

Sushasoneer Sanglap

[DIALOGUE ON GOOD GOVERNANCE]

Discussion session on 'The importance of political economy analysis for setting long-term plans, and of conducting ward shavas in preparing pro-poor Union Parishad budgets' through Community Radio

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| Session: Interactive dialogue series on good governance in UPs through community radio | Name of the session: Dialogue on Good Governance | | |
| Key themes: | Broadcast schedule | | |
| 1. Importance of political economy analysis in the long-term planning of UPs | Subject | Time | Discussant |
| | Link, credit line/promo | 15 sec | Anchor |
| | Project brief | 15 sec | Anchor |
| | Background | 15 sec | Anchor |
| | Project initiatives | 15 sec | Anchor |
| | Remarkable changes | 20 sec | Anchor |
| | Broadcast pre-recorded program | 5 mins | Sharing experience of Union Parishad councils and members of citizen's forums involved in the JATRA project |
| | Music/ drama / song | 1 min | Local radio station |
| | Advertisement/ credit line | 45 sec | Anchor |
| 2. Importance of ward shavas in preparing pro-poor Union Parishad budgets | Open discussion | 12 mins | Union Parishad councils adjacent to community radio station, and rural civil society UNO/DF-LGSP/DDLG,UNO/PIO/Other |
| | Advertisement/ credit line | 45 sec | Anchor |
| | Question-answer session | 3 mins | Anchor/from audience |
| | Quiz and credit line | 30 sec | Anchor |
| Total time | 25 mins for each issue | | |
| Total audience | 3 million people in 5 Districts | | |
| Characteristics of the audience | Members of UPs, poor and marginalized communities, farmers, day labourers, NGO workers, representatives of civil society, women, small entrepreneurs, shop keepers, small business people and people of different professions. | | |
| Discussants | Chairmen, members of UP and Upazila, representatives of poor communities, journalists and representatives of civil society | | |
| Broadcast areas | <p>1. Radio Nalta, Satkhira District. Broadcast areas: Satkhira Sadar, Tala, Shyamnagar, Kaligonj, Asashuni, Debhata.</p> <p>2. Radio Lokobater, Borguna District. Broadcast areas: Borguna Sadar, Amtali, Bamna, Batagi, Patharghata, Taltoli.</p> <p>3. Radio Pallikontho, Moulvibazar District. Broadcast areas: Moulvibazar Sadar, Rajgonj, Kamolgonj, Sreemongol.</p> <p>4. Radio Mohanonda, Chapainobabgonj District. Broadcast areas: Chapainobabgonj Sadar, Gomoshtapur, Shibgonj, Volagat, Nachol.</p> <p>5. Radio Chilmari, Kurigram District. Broadcast areas: Chilmari, Rowmary, Rajibpur, Ulipur.</p> | | |
| Probable date and time of broadcasting | 2nd & 3rd week of January 2016 between 7:00 -9:00pm | | |
| Promo/Credit line: | Dear listeners: you will listen/ are listening/ have listened to a 'dialogue on good governance' for the pro-poor budget formulation and social accountability of the local government. This program is implemented by CARE-Bangladesh and financed by the Global Partnership for Social Accountability Trust fund of the World Bank. Technical assistance has been provided by the Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communications (BNNRC). This program is prepared and broadcast by the community radio station... | | |

Dialogue on good governance for pro-poor budget and social accountability of the union parishad through community radio program by Journey for Advancement in Transparency, Representation and Accountability (JATRA) project, implemented by CARE-Bangladesh and funded by the Global Partnership for Social Accountability Trust Fund of the World Bank, with technical assistance from Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio & Communication (BNNRC), broadcast by: Radio Chilmari, Radio Mohanonda, Radio Nalta, Radio Pallikontho and Radio Lokobater.





Importance of 'political economy analysis' in setting the long-term plans of UPs:

Background:

Poverty alleviation and overall development depends on political will, proper utilization of budgeted funds and smart planning. The necessity of long-term planning is stated in the Union Parishad Act 2009, but due to lack of understanding and knowledge, it often does not happen. In unions where it does occur, the needs of poor and marginalized are often not reflected. Union Parishad funds are currently increasing through the support of the central government and bi-lateral programs, with the purpose of improving livelihoods and relevant services, and alleviating poverty. However, due to lack of appropriate planning, the expected results have not materialized. Through CARE Bangladesh's long experience in poverty alleviation, it has been observed that continued, sustainable development is not possible unless and until a smooth coordination is built between the political process and development initiatives. In this context, political economy analysis is important to explore local power relation dynamics and to support the pro-poor planning of each UP.

CARE initiatives:

At the beginning of the implementation of JATRA, the project

conducts a political economy analysis, mapping every union under the project operation area. Local-level civil society people and the elected UP members from every ward of the UP take part in this exercise. In this half-day long exercise, each and every marginal and vulnerable community, piece of infrastructure, marketing system, and type and delivery of service in the Union Parishad is reviewed and discussed. The self-interest of influential people in the community is also discussed. Through this exercise, it has become clear that poor people from marginalized and vulnerable areas are deprived of services and resources due to the absence of leadership. CARE Bangladesh began including poor and marginalized people in the development planning processes of the UP; as a result, community participation and representation has increased in the UP activities.

Remarkable changes:

As a result of the political economy analysis, poor women and men of the most disadvantaged and deprived areas have been included in the development planning process. Opportunities have been created for poor people to access resources and services from both the bilateral and direct-funded projects of the UP. Equality has been created in the distribution of resources and services to all.

Importance of conducting 'ward shavas' in preparing pro-poor UP budgets:

Background:

According to the UP act 2009, one of the important responsibilities of each UP is to prepare a budget through a participatory process and declare it in an open meeting. It is one of the institutional indicators of the UP evaluation. The 'Ward Shava' is the main foundation of the UP budget preparation; the UP are required to prepare the budget by addressing the demands and opinions of at least 5% of the voters in each ward of the UP. However, in reality this was found to be mostly not happening. As a result, the budgets were not people-oriented and did not reflect the community's needs or demands. In some cases it was identified that even the citizens themselves had no knowledge of this opportunity to speak up or raise their demands in the preparation of the UP budget.

CARE initiatives:

CARE Bangladesh has been implementing different projects on poverty reduction, women's empowerment and pro-poor service delivery under good governance for a long time. By extracting the lessons of those projects it is found that, though resources and opportunities are limited at the local level, by increasing allocations for the poorest community members and enabling rights to access for marginalized people, poverty could be reduced. JATRA is contributing to this process in its working areas. JATRA project has formed the 'citizen forum', including

representatives from the poorest communities at the grass-roots level of every ward under its working unions. CARE built up leadership capacity by providing training to members of citizen forums, including both women and men, , enhancing their understanding of the Right to Information Act, the UP Act of 2009, participatory budget preparation and social accountability. The citizen forums play a key role in organizing 'ward shavas', ensuring the representation of poor and extremely poor communities in deprived and marginalized areas, mobilizing extremely poor communities, organizing pre-budget discussion meetings, proposing pro-poor projects for the UP and disseminating information to all.

Remarkable changes:

In both ward shavas and open budget declaration meetings, the participation of poor and extremely poor people and their representatives from deprived communities has increased remarkably in the project working areas. Poor and extremely poor women and men are able to raise their demands confidently in ward shavas and can influence their inclusion in the UP budget as well. Previously, these people had felt uncomfortable talking in front of the Chairman and UP members. As a result of this change, UPs started to reserve a greater budget allocation for the most marginalized communities. The LGSP (Local Government Support Program) project, funded by the World Bank, is an example of this improvement.

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