatives, that there are no significant conflicts between the functions of the NGOs, and the "Upazila Administration".

In the development process of Bangladesh, the role of NGOs is significant, and is likely to continue to be so in the future. In some areas important activities, for example the operation and maintenance of deep tube wells for irrigation, have been entrusted by the government to the NGOs. The Grameen Bank is an example of a parastatal, which bears some resemblance to an NGO in that the state interferes with it as little as possible. It is generally agreed to be successful. In the future, activities from NGO's and the Grameen Bank may aid the learning process within the "Upazila Administration". NGOs are also playing an important role in providing training for the local

government staff who are involved in rural development. Reciprocally, future NGO activities may be better coordinated at the Upazila level, as the administrative capacity of the Upazila increases.

8.4 Concluding Comments

The experience of decentralisation at the Upazila level in Bangladesh has not been altogether satisfactory. Conflicts, lack of cooperation and coordinatiion among administrators and the elected representatives, and corrupt practices in development functions have been major problems of the "Upazila Administration". Because democracy has not been upheld, public accountability is weak in the administration. Under such circumstances, given the flow of resources to the Upazila level, corrupt-minded people have come to control resources and influence development policies. Though direct central control on the administration has been substantially reduced, indirect influence in different ways jeopardises the democratic activities of the "Upazila Administration". Planning and decision-making under such circumstances have not been effective. Moreover, development policy at the Upazila level under the current decentralisation policy, has been poorly organized. It will be evident in the next chapter that under such conditions, little improvement in the well-beings of the rural poor has come about. Rural elites, and the corrupt and unprincipled, are the ones obtaining the greatest benefits from decentralisation.

Administratively speaking, the main result of the programme of decentralisation has been the installation of a larger administrative set-up with greater authority. Historically no government in this region has been so committed to decentralisation of the administrative structure. The process seems to be irreversible in spite of the undemocratic way in which it was introduced. People have welcomed at least the outward signs of a political-administrative structure. In the short-run, decentralisation has not made any significant contribution to the creation of democratic institutions which favour participation in development. There is, however, hope for better results in the future. Chapter 9 discuss this in more detail.

Tables - Chapter 8

Table 8.1 : Opinion on the previous Thana
            Administration as compared with the
            Upazila.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Problems of Thana Administration
(compared with Upazila) :

Lack of authority for development	40.48
Lack of staff	52.38
Lack of resources	39.29
Lack of participatiion	20.24
Aloofness of the staff in local problems	13.10

Advantages of Thana Administration:

More honesty of staff	23.81
Neutrality in decision-making	26.19
No external influence on local administration	5.95

Upazila as a level for local administration :

Appropriate	86.90
Not appropriate	13.10

Viability of new administration for development :

Substantially optimistic	27.38
Moderately optimistic	54.76
Not optimistic	15.48

Table 8.2 : Independence of the "Upazila Administration."

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents.
Independence in decision-making :	
Independent	76.19
Not independent	17.86
No response	5.95
Decentralised authority :	
Decentralised	60.71
Not decentralised	13.10
No response	26.19
Bottom-up approach :	
Bottom-up	42.86
Not bottom-up	5.95
No response	51.19
External influence :	
There is influence	38.10
There is no influence	52.38
No response	9.52
Central government's consultation with the Upazila Administration :	
Consult	15.48
Does not consult	65.48
No response	19.04
Upazila Parishad's power to reject any central decision :	
Can reject	-
Cannot reject	88.10
No response	11.90

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Table 8.3 : Dual loyalties, conflicts and corruption in
the Upazila Administration.

Aspects	percentage of the total Respondents
Conflicts between representatives and officers :	
There are conflicts	88.10
There are no conflicts	11.90
Nature of conflicts :	
Power and status	77.38
Decision-making	63.09
Personal clash/rivalry	11.90
Conflicts between Upazila Chairman and UNO :	
There is conflict	78.57
There is no conflict	19.05
No response	2.38
Corruption in Administration :	
There is corruption	89.29
There is no corruption	4.76
No response	5.95
Nature of corruption :	
Financial misuse	71.43
Corrupt decision-making	29.76
No response	5.95

Table   8.4   :   Benefits   for   rural   people   from
               decentralisation.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents
Direct benefit :	
Closeness of the institution	77.38
More income and employment	7.14
Better social facilities	9.52
No response	5.95
Commitment of staff to people's benefit :	
Substantial	10.72
Moderate	57.14
None	29.76
No response	2.38

Table   8.5   :   Comments   on   the   continuation   of   present
               democratic   structures   .in   local
               administration.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents.
Upazila Administration :	
It should continue	69.04
It should not continue	14.29
It should continue with certain reforms	14.29
No response	2.38
Satisfaction on Union and Village organizations :	
Satisfied	54.76
Not satisfied	42.86
No response	2.38

Table 8.6 : Impact of decentralisation on the political environment.

Aspects	percentage of the total Respondents
Political participation :	
Increasing	22.62
Decreasing	51.19
Same as before	26.19
General political environment :	
Improving	17.86
Not improving	44.04
Worsening	29.76
Not predictable	8.33

Table 8.7 : Nature of political and social pressures.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents
Political pressure on Administration :	
There is pressure	71.43
There is no pressure	28.57
Nature of political pressure :	
By political party	29.32
By political leader	36.90
By local elites	22.47
By poor /unemployed	9.97

Table 8.8 : Some social and political aspects at the
Upazila.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents

Source of political repression/supression :

By ruling party	26.19
By locally dominant groups	26.19
Corrupt persons	7.14
None	7.14
No response	33.34

Trade Union rights for agricultural
labourers :

Should be given	80.97
Should not be given	9.52
No response	9.52

General social environment :

Has improved	20.24
Has not improved	20.24
Has deteriorated	33.33
Same as before	25.00

Table 8.9 : Aspects of Upazila judiciary and security.

Aspect	Percentage of the total Respondents

Justice for rural poor :

| They obtain justice | 47.62 |
| They do not obtain justice | 52.38 |

Corruption in the delivery of justice

There is corruption	77.38
There is no corruption	19.05
No response	3.57

External influence in the delivery of justice :

There is influence	64.29
There is no influence	11.90
No response	3.57

Role of police in security :

Playing proper role	23.81
Not playing proper role	72.62
No response	3.57

Police-Magistracy cooperation :

There is cooperation	78.57
There is no cooperation	19.05
No response	2.38

Table 8.10 : Qualification of the "Upazila Administration" for development planning at local level.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents

General qualifications :

Increased authority	46.43
Increased staff	65.48
More resource	19.05
Democratic participation	23.81
Increased awareness of staff	20.24

Improvement of Upazila Administration over Thana Administration :

Improved	86.91
Not improved	7.14
No response	5.95

Participation in development process :

Substantial	20.24
Marginal	42.86
Same as before	19.05
None	8.33
Worsening	9.52

Table 8.11 : Investmant policies of the Upazila
                Administration.

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Aspects                                percentage of the
                                       total Respondents.
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Spatial equity :

Maintains equity   11.91
Does not maintain equity   80.95
No response   7.14

Income and employment equity :

Maintain equity   10.72
Does not maintain equity   83.33
No response   5.95
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Table 8.12 : Rural development process.

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Aspects                                percentage of the
                                       total Respondents
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Area of the Upazila headquaters :

Growth is encouraged   61.91
Growth is not encouraged   34.52
No response   3.57

Development in rural areas :

Improving   47.62
Not improving   48.81
No response   3.57
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Table 8.13 : Problems in the planning process of the Upazila Administration.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents
Development administration :	
There is a problem	64.29
There is no problem	26.19
No response	9.52
Current planning problems :	
Lack of coordination	23.81
Lack of resources	14.29
Lack of efficiency in implementation	29.76
Comment on planning process :	
Better than before	15.48
Good	29.76
Worse	23.81
On paper all right not in practice	17.86
No response	13.09

Table 8.14 : NGO performance as compared with the performance of the Upazila Administration.

Aspects	Percentage of the total Respondents
NGO functions :	
Better	71.43
Same	7.14
Worse	-
No response	21.43

NOTES

1.   On conflicts in the Upazila Administration", see
      Seraj, T.M. : "Problems and Prospects of
      Decentralisation and Urbanization at the Upazila
      Level", The Journal of Local Government, Vol. 17
      No. 1   (Dhaka : NILG, 1988), pp. 107-109.

2.   Local Parliament Members (MP) have some power at
      the Upazila Level. The government has already
      provided the MPs with some licensing authority
      at the Upazila level. This has created a conflict
      between the MPs and the elected representatives
      of the "Upazila Administration".

3.   See Huda, A.T.M.S. (ed.) : Co-ordination in
      Public Administration in Bangladesh (Dhaka :
      BPATC,   1987).

4.   The electoral process has a significance beyond
      the narrow limits of the actual mechanism of the
      ballot. Polling is only the means of democratic
      self-expression. For political views on
      democratic elections in the Indian context, see,
      "Undercutting the democratic process", Economic
      and Political Weekly, vxxiii, No.35, (August 27,
      1988).

5.   A Parliament Member of one Upazila also expressed
      such a view.

6.   Dr. Atiur Rahman, a research fellow in the
      Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
      expressed the strong view that the agricultural
      labourers should have Trade   Unions. The
      present researcher discussed with him, the survey
      and questionnaires.

7.   The Upazila Engineer in one Upazila, expressed
      such a view.

8. In the cultural history of Bangladesh, secularism, humanistic socialism, and religiosity are persistently intertwined elements. The Muslims, Hindus and other religious groups have never been in any major conflict since Independence in 1971. For more information, see Jahangir, B.K. : Problematics of Nationalism in Bangladesh (Dhaka : Centre for Social Studies, 1986).

9. The Chittagong Hill Tract is a major hilly area of Bangladesh with conflicts between the original tribal inhabitants and new settlers from other parts of the country. A rebel section of the tribal population is in conflict with the government over the autonomy of the Hill Tract. There have been many armed conflicts between the rebel forces and the armies. To ease unrest, the government has made provision recently for elected councils at all local administrative tiers in the Hill Tract.

10. The Upazila Headquarters are now considered by the national government as small urban centres. The government also has completed the preparation of "Landuses Plans" for all of the Upazila headquarters. It is expected that such developments will encourage rural people to stay in rural areas, thus checking the migration of the rural poor to large urban centres. In this respect, decentralisation is aimed at rejuvenating rural life by creating new income and employment opportunities at the Upazila level.

11. More than four hundred NGOs are working in Bangladesh, with a host of ideas, strategies, political affiliations, ideologies and development programmes. For more information, see Nebelung, M. : "On the NGO-Mode of Intervention in Rural Bangladesh : The Mobilisation of Assetless Agricultural Workers as an Emancipatory Development Strategy", A paper presented to the Development Association Annual Conference (Birmingham : University of Birmingham, 6-9 September, 1988).

Chapter 9

THE IMPACT OF DECENTRALISATION ON THE SATISFACTION OF BASIC NEEDS IN THE RURAL AREAS OF BANGLADESH

Decentralisation and the Delivery of Basic Needs

There is no definite set of criteria which can be used in the evaluation of the impact of decentralisation on the satisfaction of "basic needs". But recalling Chambers' argument that the neglected "rural poor" can be helped by decentralisation as a viable alternative to centralised efforts for rural development, an attempt has been made in this chapter to evaluate the impact of decentralisation on basic needs.

Local institutions can take more care of the rural poor, in the light of what was said in the "Manila Declaration" :

"If you have come to help me you can go home again. But if you see my struggle as part of your own survival then perhaps we can work together" (IFDA, 1990).[1]

The basic philosophy is that "the people will not come to the institutions, rather the institutions should go to the people for development".[2] Empirical investigation of this chapter is informed by this philosophy. Emphasis has been placed on information

collected at the grass-roots level, through a Survey and Questionnaire (Questionnaire B). Information from secondary sources ha; also been used.

A similar strategy, as in the case of "Questionnaire A", was followed for "Questionnaire B". The Questionnaire contained questions on various aspects of basic needs. There were both open-ended and closed questions. There were differences in the type of respondents however, and also in the process of interviewing. Random sampling was followed to select respondents among three categories of households, based on income status. The list of the households was collected from the "Union Parishads". The households were categorized into three income groups, based on the amount of property taxes levied on them by the "Union Parishads". Six villages, two from each Upazila, were selected for survey using the Questionnaire. In each Upazila, one village was selected near the Upazila headquarters, and another one at a far off place, at a distance of about three miles (Appendix 8.2).

Some difficulties were encountered in the field Survey. The survey was conducted by employing investigators. The investigators were trained in the procedure of surveys. The main problem faced by the investigators was to collect information from

respondents who were not sufficiently knowledgeable to answer difficult questions on the impact of decentralisation. Moreover, many of the poorest group were not interested in answering a questionnaire which essentially required considerable time. However, sufficient numbers were interested in speaking about the new institutions at the Upazila level. The researcher himself interviewed some respondents in each village, to gauge the reactions and attitudes of the rural people towards the "Upazila Administration". To complete the Survey, however, it was necessary to employ investigators. Six villages in three Upazilas were surveyed by these investigators. A single investigator was hard pressed to complete two questionnaires in one day. A lengthy stay in the Upazila was necessary. Accommodation facilities were available in the Upazila Administration, and were used for this purpose. The investigators made strenuous efforts to provide a Survey successful. Before decentralisation there was at the Upazila level hardly any accommodation facility. This facility should help improve future surveys in the rural areas.

In the main, the Survey reflects the views of the rural poor. Landless people were included. To avoid a one-sided view however, some additional interviews were held with the relevant officers of the

"Upazila Administration".

It was not possible in the Survey to cover the entire Upazila, even less the whole country. I believe that the fieldwork has been effective nevertheless in taking a broad cross-section of opinion and exploring current attitudes towards the impact of decentralisation. In particular we have concentrated on the effects of decentralisation on the satisfaction of basic needs in the rural areas.

In total, 138 respondents were interviewed in 6 sample villages of 3 Upazilas. In the Upazila Singair, 49 respondents were interviewed; in the Upazila Jhikargacha, 47 respondents, and in the Upazila Madhupur 42 respondents. This covered about 25 percent of households in the villages.

The Survey concentrated on several aspects of basic needs. Three aspects were, however, given more emphasis. These aspects were (i) access of the people to information, (ii) the provision of health care, and (iii) assistance offered during any natural disasters. These are discussed briefly in turn below.

Access to Information

Access to information on various government policies for development, is an important basic need. In poverty-striken Bangladesh, where the literacy rate is only about 25 percent, decentralisation if it is to be regarded as a success should help in keeping rural people, particularly the rural poor informed, of the opportunities available for them.[3] This may not _directly_ improve the basic conditions of life of the rural poor, but it will make an indirect contribution towards improving knowledge, choice and self-esteem.[4] It is also a necessary prerequisite for greater participation of the rural poor in development.

Provision of Health Care

Health care is a fundamental need of the rural poor. There was no major public health service at the Upazila level before Independence. Not all of the Subdivision Headquarters even had hospital services. District Headquarters were the only dependable source of public health for major treatments. At present, however, all of the Upazila Headquarters, excepting a very few, have large health complexes. The Upazila Health Complex (UHC) consists of a hospital unit, a

family planning unit and a unit of primary health administration. In addition there are sub-centres of family planning and primary health cares generally at Union Headquarters. There are qualified private doctors who have their practices at the Upazila Headquarters. Traditional village health care is also available though not in every village.

It should be pointed out that the UHC is not a direct creation of the current decentralisation policy. This health programme was undertaken in the Second Five-Year Plan, with an objective of providing health for all by the year 2000. The completion of the programme is nevertheless a more recent phenomenon, and the policy of decentralisation has accentuated the programme. This health service has received priority from the national government. It is notable, however, that health services have not been further extended in the rural villages since 1976 (Table 9.1).

The UHC was previously under the direct control and supervision of the Chief Civil Surgeon at the district level. Decentralisation has placed the UHC under the "Upazila Administration". Different unit officers of the UHC are members of the "Upazila Parishad." The "Upazila Parishad" has, therefore, responsibility for improving the health services of the

Upazila. This research evaluates the performance of the Upazila Health Complex in providing health services for the rural people, particularly the rural poor.

Assistance During Natural Disasters

Natural disasters, such as floods, cyclones or drought are endemic in Bangladesh. The country faces natural disasters every year, though the damage caused by these calamities varies from year to year. The problems of the rural poor, and their lack of basic needs, are significantly related to these disasters.

Generally-speaking the resources to help the victims of disasters come via the central government. Decentralisation has created a new opportunity to organize local initiatives to help the victims of natural disasters, and to coordinate and supervise national programmes of relief operation.

Officials and representatives of the "Upazila Administration" were interviewed, to see if the "Upazila Administration" is capable of undertaking necessary precautionary measures, as well as relief works, relating to natural disasters. The answers were simple and clear - "no". Some officials added that if there had been such capabilities, the Army would not

have been in charge of the relief operations at the Upazila level, during the floods of 1987 and 1988.

Information was also collected from the rural people using Questionnaires about their losses during the floods of 1988, and the help they received from the public authorities (One Upazila was not, however, affected by floods).

An Overview

The key question is whether decentralisation has improved delivery of basic needs. Questions which have been posed are : (a) Do rural people now have more information on government policies and strategies for development, at the local level? (b) Do the rural poor benefit from improvements in public health services, located at certain focal points? Do rural people receive help from the local administration in times of natural disasters, such as floods, cyclones, and drought?

Answers to these questions are not straightforward, but I will argue that the information which has been gathered through the Questionnaire, presents a fair overall picture of the outcome.

Overall, the response of the people questioned, to the issue of the Upazila and basic needs, was a negative one. The Upazila has not improved the delivery of basic needs. The respondents believe, however, that local administration should be democratic, and that the "Upazila Administration" should continue in the future. There was a consensus that the increasing governmental efforts at the Upazila level, will ultimately benefit the rural areas. Secondary sources too, make it possible to express a cautious optimism, about the future effectiveness of decentralisation, and this conclusion is expanded in the final chapter.

Access to Information

a) Are rural people aware of national-local affairs?

b) How do people acquire information about national-local affairs?

c) Do rural people have information about their officials and elected representatives, in the Upazila Administration?

d) Did rural people have information about the previous "Thana Administration".

e) Do people have better information about government policies with the Upazila Administration?

f) Do people believe that corruption in the "Upazila Administration" has decreased?

Health Care

a) Which health facilities do rural people generally use - Public or Private?

b) Are the rural people satisfied with the services of the UHC?

c) Why do rural people prefer private health services?

d) Do people get treatment free of cost in emergencies?

e) Do rural people visit public doctors or health officials to consult on health matters?

f) Do public doctors or health officials visit rural people?

Natural Disasters

    a)   Do people receive any help for flood damage?

    b) Do people believe that the distribution of flood relief is "fair"?

    c) Do people receive help from the Upazila Administration?

    d)   Do rural people know the relevant officer in charge of looking after problems of natural disasters?

    e) Has the Upazila Administration coped with the problems of natural disasters?

9.1 Access to Information : Questions and Answers

a) Rural people in general are not aware of everyday national-local affairs (Table 9.2). The fieldwork results show that about 53 percent of people in rural areas are not aware of everyday national affairs. This is not unexpected in poverty-striken rural Bangladesh with a poor literacy rate. The view of 35 percent of respondents, that they are aware of everyday national affairs is encouraging in this respect. By everyday national affairs, they mean important national events which receive substantial coverage on television, radio and in the newspapers.

At the Upazila level, 40 percent of respondents are aware of everyday Upazila affairs. In a poor nation where about 80 percent people live below the poverty line, this figure is not unexpected. In the context of this thesis, however, this figure is not encouraging for improved participation. A substantial number of people have no clear knowledge of the "Upazila Administration". For democratic practice knowledge of the local institution is important.

b) People in the rural areas get information on various issues related to development through

different means (Table 9.3). The major media in rural areas are the radio, and "people as messengers". Friends and relatives are important in conveying information. Television is not yet a major medium of communication in rural areas of Bangladesh.[5]

c) It is important that rural people have information about the activities of their local democratic institutions in order to gain greater benefit from their services. The majority of respondents had no detailed knowledge of the activities of government officials, and of the elected representatives of the "Upazila Administration" (Table 9.4). People were nevertheless more informed about their elected representatives than they were about government officials. About 11 percent of respondents know the Upazila-level government officials. About 35 percent of respondents have met or talked to officials of the "Upazila Administration". This is not altogether disappointing, but awareness of democratic institutions is still very imperfect.

About 25 percent of respondents have attended meetings organised by any officials of the "Upazila Administration". Relatively few people attend meetings to obtain information on cultivation methods, prices, credit, development policies and functions of the

"Upazila Administration". In practice there has not been any significant breakthrough, in comparison with the previous situation.

d) 20 percent of respondents said that they had knowledge of the previous "Thana Administration" (Table 9.5). In their opinion the previous administration did not provide easy access for the rural poor. Only a small number of respondents (10%) had attended programmes organized by the "Thana Administration". Some respondents had the idea that officials of the "Thana Administration" had visited villages. About 54 percent of respondents believe that the "Upazila Administration" is performing better than the "Thana Administration". This is, however, not a large majority of respondents, and there are also opposite views. Many respondents could not compare the performance of the "Upazila Administration" and the "Thana Administration".

e) The majority of respondents cannot judge whether the present administrative system at the Upazila level has improved the flow of information (Table 9.6). Some respondents believe that decentralisation has increased communication at the Upazila level. They judge it in terms of the increase in staff, buildings, offices, and services of the

"Upazila Administration". They are, however, not sufficiently knowledgeable about the practical outcome of these increased facilities.

Respondents expressed the opinion that the present system of decentralisation should continue. About 70 percent of respondents supported this proposition, in the hope that resources from the centre would gradually move towards the local level.

f) People believe that corruption in the "Upazila Administration" has increased (Table 9.7). About 91 percent of respondents believe that corruption in local development administration has increased. Most of the respondents maintain that corruption of the administration involves misuse of development funds, nepotism in development contracts, such as in the construction of bridges, roads, irrigation canals, schools and so on.

About 95 percent of respondents believe that there has been an increase in the number of corrupt individuals. The increase in the flow of development funds at the Upazila level, has brought about this increase. Rural people, particularly the poor, have long experience of corruption, deception and repression in a variety of forms. Although they are not

knowledgeable about complex political-administrative structures, they are silent observers and evaluators, and know when actions are taken against their interests.

9.2   Provision of Health Care : Questions and Answers

a) Health facilities used by the rural people are shown in Table 9.8. The empirical evidence shows that **private** health facilities are used more by the rural people than are the **public** health services. Traditional bazaar doctors are popular among the rural poor. The reason is that these practitioners are symphathetic to the traditional beliefs of the rural poor, and they relate well to village people, fulfilling their expectations, psychological and spiritual as well as physical.[6]

A study by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) found that although a substantial number (92%) of rural people know about the presence of a health centre in their locality, they are not as yet properly aware of the functions of the UHC.[7] That study found that more than half of the rural people do not know the exact location of the UHC. Another study jointly carried out by the UNICEF and the GOB (1981) found that after two years of operation of a pilot health care programme, 37 percent of the villagers did not know the physical location of the institutions. This implies negligence in rural health services. Decentralisation has not favoured any

significant improvement in this respect.

b) A large majority of rural people is not satisfied with the services of the Upazila Health Complex (Table 9.9). Discharge of health functions by public means is a necessity in rural Bangladesh, in the context of the absolute poverty of the majority of the rural population. The delivery of health services to the illiterate and poor is not, however, an easy task. The experience of the UHC have not been encouraging in this respect. Rural people do not use their services. Respondents were of the opinion that the UHC do not have sufficient facilities to provide the services which they require. At the same time, some of them said that they did not know what services were available from the UHC.

Rural people do not in practice get free treatment from the UHC. This does not mean, however, that there is no provision in theory for free treatment. The fact is that the UHC always runs short of the means of treatment, including the supply of medicines. There is also corruption in different forms. The rural poor suffer in this situation. Many of the rural poor defer treatment for some time, not being able to manage the cost of treatment. But if the UHC or other public health services were able to provide the

required facilities, the poor would be willing to accept those services. The rural poor do not take health matters seriously enough, because they suffer from extreme poverty.

The UHC does not ensure all-important health services for children and mothers. Nor are health services located at the Upazila headquarters easily able to extend their services to remote villages, because of transport problems. Nevertheless, the major weakness of the health service appears to be the <u>unwillingness</u> of the health officials and doctors to visit villages. This is despite provision in theory for some health staff, including the head of the health administration, to visit Union and villages on a regular basis to investigate the health problems of the rural poor. If this were to happen in practice there would be growing awareness among the rural poor, about services available at the UHC.

The provision of free vaccinations for rural people appears to be working in practice. However, it is a fact that people generally do not visit public health institutions for vaccinations. Many of the rural poor never have any vaccinations, nor do they believe in their necessity for health. Traditional norms of the rural life, coupled with many superstitions which are

embedded in rural Bangladesh, are responsible for this situation.

c) Rural people prefer private health services (Table 9.10). About 73 percent of respondents expressed the view that the services of the private doctors are better, though they need to pay more for treatment. Why do they use private health services? There are a number of reasons, some of which have been already mentioned.

The location of the UHC in the Upazila headquarters does not provide easy access for all the rural people, living in different parts of a Upazila. The major problem in this respect is the poor transport network in the rural areas. The distance between the remote villages and the Upazila Headquarters is not easily covered, especially for those who use their feet as the only means of transport. It is not surprising, therefore, that almost all of the rural poor never use the public health services located at the Upazila Headquarters. The use of quacks, Kabiraj or religious means become inevitable in such circumstances. Examples were found to suggest that some rural poor do not bother at all about any treatment, unless an emergency threatens life. The only possibility of changing such attitudes of the rural poor towards their health

requirements, is to extend health services to them. Whatever the reasons, the UHC has not progressed much in this respect.

d) People do not get treatment free of cost in emergencies. There is a tendency to believe that free emergency services are provided by the hospitals of the UHC. Of the total questioned, 25 respondents reported that they had needed emergency treatments from the UHC for their family members. Of those who needed emergency treatments, only 5 received treatments free of cost from the UHC. The rest had to bear the cost of treatment, by purchasing medicines and other accessories. Decentralisation has not improved facilities.

Of those 5 who had to bear costs, 3 reported that they managed by borrowing from different sources. Some respondents reported that they had requested the hospital doctors to see if there was any possibility of help, but they did not receive any help. This is an important issue to be seriously considered under the present context. It is worrying that even for an emergency, the UHC fails to provide required services to the rural people. It is further worrying that under such circumstances, at least some of the rural poor become poorer and landless.

e) The rural people generally do not visit public doctors or health officials to consult on health matters (Table 9.11). Some reasons have already been discussed. A small number, who had consulted public doctors or health officials on health matters, normally did so when they needed appointments for treatment for diseases. The major reasons for not visiting the health personnel are two : (1) unaware of the public health facilities, and (2) lack of facilities at the UHC, resulting in charges for treatments. Many of the rural poor fear to approach the doctors or the health officials of the UHC. For any improvement in such conditions, regular contacts between people and the health institutions is required.

f) People generally do not see public doctors or health officials visiting the rural people (Table 9.12). A large majority of (about 80%) respondents are of this opinion. Even if they visit, they do so very rarely. The rural poor believe that the public health authorities do not perform their stated duties. Most of the public doctors of the UHC have private practices. At the Upazila headquarters, generally there are some chemists' shops. The public doctors use these shops for their private practices. This creates in public doctors a lack of responsibility in their duties in the

health complex. Thus some vital factors can be identified which make the services of the UHC unattractive to the rural people. This also explains why a large majority of the rural people simply do not know of any public doctors or health officials in the UHC.

Decentralisation has not substantially helped to extend health services to the rural people, especially those of the poor. Rather, in one of the three Upazilas, the health service has seriously deteriorated due to poor maintenance. Under the new laws this maintenance should have been provided by the "Upazila Administration". It was reported by the UHC authority that the "Upazila Administration" neglected this service. The administration takes little care to improve rural health services. This service has not received any significant priority in development policy. This draws our attention to the root cause of the problems of rural development. There are problems of maintenance, supervision, and monitoring of the health facilities by the local administration which coordinates this important function.

9.3   Assistance During Natural Disasters : Questions

and Answers

a)   During the devastating floods of 1987 and
1988, a large part of Bangladesh, and a large
percentage of its population suffered serious flood
damage. To a greater or lesser extent, the country
suffers from such natural calamities every year.
Information was collected in this respect about the
flood damage, relief distribution and performance of
the local democratic administration in such
circumstances.

Of the 91 respondents interviewed in the two
flood-affected Upazilas (Madhupur and Singair), 88
respondents reported that they were affected by the
floods and lost properties (Table 9.13).[8] Only 7 of
these flood affected households received some relief.
This help was, however, very little compared to their
total loss. Why they did not receive relief in
substantial quantity, will be evident in the following
discussions.

b) People believe that the distribution of
flood relief was not fair (Table 9.14). There are
reports that the relief materials which were made
available at the Upazila level, were not distributed

fairly. Distribution of flood relief was not impartial, and there had been misuse of resources. Respondents reported that the distributors failed to heed demands from the public, though there were official instructions to extend help and cooperation. Some reported that "on paper, many people might have received relief, but in practice very few got it". Some claimed that both the government officials and the local representatives had little sympathy for helping the flood victims, and as soon as the flood water receded, they forgot the misery of the people. The poor and helpless suffered a lot in their attempts to recover the situation.

c)   The "Upazila Administration" was not very helpful to the flood victims as they did not receive any substantial help. People provided various information on this issue (Table 9.15). It appears that people do not get any significant help from the "Upazila Administration" in any natural disasters.

An empirical study by Ahmed (1986) suggests that the distribution of relief does not always satisfy the principle of equity, as the less-affected persons in some instances receive relief while relatively more affected ones do not.[9] This study shows that improper distribution of relief materials is one important

reason why most people do not receive any significant relief in natural disasters. One major problem is that emergency relief materials are generally distributed from the Upazila headquarters. Thus those rural poor who are immediately informed of, or live near the Upazila headquarters, get   more relief than those in distant villages.

The "Upazila Administration" is not yet capable of managing major emergency relief operations during devastating floods which submerge all rural roads. This also applies to some extent to the voluntary organizations. Whatever the objective and means there is the problem that flood relief never reaches all the flood victims. Many villages remain untouched by relief operations.

But more importantly, flood rehabilitation programmes suffer from poor management, mal-distribution, corruption and resource shortages. Ahmed's study found that in one Union the housing materials for flood rehabilitation in the villages, were used for repairing a primary school because the union authority found it difficult to distribute the limited relief goods among a large number of affected people. Distribution of credits take the traditional forms of corruption by middlemen who liaise between the

credit borrowers and the distributing agencies including the commercial banks.[10]

d) Most of the rural people do not know the officer who is in charge of looking after the problem of natural disasters (Table 9.16). But when respondents were asked whether they could identify the Upazila Project Implementation Officer (UPIO) who is the relevant officer, some respondents reported that they knew about him. Most of the respondents have, however, not seen the UPIO visiting villages, or visiting people affected by natural calamities. This reflects the fact that there is worrying lack of responsibilty in the local administration.

e) People also do not believe that the "Upazila Administration" has been substantially helpful to look after the problems of natural disasters. The view of respondents on this issue is not encouraging. Overall, there is a negative impression. Respondents who live in rural areas do not see any improvement in this respect. Why does it happen, even if the administration is taken closer to the rural people?

Some respondents reported that the attention of the local authorities is soon diverted from helping the victims in the rural areas to other things, when the

immediate danger of flood water goes away. The local administration busies itself with such things as the construction of bridges and culverts, roads, buildings, and so on. The rural poor believe that these projects are preferred by the local representatives and government officials, because they help them to earn money through corrupt practices. Rural rehabilitation works are not given any priority. Decentralisation has increased this tendency in local development. There are reports that those who are responsible for initiating and coordinating development works are not honest in performing their duties. How can they then provide the necessary supervision for rehabilitation works, or control the corruption of their subordinates? Unless a strong procedure of accountability is established in the "Upazila Administration", these practices will continue and prevent an effective and humane response to the plight of the poor during natural disasters. More precise results may be evident in future empirical work on decentralisation in Bangladesh. Perhaps, it is too early to examine the complex and diversified aspects of decentralisation, that are currently taking place in Bangladesh.

9.3.1   A Note on Some Recent Measures for Alleviating

Damage from Floods

Decentralisation brought some measures at the Upazila level, after the devastating floods of 1988. In each Upazila, one "Halipad" has been constructed near the Upazila headquarters to help delivery of relief materials by helicopters. In each Union, the banks of at least one public pond have been raised up by earthworks to be used as a flood-shelter in any future floods. In addition some primary schools are to be made two-storied, to be used as flood shelters. New primary schools are to be particularly included in this programme. These measures, however, have been adopted following instructions from the central government. No initiatives in practice have come about from the "Upazila Administration". Nevertheless decentralisation can be considered as a factor in the gradual improvement in such programmes of emergency works, for any future floods, or other natural disasters.

9.4   Concluding Comments

The opinions which have been reflected in the Survey, suggest that recent decentralisation measures have not brought any significant changes in satisfying the basic needs of the rural poor. More worrying is the apparent increase in negative elements, such as the increased power of the rural elites, and the corruption which has been damaging to the conditions of the rural poor. Chambers argued in his book "Putting the Last First" that decentralisation is one of the ways of improving the prospects of the poorest groups. But following his example of asking the poor for their views, we find that this has not happened, at least in the short-run. In three vital areas pertaining to basic needs, i.e. access to information, health care, and responses to natural disasters, the situation has not improved. Indeed it is possible that potential gains have been captured by those who are already in an advantageous position in the rural economy, and that the position of the very poor may have deteriorated even further.

Though opinion survey indicates there has not been any perceptible improvement in the conditions of the rural poor, respondents from diverse sections of

the population at the Upazila level, have expressed positive views on the continuation of the "Upazila Administration". It is important to note that there are positive signs from other sources of information provided in the Tables at the end of the Chapter. Resources are moving towards local development (Table 9.17). Nationally published statistics show that resources are being increasingly concentrated at the Upazila level (Table 9.18). Although the three Upazilas surveyed were not found to have been capable of generating any significant amount of resources at the local level, national statistics present a more encouraging picture.

The income of one Upazila in the year 1984-85 (Table 9.19), shows that it mobilized on its own account, a significant proportion of its total resources (about 20% of the Annual Development Budget). Upazila-wise, earlier statistics are not available. There is a possibility that some Upazilas are capable of generating a significant quantity of finance from their own resources.

But less encouraging is evidence on the planned disbursement of Upazila finance. The planning guidelines of the "Upazila Parishad" (Table 9.20), and the development plans of the three sample Upazilas

(Tables 9.21 to 9.23), can be examined in this respect. It is notable that agriculture and rural industries are gradually being given less importance in the plans. Basic needs like health and social welfare do not received significant priority, though the situation in primary education is slightly better. Physical infrastructure and miscellaneous activities have received top priority in the plans. In Bangladesh, such activities cannot be ignored. But it is equally important to adopt an anti-poverty approach in the plans to benefit the rural poor.

Why does physical infrastructure development get top priority? Many respondents were of the opinion that construction of bridges, roads and buildings are projects which can be substantially manipulated. Elected representatives use their offices to earn a livelihood and recover election costs. Some officers also prefer to invest in these projects. The reason is same. This is an important reason as to why the Agriculture Officers of all three Upazilas were unsatisfied with declining investment in agriculture. Future planning, therefore, needs to be reconsidered in this respect to focus on the problems of the rural poor. It seems that honesty in administrative performance is required more than the planning itself, though lack of experience and poor quality in planning

cannot be ignored. It is true that there is lack of evaluation and monitoring of development projects at the Upazila level. This, however, should not affect the independence of the "Upazila Parishad". Studies on decentralisation invariably suggests that decentralisation as concept has many positive connotations, the problem lies with its implementation.

Qualified optimism on decentralisation is evident in some recent works on Bangladesh. For Hye (1987), the decentralised development introduced through the Upazila system, is the most suitable for rural development in a country like Bangladesh as it holds out the hope of making optimum use of the available resources - human, financial and physical, within a participatory framework. Its strength lies in the sysnthesis of all previous approaches to rural development. Under a strong democratic national government committed to local democracy and decentralisation of development, conditions may improve in the future.

Tables - Chapter 9

Table 9.1 :   Rural health facilities.

(In number)

Year	Upazila Health Complex	Rural Health Centre	Union Sub Centre
1976	151	12	1275
1977	179	12	1275
1978	253	12	1275
1979	275	12	1275
1980	275	12	1275
1981	280	12	1275
1982	312	12	1275
1983	319	12	1275
1984	344	12	1275
1985	346	12	1275
1986	356	12	1275
1987	356	12	1275

Source :   B.B.S., 1989, p.550.

Table 9.2 : Awareness of rural people on national-
local affairs.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
National affairs :	
Aware	35.51
Not aware	52.90
No response	11.59
Upazila affairs :	
Aware	41.30
Not aware	26.81
No response	31.88

Table 9.3 : Media of information to rural people.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Media :	
Own radio	36.23
Other's radio	7.97
Own Television	4.35
Other's Television	9.42
Newspaper	8.70
Friends/relatives	32.61
Frequency of use :	
Daily	31.16
Weekly	2.17
Fortnightly	0.72
Occasionally	18.84
No response	47.10
Interests :	
Politics	34.06
Development	37.68
Others	38.41

Table 9.4 : Knowledge of the "Upazila Administration"
             indicated by rural people.

Aspects   Percentage of the
                                           total respondents

Know all officers :

Know   10.87
Do not know   81.16
No response   7.97

Know some key persons :

Union Chairman   27.54
Upazila Chairman   28.99
Upazila Nirbahi Officer   21.01

Met or talked to any officer :

Met or talked   35.51
Did not meet or talk   28.26
No response   36.23

Attended any meetings organized by
the Upazila Administration :

Attended   24.64
Did not attend   68.12
No response   7.25

Table 9.5 : Information on the previous Thana
Administration, by rural people.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Knew officers of Thana Administration :

Knew	21.01
Did not know	73.91
No response	5.07

Had easy access to the officers :

Had	2.90
Did not have	23.19
Same as now	15.22
No response	58.70

Attended any meeting :

Attended	9.42
Did not attend	84.06
No response	6.52

Upazila Administration compared to
Thana Administration :

Better	53.62
Same	11.59
Worse	2.90
Cannot Judge	26.09
No response	5.80

Table 9.6 : Flow of information to rural people after
          the policy decentralisation was implemented

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Aspects                                Percentage of the
                                       total respondents
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Information on Government Policies :

Better	21.74
Not better	23.18
Cannot judge	50.72
No response	4.35

Assessment on the future of the
Upazila Administration :

It should continue	69.57
It should not continue	19.57
Do not know	0.72
No response	9.42

Awareness of the planning process :

Aware	5.80
Not aware	84.78
No response	9.42

Table 9.7 : People's knowledge of corruption in the
          Upazila Administration.

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Aspects                                Percentage of the
                                       total respondents
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In the Upazila Administration :

Has decreased	2.17
Same as before	0.72
Has increased	91.30
No response	5.80

By the local elites :

Has decreased	0.72
Same as before	0.72
Has increased	94.20
No response	4.35

Table 9.8 : Health facilities used by the rural people.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Health facilities used :

Upazila Health Complex	37.68
Private doctors	36.96
Village quacks	67.40
Others	5.07

Table 9.9 : Satisfaction of the rural people with the
services of the Upazila Health Complex.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Satisfaction in general :

Satisfied	7.97
Not satisfied	89.86
No response	2.17

Resources of the UHC to provide services :

Has necessary resources	5.07
Has not necessary resources	85.51
No response	9.42

Treatment in the UHC :

Free of cost	15.94
Not free of cost	76.09
No response	7.97

What people do having no money for
treatment :

Cut in other expenses for treatment	2.17
Leave treatment for certain period	63.04
No responses	37.68

Child health care in the UHC :

Free of cost	2.90
Not free of cost	84.78
No response	12.32

Mother care in the UHC :

Provide	5.07
Does not provide	89.86
No response	5.07

Table 9.10 : Reasons for using private doctors by rural
           people.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Reasons :

Better service	73.19
Closer location	6.52
More reliability	2.90

Table 9.11 : Visits by rural people to the public
           doctors/health officials.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents

Visits by rural people :

Visit	7.25
Do not visit	84.78
No response	7.97

Reasons for not visiting the public
doctors :

Unawareness of facilities	15.94
Fear to approach	1.45
Need to bear treatment costs	30.43
No response	52.17

Table 9.12 : Visits by public doctors/health officials
to rural areas as seen by the rural people

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Know the public doctors/health officials :	
Know	12.32
Do not know	75.36
No response	12.32
Visits by doctors/health officials to the rural areas :	
See them visiting	4.35
Do not see them visiting	79.71
No response	15.94

Table 9.13 : Relief for the flood victims.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Flood loss of the people :	
Had lost	63.77
Had not lost	2.17
No response	34.06
Relief received :	
Had received	5.07
Had not received	57.25
No response	37.68

Table 9.14 : Fairness/unfairness in relief
distribution.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Relief distribution :	
Fair	2.17
Unfair	50.72
No response	47.10
Type of unfairness :	
Partiality	45.65
Misuse	2.17
No response	52.17

Table 9.15 : Reasons for not receiving help/relief from
the Upazila Administration during the
flood.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Reasons :	
It had little/no resources	15.21
It was not willing to help	21.01
It neglected some villages	8.70
Not aware of the facts	4.35
Relief during other disasters :	
Receive relief	0.00
Do not receive relief	57.25
No response	42.75

Table 9.16 : Knowledge of the rural people about
the relevant officers who look after
the problem of natural disasters.

Aspects	Percentage of the total respondents
Relevant officer (s) :	
Know	10.14
Do not know	57.97
No response	31.88
Project Implementation Officer (PIO) :	
Know	37.68
Do not know	60.14
No response	2.17
Visits by PIO to the affected areas :	
See him visiting	10.14
Do not see him visiting	49.28
No response	40.58

Table 9.17 : Receipts and expenditures of local
government Parishads.

(In million Taka)

Heads	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
Zila Parishad :				
Receipts	253.06	207.79	221.63	216.84
Expenditures	251.99	212.89	267.62	235.22
Upazila Parishad :				
Receipts	2380.66	4274.16	4877.05	5910.64
Expenditures	3192.09	4161.38	4830.17	5806.77
Union Parishad :				
Receipts	418.49	491.01	659.24	722.76
Expenditures	422.15	495.18	656.64	720.02

Source : B.B.S., 1989, pp. 378-79.

Table 9.18 : Receipts and expenditures of the Upazila
Parishad under different heads.

(In million Taka)

Heads	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88
Receipts :				
Taxes	51.37	42.04	43.37	63.90
Rates	0.86	1.15	4.99	6.02
Fees and Tolls	157.95	208.44	243.17	293.64
Property Income	70.08	59.71	138.41	118.78
Miscellaneous	531.13	474.96	582.33	648.61
Works Programme Grants	548.60	1374.06	1306.53	1814.91
Total :	2380.66	4274.16	4877.05	5910.64
Expenditure :				
Wages and Salaries	979.24	1801.60	2205.05	2498.46
Commodities and Services	317.39	220.75	234.38	298.71
Gross fixed capital formation	1232.30	1737.37	1898.09	2342.29
Works Programme	490.55	245.85	318.34	328.22
Transfer	172.61	155.81	174.31	339.09
Total :	3192.09	4161.38	4830.17	5806.77

Source : B.B.S., 1989, p.378.

Table 9.19 :   Annual income of the Upazila Parishad
                Jhikargacha in 1984-85.

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Sources                                   Income in Taka
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A.  Lease of water bodies for fisheries      20,000
    Fees for licence, permits, etc.          30,000
    Tolls from hats and bazaars            4,00,000
    Services of Upazila agricultural tools     -
    Other taxes                              50,000

B.  Profit from investment                   30,000
    House rents                            2,50,000
    Others                                   62,000

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Total                                      8,42,000
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Source : Kalam, A.K.M.A. : Upazila as a Basic Unit for
Local Level Planning in Bangladesh : Problems and
Potentials, Unpublished MURP Thesis (Dhaka : Department
of Urban & Regional Planning, BUET, 1984).

Table 9.20 : Sectoral allocation pattern for Annual Upazila Development Fund (AUDP).

Sector	Minimum share	Maximum share
(a) Agriculture and Irrigation : Intensive crops programme,Demonstration farms, Seeds Programme; Digging of tanks, Reclamation of derelict tanks, Rural fisheries, Development of Social Forestry including road side plantation and Horticulture; Development of poultry and livestock; Drainage and Irrigation, Small flood embankment and small irrigation works.	15%	25%
(b) Small and Cottage Industries: Workshop programme; Skill development, traning and extension, Income generating activities, etc.	5%	10%

Physicial Infrastructure :

Sector	Minimum share	Maximum share
(c) Transport and Communication: Road construction, Rural Works Programme, Construction, reconstruction and development of small bridges, culverts, etc.	17.5%	30%
(d) Housing and Physical Planning : Development of hats and bazars, storage facilities, community centres, supply of drinking water, construction of low cost sanitation units, etc.	10%	17.5%

Socio-Economic infrastructure :

Sector	Minimum share	Maximum share
(e) Development of Education: Educational institutions, buildings, playgrounds, teaching aids.	5%	12.5%
(f) Health and Social Welfare: Health measures, sanitation and immunisation family planning, social welfare activities including child welfare, youth and woman development.	7.5%	15%
(g) Sports and Culture : Promotion of games, sports and cultural activies.	2.5%	7.5%
(h) Grants to Union Parishad rural works programme.	5%	7.5%

(i) Miscellaneous activities: Birth and   2.5%   5%
death registration services, disaster
relief (if necessary, 0.5% of this amount
may be utilised for survey work and to
supervise development activities).

Notes : 1.   Expenditure on repair and renovation work
             for a project in a particular sector shall
             be limited within the allocation for that
             sector.

        2. Allocation for one project in a particular
            sector should not exceed one-third of the
            total allocation for that sector in a year.

        3. The types of activities which cannot be
            financed by Upazila Development Fund have
            been listed.

        4. For repair and maintenance of the buildings
            transferred to the Upazila, a maximum of 5%
            of the total development assistance fund of
            the respective upazila or TK.3.00 lakh
            (whichever is higher) may be allocated.
            Rent collection from the upazila buildings
            may also be utilised for this purpose.

Table 9.21 : Annual Development Plans of the Upazila Parishad
Madhupur.

(In Taka)

Sectors	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89
Agriculture and irrigation	15,00,000 (30.00)	15,90,600 (28.39)	10,59,700 (20.00)	2,97,817 (9.30)	10,46,352 (14.47)	8,37,894 (12.51)
Small and cottage industries	-	-	3,64,900 (6.89)	-	50,210 (0.69)	60,000 (0.90)
Physical Infrastructure :	17,50,000 (35.00)	17,23,150 (30.76)				
Transport and communication	-	-	15,89,500 (30.00)	10,82,323 (33.80)	21,09,000 (29.17)	24,19,008 (36.10)
Housing and physical planning	-	-	5,09,341 (9.61)	4,12,000 (12.87)	12,63,201 (17.47)	5,62,000 (8.39)
Socio-economic infrastructure :	12,50,000 (25.00)	14,58,050 (26.03)				
Education	-	-	5,44,682 (10.28)	8,88,802 (27.76)	11,22,253 (15.52)	13,32,048 (19.88)
Health and social welfare	-	-	3,95,886 (7.47)	91,148 (2.85)	5,40,566 (7.48)	3,87,000 (5.78)
Sports and culture	2,50,000 (5.00)	2,65,100 (4.73)	1,32,000 (2.49)	-	79,000 (1.10)	50,000 (0.75)
Grants to Union Parishads	-	-	3,97,400 (7.50)	3,59,996 (11.24)	2,29,027 (3.17)	1,53,400 (2.29)
Miscellaneous	2,50,000 (5.00)	5,65,100 (10.09)	3,04,928 (5.76)	70,000 (2.19)	7,90,359 (10.93)	8,98,300 (13.41)
Total	50,00,000	56,02,000	52,98,337	32,02,086	72,30,310	66,99,650

Source : Upazila Parishad Office, Madhupur, District Tangail, 1989.

Table 9.22 : Annual Development Plans of the Upazila Parishad Singair.

(In Taka)

Sectors	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89
Agriculture and irrigation	12,52,643 (25.05)	12,58,000 (31.32)	6,52,400 (15.00)	5,11,159 (15.45)	7,65,672 (16.35)	2,06,582 (13.05)
Small and cottage industries	-	-	2,17,500 (5.00)	1,70,382 (5.15)	1,17,570 (2.51)	6,411 (0.40)
Physical Infrastructure :	13,04,447 (26.09)	12,53,200 (31.20)				
Transport and communication	-	-	13,04,800 (30.00)	10,22,298 (30.91)	22,55,177 (48.15)	6,17,038 (38.98)
Housing and physical planning	-	-	7,61,200 (17.50)	5,96,350 (18.03)	65,270 (1.39)	1,31,357 (8.30)
Socio-economic infrastructure :						
Education	13,57,812 (27.16)	11,23,250 (27.97)	4,34,950 (10.00)	4,25,957 (12.88)	3,85,765 (8.24)	1,43,610 (9.07)
Health and social welfare	-	-	3,26,200 (7.50)	2,55,573 (7.73)	21,328 (0.46)	70,380 (4.45)
Sports and culture	2,46,875 (4.94)	2,24,650 (5.59)	2,17,500 (5.00)	75,190 (2.27)	50,208 (1.07)	35,618 (2.25)
Grants to Union Parishads	6,52,286 (13.05)	-	3,26,200 (7.50)	2,55,573 (7.73)	3,13,800 (6.70)	1,06,852 (6.75)
Miscellaneous	1,85,937 (3.72)	1,57,300 (3.92)	1,08,750 (2.50)	85,190 (2.58)	7,09,200 (15.14)	2,65,152 (16.75)
Total	50,00,000	40,16,400	43,49,500	33,07,662	46,83,990	15,83,000*

Note : * First instalment.

Source : Upazila Parishad Office, Singair, Distict Manikganj, 1989.

Table 9.23 : Annual Development Plans of the Upazila Parishad Jhikargacha.

(In Taka)

Sectors	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89
Agriculture and irrigation	5,00,000 (16.67)	-	-	-	-	5,13,000 (17.10)
Small and cottage industries	-	-	-	-	-	1,35,000 (4.50)
Physical Infrastructure :	15,00,000 (50.00)					
Transport and communication	-	-	-	-	-	6,75,000 (22.50)
Housing and physical planning	-	-	-	-	-	4,05,000 (13.50)
Socio-economic infrastructure :	7,00,000 (23.33)					
Education	-	-	-	-	-	2,97,000 (9.90)
Health and social welfare	-	-	-	-	-	2,59,000 (8.63)
Sports and culture	1,50,000 (5.00)	-	-	-	-	1,08,000 (3.6)
Grants to Union Parishads	-	-	-	-	-	**
Miscellaneous	1,50,000 (5.00)	-	-	-	-	6,08,000 (20.27)
Total	30,00,000	44,65,000	44,97,500	33,12,584	47,68,000	30,00,000*

Note : ** The district authority was entrusted to provide funds for the Union Parishad.

* First instalment.

Source : Upazila Parishad Office, Jhikargacha, District Jessore, 1989.

<u>NOTES</u>

1.   See IFDA : <u>Ifda Dossier</u> (Nyon, Switzerland :
     IFDA, 1990).

2.   The Grameen Bank Project in Bangladesh is guided
     by these principles. The project is claimed to be
     a successful one in providing employment and
     generating income for the rural poor. See Yunus,
     M. : <u>Grameen Bank Project in Bangladesh : A
     Poverty Focused Rural Development Programme</u>,
     Paper presented at the workshop on "poverty-
     focused rural development and small farmer credit
     for South Asia, the Pacific and East Africa", at
     the BARD, Comilla, Bangladesh (Dhaka : Grameen
     Bank, 1982). There is also a relatively large,
     more recent literature, on this topic.

3.   On the impact of illiteracy on rural development,
     see Begum, S. and Banu, S. : <u>Education for Rural
     Development : Impact of Some Educational
     Innovations in Selected Areas</u> (Comilla : BARD,
     1988).

4.   Following the policy of decentralisation, the
     government made provision for the appointment of
     a "Mass Communication Officer" in the "Upazila
     Administration". This was never implemented, but
     in my view the appointment of a "Mass
     Communication Officer" would have good effects on
     the disseminating of information on government
     policy, to the rural people.

5.   Because of lack of electricity, television is not
     yet an important medium of communication. Most of
     the villages of rural Bangladesh are not
     electrified. A rural electrification programme
     is, however, in operation through the Rural
     Electrification Board (REB). But this provision
     is not primarily for household consumption, but
     to expand irrigation and rural industries.

6.   See GOB & UNICEF :<u>Report on Evaluation of Primary
     Health Care Programme in Three Pilot Project
     Thanas</u> (Dhaka : UNICEF, 1981).

7. See Khan, M.R. : <u>Evaluation of Primary Health Care and Family Planning Facilities and Their Limitations Specially in the Rural Areas of Bangladesh</u> (Dhaka : BIDS, 1988).

8. Natural disasters are one of major causes of low agricultural production in Bangladesh. For more information, see Murshid, K.A.S. : "Weather, New Technology and Instability in Foodgrain Production in Bangladesh", <u>The Bangladesh Development Studies</u> Vol. XV No. 1 (Dhaka : BIDS, 1987).

9. For detailed on relief operation in rural areas during a natural disaster, see Ahmed, K.A. : "Local Government and Relief Operation : A Case Study of Balaganj Union Parishad", <u>The Journal of Local Government</u>, Vol. 15 No.1 (Dhaka : NILG, 1986), pp.65-83.

10. Many reports are found even on daily newspapers, about corrupt practices in relief distribution, food for works programme, and other projects. There are reports of suspension from office of the elected representatives on such charges of corruption.

Chapter 10

CONCLUSION

It has been argued by a number of authorities that decentralisation builds up democratic institutions at the local level, and helps delivery of basic needs to rural areas. This thesis has been guided by this philosophy, in its examination of the practice of decentralisation in Bangladesh. The literature survey of Part I indicated that decentralisation is not uniformly practised across the world. It faces problems associated with its diverse nature, and difficulties in implementation. It suffers from the general unwillingness of central authorities to decentralise power to local authorities. Central government tends to retain a considerable degree of control over local authorities, and economic objectives are frequently undermined by political considerations. Nevertheless, decentralisation is in popular demand in Third World nations. The results have been mixed, and no country has achieved what could be regarded as complete success. The Bangladesh case is no exception.

Evaluators face difficulties in assessing the impact of decentralisation on development. There are no specific criteria which can be applied in evaluation. This thesis has followed some broad guidelines, associated with political, administrative and economic implications of decentralisation policies. These

guidelines also provided the framework for the fieldwork.

As far as the Bangladesh case is concerned, over-centralisation was a key feature of the administration during the British and Pakistan period. There was, however, a growing demand for democratic local administration during the later half of the British administration, and although it was slow, some progress was made.

After Independence in 1947, Pakistan failed to introduce a local government system which would grant greater power to the people. This continued for more than a decade after 1971. Indeed it is possible that over the past two centuries there has been a gradual deterioration in long-run confidence and skill in local self-governance in rural Bangladesh, given the historical experience. In recent years development in the rural areas has become increasingly dependent on government grants and subsidies. Some progress through the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was perceptible during the 1960s but the trend was not sustained. The involvement of rural elites and corrupt persons in increasing numbers, in the control and utilisation of resources, has been a constant problem. Reforms in local administration have not been

effective, either in addressing the structural problems of rural development, or in delivering basic needs to the rural poor.

A major change in the system of local development administration in Bangldesh, came through the policy of devolution in 1982. This provided for the establishment at the Upazila level, of a powerful politico-administrative structure with substantial development authority. The success of the government in legitimising this new local government system has not been complemented by corresponding success in development. The development goal of decentralisation is yet to be achieved. Increasing emphasis on privatisation, however, seems to have better prospects.

The current policy of decentralisation involving the "Upazila Administration" is an ambitious one. But the policy suffers from a number of problems. It is weakened by the non-democratic political character of the national government (Shawkat Ali 1986; Mohabbat Khan, 1987). The reforms have been a repetition of the historical legacy of partial reconstruction, to fulfil the immediate objective of gaining political support and administrative control. The objective of development has been a secondary consideration as it has always been in the past.

This study has shown that the links of villages with the "Upazila Administration" are still weak, both physically and psychologically. The confidence of the villagers in these structures is not strong. Current policy has failed to give greater control over decision-making by the rural poor.

The rural poor remain neglected in the development process. There has not been any significant improvement in the satisfaction of basic needs. The "Panchayati Raj" of India has set a better example in this respect (Neil Webster, 1989). In the Indian case, decentralisation has been favoured by democratic practice in all tiers of local government (Gangopadhyay, 1987). In the Bangladesh case, there has been a worrying lack of political goodwill and commitment from the central government to address the real problems of local government in the country, despite the emphasis on re-organization to favour the Upazila level.

That the "Upazila Administration" is more effective for development planning, is not yet clear. It has failed to create its own sources of income, and in the long-run this may turn out to be a critical issue for the independence of the "Upazila

Administration". It is necessary to reduce its financial dependence on the central government.

It is important to note that "self-help" philosophies do seem to work in Bangladesh. There have been a number of voluntary projects, under the auspices of non-governmental organizations, which have been successful. The experience of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) indicates that social conciousness can be raised.[1] The Grameen Bank project has been successful in the mobilisation of rural credits, generating income for the rural poor, and implementing other rural development projects.[2] The experience of such organisations proves that given strong commitment and motivation on the part the field agents, success is a strong possibility. The "Panchayati Raj" experience of India provides evidence that if participatory structures of local self-government are left in place for a long period, they can become instrumental in social transformation. We also point to the need for democratic practice in local development administration, if the rural majority is to have a say in managing its own future.

There are some simple measures which the government could take to make the Upazila system operate more effectively, to achieve development

objectives. For instance, separate job descriptions for each of the officers of the "Upazila Administration", are necessary to avoid clashes in local development administration. For a democratic institution to run smoothly, it must avoid conflicts and clashes. In the current practice of "Upazila Administration" in Bangladesh, the Upazila Chairman and the UNO are the two most important functionaries. It is important that these two have mutual understanding, holding each other in respect, the kind of relationship that prevails between a Minister and his Secretary at the national level.

Political representation from village level to the "Union Parishad" needs to be increased to strengthen the voice of the rural people, particularly the rural poor. At present about ten villages are represented by only three members in the "Union Parishad". This is inadequate. At least one elected representative from each village should be represented at the "Union Parishad". Villages which have no representatives, are being deprived of their legitimate share of development. In addition there is a compelling necessity to organise rural people at the village level.

Despite the problems revealed in the fieldwork opinion survey, my conclusion is open minded. I believe that decentralised institutions which have shown little success in their first five or even ten years, could nevertheless promote significant rural transformation in Bangladesh in the long-run given appropriate measures by the central government. This presupposes that the government of the day will have a commitment to democratic practice, at all levels of administration. If democracy is pursued at some levels, but not at all levels, conflict is inevitable. The present disatisfaction with the practical outcome of decentralisation in Bangladesh, expressed in the opinion surveys, and in recent academic research in the country, is significantly dependent on the national political scenerio, local power structures and their interrelationships. Many of these studies have failed to provide alternative suggestions, and some, unfortunately, have a degree of political bias. It is, however, difficult to maintain political neutrality when debating such issues. In my opinion, to derive benefits from decentralisation requires courage and patience, following the constitutional route to determine the future course of action in decentralisation. For Smith (1980, p. 137), the appeal of decentralisation is now so great that it is in competition with democracy as the concept that no

political theory, ideology or movement can afford to eschew, and the Bangladesh case is probably no exception.

In this conclusion I am supported by other empirical studies, which are cautiously optimistic about the effects of decentralisation on Thirld World development. Rondinelli and Nellis (1986) and Cochrane (1983) showed that decentralisation has brought an increase in the resources directed towards local levels from the centre. Blair (1985) maintains positive views on the experience of current decentralisation policies in Bangladesh and India. The Indian experience shows that with decentralisation significant material improvements in the economic conditions of the poorer sections of the rural social formation have occurred under the Panchayati Raj (Neil Webster, 1989). At the same time problems remain, with certain social relations preventing more radical changes, including improvement in the political participation and development of some groups, particularly women. Roger's (1985) study of Malaysia showed how greater political participation at community level helped provide greater resource control, and improved social awareness among the poorer section of the population.

It is hoped that this research is a starting point, rather than the final word. At present there is a volume of literature on decentralisation, but mostly in the form of general studies. Many studies present historical accounts on decentralisation measures. But relatively few studies explore the link between decentralisation and grass-roots development.

There is scope for more detailed studies of specific issues, and for case studies. Studies are also required which look at decentralisation in terms of central-local and inter-governmental relations. This is a research area where a particular contribution may be made by the discipline of political science, together with studies of public administration and multi-disciplinary studies on development. The empirical demands of such studies, however, need to be recognized. Although they can be found in the research literature of developed nations, it is not surprising in view of data limitations, that very few exist for Third World countries. Though this thesis illuminates some problems of rural areas, constraints of time and resources have not permitted any significant breakthrough in these directions, in particular, in detailed studies of central-local and intergovernmental relations. I realize that comprehensive surveys are needed in order to suggest more specific measures to

improve decentralisation. Group efforts and research organizations may form the ideal bases for undertaking such comprehensive studies of decentralisation.

In the case of Bangladesh, there is the need to follow up the "Upazila Administration" experience over the next five to ten years. We need to know how the new party-based elected Upazila Chairmen perform in practice in local development, and whether their political identities bring greater public accountability in local administration. Future actions will determine how the "Upazila Administration" fits into, and relates to inter-govermental organizations. This study has argued that there is a lack of linkages between the "Upazila Administration" and rural villages. Relations with the district organizations are also uncertain. Future research may illuminate these aspects.

An important area of study is the kind of "development package" which decentralisation policy should offer at the local level. Studies need to take an inter- or multi-disciplinary approach. They need to examine diversified aspects of development, covering physical, social, economic, political and administrative issues.

More particularly there is a need to move away from the simplistic view that decentralisation invariably helps the rural areas, the villages, and within the villages, the rural poor. This thesis shows that even the more straightforward improvements in basic needs - access to information, health care, alleviation of natural disasters - do not always result from decentralisation, in the way we might expect. There are gainers and losers in a policy of decentralisation. More specific measures are needed to increase the political and economic well-being of disadvantaged groups. It is important to note, however, that our fieldwork survey showed that people still want, and have faith in, a decentralised administration. This is a further and compelling reason for trying to improve decentralisation in Bangladesh so that it performs in practice in the way its advocates suggest.

Notes

1. See Lovell, C.H. and Fatema, K. : <u>Assignment Children : The BRAC Non-formal Education Programme in Bangladesh</u> (New York : UNICEF, 1989).

2. See Rahman, A. : <u>Demand and Marketing Aspects of Grameen Bank - A Closer Look</u> (Dhaka : The University Press, 1986).

APPENDICES

Appendix 6.1 : Functions of the "Upazila Parishad" and the Central Government.

Functions of the "Upazila Parishad"

1. All development activities at the Upazila level; formulation of Upazila level development plans and programmes and implementation, monitoring and evaluation thereof.

2. Preparation of Upazila development plans on the basis of union development plans.

3. Giving assistance and encouragement to Union Parishads in their activities.

4. Promotion of health, family planning and family welfare.

5. Provision for management of environment.

6. Training of Chairmen, Members and Secretaries of Union Parishad.

7. Implementation of government policies and programmes within the Upzila.

8. Supervision, control and co-ordination of function of officers serving in the Upazila, except Munsifs, Trying Magistrates and officers engaged in regulatory functions.

9. Promotion of socio-cultural activities.

10. Promotion and encouragement of employment generating activities.

11. Such other function as may be specified by the government from time to time.

12. Promotion and extension of co-operative movement in the Upazila.

13. Assistance of Zilla Parishad in development activities.

14. Planning and execution of all rural public works programme.

15. Promotion of agricultural activities for maximising production.

16. Promotion of educational and vocational activities.

17. Promotion of livestock, fisheries and forest.

Illustration List of Regulatory and Major Development Functions Retained by the Central Government

1. Civil and criminal judiciary.

2. Administration and management of central revenue like income tax, customs and excise, land revenue, land tax etc.

3. Maintenance of law and order.

4. Registration.

5. Maintenance of essential supplies including food.

6. Generation and distribution of electrical power.

7. Irrigation schemes involving more than one district.

8. Technical education and education above primary level, viz., agricultural, engineering and medical, education; High School, College and University education.

9. Modernized District Hospitals attached to the Medical Colleges.

10. Research organisations, like council of scientific and industrial reseaerch (C.S.I.R.) laboratories.

11. Large scale seed multiplication and dairy farms.

12. Large scale industries.

13. Inter-district and inter-Upazila means of communication, viz., posts, telegraph, telephones, railways, mechanically propelled road and inland water transport, highways, civil aviation, ports and shipping.

14. Flood control and development of water resources.

15. Marine fishing.

16. Mining and mineral development.

17. Compilation of national statistics.

Source : CMLAS : Manual on Thana Administration, Volume I, (Dhaka : CMLAS, 1983).

Appendix 6.2 : Charter of Duties of the Staff of the "Upazila Administration".

Upazila Chairman

1. The Chairman of a the Upazila Parishad shall be responsible for the conduct of the day to day administration of the Upazila Parishad and supervision and control of the staff of the Upazila Parishad.

2. The Chairman shall dispose of the following business of the Upazila Parishad.

    a) Appointment, transfer, punishment or removal of any servant of the Upazila Parishad, not being a government servant.

    b) Collection and recovery of all taxes, rates, tolls,fees and other

    c) Receipt of all amount on behalf of the Upazila Parishad.

    d) Incurring of expenditure on any item within sanctioned budget not exceeding such limit as may be specified by the Upazila Parishad

    e) Conduct of all correspondence on behalf of the Upazila Parishad.

    f) Issuing of notice on behalf of the Upazila Parishad.

    g) Compounding of all offences under the ordinance.

    h) Such other business as may be specified by the government.

3. The Chairman of the Upazila Parishad will coordinate all the development activities of the Upazila.

4. He will initiate formulation of policies in development matters, indentify project and schemes and ensure timely implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the schemes.

5. He will be responsible for relief works in time of natural calamities, famine and epidemics.

6. He will promote and organise employment generating activities including agriculture and food productions.

7. He will promote socio-cultural activities.

8. He will be responsible for proper administration and functioning of primary education.

9. He will be responsible for implementation of family planning programme.

10. He will also be responsible for ensuring implementation of government policies and programme within the Upazila.

11. He will extend necessary help and assistance for maintenance of law and order.

12. He will initiate the annual confidential report of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

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8. Create employment opportunities, especially in rural areas;

9. Promote efficient import substitution, export-oriented and export-linkage industries;

10. Encourage geographical dispersal of industries;

11. Promote development of indigenous raw materials and technology-based industries through research and adoption;

12. Support efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in clothing by 1990;

13. Encourage foreign investment in appropriate sectors and particularly in high technology, export-oriented and labour intensive industries;

14. Encourage Bangladeshi ventures abroad in areas having a comparative advantage; and

15. Encourage tourism.

Source : DI, 1987.

Appendix 8.1 : **Questionnaires.**

Questionnaire A

QUESTIONNAIRE

For Administrators, Representatives and other Local
Persons with Knowledge and Status

Name of Respondent   :

Occupation/ Position   :

Upazila   :

Date   :

I.   **Political Aspects**

(a)   Please give your opinion on changes in the rate of
      political participation by the people at Upazila
      level

Increasing /__7   Decreasing /__7   Same as before /__7

If your answer is 'increasing' in what form are you
measuring the participation ? Please use 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
according to increasing weight.

Electoral participation /__7 General policy-making /__7

Project identification, planning and implementation /__7

Project monitoring and evaluation /__7   Exchange of

ideas and experiance /__7 Others (specify) :

(b) Do you face any political presure on the work of your department ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If your answer is 'yes' why ? (please use 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, according to increasing weight of your answer)

Presure from political party ☐ Presure from political leaders ☐ Presure from social elites ☐

Presure from unemployed/poor ☐ Others (specify) :

Dose it hamper your work ? Yes ☐ No ☐

If your answer is 'yes' how ?

Hampers expected work plan ☐ Hampers expected distribution of resources/investment plan ☐

Forces corruption ☐ Others(specify) :

(c) What is your comment on the democratic governance of institutions at Upazila level ?

It should continue ☐ It should not continue ☐ It should continue but reform is necessary ☐

Others (specify) :

Are you satisfied with the democratic institutions at Village, Union and Upazila level ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you have any comment on democratic practics o₹ local institutions, please state :

Democratic practice has not yet come about ☐

Union/Village level institutions need to be strengthened ☐ Upazila Parishad should be given more

authority ◻ Dual administration cannot continue ◻

Corruption should be stopped ◻ Upazila Parishad

Chairman should be more qualified ◻ People are now

encouraged by decentralisation ◻

(d) Do you believe that the Upazila system of local administration is the most appropriate for national development in Bangladesh ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

(e) In your opinion, to what extent does the Upazila administrative system contribute towards ensuring people's participation in the development process?

Substantially contributing ◻ Marginally

contributing ◻ Not contributing ◻ Same as before

◻ Worsening ◻

(f) What is your comment on the local political enviroment ?

Improving ◻ Not improving ◻ Worsening ◻

(g) Do you notice any conflicts between Representatives and Government Excutives ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

If your answer is 'yes', what type of conflicts do you notice ?

Power and status ◻ Decision-making ◻

Professional/ideological conflicts ◻ Personal clash

◻ Others (specify) :

Is there any conflict between the Representatives ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

If your answer is 'yes', please state what type of conflicts exist ?

Power and status $\square$ Decision-making $\square$

Professional/ideological differences $\square$ Personal

clash (between the local MP and the Upazila Parishad

Chairman $\square$

Do you notice any conflicts between the Upazila Chairman and the Upazila Nirbahi Officer(UNO) ?

Yes $\square$ No $\square$

(h) Do you see any conflicting issues in the job description of the staff of the Upazila Parishad ?

Yes $\square$ No $\square$

(i) What is your comment on the future of Upazila Administration system when comparing it with the previous Thana Administration in terms of a development role ?

Substantially improved $\square$ Moderately improved $\square$

No improvement $\square$

II. **Administrative Aspects**

(a) From your knowledge or experiance, what were the major problems of Thana Administration for development at local level ? Please state :

Lack of development authority $\square$ Lack of staff

capacity $\square$ Lack of resources $\square$ Lack of democratic

participation $\square$ The officials were aloof from local

problems $\square$

Please also state if there was any specific advantage in the previous Thana Administration system over the present Upazila Parishad Administration system :

Officials and representatives were more honest ╱──╱ The

administration was more neutral ╱──╱ There was no

influence on Circle Officer's decision ╱──╱ People

would like to participate more in the elections ╱──╱

(b)   Please give your opinion on the following :

   (1) Are there any coordination problems among your departmental staff ?

      Yes ╱──╱ No ╱──╱

   (2) Is there any problem of coordinating tasks which involve more than one departments ?

      Yes ╱──╱ No ╱──╱

   (3) Is there any corruption in the Upazila Administration ?

      Yes ╱──╱ No ╱──╱

If your answer is 'yes' please state the nature of corruption :

Misuse of development funds ╱──╱ Corruption in

decision making ╱──╱ Contractors are the relatives of

influential Representatives ╱──╱

(c) What extra benefits accrue to people from the Upazila Administration compared to Thana Administration ? please state :

Institutions are on the door step ╱──╱ More income and

employment opportunities ╱──╱ Better social

facilities ╱──╱

What is your comment on the committment of Upazila Parishad staff :

(i)   To people :

Seriously committed ☐   Moderately committed ☐

Not committed ☐

(ii) To work :

Seriously committed ☐   Moderately committed ☐

Not committed ☐

(d)   In your opinion, what major administrative problems do the Upazila Parishad face now ?

Lack of coordination ☐ Lack of responsibility ☐

Power and status between Chairman and UNO ☐ Lack of

sincerity and mutual trust ☐ Lack of respect for

rules and regulations ☐

(e)   Is decision-making in the Upazila Parishad independent in practic, of the government ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you notice any indirect/unofficial influence on the Upazila Parishad by the higher authority ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(f)   Do you see in Upazila Parishad a decentralised authority ? Please state your opinion.

Yes ☐   No ☐

Do you think that the Upazila Parishad system provides a bottom-up decision-making process. Please give your opinion.

Yes ☐   No ☐

(g) Does the central authority ask the Upazila Parishad for suggestions, in the case of policy changes towards local administration ? Please give your opinion.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you find that the Upazila Parishad can reject any central decision, for further consideration by the government ? Please state your opinion.

Yes ☐ No ☐

III. Economic and Managerial Aspects

(a) In your opinion what significant aspect of the Upazila Parishad qualifies it for a better role in economic management ? Please state.

Increased development authority ☐ Increased staff

capacity ☐ Availability of more resources ☐

Democratic practice in planning process ☐ increased

awareness of the staff about local problems ☐

Do you see the present system as an improvement on the previous Thana Administration system for local development ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) Does the Upazila Parishad support equity in the distribution of investment within the Upazila ? Please State.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the Upazila Parishad offer equal opportunities for income and employment generating in different parts of the Upazila ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(c) Do you see the Upazila Parishad facing any particular problems in the management of economic activities ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If your answer is 'yes', please give details.

Lack of coordination ☐ Lack of resources ☐ Lack of effiency in planning and implementation ☐

(d) What is your comment on the economic planning process of the Upazila Parishad, as compared with Thana Parishad ?

Good ☐ Better ☐ Worse ☐

On paper O.K. but not in practice ☐

(e) Do you think that the Upazila town centre is developing as a potential growth centre ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(f) Do you think that the rural development process has been improved as compared with Thana Administration period?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(g) In your opinion is the Upazila Administration playing a role in meeting basic human needs ?

More community development oriented projects ☐ More income and development generating projects ☐

Extension of technical services ☐ The Upazila Administration is not aware of such needs ☐

(h)   What is your comment on the role of NGOs at Upazila level ?

They are performing better than Upazila Administration

☐ They are performing same as Upazila

Administration ☐ Their performance is worse compared

to Upazila Administration ☐ They are making local

administration dependent ☐ They hold identical/

Parallel power structure ☐

IV.   Social Environment

(a)   What is your comment on the general social environment of your Upazila, since 1982 ?

It has improved ☐ It has not improved ☐ It has

deteriorated ☐ Same as before ☐

Not predictable ☐

(b)   What is your comment on the freedom of expression and association for people at the Upazila level, since 1982 ?

Better than before ☐ Same as before ☐ Worse than

before ☐ Cannot judge ☐

Do you think that the association of agricultural labourers should get trade union rights ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(c) What is your opinion about political repression at Upazila level ?

There is dominance by ruling party $\boxed{}$ There is dominance by all strong /influential groups $\boxed{}$ There is dominance by corrupt persons $\boxed{}$ There is no political repression $\boxed{}$

(d) Do you believe that poor people are obtaining justice from the Upazila Judiciary ?

  Yes $\boxed{}$ No $\boxed{}$

Have you ever noticed any pertiality or corruption in judicial department ?

  Yes $\boxed{}$ No $\boxed{}$

(e) Do you think that the police station is playing an appropriate role in security ?

  Yes $\boxed{}$ No $\boxed{}$

(f) Does the police station cooperate with the Upazila Magistrate to control crime ?

  Yes $\boxed{}$ No $\boxed{}$

(g) Are there any social/religious/ethnic conflicts in your Upazila ?

Social conflicts $\boxed{}$ Religious conflicts $\boxed{}$ Ethnic conflicts $\boxed{}$ None $\boxed{}$

(h) If you have any comment to improve the social environment of your Upazila, please state.

Moral values need to be upgraded $\boxed{}$ Political system should be strengthened $\boxed{}$ Strict law order to be maintained $\boxed{}$ Cooperation among law and order enforcing agencies is necessary $\boxed{}$

V. **Natural Disasters e.g. famine, flood**

(a) Do you think that the Upazila Administration is capable of solving the problems of natural disasters ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) Do you feel that a national flood control programme is necessary to solve the Upazila level flood problems ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(c) Do you feel that local flood control programmes would minimise the flood problems at Upazila level?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(d) Do you think that the Upazila Administration could have substantially helped the flood victims during the last two flood ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(e) If you have any other comment related to Upazila administration, please state :

Questionnaire B

<u>For reseach only</u>

<u>HOUSEHOLD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON BASIC NEEDS</u>

Name of the Respondent :   Upazila :

Age of the Respondent :   Union :

Interviewer :   Village :

Date of Interview :

I.   General Household Information

Household Member (Sl.No.)	Age (year)	Sex (M/F)	Marital Status (M/Um)	Occupation (Major/ Subsidiary)	Income monthly (Taka)

II.   **Food and Nutrition**

(a)   What are your major sources for food ?

Crops/vegetables on own land /‾7 Fish in own pond /‾7

Family poultry /‾7 Purchase of some food items from

market /‾7 Purchase of most of the food items from

market /‾7

What quantity of land you have at present (acres/decimal) ?

_____

Is it the maximum quantity of land you ever have had ?

Yes /___/   No /___/

If No, when did you have the highest quantity of land ?

Year_____   Quantity   _____

(b)   Did you sell any land after 1982 ?

Yes /___/   No /___/

If yes, why did you sell your land ?

For: food purchase /___/   repairing houses /___/

buying clothing /___/ health treatment /___/

marriage of a family member /___/ family education /___/

settling any disputes with others /___/   other :

To whom did you sell your land ?

Money lender /___/ Rich man /___/ Village member /___/

Bank /___/   Other :   Quantity sold :

Did you ask for any help from the local public authorities (Upazila/Union Parishad) ?

Yes /___/   No /___/

If yes, what help did you receive ?

Cash loan /___/   grants /___/   help in kind /___/

advice to bank for credit /___/   other :

If No, why ?

You were not aware of the system /_7 You feared to approach them /_7 you were aware that you would not get any help /_7   Upazila/Union parishad has no resources to help in such circumstances /_7 You would be required to pay a bribe /_7   other :

(c) How many times do you have meals in a day ?

Breakfast /_7 lunch /_7 supper /_7

other times /_7

Do you find yourself physically sound ?

Yes /_7   No /_7

Do you think that you would be physically better if you could take more food ?

Yes /_7   No /_7

If yes, why don't you take more food ?

You cannot afford to /_7 You are on a controlled diet /_7 Other :

Does your health permit you to undertake regular work?

Yes /_7   No /_7

Do you stop working any day because of physical weakness due to?

Overwork /_7 Less food/nutrition /_7 Disease /_7

Other :

III.   **Shelter and clothing**

(a) Is this your own house ?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If no, who is the owner ?

Relatives/friend ☐   Employer ☐   Other:

Do you pay any rent ?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, monthly amount in taka _____

What is your homestead area (acres/decimals)?
_____

(b) Please state your housing facilities (number of units) :

   Residential :   Kitchen :   Sitting/reading :

   Cattle shed :   Other :

Have you carried out any improvement to your housing unit in last 6 years ?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, what improvements ?

Unit :   Cost :   Year :

Have you received any help for improving your housing from Upazila/Union Parishad ?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

If you have received any help, which department provided you help and what was the amount in taka ?

_____   _____

Please also state if you have received any bank loan :

_____

Has there been any improvement for house loan
facilities since the Upazila system was introduced ?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

(c) Are you satisfied with your present housing
facilities ?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

If No, what is the Problem with present housing ?

Need more room ☐   Needs improvement ☐   Other :

How do you think that you will solve this problem ?

Don't know ☐ If I get money ☐   Children will

make improvements in the future ☐ God knows ☐

I will think about this in the future ☐ Other ☐

(d) Do you have clothing for all of your family
    members?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

(e) Do you face any problems because of shortage of
    clothing ?

      Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, please indicate your problems :

Prevents us working ☐ Prevents us meeting people

☐ Prevents social gatherings ☐ Prevents

schooling for the childrens ☐ The children become

angry ☐ Other :

Do you borrow clothing from anybody for any of the reasons stated in (e) above ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

(f) What type of clothes you generally buy from the market ?

New clothes ◻ Old clothes ◻ Both ◻

Has your financial ability increased over the last few years, for buying clothing ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

W ere you financially better off, able to buy clothing for your family members, before the formation of Upazila?

Yes ◻ No ◻

IV. Primary Health Care

(a) What major health facilities do you generally use ?

Upazila Health Complex ◻ Graduate private doctor

◻ Kabiraj ◻ Village doctor ◻

Other (Missionary Health Service, etc.) :

(b) Are you satisfied with the service of the Upazila Health Complex ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

Do you get free treatment from the Health Complex ?

Yes ◻ No ◻

Dose the hospital service of the Health Complex provide the necessary treatment facilities for the in-patients?

Yes ⧄   No ⧄

If no, how do you generally manage the cost of treatment ?

You reduce other expenditure ⧄   You leave treatment

for some time ⧄   Other :

What changes do you generally make for managing the cost of treatment ?

You reduce quantity of food ⧄   You reduce quantity

of clothing ⧄ You stop taking nutritious food ⧄

Other :

(c) Have you had any major treatment for any of your family member in recent time ?

Yes ⧄   No ⧄

If yes, did you get free treatment from the Upazila Health Complex ?

Yes ⧄   No ⧄

If no how did you manage the cost of treatment ?

From savings ⧄ By borrowing ⧄   Other :

If you have borrowed money, what was the source(s) ?

Bank ⧄   Money lender ⧄ Relatives/Friends ⧄

Other :

Did you ask UZP or any of your local representatives for help ?

Yes ⧄   No ⧄

Did you receive any help ?   Yes ⧄   No ⧄

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(d) If you generally use private doctors, why do you prefer them ?

Their services are better ☐ They take more care about patients ☐ They are your relatives ☐ Their locations are closer ☐ Public doctors are not reliable ☐ other :

(e) Do you received free treatment for your children from public health services ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you get regular vaccinations for cholera, small pox, after disaster ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(f) Do you get mothercare facilities from public health services ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you ever visited public health personnel to consult about your family health affairs ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why don't you visit them ?

You are not aware of any public health facility in the Upazila ☐ You fear to approach them ☐ You need payment for consultation ☐ Public health service is not good ☐ Other :

(g) Do you know the public doctors and health officials of your Upazila ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you know the Upazila Social Welfare Officer ?

        Yes ☐   No ☐

Have you ever gone to him for any of your family problem ?

        Yes ☐   No ☐

(h) Do you know whether the public doctors/health officials visit villages for any health work?

        Yes ☐   No ☐

If you have any comment on health aspects, please state.

V. Literacy and Access to Information

Literacy

(a)   General Information :

Household Member (SI. No.)	Level of Education	Institution attended	
		Formal	Informal

(b) Do you want to see your children educated ?

        Yes ☐   No ☐

Are you able to maintain the educational expenditure of your children ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

(c) Have you ever received any help for your children's education from local public authorities ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

Have you ever met your education officer ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

(d) Are you aware that the Upazila Parishad/ Union Parishad is responsible for the expansion and improvement of literacy in your village ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

Had there been any initiative for universal primary education in your village ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

(e) Do you want to contribute if any programme on Universal primary education and mass literacy is undertaken ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

Access to Information on Government Policies

(a) Are you aware of everyday national affairs ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

Are you aware of everyday Upazila affairs ?

    Yes ⧄   No ⧄

If your answer is yes to either or both of the above questions, how do you get Information ?

Own radio /__7   Others radio /__7   Own TV /__7

Other's TV /__7   Newspapers /__7   Friends/Relatives /__7

Others :

How often do you use these communication media ?

Daily /__7   Weekly /__7   Fortnightly /__7

Occasionally /__7

(b) What information are you generally interested in ?

Politics /__7   Development /__7   Other (cinema, music,

crime, etc.) /__7

(c) Do you get information about the officials and representatives of Upazila administration ?

Yes /__7   No /__7

If yes, whom are you best informed of ?

Village/Ward Member /__7   Union Chairman /__7   Upazila

Chairman /__7   Upazila Nirbahi officer /__7   Other :

(d) Do you know all the officials of the Upazila administration ?

Yes /__7   No /__7

Have you ever met any of the following officials ?

Upazila Chairman /__7   UNO /__7   Upazila Magistrate /__7

Union Chairman /__7

Have you ever talked to any of them ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(e) Have you attended any meeting organised by the UZP officials ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

What information did you gather from that meeting ?

Agricultural information ☐ Price of commodities ☐

Credit facilities ☐ Government policies on

development ☐ Functions of Upazila Parishad ☐

Other :

(f) Did you know any previous Thana officials ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Was is easy to meet them ? Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you attended any programme organised by the Thana officials ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you know whether they have visited yours or other villages ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(g) What is your comment on the performance of the UZP official and representatives ?

They are performing better than Thana officials ☐

They are doing same as Thana officials were doing ☐

They are performing worse than Thana officials ☐

I can not predict yet ☐ Other :

(h) Do you now have better information about government
policies at Upazila than previous time of Thana
administration ?

Yes ☐   No ☐   I can not judge ☐

If your answer is yes, please state why ?

Presence of more officials ☐   More development

activities ☐   Movement and efficiency of the

officials have increased ☐   Local democratic

procedure has been a cause for diseminating information

☐   Political activities have increased ☐   Other :

(i) Has there been a greater degree of communication
after the introduction of Upazila administration ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(j) What is your comment on the future of the Upazila
administration ?

It should continue ☐   It should not continue ☐

It should be changed ☐   I don't know ☐   Other :

(k) Are you aware of the planning process of the
Upazila Parishad ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(l) Do you think that corruption in Upazila
administration has decreased ?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Same ☐

Do you think that misuse of money by Upazila level
official has decreased ?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Same ☐

(m) Do you think that the number of corrupt middlemen has decreased after the introduction of the Upazila administration ?

Yes /__7   No /__7   Same /__7

VI.   **Aspects of Natural Hazards**

(a) Have you lost anything during the last two floods ?

Yes /__7   No /__7

If yes, what have you lost ?

Human lives   Yes/No

Houses   Yes/No   Price :

Crops & animals   Yes/No   Price :

(b) Have you received any help for flood damage ?

Yes /__7   No /__7

If yes, what have you received ?

In Kind :   In Cash :

(c) Did the Upazila/ Union Parishad help you any way ?

Yes /__7   No /__7

Please indicate who distributed the flood relief in your area/village :

Upazila Parishad /__7   Union Parishad /__7   Village

member /__7   Other :

Who decided the amount/quantity of help ?

Village member /⎯7 Union Chairman /⎯7 Committee among
the people /⎯7 An Officer of the UZP /⎯7 Other :

(d) Do you think that the distribution of flood relief
was fair and responsible ?

Yes /⎯7 No /⎯7

If your answer is no, please state why ?

There was partiality in the distribution /⎯7 The
distributors misused flood relief /⎯7 The relatives
and friend of the distributors received more /⎯7
other :

(e) If the UZP did not help you, please state why ?

The UZP had no resources for flood relief /⎯7 The UZP
had not enough resources to distribute among all flood
victims /⎯7 They were not willing to help /⎯7 They
neglected your village /⎯7 You are not aware of the
facts /⎯7 Other :

(f) Did people receive help at the time of their need?

Yes /⎯7 No /⎯7

(g) Do people receive any help from the UZP in the time
of other natural disasters ?

Yes /⎯7 No /⎯7

(h) Do you know the UZP Officer who is in charge of
looking after victims during natural disasters ?

Yes /⎯7 No /⎯7

Do you know the Project Implementation Officer (PIO) ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes , have you seen him to visit the areas damaged by natural disasters ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(i)   Do you think that the present Upazila administration has been more favourable to solving problems of natural disasters ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(j)   If you have any other comment related to the problem of natural disasters in your Upazila, please state.

<u>Appendix 8.2</u> :   Maps.

355

BANGLADESH

(Administrative)

0 _____ 32 miles

N

India   India

Upazila
Madhupur

India

Dhaka
Upazila
Singair

Upazila
Jhikargacha

Bay of Bengal

Burma

LEGEND :

International Boundary   — · —
District Boundary   — ·· —
Upazila Boundary   ....

River

Sample Upazila   ▨

UPAZILA SINGAIR

(Zila Fanikganj)

0 _____ 2 miles

N

Upazila
Saturia

Zila Dhaka

Dhalla

O

Gandardia

Fedulia

To Dhaka

To
Manikganj

Upazila
Harirampur

Zila
Dhaka

Zila Dhaka

LEGEND :
District Boundary
Upazila Boundary

Union Boundary

Upazila Headquarters
Union Headquarters

Sample Village

River/Canal

Road

UPAZILA JHIKARGACHA
(Zila Jessore)
0 ___ 2 miles

India

Upazila
Chowgacha

Upazila
Kotwali

To Jessore

N

Jhikargacha
Chapatala
Kashipur

To Benapol

Upazila
Sarsa

Upazila
Monirampur

LEGEND:

International Boundary —.—.
Upazila Boundary —..—..
Union Boundary — — — —
Upazila Headquarters □
Union Headquarters ○
Sample Village ⊘
River/Canal
Road
Railway

UPAZILA MADHUPUR

(Zila Tangail)

0 _____ 2 miles

LEGEND :

District Boundary
Upazila Boundary

Union Boundary
Upazila Headquarters

Union Headquarters
Sample Village
River/Canal

Road

To
Jamalpur

Zila Jamalpur

Zila
Mymensingh

To
Mymensingh

Charaljani

Kaitkai

Upazila
Gopalpur

Madhupur

Upazila Ghatail
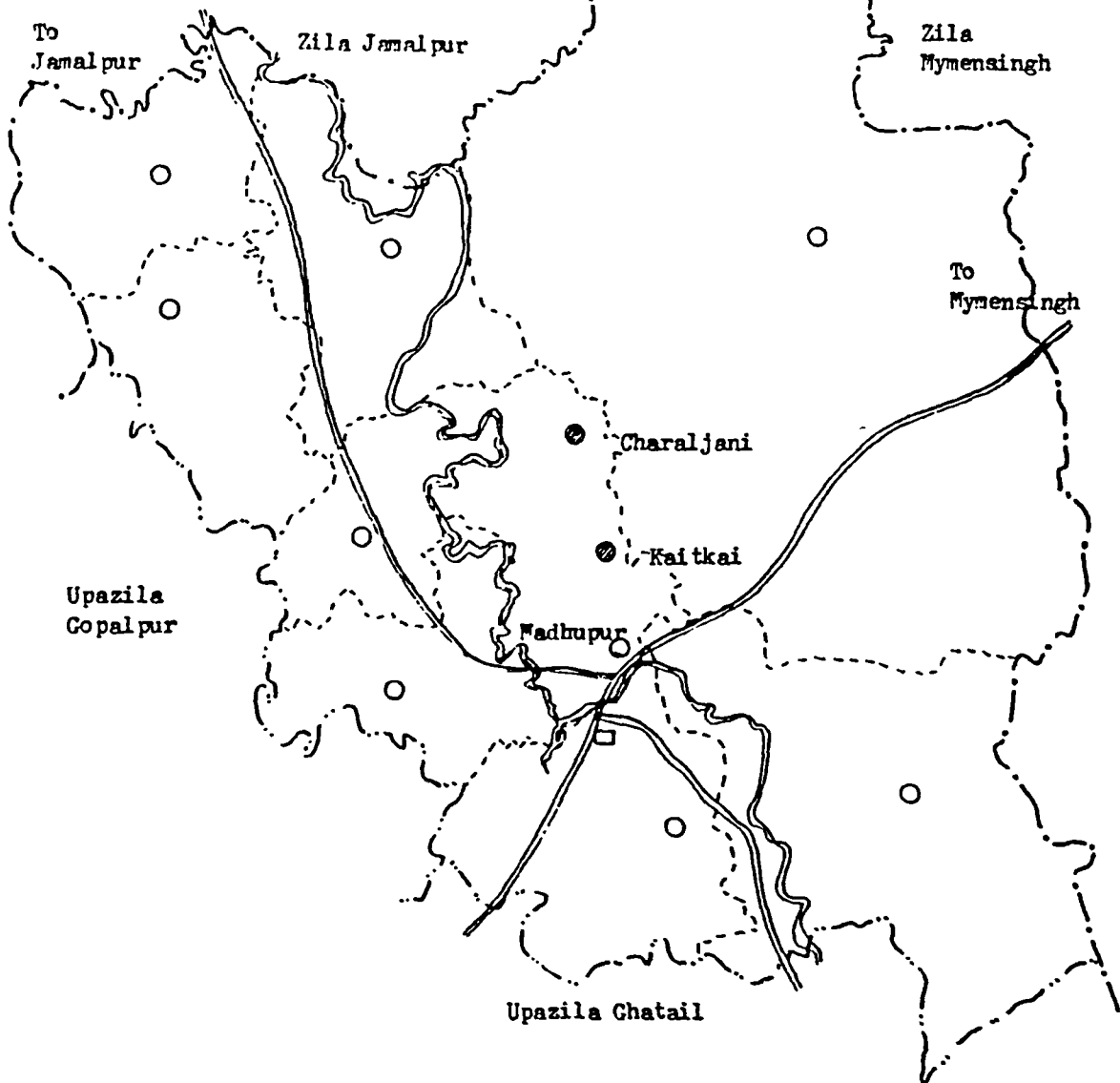
Appendix 8.3 : Tables.

Tables - Chapter 8

Results are shown in percentages, for three categories of respondents, I, II, and III (I represents Administrators, II stands for Representatives, and III for Local Educated Elites). Percentages are given for the ratio of the number of respondents answering the question in specified way, to the total number of respondents. The actual number of respondants answering as specified is shown in parentheses. Where any exceptions are made, notes are provided in the appropriate Table.

Table 8.1 :   Problems of Thana Administration

Respon- dents	Lack of authority for deve- lopment	Lack of staff	lack of resources	Lack of Partici- pation	Aloofness of staff, lack of interest in local problems
I	21.43 (18)	21.43 (18)	13.09 (11)	7.14 (6)	5.95 (5)
II	5.95 (5)	11.90 (10)	11.90 (10)	5.95 (5)	1.19 (1)
III	13.09 (11)	19.05 (16)	14.29 (12)	7.14 (6)	5.95 (5)
Total	40.48 (34)	52.38 (44)	39.29 (33)	20.24 (17)	13.10 (11)

Table 8.2 :   Advantages of Thana Administration

Respon- dents	Honesty of staff	Neutrality of sytem	No external influence
I	7.14 (6)	15.48 (13)	4.76 (4)
II	5.95 (5)	3.57 (3)	-
III	10.71 (9)	7.14 (6)	1.19 (1)
Total	23.81 (20)	26.19 (22)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.3 : Whether the Upazila is the most appropriate
level for local development administration in
Bangladesh

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	36.90 (31)	5.95 (5)	-
II	26.19 (22)	2.38 (2)	-
III	23.81 (20)	4.76 (4)	-
Total	86.90 (73)	13.10 (11)	-

Table 8.4 : Opinion of respondents on the viability of the
"Upazila Administration" for local development

Respon-dents	Substantially optimistic	Moderately optimistic	Not optimistic	No response
I	15.48 (13)	21.43 (18)	3.57 (3)	2.38 (2)
II	5.95 (5)	19.05 (16)	3.57 (3)	-
III	5.95 (5)	14.29 (12)	8.33 (7)	-
Total	27.38 (23)	54.76 (46)	15.48 (13)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.5 :   Independence of the "Upazila Parishad" in decision-making

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	32.14 (27)	9.52 (8)	1.19 (1)
II	25.00 (21)	1.19 (1)	2.38 (2)
III	19.05 (16)	7.14 (6)	2.38 (2)
Total	76.19 (64)	17.86 (15)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.6 :   Whether respondents see the Upazila Administration as a decentralised authority

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	25.00 (21)	5.95 (5)	11.90 (10)
II	19.05 (16)	1.19 (1)	8.33 (7)
III	16.67 (14)	5.95 (5)	5.95 (5)
Total	60.71 (51)	13.10 (11)	26.19 (22)

Table 8.7 :   Whether   respondents   see   the   Upazila
               Administration   a   bottom-up   approach   of   the
               central government

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	19.05 (16)	3.57 (3)	20.24 (17)
II	8.33 (7)	-	20.24 (17)
III	15.48 (13)	2.38 (2)	13.09 (11)
Total	42.86 (36)	5.95 (5)	51.19 (43)

Table 8.8 :   External influence on the Upazila Parishad

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	11.90 (10)	27.38 (23)	3.57 (3)
II	10.71 (9)	15.48 (13)	2.38 (2)
III	15.48 (13)	9.52 (8)	3.57 (3)
Total	38.10 (32)	52.38 (44)	9.52 (8)

Table 8.9 :   Whether the central government asks the Upazila
Administration for any suggestions in matters
of policy changes at the Upazila level.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	10.71 (9)	23.81 (20)	8.33 (7)
II	2.38 (2)	21.43 (18)	4.76 (4)
III	2.38 (2)	20.24 (17)	5.95 (5)
Total	15.48 (13)	65.48 (55)	19.04 (16)

Table 8.10 :   Whether the Upazila Parishad in practice can
reject any central decision.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	-	35.71 (30)	7.14 (6)
II	-	27.38 (23)	1.19 (1)
III	-	25.00 (21)	3.57 (3)
Total	-	88.10 (74)	11.90 (10)

Table   8.11 :   Presence of conflicts between the
                      representatives and the government
                      executives.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	30.95 (26)	11.90 (10)	-
II	28.57 (24)	-	-
III	28.57 (24)	-	-
Total	88.10 (74)	11.90 (10)	-

Table   8.12 :   Nature of conflicts between the
                      representatives and the government
                      executives.

Respon-dents	Power and status	Decision-making	Personal clash/ rivalry	Ideological
I	23.81 (20)	19.05 (16)	1.19 (1)	-
II	27.38 (23)	21.43 (18)	5.95 (5)	-
III	27.38 (23)	22.62 (19)	4.76 (4)	-
Total	77.38 (65)	63.09 (53)	11.90 (10)	-

Table   8.13 : Conflicts among the representatives.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	19.05 (16)	17.86 (17)	5.95 (5)
II	11.90 (10)	16.67 (14)	-
III	25.00 (21)	2.38 (2)	1.19 (1)
Total	55.95 (47)	36.91 (31)	7.14 (6)

Table   8.14 :   Nature   of   conflicts   among   the representatives.

Respondents	Power and status	Decision-making	Personal clash/ rivalry	Ideological
I	2.38 (2)	14.29 (12)	5.95 (59	2.38 (2)
II	5.95 (5)	13.09 (11)	-	-
III	11.90 (10)	17.86 (15)	3.57 (3)	2.38 (2)
Total	20.24 (17)	45.24 (38)	9.52 (8)	4.76 (4)

Table 8.15 :   Conflicts between the Upazila Chairman and
the Upazila Nirbahi Officer.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	29.76 (25)	13.09 (11)	-
II	21.43 (18)	4.76 (4)	2.38 (2)
III	27.38 (23)	1.19 (1)	-
Total	78.57 (66)	19.05 (16)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.16 :   Presence of conflicting issues in the job-
description of staff of the Upazila
Parishad.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	16.66 (14)	25.00 (21)	1.19 (1)
II	8.33 (7)	10.71 (9)	9.52 (8)
III	17.86 (15)	2.38 (2)	8.33 (7)
Total	42.86 (36)	38.10 (32)	19.04 (169

Table 8.17 : Current problems of the Upazila Administration.

Respon-dents	Lack of coopera-tion	Lack of respon-sibility	Conflict between Chairman and UNO	Lack of mutual trust	Lack of respect for rules
I	25.00 (21)	8.33 (7)	7.14 (6)	4.76 (4)	9.52 (8)
II	10.71 (9)	8.33 (7)	-	7.14 (6)	4.76 (4)
III	14.29	13.09	2.38	10.71	-
Total	50.00 (42)	29.76 (25)	9.52 (8)	22.62 (19)	14.29 (12)

Table 8.18 :   Corruption in the Upazila Administration.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	33.33 (28)	3.57 (3)	5.95 (5)
II	27.38 (23)	1.19 (1)	-
III	28.57 (24)	-	-
Total	89.29 (75)	4.76 (4)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.19 : Nature of corruption in the Administration.

Respondents	Financial misuse	Corrupt decision-	Undue privilege to some people
I	23.81 (20)	13.09 (11)	4.76 (4)
II	22.62 (19)	5.95 (5)	-
III	25.00 (21)	10.71 (9)	1.19 (1)
Total	71.43 (60)	29.76 (25)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.20 : Problems of cooperation and coordination within individual departments.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	8.33 (7)	34.52 (29)	-
II	11.90 (10)	15.48 (13)	1.19 (1)
III	14.29 (12)	14.29 (12)	-
Total	34.52 (29)	64.29 (54)	1.19 (1)

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Table   8.21 :   Problem of coordination among several
                 departments.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	21.43 (18)	21.43 (18)	-
II	23.81 (20)	4.76 (4)	-
III	23.81 (20)	2.38 (2)	2.38 (2)
Total	69.05 (58)	28.57 (24)	2.38 (2)

·Table 8.22 :   Benefit to the people from decentralisation.

Respon-dents	Closeness of the institution	More income and employ-ment	Better Social facilities	No response
I	32.14 (27)	3.57 (3)	7.14 (6)	-
II	21.43 (18)	3.57 (3)	1.19 (1)	2.38 (2)
III	23.81 (20)	-	1.19 (1)	3.57 (3)
Total	77.38 (65)	7.14 (6)	9.52 (8)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.23 : Committment of the staff of the Upazila Administration, to the people.

Respondents	Substantial	Moderate	None	No response
I	4.76 (4)	29.76 (25)	5.95 (5)	2.38 (2)
II	1.19 (1)	17.86 (15)	9.52 (8)	-
III	4.76 (4)	9.52 (8)	14.29 (12)	-
Total	10.72 (9)	57.14 (48)	29.76 (25)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.24 : Opinion of respondents on democratic practice in the Upazila Administration.

Respon- dents	It should continue	It should not continue	It requires reforms	No response
I	28.57 (24)	3.57 (3)	8.33 (7)	2.38 (2)
II	23.81 (20)	1.19 (1)	3.57 (3)	-
III	16.67 (14)	9.52 (8)	2.38 (2)	-
Total	69.04 (58)	14.29 (12)	14.29 (12)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.25 :   Opinion of respondents on whether they are
                 satisfied with the Union and the Village
                 level institutions.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	25.00 (21)	15.48 (13)	2.38 (2)
II	20.24 (17)	8.33 (7)	-
III	9.52 (8)	19.05 (16)	-
Total	54.76 (46)	42.86 (36)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.26 :   Comment on local administrations within the
                 Upazila.

Respon-dents	Democratic pratice is not ensured yet	Union/ village should be stren-gthened	Upazila Adminis-needs more authority	Dual admn cannot continue	No response
I	13.09 (11)	3.57 (39	-	4.76 (4)	21.43 (18)
II	8.33 (7)	7.14 (6)	-	1.19 (1)	11.90 (10)
III	17.86 (15)	-	-	1.19 (1)	9.52 (8)
Total	39.29 (33)	10.71 (9)	-	7.14 (6)	42.86 (36)

Table 8.27 : Political participation of the people at the
              Upazila level.

Respon- dents	Increasing	Decreasing	Same as before	No response
I	16.67 (14)	17.86 (15)	8.33 (79	-
II	4.76 (4)	14.29 (12)	9.52 (8)	-
III	1.19 (1)	19.05 (16)	8.33 (7)	-
Total	22.62 (19)	51.19 (43)	26.19 (22)	-

Table 8.28 : Impact of decentralisation on the local
              political environment.

Respon- dents	Impro- ving	Not impro- ving	Worse- ning	Not predic- table	No response
I	11.90 (10)	17.86 (15)	7.14 (6)	5.95 (59	-
II	2.38 (2)	14.29 (12)	10.71 (9)	1.19 (1)	-
III	3.57 (3)	11.90 (10)	11.90 (10)	1.19 (1)	-
Total	17.86 (15)	44.05 (37)	29.76 (25)	8.33 (7)	-

Table 8.29 : Local pol_cical pressure on the Upazila
Administration.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	27.38 (23)	15.48 (13)	-
II	21.43 (18)	7.14 (69	-
III	22.62 (19)	5.95 (5)	-
Total	71.43 (60)	28.57 (24)	-

Table 8.30 : Nature of political pressure on the Upazila
Administration.

Respon- dents	political party	political leaders	local elites	poor/ unemployed
I	9.50 (63)	14.33 (95)	7.84 (52)	1.51 (10)
II	9.05 (60)	11.76 (78)	8.90 59)	7.39 (49)
III	11.16 (74)	11.31 (75)	6.03 (40)	1.21 (8)
Total	29.32 (197)	36.90 (248)	22.47 (151)	9.97 (67)

Note : Figures in parentheses are scores.

Table 8.31 : Nature of political repression/supression at the Upazila level.

Respondents	By ruling party	By locally dominant groups	Corrupt persons	None	No response
I	10.71 (9)	4.76 (4)	3.57 (3)	3.57 (3)	20.24 (17)
II	5.95 (5)	13.09 (11)	-	2.38 (2)	7.14 (6)
III	9.52 (8)	8.33 (7)	3.57 (3)	1.19 (1)	5.95 (5)
Total	26.19 (22)	26.19 (22)	7.14 (6)	7.14 (6)	33.34 (28)

Table 8.32 : Opinion of respondents on whether the agricultural labourers should get trade union right.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	34.52 (29)	4.76 (4)	3.57 (3)
II	22.62 (19)	4.76 (4)	1.19 (1)
III	23.81 (20)	-	4.76 (4)
Total	80.96 (68)	9.52 (8)	9.52 (8)

Table 8.33 : Comment of respondents on the general social environment at the Upazila level.

Respon-dents	Has improved	Has not improved	Has dete-riorated	Same as before	No response
I	16.67 (14)	7.14 (6)	9.52 (8)	9.52 (8)	-
II	1.19 (1)	5.95 (5)	10.71 (9)	10.71 (9)	-
III	2.38 (2)	7.14 (6)	13.09 (11)	4.76 (4)	-
Total	20.24 (17)	20.24 (17)	33.33 (28)	25.00 (21)	-

Table 8.34 : Whether the rural poor are obtaining justice from the Upazila Judiciary.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	25.00 (21)	17.86 (15)	-
II	15.48 (13)	13.09 (11)	-
III	11.90 (10)	16.67 (14)	-
Total	47.62 (40)	52.38 (44)	-

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Table 8.35 :   Whet.:er there is any corruption in the delivery of justice.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	27.38 (23)	14.29 (12)	1.19 (1)
II	26.19 (22)	2.38 (2)	-
III	23.81 (20)	2.38 (2)	2.38 (2)
Total	77.38 (65)	19.05 (16)	3.57 (3)

Table 8.36 :   Whether respondents have seen any external influence in the delivery of justice.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	19.05 (16)	7.14 (6)	16.67 (14)
II	21.43 (18)	3.57 (3)	3.57 (3)
III	23.81 (20)	1.19 (1)	3.57 (3)
Total	64.29 (54)	11.90 (10)	23.81 (20)

Table 8.37 : Opinion of respondents on whether the police
are playing a proper role in security.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	16.67 (14)	22.62 (19)	3.57 (3)
II	5.95 (5)	22.62 (19)	-
III	1.19 (1)	27.38 (23)	-
Total	23.81 (20)	72.62 (61)	3.57 (3)

Table 8.38 : Whether police cooperate with the Upazila
Magistracy in controlling crime.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	33.33 (28)	7.14 (6)	2.38 (2)
II	26.19 (22)	2.38 (2)	-
III	19.05 (16)	9.52 (8)	-
Total	78.57 (66)	19.05 (16)	2.38 (2)

Table 8.39 : Suggestions of respondents on how the social environment can be improved.

Respon-dents	Moral values to be upgraded	Political system to be improved	Law and order to be stren-gthened	Cooperation is needed among all	No response
I	2.38 (2)	5.95 (5)	4.76 (4)	3.57 (3)	26.19 (22)
II	5.95 (5)	8.33 (7)	5.95 (5)	-	8.33 (7)
III	4.76 (4)	9.52 (8)	7.14 (6)	-	7.14 (6)
Total	13.09 (11)	23.81 (20)	17.86 (15)	3.57 (3)	41.67 (35)

Table 8.40 : Qualifications of the Upazila Administration to better manage the local economic development, compared to Thana Administration.

Respon-dents	Increased authority	Increased staff	More resource	Democratic Participa-tion	Increased awareness of staff
I	16.67 (14)	19.05 (16)	7.14 (6)	11.90 (10)	11.90 (10)
II	14.29 (12)	25.00 (21)	5.95 (5)	7.14 (6)	4.76 (4)
III	15.48 (13)	21.43 (18)	5.95 (5)	4.76 (4)	3.57 (3)
Total	46.43 (39)	65.48 (55)	19.05 (16)	23.81 (20)	20.24 (17)

Table 8.41 : Whether the Upazila Administration is an improvement over the Thana Administration

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	36.90 (31)	3.57 (3)	2.38 (2)
II	28.57 (24)	-	-
III	21.43 (18)	3.57 (3)	3.57 (3)
Total	86.91 (73)	7.14 (6)	5.95 (5)

Table 8.42 : Contribution of the Upazila Administration to greater participation in the development process.

Respondents	Substantially contributing	Marginally contributing	Not contributing	Same as before	Worsening
I	13.09 (11)	20.24 (17)	3.57 (3)	2.38 (2)	3.57 (3)
II	4.76 (4)	14.29 (12)	7.14 (6)	2.38 (2)	-
III	2.38 (2)	8.33 (7)	8.33 (7)	3.57 (3)	5.95 (5)
Total	20.24 (17)	42.86 (36)	19.05 (16)	8.33 (7)	9.52 (8)

Table 8.43 :   Whether there is spatial equality in
                investment for development.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	8.33 (7)	29.76 (25)	4.76 (4)
II	2.38 (2)	26.19 (22)	-
III	1.19 (1)	25.00 (21)	2.38 (20
Total	11.91 (10)	80.95 (68)	7.14 (6)

Table 8.44 :   Opinion of respondents on whether the Upazila
                Administration seeks equity in income and
                employment distribution.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	8.33 (7)	30.95 (26)	3.57 (3)
II	2.38 (2)	26.19 (22)	-
III	-	26.19 (22)	2.38 (2)
Total	10.72 (9)	83.33 (70)	5.95 (5)

Table   8.45 :   Whether the Upazila Headquarters is
                  a potential growth centre.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	29.76 (25)	11.90 (10)	1.19 (1)
II	20.24 (17)	8.33 (7)	-
III	11.90 (10)	14.29 (12)	2.38 (2)
Total	61.91 (52)	34.52 (29)	3.57 (3)

Table 8.46 :   Whether the rural development process is
                improving.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	29.76 (25)	11.90 (10)	1.19 (1)
II	14.29 (12)	14.29 (12)	-
III	3.57 (3)	22.62 (19)	2.38 (2)
Total	47.62 (40)	48.81 (41)	3.57 (3)

Table 8.47 : Whether the Upazila Administration is facing problems in development administration.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	21.43 (18)	16.67 (14)	4.76 (4)
II	21.43 (18)	4.76 (4)	2.38 (2) ·
III	21.43 (18)	4.76 (4)	2.38 (2)
Total	64.29 (54)	26.19 (22)	9.52 (8)

Table 8.48 : Current problems of the Upazila Administration in development planning.

Respon-dents	Lack of coordination	Lack of resources	Lack of efficiency in planning and implementation
I	4.76 (4)	8.33 (7)	11.90 (10)
II	11.90 (10)	4.76 (4)	4.76 (4)
III	7.14 (6)	1.19 (1)	13.09 (11)
Total	23.81 (20)	14.29 (12)	29.76 (25)

Table 8.49 : Comment of respondents on the current planning process.

Respondents	Good	Better	Worse	On paper all right but not in practice	No response
I	10.71 (9)	8.33 (7)	8.33 (7)	5.95 (5)	9.52 (8)
II	14.29 (12)	4.76 (4)	5.95 (5)	2.38 (2)	1.19 (1)
III	4.76 (4)	2.38 (2)	9.52 (8)	9.52 (8)	2.38 (2)
Total	29.76 (25)	15.48 (13)	23.81 (20)	17.86 (15)	13.09 (11)

Table 8.50 : Opinion of respondents on the NGO functions at the Upazila level, compared to the functions of the Upazila Administration.

Respondents	Better	Same	Worse	No response
I	27.38 (23)	3.57 (3)	-	11.90 (10)
II	22.62 (19)	3.57 (3)	-	2.38 (2)
III	21.43 (18)	-	-	7.14 (6)
Total	71.43 (60)	7.14 (6)	-	21.43 (18)

Tables - Chapter 9

In each table, results are shown for three categories of respondents, i.e. I, II and III(I is for the low income group, II for the medium income group, and III for the high income group). Groups I and II, in the context of rural Bangladesh, form the rural poor. Results are shown in numbers and percentages (The Numbers are shown in parenthesis). Percentages are shown as a ratio to the total.

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Table 9.1 : Information on whether rural people are aware of everyday national affairs.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	6.52 (9)	31.88 (44)	9.42 (13)
II	13.77 (19)	13.77 (19)	1.45 (2)
III	15.22 (21)	7.25 (10)	0.72 (1)
Total	35.51 (49)	52.90 (73)	11.59 (16)

Table 9.2 : Information on whether rural people are aware of everyday affairs in the "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	12.32 (17)	16.67 (23)	18.84 (26)
II	14.49 (20)	6.52 (9)	7.97 (11)
III	14.49 (20)	3.62 (5)	5.07 (7)
Total	41.30 (57)	26.81 (37)	31.88 (44)

Table 9.3 : Means of getting information to rural people.

Respon-dents	Own radio	Other's radio	Own TV	Other's TV	News-paper	Friends/relatives
I	11.59 (16)	2.90 (4)	- (0)	2.17 (3)	1.45 (2)	26.09 (36)
II	8.70 (12)	3.62 (5)	- (0)	1.45 (2)	3.62 (5)	4.35 (6)
III	15.94 (22)	1.45 (2)	4.35 (6)	5.80 (8)	3.62 (5)	2.17 (3)
Total	36.23 (50)	7.97 (11)		9.42 (13)	8.70 (12)	32.61 (45)

Table 9.4 : Frequency of using communication media by rural people.

Respon-dents	Daily	Weekly	Fort-nightly	Occa-sionally	No response
I	9.42 (13)	0.72 (1)	0.72 (1)	8.70 (12)	28.26 (39)
II	10.14 (14)	- (0)	- (0)	6.52 (9)	12.32 (17)
III	11.59 (16)	1.45 (2)	- (0)	3.62 (5)	6.52 (9)
Total	31.16 (43)	2.17 (3)	0.72 (1)	18.84 (26)	47.10 (65)

Table   9.5 : Types of information rural people are
              generally interested in.

Respondents	Politics	Development	Others (cinema, music, crime, etc.)
I	11.59 (16)	15.94 (22)	20.29 (28)
II	9.42 (13)	13.77 (19)	12.32 (17)
III	13.04 (18)	7.97 (11)	5.80 (8)
Total	34.06 (47)	37.68 (52)	38.41 (53)

Table 9.6 : Whether rural people get information on the
             officials and representatives of the
             "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	3.62 (5)	39.13 (54)	5.07 (7)
II	6.52 (9)	16.67 (23)	5.80 (8) .
III	10.87 (15)	10.87 (15)	1.45 (2)
Total	21.01 (29)	66.67 (92)	12.32 (17)

Table 9.7 : Information for rural people about important personnel in the "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	Village/Ward Member	Union Chairman	Upazila Chairman	UNO
I	6.52 (9)	5.07 (7)	5.07 (7)	2.90 (4)
II	13.04 (18)	9.42 (13)	8.70 (12)	4.35 (6)
III	21.01 (29)	13.04 (18)	15.22 (21)	13.77 (19)
Total	40.58 (56)	27.54 (38)	28.99 (40)	21.01 (29)

Table 9.8 : Whether rural people know all the Upazila level officials.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	0.72 (1)	42.03 (58)	5.07 (7)
II	2.17 (3)	25.36 (35)	1.45 (2)
III	7.97 (11)	13.77 (19)	1.45 (2)
Total	10.87 (15)	81.16 (112)	7.97 (11)

Table   9.9 : Whether rural people have ever met or
talked to any officials of the "Upazila
Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	5.07 (7)	20.29 (28)	22.46 (31)
II	11.59 (16)	6.52 (9)	10.87 (15)
III	18.84 (26)	1.45 (2)	2.90 (4)
Total	35.51 (49)	28.26 (39)	36.23 (50)

Table   9.10 : Whether rural people have attended any
meetings organized by the officials of
the "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	6.52 (9)	36.23 (50)	5.07 (7)
II	7.97 (11)	19.57 (27)	1.45 (2)
III	10.14 (14)	12.32 (17)	0.72 (1)
Total	24.64 (34)	68.12 (94)	7.25 (10)

Table   9.11 : Whether rural people know officials of
              "Thana Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.90 (4)	– (60)	1.45 (2)
II	6.52 (9)	19.57 (27)	2.90 (4)
III	11.59 (16)	10.87 (15)	0.72 (1)
Total	21.01 (29)	73.91 (102)	5.07 (7)

Table 9.12 : Whether rural people find it easy to meet
            officials of the "Thana Administration".

Respondents	Yes	No	Same as now	No response
I	– (0)	17.39 (24)	4.35 (6)	26.09 (36)
II	0.72 (1)	3.62 (5)	7.97 (11)	16.67 (23)
III	2.17 (3)	2.17 (3)	2.90 (4)	15.94 (22)
Total	2.90 (4)	23.19 (32)	15.22 (21)	– (81)

Table 9.15 : Whether rural people have better
information about government policies
at the Upazila level.

Respondents	Yes	No	Cannot judge	No response
I	4.35 (6)	8.70 (12)	33.33 (46)	1.45 (2)
II	6.52 (9)	7.97 (11)	12.32 (17)	2.17 (3)
III .	10.87 (15)	6.52 (9)	5.07 (7)	0.72 (1)
Total	21.74 (30)	23.18 (32)	50.72 (70)	4.35 (6)

Table 9.16 : Opinion of respondents on the future of
the "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	It should continue	It should not continue	Don't know	No response
I	34.78 (48)	7.25 (10)	0.72 (1)	5.07 (7)
II	15.22 (21)	10.87 (15)	- (0)	2.90 (4)
III	20.29 (28)	1.45 (2)	- (0)	1.45 (2)
Total	69.57 (96)	19.57 (27)	0.72 (1)	9.42 (13)

Table 9.17 : Whether rual people are aware of the planning process of the "Upazila Parishad".

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	- (0)	46.38 (64)	1.45 (2)
II	1.45 (2)	24.64 (34)	2.90 (4)
III	4.35 (6)	13.77 (19)	5.07 (7)
Total	5.80 (8)	84.78 (117)	9.42 (13)

Table 9.18 : People's knowledge of corruption in the "Upazila Administration".

Respondents	Has decreased	Same as before	Has increased	No response
I	- (0)	- (0)	45.65 (63)	2.17 (3)
II	0.72 (1)	0.72 (1)	26.09 (36)	1.45 (2)
III	1.45 (2)	- (0)	19.57 (27)	2.17 (3)
Total	2.17 (3)	0.72 (1)	91.30 (126)	5.80 (8)

Table 9.19 : People's knowledge of increase or decrease in corruption.

Respondents	Has decreased	Same as before	Has increased	No response
I	- (0)	0.72 (1)	45.65 (63)	1.45 (2)
II	0.72 (1)	- (0)	26.09 (36)	2.17 (3)
III	- (0)	- (0)	22.46 (31)	0.72 (1)
Total	0.72 (1)	0.72 (1)	94.20 (130)	4.35 (6)

Table 9.20 : Use of health facilities by rural people.

Respondents	Health complex	Private doctors	Village quacks	others (Missionary)
I	13.04 (18)	6.52 (9)	36.23 (50)	3.62 (5)
II	15.22 (21)	11.59 (16)	23.19 (32)	1.45 (2)
III	9.42 (13)	18.84 (26)	7.97 (11)	- (0)
Total	37.68 (52)	36.96 (51)	67.40 (93)	5.07 (7)

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Table 9.21 : Whether rural people are satisfied with the services they receive from the Upazila Health Complex (UHC).

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.17 (3)	44.20 (61)	1.45 (2)
II	1.45 (2)	26.81 (37)	0.72 (1)
III	4.35 (6)	18.84 (26)	- (0)
Total	7.97 (11)	89.86 (124)	2.17 (3)

Table 9.22 : Whether the UHC has the necessary resources to provide health services to rural people.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.90 (4)	42.75 (59)	2.17 (3)
II	0.72 (1)	24.64 (34)	3.62 (5)
III	1.45 (2)	18.12 (25)	3.62 (5)
Total	5.07 (7)	85.51 (118)	9.42 (13)

Table 9.23 : Whether rural people get treatment free of
costs from the UHC.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.90 (4)	44.93 (62)	- (0)
II	7.25 (10)	17.39 (24)	4.35 (6)
III	5.80 (8)	13.77 (19)	3.62 (5)
Total	15.94 (22)	76.09 (105)	7.97 (11)

Table 9.24 : What people do in the case of their
failure to afford cost of treatment
for diseases.

Respondents	Cut in other expenses for treatment	Leave treatment for certain period	No response
I	1.45 (2)	27.54 (38)	18.84 (26)
II	0.72 (1)	14.49 (20)	13.77 (19)
III	- (0)	18.12 (25)	5.07 (7)
Total	2.17 (3)	63.04 (83)	37.68 (52)

Table 9.25 : Whether rural people receive free treatment for their children.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.17 (3)	42.03 (58)	3.62 (5)
II	0.72 (1)	25.36 (35)	2.90 (4)
III	- (0)	17.39 (24)	5.80 (8)
Total	2.90 (4)	84.78 (117)	12.32 (17)

Table 9.26 : Whether the UHC provide mother care services.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.17 (3)	41.30 (57)	4.35 (6)
II	1.45 (2)	26.81 (37)	0.72 (1)
III	1.45 (2)	21.74 (30)	- (0)
Total	5.07 (7)	89.86 (124)	5.07 (7)

Table 9.27 : Whether people get regular vaccinations.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	18.12 (25)	26.81 (37)	2.90 (4)
II	12.32 (17)	13.04 (18)	3.62 (5)
III	18.84 (26)	4.35 (6)	- (0)
Total	49.28	44.20	6.52

Table 9.28 : Reasons for using private doctors by rural people.

Respon- dents	Better service	Closer location	Personally known/ relatives	More reliable
I	26.81 (37)	2.90 (4)	- (0)	0.72 (1)
II	25.36 (35)	2.17 (3)	- (0)	1.45 (2)
III	21.01 (29)	1.45 (2)	- (0)	0.72 (1)
Total	73.19 (101)	6.52 (9)	- -	2.90 (4)

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Table 9.29 : Whether people visit public health officials/doctors to consult on health matters.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	- (0)	44.20 (61)	3.62 (5)
II	2.90 (4)	24.64 (34)	1.45 (2)
III	4.35 (6)	15.94 (22)	2.90 (4)
Total	7.25 (10)	84.78 (117)	7.97 (11)

Table 9.30 : Reasons for not visiting the public doctors by rural people.

Respondents	Unawareness of facility	Fear to approach	need to spend	No response
I	11.59 (16)	1.45 (2)	5.07 (7)	29.71 (41)
II	2.90 (4)	- (0)	12.32 (17)	13.77 (19)
III	1.45 (2)	- (0)	13.04 (18)	8.70 (12)
Total	15.94 (22)	1.45 (2)	30.43 (42)	52.17 (72)

Table 9.31 :   Whether rural people see the public
                health officials/doctors visiting
                rural villages.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	5.80 (8)	30.43 (42)	11.59 (16)
II	2.90 (4)	23.91 (33)	2.17 (3)
III	5.07 (7)	15.94 (22)	2.17 (3)
Total	4.35 (19)	79.71 (110)	15.94 (22)

Table 9.32 : Whether rural people know their public
             doctors.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	2.17 (3)	40.58 (56)	5.07 (7)
II	4.35 (6)	18.12 (25)	6.52 (9)
III	5.80 (8)	16.67 (23)	0.72 (1)
Total	12.32 (17)	75.36 (104)	12.32 (17)

Table 9.33 : Loss of properties by rural people in the flood of 1988.

Respondents	Had lost	Had not lost	No response
I	28.99 (40)	– (0)	18.84 (26)
II	– (22)	0.72 (1)	12.32 (17)
III	– (26)	1.45 (2)	2.90 (4)
Total	63.77 (88)	2.17 (3)	34.06 (47)

Table 9.34 : Help/relief received by victims of floods.

Respondents	Had received	Had not received	No response
I	2.90 (4)	27.54 (38)	17.39 (24)
II	1.45 (2)	13.77 (19)	13.77 (19)
III	0.72 (1)	15.94 (22)	6.52 (9)
Total	5.07 (7)	57.25 (79)	37.68 (52)

Table   9.35   :   Fairness/unfairness   in   relief
                  distribution.

Respondents	It was fair	It was not fair	No response
I	- (0)	23.91 (33)	23.91 (33)
II	1.45 (2)	10.14 (14)	17.39 (24)
III	0.72 (1)	16.67 (23)	5.80 (8)
Total	2.17 (3)	50.72 (70)	47.10 (65)

Table   9.36   :   Types   of   unfairness   in   relief
                  distribution.

Respondents	Partiality	Misuse	No response
I	10.87 (15)	1.45 (2)	35.51 (49)
II	15.94 (22)	- (0)	13.04 (18)
III	18.84 (26)	0.72 (1)	3.62 (5)
Total	45.65 (63)	2.17 (3)	52.17 (72)

Table 9.37 : Reasons for not extending any help by the "Upazila Administration".

Respon- dents	It had little or no resources	It was not willing to help	It neglec- ted some villages	Not aware of the facts
I	2.90 (4)	13.04 (18)	5.07 (7)	2.17 (3)
II	6.52 (9)	4.35 (6)	2.90 (4)	1.45 (2)
III	5.80 (8)	3.62 (5)	0.72 (1)	0.72 (1)
Total	15.21 (21)	21.01 (29)	8.70 (12)	4.35 (6)

Table 9.38 : Whether people receive help from the "Upazila Administration" at the time of other natural disasters.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	- (0)	27.54 (38)	20.29 (28)
II	- (0)	12.32 (17)	16.67 (23)
III	- (0)	17.39 (24)	5.80 (8)
Total	(0) -	57.25 (79)	42.75 (59

Table 9.39 : Whether rural people know relevant officers who are in charge of looking after the problem of natural disasters.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	1.45 (2)	26.81 (37)	19.57 (27)
II	3.62 (5)	15.22 (21)	10.14 (14)
III	5.07 (7)	15.94 (22)	2.17 (3)
Total	10.14 (14)	57.97 (80)	31.88 (44)

Table 9.40 : Whether rural people know of the Upazila Project Implementation Officer (UPIO).

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	10.14 (14)	36.23 (50)	1.45 (2)
II	12.32 (17)	15.94 (22)	0.72 (1)
III	15.22 (21)	7.97 (11)	– (0)
Total	37.68 (2)	60.14 (83)	2.17 (3)

Table 9.41 : Whether rural people see the UPIO visiting
villages or people affected by natural
calamities.

Respondents	Yes	No	No response
I	- (0)	28.99 (40)	18.84 (26)
II	2.17 (3)	13.04 (18)	13.77 (19)
III	7.97 (11)	7.25 (10)	7.97 (11)
Total	10.14 (14)	49.28 (68)	40.58 (56)

Table 9.42 : Opinion of rural people on whether the
"Upazila Administration" has been more
helpful in looking after problems of
natural disasters at the Upazila level.

	Yes	No	No response
I	9.42 (13)	28.26 (39)	10.14 (14)
II	10.14 (14)	10.87 (15)	7.97 (11)
III	5.07 (7)	5.07 (7)	13.04 (18)
Total	24.64 (34)	44.20 (61)	31.16 (43)

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