

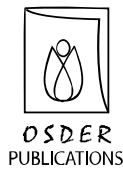
Local Governance in Bangladesh

Policy and Strategy Framework

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Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Annual Development Plan
AIM	Asian Institute of Management
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDG	Center for Decentralization and Governance Society
CDM	Center for Development Management
CHTDF	Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DPP	Development Project Proposal
GAD	Gender and Development
GAF	Governance Advocacy Forum
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Ibid	Ibidem
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LGD	Local Government Division
LGRD&C	Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
LGSP-LIC	Local Governance Support Project-Learning and Innovation Component
MDM	Master in Development Management
MIS	Management Information System
MRR	Management Research Report
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
PCARRD	Philippines Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SLGDF	Sirajganj Local Governance Development Fund
SVRS	Sample Vital Registration System
SWOT	Strengths and Weakness, and Opportunities and Threats
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbhahi Officer
USAID	United States Assistance for International Development
WASA	Water Supply and Sewerage Authority

FOREWORD

In recent years, development as well as democracy has seen the convergence of local government (political reform), pro-poor social accountability (governance reform) and sustainable development (social reform). Globally, there is a growing recognition of the significance of the synergy of democratic decentralization coupled with fiscal and administrative accountability. Donors are increasingly in agreement with the fact that the strengthening of mechanisms and processes around local level governance is instrumental in bringing the development dialogue and the fruits of that dialogue closer to those that matter most in the development process itself— people themselves.

Bangladesh, with its long history of non-state/NGO/civil society participation in development, has recently recognized the link between strong local government and the success in accelerating the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the local level. As such, the country has undertaken a number of legal reforms for strengthening local governance and the empowerment of local government bodies by conducting elections for many of its local government institutions. However, the country has yet to enact a local governance policy - the absence of which could undermine the stability of the local government system and render unsustainable the quality service delivery needed for local development.

With such a framework in mind, *Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar* wrote this book based on a study conducted in Bangladesh initially for preparing a Management Research Report (MRR) at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Manila. The original study was commissioned by the Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management (formerly Center for Development Management) of AIM. The book advocates a policy to be adopted and/or adapted by the proponent agent of the study, the Local Government Division (LGD) of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C) of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. In addition, the book incorporated an implementation strategy to demonstrate how

policy reform can be carried out given the complex operating environment in Bangladesh.

This work has been systematic, rational and vision-driven: to strengthen local governments as institutions of change and to build a strong democracy premised on local governance. It is our hope that such a systematic policy study could make a significant contribution to the Government of Bangladesh in support of an aggregate policy on decentralization and local governance.



Manila
December 2014

Juan Miguel M. Luz
Dean
Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of
Development Management
Asian Institute of Management (AIM)

PREFACE

It is widely recognized that unless we do have an aggregated or national local governance policy, we will not have a vision and road map for local governance development in the country. Thus, this social input *proposed national local governance policy for Bangladesh* is crafted for consideration of the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The proposed local governance policy envisions placing democratic decentralization along with the fiscal autonomy and local administrative reforms in an attempt to develop political capacity of local citizens for demanding accountability and engaging local authorities towards economic and social advancement of the rural areas.

Despite the fact that the proposed policy is unique of its kind with crafting vision, mission, goal, objectives and principles, and designing structural, functional and legal frameworks, and addressing key issues and concerns, it needs to go with a strong advocacy strategy for finalizing the policy. Thus, this policy study focuses on the importance of the policy advocacy strategy (*see Annexure 1-2*). The study strongly emphasizes on policy implementation strategy or strategic implementation planning that is central to ensuring the successful delivery of the policy. The study comprehends that the policy formulation and implementation are intertwined and interdependent with results in mind.

My sincere thanks are due to Professor Manuel J. De Vera and Professor Benjamin C. Bagadion, Advisers to the study, and Professor Juan Miguel M Luz, Dean of Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management at Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Manila, for their research guidance in carrying out the study. I am grateful to Md. Azizur Rahman Siddique, Consultant on Local Governance in Bangladesh, for making his time available as an external expert panelist in the international defense of the *sa llew sa ycilop ygetartspaper*. I am also indebted to reviewers of the manuscript - Professor Tofail Ahmed and Professor Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, eminent local governance experts - for their valuable review and guidance.

Furthermore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Sir Fazle Hasan Abed KCMG, Founder and Chairperson of BRAC, and Dr. Syed Saad Andaleeb, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University. Also I am sincerely thankful to Professor Dr. Ainun Nishat, former Vice Chancellor of BRAC University for his encouragement. I am indebted to Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) of BRAC University, Dr. Rizwan Khair, former Director of BIGD, and Dr. Minhaj Mahmud, Head of Research at BIGD, for their encouragement and cooperation in getting the manuscript published.

The study candidly acknowledges the cooperation and/or contribution of AKM Mozammel Haque, Member of the Parliament in Bangladesh, Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, the former Secretary of Local Government Division, Ministry of LGRD&C, Government of Bangladesh, Ashok Madhab Roy, Additional Secretary of the same, Basudeb Acharja, the then Joint Secretary of Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, Md Faizur Rahman, Upazila Parishad Chairman at Mymensing Sadar Upazila, Selina Hayat Ivy, Mayor at Narayanganj City Corporation, and many other elected heads of different local government institutions, and also Professor Akhter Hussain, Local Governance Expert, Abdullah Al Mamun, former Faculty Member at University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, Zeenat Ahmed, Senior Program Coordinator of BIGD, and Saika Nudrat Chowdhury, Research Associate of BIGD.

Finally, I sincerely admit the fact that this is a hurriedly done work. As such it may have some shortcomings which are subject to be left with the readers' responsiveness to kindly bring those to my notice. Also as described in the *publication note*, this policy research was originally conducted in 2012 whereas full manuscript of the book was tailor-made in 2013. Thus, the data and content used in this book reflect the context of Bangladesh in 2012 and 2013.

Dhaka
December 2014

Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar
BIGD, BRAC University

OVERVIEW

Despite the fact that Bangladesh has recently undertaken a number of legal reforms for strengthening local governance, the country is yet to enact a local governance policy - the absence of which undermines the balance of power between local government institutions and the government as well as the legislative body, renders instability of the local government system and distresses quality service delivery needed for local people.

The absence of a local governance policy is supposed to be a prioritized governance problem in Bangladesh, which affects effective implementation of current round decentralization theory. Unless the country does have an aggregated local governance policy, it will not have a vision and road map for development of local governance.

Thus as part of Management Research Report (MRR) of MDM program at Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Manila, a proposed local governance policy for Bangladesh is developed for consideration of the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, then for approval of the Cabinet Division¹, Government of Bangladesh.

This is a qualitative as well as explorative study by nature, and it is basically anchored in focused synthesis and participant observation methods. It also involves other supportive study techniques like *SWOT Analysis* and *Stakeholder* as well as *Force-field Analysis*. The study is apprehensive and meticulous to both academic and management requirements.

The purpose of this policy is to develop a fully decentralized local government system at all spheres of the local government units so as to ensure full-fledged democracy and good local governance through citizen engagement, inclusiveness and empowerment.

¹ Cabinet Division is a high power policy management division in the secretariat, which works in close proximity to the Prime Minister in implementing important decisions and policies made by the cabinet as well as in effecting inter-ministerial coordination (<http://publicadbd.blogspot.com/2012/09/cabinet-division-of-bangladesh.html>).

The goal is to guarantee that this local governance policy will be translated fully in laws, rules, regulations and practices by 2018, and to ensure that the public services delivery will be made available with fully decentralized approach so as to meet the civic satisfaction and needs without irrational system loss or corrupt practices by 2020.

The overall objective of the policy is to facilitate political, economic, social, administrative and developmental empowerment of local citizens to make sure they attain the rights to development and public services, and set access to the knowledge and information.

As per the proposed policy, there will be two types of local government institutions in Bangladesh, namely rural local government institutions and urban local government institutions under a total of eight regional local government commissions and one national local government commission. 'Division' would no longer be treated as administrative unit of the government as it would infringe on the constitution.

Importantly, rural local government and urban local government units will never be geographically overlapped, which means that the rural local government units and urban local government units must be with separate constituencies fitted with clear-cut area mapping, and the Local Government Division would be down-sized with limited scope of responsibilities.

Though decentralization is evolving in Bangladesh, there are a number of constraints for fiscal decentralization, particularly, for sub-national borrowing. It is not just the scenario of Bangladesh. In South Asian countries, even in India, there is insufficient regulation for sub-national borrowing in the decentralization legal framework. The local government or sub-national borrowing, however, becomes increasingly essential herein Bangladesh as part of the advancement of the fiscal decentralization. Given this analysis, this proposed policy strongly recommends sub-national borrowing to be legislated here. The country's local government institutions, indeed, need support to get their planning, budgeting and financial management capacity improved.

The first few chapters of this book analyze the context, SWOT and Force-field to craft the proposed policy. The proposed policy is unique of its kind with crafting vision, mission, goal, objectives and principles, and designing structural, functional and legal frameworks, and addressing key issues and concerns. Yet it needs to go with a strong advocacy strategy for finalizing the policy with adoption and/or necessary adaptation by the LGD followed by the approval of the Cabinet. Otherwise it would just be a paper work. Thus, the study integrates a policy advocacy strategy (*see Annexure 1-2*).

The study also focuses on policy implementation strategy or strategic implementation planning that is central to ensuring the successful delivery of the policy. Once we get the policy approved, focus must go to the strategic implementation plan. The study recognizes that the policy implementation plan must be scalable and flexible, and it is expected to reflect the degree of exigency, urgency, innovation, complexity and/or sensitivity associated with the concerned policy appraisal. Detailing enough is necessary to enable the implementing agencies to manage effectively the implementation of the policy measures.

The study comprehends that the policy formulation and implementation are intertwined and interdependent with results in mind. The study also acknowledges that making the organization capable of successful policy execution, establishing policy supportive budget, exercising strategic leadership and shaping the organization culture to fit with the strategy or reshaping the strategy to fit with the organizational culture, installing administrative support systems and designing rewards as well as incentives are significant to the policy implementation framework.

Most importantly, the study reveals that one major political party alone cannot strengthen the local government institutions in Bangladesh because one political regime is too short to garner durable results in this domain. In reality, political regimes here are changing between the two political parties, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Bangladesh Awami League (AL). As such, the government must realize the importance of the stated policy and bring the issue to the discussion table with the main opposition party to make a consensus. Then it needs to allow Local Government Division to do the policy initiation with adoption or adaptation of this proposed one.

INTRODUCTION

The Context and Purpose

The absence of a local governance policy is supposed to be a prioritized governance problem in Bangladesh, which affects effective implementation of current round decentralization theory that focuses on democratic decentralization in line with the fiscal autonomy and local administrative reforms. The absence of the avowed policy also affects inherent and institutional linkages of the local government bodies. In some cases overlapping of functions are evidenced in different LG institutions, while in other cases lack of coordination and inter-cooperation are missing. More importantly, unless the country does have an aggregated local governance policy, it will not have a vision and road map for development of local governance.

Despite the fact that the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh holds some specific provisions for local governance² and the country has separate Act or law for every local government unit, the nonexistence of the stated policy allows the Acts to run the local government institutions without harmonized vision, mission, goal, objectives and road map for sustainable development of the local governance in Bangladesh.

Thus, as part of Management Research Report (MRR) of MDM program at Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Manila, a proposed national decentralized local governance policy framework for Bangladesh is developed, which is, indeed, a proposed policy for consideration of the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The AIM study widens to fit an advocacy strategy for the final policy to be initiated,

² Please see Article 11, 59 and 60 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

adopted and/or adapted by the LGD followed by approval of the Cabinet. The study also recognizes that the implementation of the policy would require a sound implementation strategy, and thus it incorporates a tailor-made draft implementation strategy for the proposed policy to be implemented by the LGD, concerned line ministries, departments and agencies under the guidance of the proposed National Local Government Commission in this policy framework.

Theoretical Perspective

In the general sense, decentralization is the process of transferring power from national government to its agency, private institution, regional and local government. Though traditionally there are four forms of decentralization (i.e. deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatization),³ most of the thinkers, for example, Mawhood, Uphoff, Rondinelli and Cheema, pertinently emphasize on devolutionary decentralization⁴ which resulted in democratic decentralization.

Formally, devolution is the creation or increased reliance upon sub-national levels of government, with some degree of political autonomy, that are substantially outside direct central government control yet subject to general policies and laws, such as those regarding civil rights and rule of law (USAID, 2000). While, theoretically, devolution does not necessarily mean democracy, there is a tendency to equate the two (Oxhorn, 2004). Democratic decentralization goes further than the

³ The use of the term 'decentralization' varies depending on its different modes, but the most commonly used are deconcentration that means redistribution of administrative responsibilities within the central government, that is to be decentralized units of central government; delegation indicating delegation of decision-making and management authority for specific functions to semi-autonomous or para-statal organizations outside the normal bureaucratic structure of central government; devolution meaning transfer of authority to autonomous and independent units of local governments with corporate status (often with supervisory power and financial role retained by the central government); and privatization that encompasses transfer of functions from government to non-government organizations (Rondinelli and Cheema, 1983 cited by Hussain, 2010).

⁴ For details please see Begum et al., 1998; Mawhood P., 1985; Rahman M.H., 1989; Rondinelli D.A., Cheema G.S. (eds.), 1985.

devolution does in terms of autonomy, responsibility and accountability of the local authority, and participation, opportunity and emancipation of the people. Two interlinked and inevitable components of this latest form of decentralization are structural decentralization and institutional democratization.

Structural decentralization refers to devolution in the organization and relationship of government units, in relation to one another including a shift of production and provision functions to more localized government units (Hicks and Kaminski, 1995; Rainey, 1997). Basically, structural decentralization alters the balance of exercising the power among levels of government favoring localized levels of government; even to some extent this component allows local people's representatives to govern the local government, but values associated with legacy do not always change until it goes with institutional democratization.

Institutional democratization refers to this shift in values, rules, skills, and interactions, favoring transparency, equity, responsiveness, accountability, and other traditional democratic values (Hodgson, 2006; McGill, 1997; OECD, 1996). Evidence of institutional democratization can be found through functioning oversight and accountability mechanisms and the systematic incorporation of public input into government decision making (Coston, 1998; Klingner, 1996).

A full-fledged democratic decentralization not only creates environment for wider participation, social inclusiveness and for citizens to demand accountability of local authority, but also generates a sense of transparency and accountability of the country's political system and government.

The current decentralization literature recognizes the importance of the central state in bringing about this higher standard of decentralization and thus demands from central government a sophisticated coordination and oversight as well as the willingness to allow autonomy (especially fiscal autonomy) and democratic participation at the local level (Crook, 2003; Olowu, 2003; Dauda, 2006). In turn, local Government institutions must show a certain worthiness of

autonomy by providing an innovative, transparent and accountable administration along with a participatory political process geared in alleviating marginalization and poverty (Dauda, 2006).

In fact, the emphasis on decentralization began with the broadening of the concept of development beyond economic growth to include growth-with-equity and fulfillment of basic needs of the poorer sections of the community. This entails wider participation in the economic, social and political processes and structures that enables the poor to help themselves in increasing their productivity and incomes. It is also believed that decentralization is a more efficient way of meeting local needs (Alam et al., 1994 cited in Hussain, 2010). And Rondinelli (1981) puts forward two major arguments for encouraging decentralization. Firstly, decentralization is necessary to accelerate the pace and the spread of the benefits of growth, integrate diverse regions and use the scarce resources more efficiently to promote development in poverty stricken or economically backward areas. Secondly, poorest groups are to obtain a larger share of government services and means must be found to decentralize public service delivery and involve the beneficiaries in planning and decision making at local level.

Furthermore, in a world of rampant ethnic conflicts and separatist movements, decentralization is also regarded as a way of diffusing social and political tensions and ensuring local cultural and political economy (Bardhan, 2002). Moreover, decentralization is considered a means to achieve good governance in terms of a high level of public participation, accountability of public officials and low corruption, which is a crucial condition for poverty alleviation (Steiner, 2007).

It is gratifying to see that researchers are recognizing that decentralization takes place within a particular political context and, therefore evolves differently in each country (Smoke, 2003); yet, the requirements still set uniformly high standards (Dauda, 2006). Importantly, Bangladesh is stepping ahead to the latest form of decentralization - democratic decentralization - but the basic challenge here is formulation of a local governance policy. Anecdotal evidence, participant observation and past experience as well as studies (for example, Talukdar 2009, 2012 and 2013) support that the absence of

the policy results in the unstable local government structure as well as the frequent changing pattern of the local governance power dynamics, weakens the inherent institutional linkages between and/or among the local government units. The policy absence also allows the local government bodies to govern these institutions without a definite vision as well as road map for the development of local governance in the country.

Nevertheless, a more balanced and nuanced view of democratic decentralization, and integrated perspective on how to approach it in Bangladesh is likely to emerge with the support of this study as well as policy framework. Specifically, this policy as well as management research wish to explore success factors and barriers of positive outcomes of democratic decentralization as well as its considerable ways for overcoming limitations to the Bangladesh context⁵ to get the development encountered through local governance.

Specific Objectives

There are four specific objectives of the study:

- i. An analysis on strengths and weaknesses of the Local Government Division for policy design and implementation framework building as well as opportunities and threats of external environment⁶ for identifying expected outcomes and challenges of the policy implementation.
- ii. Stakeholder as well as Force field analysis for understanding the set of connections of the forces for and against the proposed policy so as to craft the policy advocacy strategy in a right way.

⁵ Here in its local government, the Upazila Parishad and Zila Parishad are facing a transition period although there is a probability that the stalemate of their evolution would somewhat be over by amending some controversial aspects of laws, and by absolutely functioning new local government Acts with swiftly issuing subsequent rules and regulations, and by conducting Zila Parishad election soon. These prescriptions, however, are unlikely to work sustainably unless the focus shifts to the holistic approach with the system perspective that calls for a decentralized local governance policy.

⁶ Here external environment denotes the society as a whole in general and local government institutions in particular.

- iii. Development of a national decentralized local governance policy framework for Bangladesh.
- iv. Tailoring a proposed policy implementation strategy.

Study Methodology

This is a qualitative as well as explorative⁷ study by nature. It allows in-depth interview of key stakeholders including chiefs of local government institutions, local government officials and senior officials of the Local Government Division, and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, discussion with experts, practitioners and a legislator. The study also follows review of published materials, project documents, staff memoranda, and judicious using of participant observation and past professional as well as consultancy experience. As such, the study anchors *Focused Synthesis Method*⁸ and *Participant Observation Method*.⁹ It also involves other supportive study techniques like *SWOT Analysis*¹⁰ and *Force-field Analysis*.

The *SWOT Analysis* has been carried out based on the participant observation, review of available published documents,¹¹ and project reports, staff memoranda and in-depth interview of key stakeholders, while the *Force-field Analysis* has been undertaken based on the *SWOT Analysis* and discussion with stakeholders, experts, practitioners and

⁷ See Booth, Colomb and Williams, 2003; Rugg and Petre, 2006; Dawson, 2002.

⁸ Focused Synthesis allows collecting and documenting information as well as data from a range of sources as diverse literature review, researchers' personal experience, web and media evidence, legislative hearing, court verdict, staff memorandum, unpublished project or study document, anecdotal evidence and story, citation or discussion with experts, practitioners and stakeholders (Talukdar, 2013a).

⁹ Such research involves a range of well-defined, though variable techniques: informal interviews, direct observation, participation in the life of the group, collective discussions, analyses of personal documents produced within the group, self-analysis, results from activities undertaken off or online, and life-histories (DeWalt, DeWalt and Wayland, 1998).

¹⁰ *SWOT Analysis* stands for strengths and weaknesses analysis of internal environment and opportunities and threats analysis of external environment.

¹¹ The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Acts/Laws, different Committee Reports, National Population Census, and Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Bangladesh

policy makers. And the *Proposed Policy Framework* has been crafted based on the understanding of the *SWOT Analysis* and *Force-field Analysis*, and on the experts' opinions, findings from the discussion with stakeholders, review of the constitution and concerned laws, rules, regulations and circulars, and international guidelines on decentralization.¹² Development of the policy advocacy strategy (*Annexure1-2*) and proposed policy implementation strategy have, however, been anchored given the past consultancy and professional experience, and stakeholders' and experts' opinions and study advisers' guidance.

Here population as well as sampling has purposively been framed, whereas area has conveniently been selected. Table 1.1 shows the list of population stratum and Table 1.2 shows the sample area, whereas the list of sample population with whom in-depth interviews and discussions have been carried out is demonstrated at *Annex 4* and the study work schedule is detailed out at *Annex 5*. Importantly, orientation with the proponent agent - *the Local Government Division under the Ministry of LGRD&C, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh* – for the study was made possible with a letter from Dean at Stephen Zuellig Graduate School of Development Management (formerly Center for Development Management), Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Manila.

Table 1.1: List of Population Strata

Stratum	Population
Stratum 1	Elected Representatives of Local Government Institutions
Stratum 2	Public Officials of the Local Government Institutions
Stratum 3	Senior Officials of the Local Government Division and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
Stratum 4	Local Governance Experts and Practitioners
Stratum 5	Politicians and Legislators

¹² International guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities, UN-HABITAT (2007), envisions to serve as a catalyst for policy and institutional reform at the national level to further enable and empower local authorities.

Table 1.2: Area Selection

Area Stratification	Number of Sample Area	Name of the Sampled Area
7 Administrative Divisions	1 Administrative Division	Dhaka Division
64 Zila Parishads	1 Zilla Parishad	Narayanganj Zila Parishad
487 Upazila Parishads	2 Upazila Parishads	Narayanganj Sadar Upazila Parishad and Mymensingh Sadar Upazila Parishad
4557 Union Parishads	1 Union Parishad	Bokthaboli Union Parishad at Narayanganj
319 Municipalities	1 Municipality	The then Gazipur Municipality ¹³
11 City Corporations	1 City Corporation	Narayanganj City Corporation
The then 38 Ministries including Secretariats of the Prime Minister and the President	2 Ministries	Local Government Division, Ministry of LGRD&C, and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs
350 Members in the National Parliament	1 Legislator	Gazipur 1 Constituency
27 Public Universities	1 University	Dhaka University
15 UN Organizations	1 UN Organization	Local Governance Cluster, and CHTDF at UNDP-Bangladesh

Arrangement of the Script

Following the Introduction, Chapter Two begins with the understanding of the internal environment that is to say an analysis on strengths and weaknesses of the Local Government Division, the proponent agent of the study. Then the chapter focuses on understanding the country context and on social, political and local government institutional analysis as part of the external environment analysis.

Chapter Three of the book deals with the *Stakeholders* well as *Force-field Analysis*, while Chapter Four provides idea and glimpses of the *Local Governance in Bangladesh*. Then Chapter Five crafts the *Proposed Local Governance Policy for Bangladesh* and Chapter Six develops a tailor-made *Strategy Framework for Policy Implementation* so that the Local Government Division and/or proposed National Local Government

¹³ It is now a City Corporation

Commission can robustly control the implementation of the policy with results based management.

Chapter Seven draws the final conclusions. Importantly, *Annexure 1-2* frame the policy advocacy strategy so as to make systematic pressure to the government and its Local Government Division for final policy to be initiated and adopted soon.

CHAPTER 2

SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT Analysis has three sub chapters. The first one deals with the *Internal Analysis* that includes analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the proponent agent. The second one is *External Analysis* that focuses on the opportunities and threats analysis of the external environment. The third one compacts SWOT perspective to the policy. Importantly, here the proponent agent of the proposed policy is the Local Government Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, while the external environment is to be everything outside the internal organization, but mainly concerned about country context and social, political as well as local government institutional perspective.

Figure 2.1: SWOT Diagram

Internal and External Analysis	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal Origin attributes of the organization <i>Local Government Division</i>	S Strengths	W Weaknesses
External Origin attributes of the environment <i>Country context and social, political as well as local government institutional perspective</i>	O Opportunities	T Threats

Source: Adapted from PCARRD, 2010

Internal Analysis

Given the analysis of mission and functions of LGD and in-depth interview of a number of its senior officials as well as elected chiefs of local government institutions and discussion with experts, the following context, strengths as well as weaknesses of LGD, particularly regarding

its aptitude towards local governance policy initiation, adoption and adaptation and/or policy implementation are noted hereunder:

Context

The government is committed to establishing strong local government institutions at various levels through active participation of the elected representatives in the administration and development activities, while the Local Government Division is implementing various development and service-oriented activities for poverty alleviation and for making the rural people's life more comfortable, sound and meaningful.¹⁴ The activities of the LGD extend down to the grass-root level of the country. The Union Parishads, Upazila Parishads, Zila Parishads, Municipalities and City Corporations are the local government institutions under this Division. In addition, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED),¹⁵ Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), Dhaka WASA, Chittagong WASA, Khulna WASA and NILG are the different Departments /Directorates/Institutions of this Division.¹⁶ The contextual analysis, however, indicates the evidence of avoiding local government institutions and concentrating development activities in the hands of government.

Strengths

LGD has a strong organogram with a number of qualified senior officials and it is one of the oldest divisions under one of the oldest ministries. It is under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, run by the stewardship of a Minister and a State Minister. Traditionally, Secretary of the ruling party becomes its Minister.

¹⁴ www.lgd.gov.bd

¹⁵ As a part of the government's programme for improvement of socio-economic conditions and poverty alleviation, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is implementing different projects for development of infrastructure both in the rural and urban areas, such as, construction/reconstructions/rehabilitation of roads including bridges and culverts, development of small scale water resources, development of growth centers/rural markets, construction of Union Parishad Buildings, cyclone/flood shelters, bus terminals, municipal markets, improvement of slums and so on.

¹⁶ www.lgd.gov.bd

Plenty of evidence, for instance, management of *Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP)* and *Upazila Parishad Governance Project (UZGP)*, support that LGD has outstanding project management and overseeing ability. It has also adequate amount of resource allocation and sufficient number of development projects.

This division drafted all of the existing local government Acts/laws¹⁷ that are unique except some substantive constraints. It has also proven records of initiating and developing concerned rules, regulations and circulars¹⁸ despite the fact that these are supported by project driven initiatives.

Weaknesses

This study supports that it has inability to manage and disburse ADP and other project grants in time. Participant observation supports that LGSP and LGSP-LIC grants, for instance, had not been disbursed in time. Also in some years, the last fiscal quarterly installment was disbursed almost nearly the national budget initiation time, which got serious concern of the local government institutions as the expenditures were subject to adjust before the end of the fiscal year. Therefore, the stated quarter fund might be misused and/or utilized in improper schemes.

Participant observation supports that its MIS is yet to be full-fledged and website is not being updated in time.¹⁹

¹⁷ The Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009; The Local Government (City Corporation) (Amendment) Act, 2011; The Local Government (Pourashava) Act, 2009; The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009; The Upazila Parishad Act, 1998; The Upazila Parishad (Reintroduction of the Repealed Act and Amendment) Act, 2009; The Upazila Parishad (Amendment) Act, 2011; The Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Act, 2010; Village Court Act, 2006; The Zila Parishad Act, 2000; Chittagong Hill Regionnal Coucil Act, 1998; Rangamati Hill District Council Act, 1989; Khagrachori Hill District Council Act, 1989; Bandarban Hill District Council Act, (1989).

¹⁸ Most of the old local government rules and regulations were drafted and/or issued by this Division. And it is currently on progress of drafting all rules and regulations under the Acts/laws passed on or after 2009.

¹⁹ www.lgd.gov.bd

Participant observation also supports that its out-reach and communication system is yet to be ICT based in a satisfactory level in practice, in spite of the fact that the lowest unit of the rural local government institutions (i.e. the Union Parishad) holds the *Union Information and Service Centre* with well-equipped ICTs and services.

This study also supports that many of its senior officials have some political bias in favor of the ruling party. Thus, despite the fact that it has ability to discharge its obliged duty of initiating and designing the relevant policies, it is inactive here with the issue of national decentralized local governance policy since it is a politically sensitive decision. Once again, unless the political wing of the government is willing to put forward the issue to the agenda of LGD, it will not be doable.

After the policy approval, the major concern would be how to implement the policy. And regarding the likely policy implantation, research notices that LGD does not have enough capability at this moment. As such, the proposed policy implementation strategy may focus on its competency building requirement as well.

External Analysis

Country Context

Bangladesh²⁰ emerged as an independent nation state in 1971, but it has a long recorded history of several thousands of years. In its recent past it was a part of Pakistan (1947-1971), and was known as East Pakistan. Prior to this, different parts of the present Bangladesh territory were under British India (1765-1947), the Mughals and other Muslim rulers, and before them under Buddhist and Hindu rulers (UN ESCAP, 2009). The country is located in South Asia surrounded by India, Nepal, Myanmar and Bay of Bengal with 47,570 square kilometers (56,977 square miles) area²¹ and 142.3 million population²², out of which 75% live in the rural area.²³

²⁰ Bangladesh, officially the People's Republic of Bangladesh, is a sovereign state located in South Asia. The capital as well as largest city is Dhaka, located in central Bangladesh. The official state language is Bengali.

²¹ Total Area 147570 square kilometers (Effective Land Area 119624 sq + Reverie Area 8236 sq+Forest Area 19710 sq) (See Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Bangladesh, February 2011)

The constitution, formulated immediately after independence, is equally lauded for democracy and decentralized local government system in Bangladesh. None of these aspects of the constitution has, however, reached into sustainable standard over the span of the periods.

Social and Political Analysis

Since 1990, elected governments²⁴ have been governing the state except military-backed interim government regime in 2007-8. Throughout the democratic regimes until now, human rights based approach to development is colossal, for instance, success in MDGs is considerably notable but at the same time, corruption, nepotism, party affiliation and political contacts became the key forces to succeed or to be socially influential. And traditional middle or elite class families of the society get less importance unless someone of the family members has strong link with the party affiliation and/or political contacts. More importantly, in the countryside, society is dominated by the politically affiliated new generation.

Regarding local government, politically affiliated new generation has strong interest to engage with local governance process, whether as elected representative or societal representative. And they are now advocating for the democratic decentralization and local governance. Civil society organizations also put emphasis on local governance development. Donors and development partners like UNDP, WB, USAID, SDC, EC, Danida and DFID are supporting and advocating for more legitimate, inclusive and effective local government system that make the local government institutions more responsive to the needs of their people.

It is also evident that there was no sequential development of the local government, and thus to local governance in Bangladesh, yet it has

²² According to the provisional results of 2011 Population and Housing Census, the enumerated population on 15th March, 2011 was 142,319 thousand (*Source: 2011 Population and Housing Census: Preliminary Results*).

²³ Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Bangladesh, February 2011.

²⁴ Basically run by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), headed by Begum Khaleda Zia – Wife of former Military President Freedom Fighter General Ziaur Rahman, and Bangladesh Awami League (AL), led by Sheikh Hasina – Daughter of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

a long heritage and history. With the recent development, both political and administrative decentralization, to some extent, have occurred in upazilas, while in districts there would have been only administrative aspect of decentralization. The Union Parishads hold only the political decentralization. As far as laws/Acts are concerned special local government units should have been (politically, administratively and fiscally) strongly decentralized, but in reality elected parishads are yet to form there. The urban local government units are in principal politically, fiscally and administratively decentralized, but they have limited transferred services.

Furthermore, there are a number of growing concerns, for instance lack of capacity and accountability of local government bodies and absence of the consistency at state works for stepping ahead with decentralized local governance. Thus, the scholars, practitioners and local elected representatives have been claiming for the need of a permanent local government commission for years. This has also been supported by the local government committees/commissions since 1990s. Finally, the recent past military backed interim government put forward the Local Government Commission Ordinance, 2008, by which the commission actively began to exercise its portfolio from November 2008, but the following parliament did not endorse the ordinance. Why did the Parliament not endorse the Local Government Commission Ordinance, 2008? Perhaps the elected government was not ready to unlock the door for local discretion and full-fledged autonomy. Along with the other factors, the Government might have the aversion to the commission members who were appointed by the controversial military backed interim government. However, the Local Government Commission Ordinance, 2008 was somewhat rational to the context.²⁵

Importantly, after much-awaited upazila and union parishad elections, the zila parishad election has now become pertinent and inevitable. If things move ahead as these should be, it is likely to unlock the potentials for local government in Bangladesh, particularly for the

²⁵ In addition, in early 2008, the Local Governance Cluster of UNDP-Bangladesh conducted a comprehensive study to address the formation modality and role of the probable Local Government Commission that was also unique of its kind.

rural local government that may acquire new responsibilities and more resources. The current round emphasis on democratic decentralization, globally as well as in Bangladesh, makes citizens to look forward to the local government for better services, local economic development and more secure local governance.

Meeting this overreaching goal, however, is still subject to developing the relationship between the Government and local governments. In reality, though local governments are apparently capable of solving the local problems, the national government in Bangladesh, like many other countries including some developed countries, does have the extensive stride to control the local governments. Herein Bangladesh the key aspects and notions of this control are:

- Political motives in local government reform initiatives
- Constitutional aspect and legislative notion
- Fiscal aspect as well as notion
- Administrative aspect

Local Government Institutional Analysis

The underneath structure of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is tailored concerning to the precedence based on the spirit of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh:

Table 2.1: Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Executive Body	Legislative Body	Judicial Body
President Prime Minister and Cabinet ²⁶	National Parliament ²⁷	Supreme Court ²⁸
Department of Defense Services Attorney General	-	Lower Court
Local Government ²⁹	-	Administrative Tribunal

Source: Talukdar, 2009

²⁶ As Bangladesh holds a unitary as well as the parliamentary form of government, herein reality is that the Prime Minister is the kingpin of the Government, and the President holds just an ornamental position.

²⁷ There are 300 elected members and 50 nominated women members.

²⁸ Consist of Appellate and High Court Divisions.

²⁹ Three-type rural local government institutions (i.e. Zila Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad), two-type special local government institutions (i.e. Chittagong Hill Regional Council and Chittagong Hill District Council), and two-type urban local government institutions (i.e. City Corporation and Municipality) excluding the cantonment board.

Table 2.1 above shows that *Local Government* exists under executive organ of the state. Importantly, two ministries coordinate with the local government institutions: one is for rural and urban local government institutions, and another is for special local government institutions at Chittagong Hill Tracts area. The table 2.2 below shows which ministry is responsible for what.

Table 2.2: Ministries Responsible for the Coordination of LG Institutions

Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives <i>Local Government Division</i>	
<i>Special Local Government</i>	<i>Rural Local Government</i>	<i>Urban Local Government</i>
Chittagong Hill Regional Council (1)		
Chittagong Hill District Councils (3)	Zila Parishads (64-3) = 61	City Corporations (11)
Traditional Raja (3) and Mouza Based Headman-karbari (472) System		
Upazila Parishads (25)	Upazila Parishads (487-25) = 462	Municipalities (319-3) = 16
Municipalities (3)		
Union Parishads (118)	Union Parishads (4557-118) = 4439	Cantonment Board (One in Every Cantonment Area)
Note: There is a legal debate whether Chittagong Hill Regional Council is to be considered as local government unit/institution. Upazila Parishads, Municipalities and Union Parishads at Hill areas functionally do not have link with Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, but these have direct link with Local Government Division. Moreover, literarily, Cantonment Board is not considered as Local Government institution.		

Source: Adapted from Talukdar, 2013

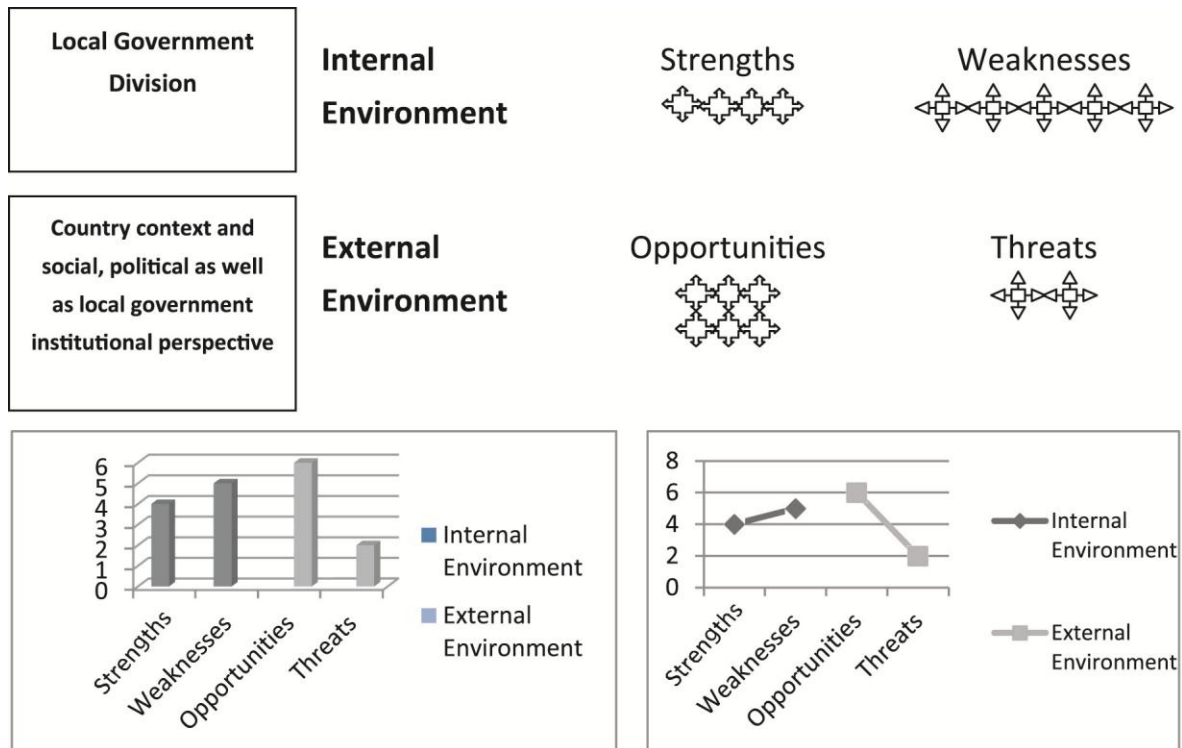
SWOT Perspective to the Policy

In fact, local government in Bangladesh, especially its rural local government institutions, is passing a transition period. There are gaps of understanding between the elected local government bodies and the legislators, and political elites and civil society proponents. There is also a shadow stress between the local bureaucracy and elected representatives.

However, to surmount this transition and to bridge the gaps both from the viewpoints of structural decentralization and institutional democratization, meticulous intellectual contributions, particularly

forming a robust decentralized local governance policy³⁰ and strategy for consideration of the Local Government Division, are sturdily essential, while the *SWOT Analysis* would help here understand policy perspective (as summarized at Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: SWOT Perspective to the Policy Design



The Figure 2.2 shows a graphical reflection of the SWOT perspective to the policy design. Here the opportunities of external environment prevail over the threats, whereas weaknesses of internal environment outweigh the strengths. Thus, the proposed policy and its advocacy as well as implantation strategy would be designed based on the perspective of opportunities of the external environment and weaknesses of internal environment. Importantly, the discussions with officials of Local Government Division (LGD) reveal the fact why LGD is yet to initiate a local governance policy: This is a subject to substantive political decision of the government. Unless the government provides LGD with the green signal to do so, it cannot do anything regarding this policy. And that is why this proposed policy requires a strong advocacy strategy.

³⁰ A number of recent studies suggest that the outcome of decentralization policies crucially depends on the extent to which central management is replaced by democratic institutions ensuring that the community can exercise control over government affairs at the local level (Eckardt, 2008).

CHAPTER 3

FORCEFIELD ANALYSIS

Force-field Analysis follows the *SWOT Analysis* and discussion with stakeholders, experts, practitioners and policy makers. It is a useful technique for looking at all the forces for and against a plan. It helps one to weigh the importance of these factors and to decide whether a plan is worth implementing. It starts with the stakeholder matrix and ends up with Force-field matrix as well as analysis. In effect, *Force-field Analysis* helps frame a policy strategically and design its advocacy as well as implementation strategy carefully.

Stakeholder and Force-field Matrices

Here the stakeholder matrix shows the stakeholders' interest or disinterest for the development of a robust local governance policy in Bangladesh, and their degree of influence as well as resources at disposal to the same, whereas Force-field matrix demonstrates the *forces for* development of the stated policy and *forces against* the same.

Table 3.1: Stakeholder Matrix

Stakeholders	Interest	Impact +/-	Degree of Influence (1-5)	Resources at Disposal (1-5)	Average Score (1-5)
Local Government Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a robust local government system• Empowerment of the local government bodies• Systematic improvement of the local governance and rural development• Enhanced institutional arrangement and balance of power	+	4	4	4
Legislators ³¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep control over the local resources and intergovernmental transfers as well as social security funds• Hold influence over the local	-	4	3	3.5

³¹ Based on the in-depth interview of a legislator, the study notes that majority of legislators are against the development of local governance system, and thus they disfavor the call for a decentralized local governance policy in Bangladesh.

Stakeholders	Interest	Impact +/-	Degree of Influence (1-5)	Resources at Disposal (1-5)	Average Score (1-5)
	people of his or her constituency				
Legislators ³²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few legislators believe in decentralization and deliberate democracy • They want to improve local governance system and pro-poor development 	+	2	1	1.5
Local Government Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep bureaucratic control over the local government institutions • Want to show obedience and loyalty to the government political will 	-	2	4	3
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influenced by the legislators who are against the development of the local governance • Influenced by the bureaucrats who are against decentralised and deliberate democracy • Fear of demand from people for increased accountability, transparency and deliberate democracy as well as governance 	-	2	5	3.5
Prime Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral (Prime Minister personally believes in essence of a robust local governance system but officially she is neutral, and goes with the Cabinet or government stand) 	(+/-)	5	5	5
Main Opposition Political Party and its Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main opposition party and its alliance do not show interest so that government forms a decentralized local governance policy for the same reason as discussed for the government case as they expect to come in power despite the fact that they do not oppose it strongly 	-	1	2	1.5
Small Political Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of small political parties have some keen interest for advancing 	+	2	1	1.5

³² Yet a significant number of legislators are in favor of the development of local governance system, and thus they advocate for a decentralized local governance policy in Bangladesh.

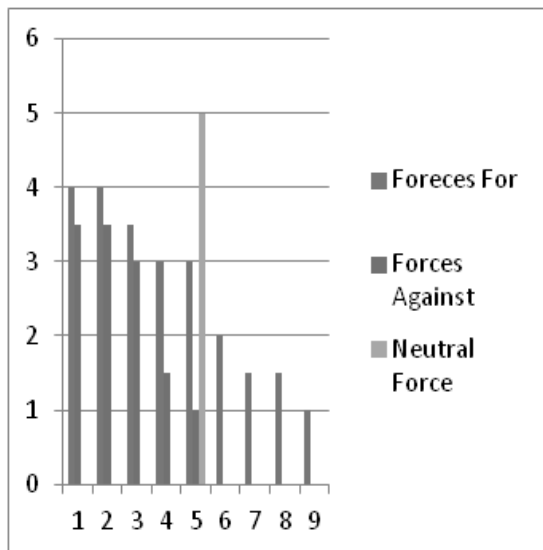
Stakeholders	Interest	Impact +/-	Degree of Influence (1-5)	Resources at Disposal (1-5)	Average Score (1-5)
	decentralization and local governance system as it goes with their political mandate				
Local Bureaucrats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their main interest vested with the loss of budgetary and bureaucratic control 	-	1	1	1
Civil Society Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-poor governance and rights based approach to development through deliberate local governance 	+	3	4	3.5
Experts and/or Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for a nuanced system of democratic, fiscal and administrative decentralization, and for an improved local governance system so as to meet MGDs with decentralized and deliberate democracy 	+	2	2	2
Development Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved and empowered local governance system and systematic rural development 	+	1	1	1
Donors as well as Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decentralized and deliberate democracy to ensure inclusive governance 	+	4	4	4
Peoples/Citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowerment, entitlement and rights to development and basic public service delivery, and getting out from poverty, hunger and social injustice 	+	2	4	3
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate themselves as a catalyst and social change agent as a group, and help people to know the right things, facts and read between the lines Support people empowerment, entitlement and rights to development, and basic public service delivery through deliberate and decentralized governance 	+	3	3	3

Table 3.2: Force-field Matrix

Forces for Change or Development (1-5)		Plan of Action	Forces against Change or Development (1-5)	
4	Local Government Institutions	Development of a proposed decentralized local governance policy for Bangladesh, and then tailoring a policy advocacy strategy and a policy implementation strategy	Legislators	3.5
4	Donors as well as Development Partners		Government	3.5
3.5	Civil Society Organizations		Local Government Division	3
3	Peoples/Citizens		Main Opposition Political Party and its Alliance	1.5
3	Media		Local Bureaucrats	1
2	Experts and/or Academics	Forces for – Forces against = 23.5-12.5 = 11 So forces for outweigh the forces against, and as such aforementioned plan of Action is justified		
1.5	Legislators			
1.5	Small Political Parties			
1	Development Practitioners			
23.5	◀ Total	Prime Minister (Neutral Force) (+/-) 5	Total ▶	12.5

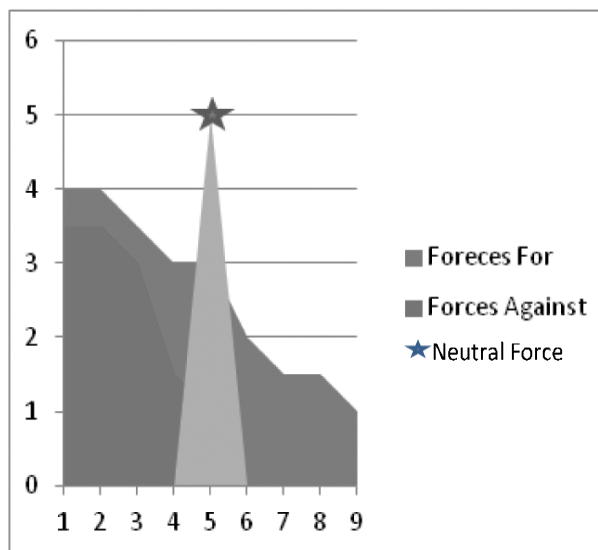
Figure 3.1: Force-Field Column Chart **Figure 3.2: Force-Field Area Chart**

Y = Force Rank



X = Force Unit

Y = Force Rank



X = Force Unit

Analysis of Key Forces

The main *forces for* are local government institutions, development partners, civil society organizations, citizens, media, local governance experts and some small political parties, while key forces against are legislators, government, Local Government Division and even main opposition political party.³³ The research also observes that there are, however, a few legislators who are in favor of strengthening local government system, and they acknowledge the importance and essence of local governance policy here. Same is true for the Local Government Division officials as well, but the study does not document it at the *force field* figure as these officials are not officially extending their support, given the fact that they are loyal to the government intention.

Notwithstanding Table 3.1 shows that neither the Local Government Division nor the government holds strong negative influence, but the resources at their disposal are very high. Importantly, the media observation and past participant experience - particularly while worked in UNDP - allow the study to document the Prime Minister's, and Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister's attitude towards local governance.

The former one has strong personal positive mind-set for strengthening local government system and so for the improvement of pro-poor local governance, but officially she is neutral, while the concerned Minister holds cautious attitude that allows him to stress back to the concern of history of decentralization in Bangladesh. In fact, historical evidence supports that during the autocratic regimes there were strong emphases on decentralized local governance system, but those were intentional decentralization, intended to sabotage the democracy at the national government. Substantiations of that type of artificial decentralization make the concerned Minister a bit worried to fortify the democratic decentralization. His individual belief, in fact, goes with Davey (2003) who points out that extent of local discretion would

³³ Although Local Government Division is a part of the government, the study puts it here separately because the former is particularly responsible for this policy initiation, while the government is a holistic mechanism where Prime Minister as well as Cabinet is the main concern.

be a matter of balance between national and local interests. Neither central control nor local autonomy should have unchallenged priority.

Importantly, research notices that the Prime Minister and the concerned Minister for the local government are two powerful forces for the decision whether proposed local governance policy would be adopted or adapted so as to proceed to the Cabinet for approval. Even the Prime Minister would alone get convinced with advocacy movement for the proposed policy, and thus she would hold official stand to go with this policy with adoption and/or adaptation, in the context Bangladesh political culture, the advocacy movement would succeed.

As such as part of the policy advocacy strategy, there are calls to engage such consultants who are champions for policy advocacy in the context of Bangladesh, and to appoint senior lobbyists who have records of accomplishment of political influence to the ruling party including to the Prime Minister.

These two-dimensional forces (i.e. forces for and against) together, however, allow the Local Government Division to move steadily toward paradigm shifting to the development of local government system and local governance practice. The stated movement is evidenced to the performance of developing and/or modifying all Acts/ laws concerning the local governance, and of conducting local government elections.³⁴

Considering this analysis, it is to acknowledge that this is the time for mitigating the academic and/or policy bankruptcy for the development of a robust local government as well as local governance system in Bangladesh. Thus, developing this proposed national local governance policy followed by policy advocacy strategy and implementation strategy is significant to the context of Bangladesh.

Summary of Stakeholder and Force-field Matrices

In summary, stakeholder matrix in Table 3.1 indicates that different interest groups or stakeholders, for instance, representatives of local government institutions, development partners, civil society organizations, citizens, media, local governance experts, legislators,

³⁴ Despite the fact that Zila Parishad election is yet to be held

government (cabinet), local government division and main opposition party, hold different interests coupled with degree of influence and resources at disposal towards the development of a decentralized and nuanced local governance system. Interestingly, Prime Minister individually advocates for fully decentralized local governance system, while her cabinet, local government division and major portion of legislators including from the opposition alliance strategically walk off against the essence of robust local governance functioning. Despite prime Minister's personal choice goes in essence of a robust local governance system, officially she is neutral, and goes with the Cabinet or government stand.

Given this critical context of stakeholders, the likely approach of a proposed local governance policy for Bangladesh – followed by policy advocacy and implementation strategies – would depend to a certain extent on the aforementioned *Force-field Analysis*. In effect, force field matrix at Table 3.2 shows that *forces for* the proposed policy and its implementation strategy sturdily outweigh the *forces against* the same.

CHAPTER 4

LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN BANGLADESH

Many countries around the world have been attempting – for several reasons with varying degrees of intention and success – to create or strengthen sub-national governments in recent years (Smoke, 2003). Now it has come to be widely accepted that decentralization can be conducive to poverty reduction. This is mainly because local governments are assumed to have better information and higher incentives than the central government does to design and implement policies that respond to local needs and preferences (Talukdar, 2013).

Despite the fact that globally as well as in Bangladesh, there has been a widespread emphasis on democracy as the current round of decentralization, the literature on this topic is still confined to relatively few studies, while in response to this decentralization, globally there are plenty of failure evidence and success stories (Talukdar, 2009). Crook and Sverrisson (1999 cited by Eckardt, 2008), for instance, provide evidence that despite extensive strides of devolution of authority and resources to democratically elected local governments, decentralization in Colombia, West Bengal and Brazil has achieved little in improving service delivery.

Grindle (2007), however, notes down that local officials were lauded for the innovations they introduced in the governance of their communities and the new spaces they created for civic participation. In some cases, governments became world famous for such innovations, as did Porto Alegre, Brazil, when it introduced participatory budgeting process. In Mexico, cities such as Monterrey, Leon, and Aguascalientes became well-known models for efficient and responsive governance. In municipalities in Kenya, India, the Philippines, South Africa, and elsewhere, citizens shared information, made decisions about resource allocation, monitored policy implementation, and envisioned improvements that would alter the future of their communities. Talukdar (2009) points out that Sirajganj in Bangladesh is also noted for

the local governance development that is resultant from Sirajganj Local Governance Development Fund Project (SLGDFFP).³⁵

According to Talukdar (2013), there is evidence that democratic decentralization provides the environment for wider participation and social inclusiveness. Again, developing political capacity of the local electors for demanding accountability, and engaging local authorities towards human rights and freedom from poverty are apparently ways to ensure the sustainable democratic and economic development of the country. Nonetheless, in Bangladesh, like many other developing countries, the decentralization, by itself, will not unleash the potentials of good governance at the local level to meet the development goals, getting peoples free from poverty and peoples' entitlement of human rights, unless it apprehends factors that can turn these potentials into reality. Regardless of the fact that inefficiency, lack of resources and finance remain daunting issues, these alone are not the crucial factors for the success of decentralization and local governance in Bangladesh and elsewhere; the most crucial part is changing behavior and institutionalizing decentralization and local governance with democratic values.

Interface of Local Government and Local Governance

According to Kingdom (1999) the local government is the self-government of sub-national territorial units of the state. He identifies that a modern local government should have the following characteristics: *Democratic control by locally elected representatives who form the council, a local parliament; power to levy taxes; clearly delineated territorial boundaries; large permanent bureaucracies – local civil services; responsibility for a wide range of services; a legal persona as a body corporate – the local authority in the name of which all activities are carried out.*

³⁵ The experience of Union Parishads' Governance in Sirajganj had been exercised at Unions all over the Bangladesh through Local Governance Support Project (LGSP), with special emphasis at Unions of 6 Districts (Sirajganj, Barguna, Feni, Narshindi, Hobigonj and Sathkira) through Local Governance Support Project – Learning and Innovation (LGSP-LIC). The second generation of LGSP is now known as LGSP-II and LGSP-LIC is renamed Union Parishad Governance Project (UPGP).

Local politics is the process of settling differences and reaching compromises over local issues, and can take place in the streets as well as in the town hall. It involves local elections, parties, pressure groups, media and local opinion. It can also involve a world of intrigue within the corridors and debating chambers of the town hall (kingdom, 1999: 570-571). Importantly, local government should be valued in a democracy more highly than the numerous other bodies that also shape aspects of urban and rural life (Chandler, 1996:2).³⁶

Nonetheless, much of the evidence points to considerable deficits that preclude any meaningful democratic engagement. The lack of resources, material, human, and marginalized populations and even the incompetence of local electorates in newly democratized local governments are all barriers to local governments becoming effective and accountable and, thus legitimate (Dauda, 2006). Also, organizational base of the local government in many countries like Bangladesh is to some extent inappropriate, and its revenue-generating capacity as well is inadequate to offer workable solutions to the rural and urban problems.

Furthermore, in most liberal democracies, local elections are contested by the national political parties. This means that the outcome of local election contests is greatly influenced by national political issues. Such as, the degree of popular support for the national government may be more influential in determining the outcome of a local election than the performance of the authority (Joyce, 2003:253). However, the development of electoral politics at the local level is very important. The National Election Commission should emerge as one of the most trusted institutions in the country, with commitment to develop and implement participatory democracy in the election process both in central and local elections, giving the opportunity to make the peoples' voices heard and

³⁶ They differ from other agencies that supply local services in two important aspects: Local authorities supply a large range of services rather than ... a small number of specific tasks. They are, therefore, capable of coordinating many separate functions and determining a strategy for the well-being and development of community as a whole; Local authorities not only provide many services, they also can claim to represent the views and aspirations of their communities.

their full participation, and to exercise their democratic rights. Also, the involvement of political parties in local political elections is at the center of several debates, but one of the vital aims of democratic decentralization concludes these debates. It gets granted for the augmentation of continual political competition that affects accountability and political lessons for the local leaders. But the Election Commission should be keen to transform the involvement of political parties towards a supportive climate for a competitive, free and fair election process. Empirical evidence suggests that free and fair election is vital for accountability leverage.

Often overlooked is the fact that it is the marginalized populations that lack legitimacy and it is only through active struggles to engage local authorities that they will gain it. When the focus is shifted to these struggles, there is the potential to gain new insight into how local people are building the political capacity to demand some democratic accountability (Dauda, 2006).

In simple sense the term 'Governance' denotes the inter-relationship between the state and society, and/or the government and governed. This is likely to focus more on process and outcomes than on formal institutional arrangements (Talukdar, 2013). Hence, local governance is governing at the local level viewed broadly to include not only the machinery of government, but also the community at large and its interaction with local authorities, while democratic local governance is, in turn, local governance carried out in a responsive, participatory, accountable and increasingly effective (i.e. democratic) fashion. Decentralization gives the local governance system the opportunity to become increasingly democratic. Without decentralization, the development of democratic local governance is much more difficult. As decentralization opens avenues for the development of democratic local governance, local governments gain the authority, resources and skills; make responsive choices with citizen input; and operate effectively and accountably (USAID, 2000).

The contemporary world is experiencing profound change in the field of governance and in this context many developing countries are undertaking extensive state reform including decentralization of state

structures and functions, public administration reorganization, and transitional steps to democratization. As a result, there is an increased emphasis on the need to address local government more specifically, since in many countries this has been a neglected tier of government in the development effort (McCarney,1996a). Hence, the need for a new type of local government is being felt by both the national governments and also pushed by the international development agencies, such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, European Commission and the UN System (Islam, 2000:273). The international scholarly community also seems to favor stronger and more autonomous local level governance (McCarney, 1996b).

Local Governance Scenario in Bangladesh

The current local government system in Bangladesh can be traced back to Chowkidari Panchayat Act of 1870 followed by the Bengal Local Self Governed Act of 1885, but the local governance in Bangladesh has a long heritage as well as history, which is dated back to thousands of years. Thus the present pattern of local governance in Bangladesh has been resultant from a long legacy, reforms, evolution and revolution.

In spite of a long heritage of the local governance in Bangladesh, decentralization herein was hardly considered a pragmatic means to achieve good governance and experiments of transforming local governance for thousands of years as well have brought little pro-people innovation. The frequent changes of the system have been leading to wane the institutional value and norms of the local government.

Local government reforms in Bangladesh evolved very distinctly according to the needs of the ruling elites (Westergaard, 2000; Khan and Hussain, 2001 cited by Aminuzzaman, 2010).According to Aminuzzaman (2010), with change of government, the policy of local government also kept changing. Such changes were generally dictated by the imperative of legitimizing and broadening the narrow base of the power-holders in the national government. As a consequence, LGIs have not had any opportunity to act as effective tiers of governments with mandates and funds to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Though several attempts have been made to improve local government in Bangladesh, they continue to be managed and controlled by the central government administrative structures.

Aminuzzaman (2010) further argues that Local government has been repeatedly identified as a key strategic sector for improving governance and development in Bangladesh.³⁷ Considering the political economy and the Constitutional commitment, decentralization is an imperative to improve service delivery, respond to the demand of the civil society, resolve conflict, address the technological changes and meet the challenges of the growing urbanization. International lessons also draw a broad conclusion that decentralization is not only a political process of creating accountability but also is the best means to bring government closer to people and institutionalizing democracy.

Given the empirical data across the continents, (Ahmed J, 2007) reveals that at least 3 Fs - *Functions, Finance and Functionaries* - are essential to make any decentralization process successful, while Aminuzzaman (2010) explains the fact that in Bangladesh context, unfortunately there has always been a severe imbalance among the 3Fs. Finance and Functionaries have always been a perennial problem of the LG systems in Bangladesh. Ahmed (2012) calls for two challenging questions to be answered in future: i) weather the functionaries and funds will also flow towards the LGs with list of functions? li) How are we going to deal with numerous line agencies at all administrative units together with LGs at the same levels?

With reference to the empirical evidence (Akash, 2009; et al.), Aminuzzaman (2010) points out some invisible but serious challenges that characterize the governance of the rural local government: i) Continued centralized control over the UP (and thus local government) maintained through the administration and the limited resources at its disposal;³⁸ ii) the critical and often hidden role of the MPs and other political stakeholders; iii) the poor understanding of the UP role both among its members and the wider populace.

The constitutional commitment as well as spirit, to the extent that is evidenced, for ensuring good local governance in Bangladesh has never

³⁷ All Five Year Plans of the Govt. of Bangladesh highlighted the need and importance of local government as the prime institution for revitalizing the rural hinterland of Bangladesh

³⁸ A recent estimate suggests that only about 2 percent of national development budget is channeled through local government system. (Akash, 2009)

been made in to reality. Furthermore, there are a couple of critical concerns with the constitutional guarantee. Firstly, previous *Article 9* had been a powerful constitutional instrument for the development of local government institutions in Bangladesh, which was replaced with *Nationalism* in 2011 by the 15th amendment of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Secondly, power of the local government, national-local relationship, degree of democratic and fiscal decentralization, and functions as well as functionaries of the local government are depending on the mode of the legislature, as evident at Article 60 of the constitution (Talukdar, 2013).

Furthermore, the reintroduced upazila system in 2009 has neither yet become fully effective nor produced desired outcomes. Moreover, the Zila parishad system is still operative with de-facto arrangement. Meanwhile the reformation as well as enactment of separate Acts/laws for every unit of the local government apparently could be remarkable, but given the visionary and strategic perspective, an *aggregated policy as well as well as legal framework* is inevitable. Ahmed (2012) opines that in order to bring harmony, discipline, consistency and efficiency, the LGI system could be brought under uniform legal coverage. He further argues the interfacing of rural-urban divide also needs to be addressed in the context of uniformity in institutional, legal and services perspectives.

Nevertheless there are many local governance issues on which a greater consensus has been built if not more at least for last one decade. In one blanket term all of these may be encapsulated as 'local government strengthening agenda'. The other single but cross cutting issue feature dominantly is 'poverty alleviation' proliferated in the areas like enhancing allocation and efficiency for safety net, education, health and eradicating of inequalities and discrimination on gender considerations (GoB, 2004 cited by Ahmed, 2012). There are some policy innovations as well. One such innovation was introduced in 1997 that constituted three elected council seats for women alongside the nine general elected ward seats at the Union Parishad. Then the innovation was replicated in Municipality and City Corporation as well.³⁹

³⁹ 1/3rd members ought to be reserved for women representatives who must come through direct election (as described in the Union Parishad case), but that does

Some Critical Issues and Concerns

Institutional Linkages

Institutional linkages at different dimensions, for instance, between and/or among the local government institutions, between transferred and residual service departments within a local government institution, between a local government institution and other reserved and delegated local service departments of the national government, between local government institution and civil society organizations, between local government and proposed national and regional local government commissions, and between the local government and national government, are necessary, and these need to be well defined by law and/or rules and regulations.

Inter-Governmental Relations

The current round emphasis on democratic decentralization, globally as well as in Bangladesh, makes the citizens' sense to increasingly look forward to local government institutions for better services and more secure local governance, which may be conducive to local economic development as well. Meeting this overreaching goal, however, is still subject to developing the relationship between the Government and local governments. And as such, the proposed decentralization and local governance policy recommends local governments to be legislatively self-governing institutions. Notwithstanding Davey (2003) points out that extent of local discretion would be a matter of balance between national and local interests. Neither central control nor local autonomy should have unchallenged priority.

Structuring Local Governments' Borrowing

A local government's fiscal balance can be defined as the difference between its expenditure responsibilities on the one hand, and its own source of revenues and transfers on the other. If any local government expenditure needs are not properly balanced with the resources available to it, this could be resultant in sub-national deficits and the

not limit the women right to compete for general membership or chairmanship (mayoral position).

incurrence of debt (UNDP, 2005:6). In such case, it seems that local borrowing may be a co-opted option, but the global anecdotal and empirical evidence suggest that having a loan is not always welcomed, and generally inappropriate for the recurrent spending of the sub-national governments. Local borrowing is appropriate for responsible expenditures (e.g. for long term capital development projects or for sustainable business development or profit generating undertakings).

In many countries, sub-national borrowing is still to be neglected when the legal framework for decentralization is established. In South Asian countries, even in India, there is an insufficient regulation for sub-national borrowing in the decentralization legal framework. And in Bangladesh, there is an absolute absence of the legal framework for the local government borrowing, but this increasingly becomes essential here for advancement of the fiscal decentralization. Given this analysis, the proposed decentralization and local governance policy strongly recommends sub-national borrowing to be legislated here.

Local Government Financial Planning and Management

Apart from the fiscal decentralization, financial planning and management are central to local governance. In the context of Bangladesh, the local government institutions need support to get their planning, budgeting and financial management capacity improved.

First, local governments must instigate five years integrated development plan with the engagement of key local stakeholders including concerned legislator(s) so as to avoid conflict of interest and unnecessary intervention of government or legislator.

Second, five-year budget and yearly budget, of course, should be realistic, based on the resources that can be practically collected through internal resource mobilization and external assistance. The budget preparation needs to be participatory and open so that it confers the impression to the residents that tax and other available resources will be used in their interests. Local public financial as well as expenditure management needs to be strengthened to reinforce the value of money.

Third, there are some other factors to be considered here. For instance, local government procurement is critical to the local public expenditure management. And success of the expenditure management, to a great extent, depends on the worthiness of the revenue administration and timely intergovernmental or project fund transfer. As part of revenue administration the tax base, tax collection and expenditure information should be made publicly available, which in turn, bestows local citizens confidence that their money is being used properly, and thus makes them more willing to pay their taxes.

Gender Mainstreaming in Local Governance

Despite the extensive debates on the governance and development approach, there is a widespread belief that Gender and Development (GAD) or gender mainstreaming, poverty reduction and local governance are interrelated and likely to be central to the local government, particularly in Bangladesh context. Globally as well as in Bangladesh, while GAD is the evolution of the Women in Development (WID) programs of the 1970s, “gender mainstreaming” is the further advancement, and governance version of the GAD (Talukdar, 2009:87).

GAD, however, has been widely accepted in development initiatives by the donor institutions, mainly by the World Bank and the ADB since the Beijing Conference in 1995. The recent development of GAD focuses on ‘gender mainstreaming’ in governance and development in general, and in local government institutions in particular, so that it can reinforce the local governance with inclination to redress the gender inequalities and local poverty. International guidelines on decentralization recognize the need for gender mainstreaming in local governance with particular focus on women as depressed group of the society. In addition, the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh prescribes for the gender equality (as described in Part 3, Article 28 of the Constitution).

Central to the Institutional Challenges

Though corruption is a daunting issue, still it is a reality of local governments in Bangladesh. The foremost corruption of local governments here is associated with the land as well as settlement administration and rural social safety net programmes (e.g. Food-for-

work, VGD, VGF and some other rural food-based programmes), and to some extent with local revenue and expenditure management.

Firstly, the local land and settlement assignment is still being governed under the national government, but it needs to be administratively decentralized with sensible reform efforts, and this decentralized administration should consistently be answerable to the democratic local government (e.g. to the Upazila Parishad). Secondly, misuse, abuse, or even non uses of the local social safety net programmes destroy the trustworthiness of local leaders to the residents, which adversely affect on local tax collection. Thus, these food-based programmes are considerably being phased out, and social safety net approach should be mainstreamed with the other governance and development programmes with increased transparency and downward accountability. Thirdly, in order to make the local revenue as well as expenditure management transparent, accountable and efficient, it needs to get comprehensively supported by the national government through decentralization projects.

Local Government Election

Electoral politics at the local level is very important. Involvement of political parties at local political elections is at the center of several debates, but one of the vital aims of democratic decentralization concludes these debates. The augmentation of continual political competition will effect on accountability leverage and political lessons for local leaders.

Nonetheless, the National Election Commission must emerge as one of the most trusted institutions in the country so as to help participatory democracy in the election process and to ensure free and fair national and local elections. Thus, the commission should be keen to transform the involvement of political parties towards a supportive climate for a competitive, free and fair election process. Empirical evidence suggests that free and fair election is vital for the accountability leverage. For example, there was a failure of the Upazila system during the autocratic regime when the Election Commission had less freedom to hold a fair election. Those unfair elections had been resultant unaccountable local

governance that generated further mistrust and suspicion between the local government and community people.

Local Government Commission

There are a number of growing concerns, for instance, lack of capacity and accountability of the local government bodies, absence of the consistency at state works for stepping ahead to the local government and so to the local governance. Thus, the scholars, practitioners and local elected representatives are lauding the need for a permanent local government commission for years. This has also been supported by the local government committees/commissions since 1990s. Finally, the recent past military backed interim government put forward the Local Government Commission Ordinance, 2008, by which the commission actively began to exercise its portfolio from November 2008, but the following parliament did not endorse the ordinance.

Nonetheless, this proposed policy prescribes one “national independent local government commission” for maintaining relationship with the central/national government and the devolvement of the effective local government and local governance system both substantively and functionally, and *eight “regional independent local government commissions”* for the regional integration of the local government and local governance. These commissions will have appropriate powers, functions and authority to look after the affairs of the local government institutions including allocation of financial resources and monitoring and supervision on behalf of the national government (adapted from GAF proposed policy, 2010).

Policy and Constitutional Assurance

The National Rural Development Policy provides support for the development of mechanisms to develop the role of the local government as a facilitator and creator of the ‘necessary conducive environment for the required services to be provided to the rural people and also expand the opportunities’. It underlines the importance of ‘accountable and responsive’ local government institutions, where ‘people will be made aware of and given access to services and opportunities offered by government’. Similarly the second Poverty Reduction Strategy underlines the multidimensional nature of poverty

and suggests few important areas of intervention of LGIs (Aminuzzaman, 2010). As the significance of local government in Bangladesh has been acknowledged by aforementioned policy documents as well as by other scholarly evidence (Ahmed, 2012; Amunizzaman, 2010; Talukdar 2013), the absence of a local governance policy is supposed to be a prioritized governance problem in Bangladesh. Unless we do have an aggregated or national local governance policy, we will not have a vision and road map for development a robust local governance system in the country as described in the *Introduction* of the book.

Furthermore, considering the critical concerns with regards to the constitutional guarantee, as mentioned here in the subchapter *Local Governance Scenario in Bangladesh*, independent reviews – for instance, Ahmed 2012 and Talukdar 2009 and 2013 – support Indian model of constitutional guarantee. The 73rd and 74th amendments of the Indian constitution have made a clear sense on those issues. Talukdar (2013), however, argues with evidence that constitutional assurance is not the ultimate to build up a high-quality local government as well as good local governance. For example, the success of the local government in Britain, without such constitutional safeguarding, reminds us the democratic practice is central to the democracy and democratic decentralization. But Bangladesh is not in a position of Britain, particularly in terms of democratic practices. While in Uganda and South Africa, political authorities passed statutory and constitutional guarantees for local government development just an 18-year back,⁴⁰ but now both countries are noted as examples for democratic development of the local government as well as for robust local governance. The success of those counties has underpinned a lesson that the constitutional pledge is as important as democratic commitment does for a strong local government system and serving deliberate governance at local level, particularly for a country like Bangladesh.

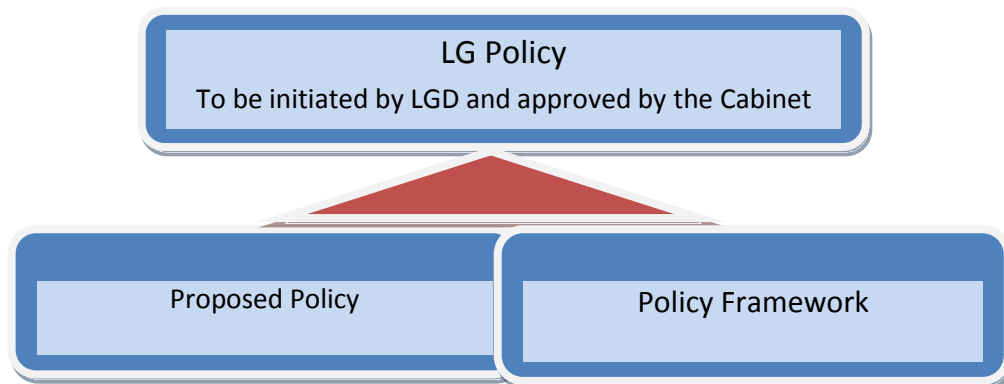
⁴⁰ In Uganda democratic Local Councils (previously called Resistance Councils) were adopted by the 1996 constitution followed by a further development of local government by the Local Government Act of 1997. Also, in South Africa the 1996 Constitution provided mandate basically for a democratically decentralized local government [see Chapter 7, Section 152(1)/e and Section 153 (a), Constitution of South Africa, 1996].

CHAPTER 5

PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNANCE POLICY

Following the *SWOT as well as Force-field Analysis* and taking into account the *International Guidelines on Decentralization and the Strengthening of Local Authorities*⁴¹ along with the *Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*,⁴² local government Acts/laws in Bangladesh and GAF⁴³ proposed *Decentralization Policy in Bangladesh*,⁴⁴ the present *Proposed Local Governance Policy for Bangladesh*, has, after a couple of months of research,⁴⁵ been tailor-made. Figure 5.1 shows how the local governance policy would be crafted.

Figure 5.1: Crafting local governance policy



⁴¹ See UN-HABITAT, 2007

⁴² See Articles 11, 59 and 60 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

⁴³ Governance Advocacy Forum (GAF) is a renowned platform operating at national level that aims to promote democratic decentralization, strong local government and governance through policy advocacy (see <http://www.gafbd.org/html/aboutus.asp?st=1>).

⁴⁴ GAF proposed *Decentralization Policy in Bangladesh* was drafted by Professor Akhter Hussain, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University, in 2010.

⁴⁵ The methods and/or techniques of research applied here are in-depth interview of a number of senior officials of the Local Government Division, and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tract Affairs, and Public Officials and Elected Chiefs of local government institutions, and also discussion with experts, practitioners and a legislator, and participant observation along with social and mass-media observation, and review of constitution, local government Acts/laws, rules and regulations, and international guidelines on decentralization.

Proposed Policy

Vision

The vision is to develop a robust local governance and pro-poor local development system outfitted with structural decentralization and institutional democratization through politically, fiscally and administratively decentralized local government institutions in pursuance of the constitutional commitment and the *international guidelines on decentralization*.⁴⁶

Mission

The mission is to develop a fully decentralized local government system at all spheres of the local government units so as to ensure a full-fledged deliberate democracy and good local governance through citizen engagement, inclusiveness and empowerment, and through ensuring down-ward, horizontal and vertical accountability and maintaining a robust institutional linkage between national government and local government and among the local government institutions.

Goal

The goal is to guarantee that this local governance policy will be translated fully in laws, rules, regulations and practices by 2018, and to ensure that the public services delivery will be made available with fully decentralized approaches so as to meet the civic satisfaction and needs without irrational system loss or corruption practices by 2020.

Overall and Specific Objectives

The overall objective of the policy is to facilitate political, economic, social, administrative and developmental empowerment of local citizens to attain the rights to development and public services, access to the knowledge and information, ability to the decent standard of living, and affordability for a long, healthy and secure life.

⁴⁶ *International guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities*, UN-HABITAT (2007), envisions serving as a catalyst for policy and institutional reforms at the national level to further enable and empower local authorities.

The specific objectives of the policy are to:

- i. ensure a full-fledged political, fiscal and administrative decentralization at LGIs;
- ii. strengthen accountability and transparency of the decentralized system by making local leaders and service providers directly accountable to the communities they serve through citizen inclusiveness and empowerment with the engagement in decision making, planning, budgeting, implementation and follow up actions (*Adapted from GAF proposed policy, 2010*);
- iii. enhance the sensitivity and responsiveness of government agencies to the local needs by placing the planning, financing, management, and control of service provision at the point where services are provided, and by enhancing capacities of local institutions so that they are able to take into consideration the local environment and needs (*Ibid*); and
- iv. develop sustainable development planning and management capacity of local government institutions that will serve as the driving force for planning, mobilization, and implementation of social, ecological, political, and economic development of the community and thus of the country (*Ibid*).

Principles

The basic principles of this policy are as following:

Unity of Diversity: Ensuring that national unity is met with local autonomy, identity, interests and diversity.

Balanced Decentralization: Making certain that a nuanced move towards a balanced political, fiscal and administrative decentralization for the local governance and development is going on, but the democratic decentralization is subject to be met immediately in all local government institutions.

Equitable Distribution: Ensuring that reasonable distribution of reserved, transferred and residual functions and services between the national and local government, and between the local government institutions is

customized and similarly equitable distribution of revenue collected from the local level by the national government is tailored between the levels of government as stated above. As such, financial equalization, both vertical (i.e. between state and local authorities) and horizontal (i.e. among local authorities) level would sensibly be ensured.

Material, Financial and Human Resources: Ensuring that the material, financial and human resources of local government institutions are commensurate with their tasks and responsibilities, and the institutions are allowed to determine and appoint their own internal administrative structure with their own resources, in addition to the transferred departments, so as to adapt with local needs and to ensure effective management. Moreover, in addition to the inter-governmental transfers along with the development project assistance, ensuring that they have access to a broad variety of local financial resources including incurring taxes, levies and service charges in accordance with the government tax schedule. Further to these, local government institutions should, within the legislation (i.e. Acts/laws) and/or rules and regulations, have access to national and international capital markets (i.e. sub-national borrowing authority) and/or to the public–private partnership model for capital investment.

Responsibility with Authority: Ensuring that the full control and authority are exercised on transferred departments including their responsibilities and budgets and/or allocations from the national government.

Transparency and Accountability: Ensuring that openness and transparency, and down-ward horizontal and vertical accountability of all local government institutions, local government division, and other concerned departments of line ministries regarding local governance are maintained.

Engagement and Empowerment: Ensuring that citizen engagement, inclusiveness and empowerment would be the underlying principle in local decision-making, planning, budgeting, implementation and follow-up Actions. As such, the citizen interest ought to be the central to the outputs as well as outcomes of local governance and development. Thus, the legal provision for standing and steering committees is

necessary here. And such committees need to be formed and/or activated in timely and full-fledged manner with the involvement of local stakeholders, especially diverse sectors of the community leaders, so as to get the civic engagement in monitoring and gearing up public services delivery and other expenditure responsibilities with transparent and accountable way. Importantly, the participation of the women and youth embedded in all local initiatives would be highly encouraged here.

Equality and Non-discrimination: Ensuring that all individuals are equal and are entitled to the human rights including the rights to development and public services, access to the knowledge and information, ability to maintain a decent standard of living, and affordability for a long, healthy and secure life without discrimination of any kind.

Rule of Law: Ensuring that local government institutions, alongside the state authorities at different levels, have obliged to respect, protect and fulfill human rights, rule of law and social justice.

Legislative Provision: Ensuring that in addition to the constitutional mandates, legislative provisions (i.e. Acts /laws) clearly declare the local government units, and articulate the roles, responsibilities and institutional linkages as well as inter-governmental relations among the local government institutions and between local government and national government. Furthermore, it is to be ensured that rules and regulations are aligned with the concerned Acts/laws.

Code of Conduct: Ensuring that the different codes of conduct for local public civil servants and political office holders are made available by the government, that guide politicians and officials of local authorities to discharge their tasks with a sense of responsibility and accountability to the citizens. However, the material and remunerative conditions of local politicians should be as high as they could continue their commitment to the common good of society with strong integrity and high degree of transparency. As such, disclosure of assets and liabilities of local political office holders are necessary.

Public Service Delivery: Ensuring that the public services delivery will be made available with fully decentralized approaches that meet civic

satisfaction and needs without irrational system loss and/or corruption practices.

Institutional Capacity: Ensuring that bridging communal leadership and institutional capacity building initiatives are initiated both at local level and national level, and these are supported by the national government and development projects.

Empowerment of the Local Authorities: Ensuring that local government bodies are freely exercising their powers, including those bestowed upon them by the national government, within the limits defined by legislation. This means these powers must be exclusive, and should not be undermined by other authority – not even by any individual legislator. Legislation, however, must address the provisions for separation of authorities for revenue assignments, expenditure responsibilities and public services delivery, and administrative, political and social justice authority.

This prescription allows authority for revenue assignments including inter-governmental transfers to the councilors, authority for expenditure responsibilities and public services delivery to the secretary of the concerned local government institution, and administrative, political including networking, stakeholder-partnership, public-private partnership, local government borrowing and social justice authority to the chief elected representative (i.e. chairman or mayor). This chief political official, however, should have the discretionary authority to oversee the all other assignments and responsibilities, especially the public services delivery affairs. And the political officials should not involve directly in implementation, rather they will oversee and make accountable the other implantation authorities.

Thus, local government institutions' right to develop partnership with civil society, especially with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), and with private sector and other interested stakeholders, and also with other spheres of government, needs to be addressed by the legislation and/or rules and regulations so that inclusive development process here is set forth. Furthermore, participation of local government representatives in

national and/or regional decision making and planning as well budgeting process is significant to the context of empowerment of local authorities and so to the balanced national development. And as such, national and/or regional government should involve consultation with local government bodies and their associations regarding any policy, Act/law, rules and regulations, and also relating to planning, budgeting and designing of development projects/programmes on local governance and development.

Supervision of Local Authorities: Ensuring that supervision, suspension or dissolution of local government elected representatives or local councils are exercised in accordance with procedures in Acts/laws, but these must be done by independent local government commissions, and subject to oversee such suspension or dissolution Activities by administrative courts and/or high courts to which appeals may be made. In addition, the independent local government commissions will help the government to ensure that the constructional mandate and spirit for the local governance development through the decentralization and local governance policy will be translated fully in laws, rules, regulations and practices as soon as possible.

Policy Framework

Structural Framework

There will be two types⁴⁷ of local government institutions in Bangladesh, namely rural local government institutions and urban local government institutions under a total eight regional local government commissions⁴⁸ and one national local government commission, while 'division' would no longer be treated as administrative unit of the government. Importantly, rural local government and urban local government units will never be geographically overlapped, which means that the rural

⁴⁷ Currently there are three types of local government institutions in Bangladesh (i.e. Rural Local Government Institutions, Special Local Government Institutions and Urban Local Government Institutions).

⁴⁸ Regions will be Dhaka, Chittagong, Hill-Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, Barisal and Rangpur.

local government units and urban local government units must be with separate constituencies fitted with clear-cut area mapping. The proposed structural framework of the local government is presented at Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Proposed structural framework of the local government

Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Local Government Division (LGD)	
One National Independent Local Government Commission Eight Independent Regional Local Government Commissions	
Rural Local Government Institutions Zilla Parishad (64) Upazila Parishad (487) Union Parishad (4557)	Urban Local Government Institutions City Corporation (11) Municipality (319)

The Local Government Division would, however, be downsized with limited number of senior officials and support staff, and with limited scope of responsibilities. The basic tasks of the LGD would be liaison with the national local government commission. Given the commission's advice and recommendations, it will deal with international organizations with matters relating to treaties and agreements, and with countries and world bodies regarding the subjects allotted to this division. And it is likely to draft Acts/laws on subjects allotted to this division for the legislative body, and thus issue rules, regulations, circulars, guidelines and strategy papers concerned to the related Acts/laws, and design, draft and initiate related policies to get approved from the Cabinet.

Furthermore, it will also maintain scope for public inquiries, MIS and statistics on any of the subjects allotted to this division. The LGD would also provide secretarial support to the concerned minister and/or state minister so that they defend well in the relevant parliamentary standing committee. However, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), and National Institute of Local Government (NILG) will go under the stewardship of the National Local Government Commission. And as where applicable

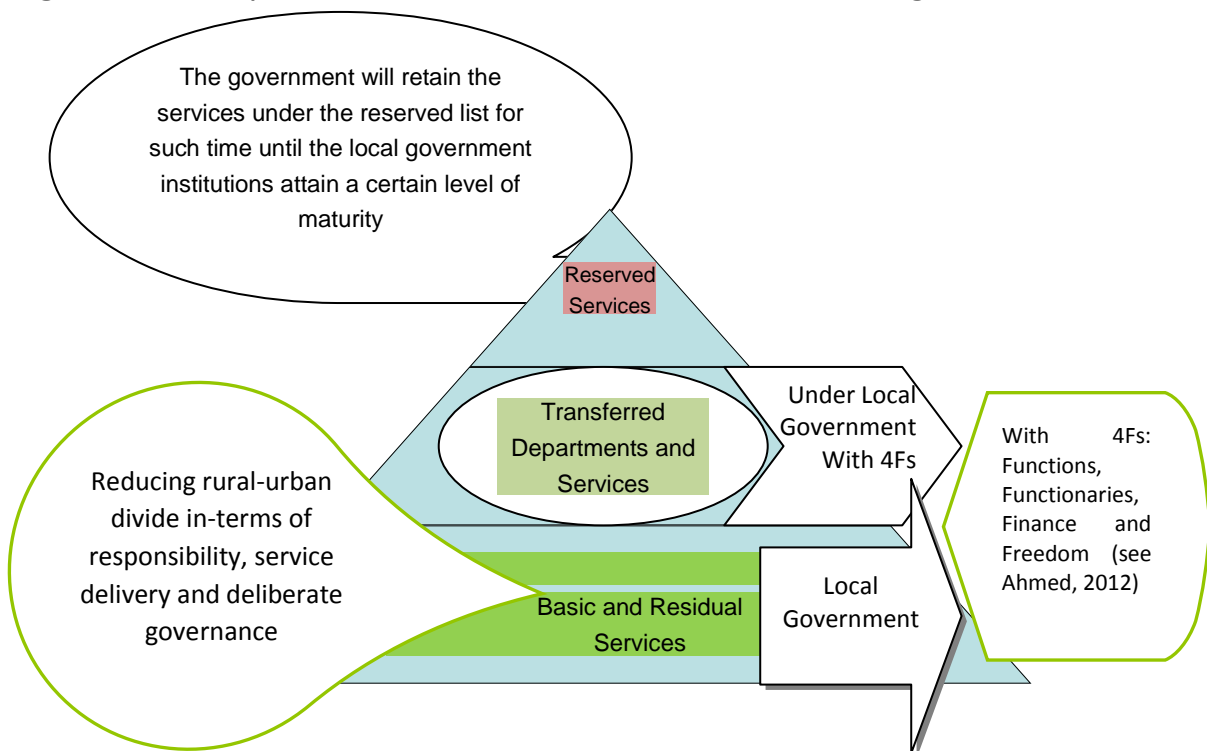
local offices of these departments and Dhaka WASA, Chittagong WASA, Khulna WASA, and five other new (proposed) WASA will operate under the concerned local government institutions and under stewardship of the regional local government commissions given the guidance as would be determined by the Acts/laws and/or rules and regulations.

Functional Framework

In order to establish an effective decentralization framework, government services and functions should be divided into three, namely, reserved, transferred and residuals. The services and functions under the reserved list will include the regulatory services such as: maintenance of law and order, administration of justice, and national revenue collection and other regulatory administrations that are central and national in nature (GAF proposed policy, 2010).

The central government will retain the services under the “reserved list” for such time until the local government institutions attain a certain level of maturity. The rest functions and services should be included in the “transferred and/or residual lists”. The services under the transferred list should be transferred to the local government bodies. These could include, for example: primary and secondary education, health and family planning, agriculture, youth and sports, water supply and sanitation, disaster management and relief, rural development and cooperatives, livestock and fisheries, and social welfare (Ibid).

All services and functions under the residual list, for instance, social justice, and social safety and benefit schemes, and government development projects, must be governed by the local government bodies with efficient delivery and transparent administration. In line with the existing enactments, the above devolution should take place at the *Zila*, *Upazila* and *Union Parishad* levels as relevant administrative set-up and infrastructure facilities currently exist at these levels (Ibid). For the municipality and city corporations, further to these services, inclusive city governance system and services must be incorporated. Figure 5.2 shows the proposed functional framework of the local government.

Figure 5.2: Proposed functional framework of the local government

Legal Framework

The local government institutions, especially Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad and Zila Parishad, are passing through a stalemate and transition period. It is probable that this impasse will somewhat be over by amending some controversial laws soon, for the purpose of the principles of this proposed policy, and then of course, by functioning new local government Acts with hurriedly issuing subsequent rules and regulations.

This alone, however, is not the critical factor. Absolute dependency on the mode of the legislature for the power of the local government in terms of the central-local relationship, and of the degree of democratic, administrative and fiscal decentralization, and of functions as well as functionaries of the local government is evidenced in the constitution. This reality helps support Indian model of constitutional guarantee (as discussed in the subchapter *policy and constitutional assurance* under the chapter *local governance in Bangladesh*). The constitutional assurance, however, is not the ultimate to shape the premium local governance Constitutional pledge is as important as democratic commitment does for a strong local government system, particularly for

a country like Bangladesh. Figure 5.3 shows the proposed legal framework of the local government as well as local governance.

Figure 5.3: The proposed legal framework of the local government

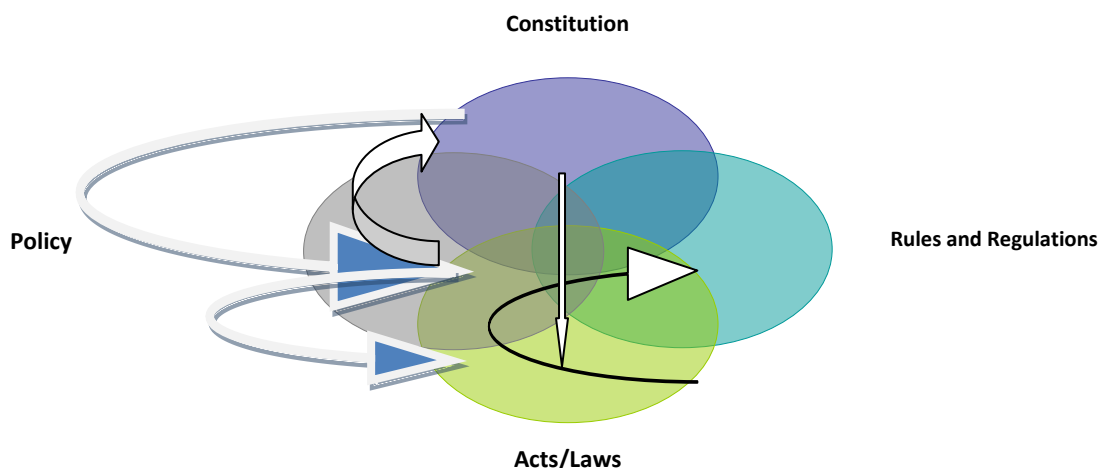


Figure 5.3 also shows how relevant aspects and essence of the constitution help build a policy, and reversely policy framework may tailor to amend/comprise constitutional articles. The figure also illustrates that Acts/laws are subject to be framed given the policy and related constitutional aspects, while rules and regulations are formed based on a concerned law.

In conclusion of this chapter, it is to be said that the national local governance policy in Bangladesh is significant not only to the context of streamlining the decentralization paradigm but also to the perspective of underpinning the confidence of democratic decentralization to all democratic political parties, particularly to the major two. In reality, political regimes here are changing between the two political parties, known as BNP and Awami League. Importantly, one major political party alone cannot strengthen the local government institutions because one political regime is too short to garner durable results in this domain. Thus, a political consensus on the issue followed by a policy initiation of the Local Government Division with adoption and/or adaptation of this proposed policy leading to the approval of the Cabinet is undoubtedly very urgent.

CHAPTER 6

PROPOSED POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Policy implementation strategy or strategic implementation planning is basically a management tool for a specific policy to be measured and/or quantified followed by a package of procedures and actions , designed to assist concerned departments, commissions and agencies to manage and monitor implementation effectively.

Sound strategic implementation planning is central to ensuring the successful delivery of the policy. Once the policy is approved, focus must go to the strategic implementation plan, and on executing and monitoring the policy implementation process by the concerned departments, commissions and agencies.

Importantly, policy implementation plan must be scalable and flexible, and it is expected to reflect the degree of exigency, urgency, innovation, complexity and/or sensitivity associated with the concerned policy appraisal. Detailing enough is a must to enable the implementing agencies to manage the implementation of the policy measures effectively.

Factors to be Considered

There are several key factors that must be considered during designing local governance policy implementation plan. First, it is acknowledgeable here that the proposed policy is itself a strategy associated with vision, mission, goal and objectives. Second, the policy formulation and implementation are intertwined and interdependent with results in mind. Third, it is important to focus on building an organization capable of successful policy execution, establishing policy supportive budget, exercising strategic leadership, and shaping organization culture to fit with the strategy, installing administrative support system including provision of rewards and incentives for better performance at policy implementation.

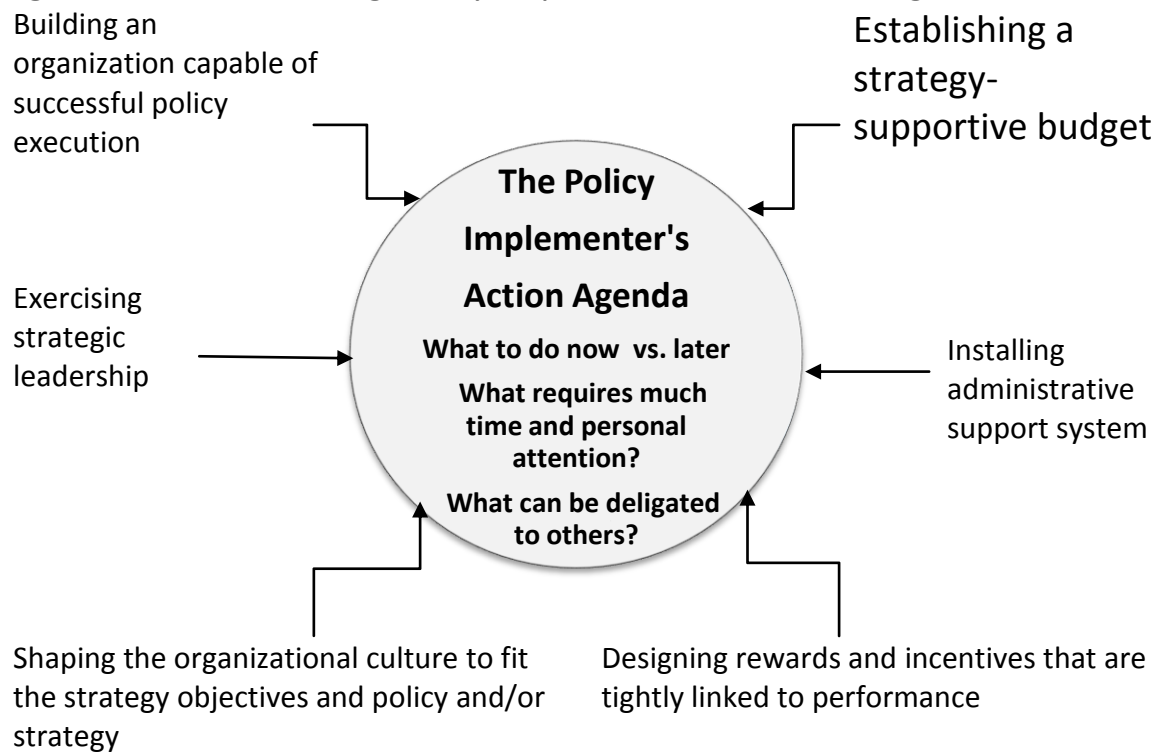
Importantly, three fundamental and interlinked figures hereunder reveal how the factors are to be considered for policy implementation strategy. Figure 6.1 shows the interdependency of policy formulation (vision, mission, goal, objectives, strategic guidelines and framework) and its implementation strategy (strategic priority considerations of policy aspects, whose responsibility counts, how to achieve results), while figure 6.2 demonstrates how to determine policy implementation action agenda considering the facts: What to do now vs. Later? What requires much time and leadership attention? What can be delegated to others? Moreover, the figure 6.3 points up the administrative aspects of policy implementation, for instance, building an organization capable of successful policy execution, establishing a strategy-supportive budget, installing administrative support system, designing rewards and incentives that are tightly linked to performance objectives, shaping the organizational culture to fit the strategy objectives as well as policy and/or strategy, and exercising strategic leadership.

Figure 6.1: Interdependence of Policy Formulation and Implementation



Source: Adapted from Mintzberg and Quinn, 1991: 47

Figure 6.2: Determining Policy Implementation Action Agenda



Source: Adapted from Thompson and Strickland, 1992: 216

Figure 6.3: The Administrative Components of Policy Implementation

<p>Building an Organization Capable of Executing the Policy</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a policy-supportive organization structure • Developing the skills and core competencies needed to execute the policy successfully • Selecting people for key positions 	<p>Establishing a Strategy-Supportive Budget</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing that each organizational unit has a big enough budget to carry out its part of the strategic plan • Ensuring that resources are used efficiently to get 'the biggest bang for the buck 	<p>Installing Internal Administrative Support Systems</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and administering strategic policy implementation -facilitating guidelines and procedures • Developing administrative and operating systems to give the organization strategy critical capabilities • Generating the right strategic information on a timely basis
<p>Designing Rewards and Incentives that are tightly Linked to Performance Objectives and Strategy</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating organizational units and individuals to do their best to make the strategy work 	<p>Shaping the Organizational Culture to Fit the Strategy</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing shared values • Setting ethical standards 	<p>Exercising Strategic Leadership</p> <p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the process of shaping values, molding culture, and energizing strategy accomplishment

- Designing rewards and incentives that induce employees to do the very things needed for successful strategy execution
- Promoting results orientation
- Creating a strategy supportive work environment
- Building a spirit of high performance into the culture
- Keeping the organization innovative, responsive, and opportunistic
- Dealing with the politics of strategy, coping with power struggles, and building consensus
- Enforcing ethical standards and behavior
- Initiative corrective actions to improve strategy execution

Source: Adapted from Thompson and Strickland, 1992: 218

Responsible Parties for Policy Implementation

There are options here regarding which organization is to be chiefly responsible for policy implementation. First, it could be the Local Government Division; Second, it could be National Local Government Commission Third, it could be National and Regional Local Government Commissions; Fourth, it could be Local Government Division and proposed Local government Commissions.

This study, however, suggests Local Government Division of the Ministry of LGRD&C, and proposed Local Government Commissions to be jointly responsible for the policy implementation. Other departments and agencies closely related to the proposed policy implementation are likely to be the *Finance Division* of the Ministry of Finance, *Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED)* of the Ministry of Planning, *Rural Development and Cooperatives Division* of the Ministry of LGRD&C, and *Urban Development Directorate* of Ministry of Housing and Public Works, and Ministry of Public Administration. All other line ministries having agencies or public officials at the local level would also be responsible here.

Strategic Policy Implementation Plan

In the simplest sense, *strategic policy implementation plan* deals with how to implement the policy providing priority consideration of policy aspects and their expected results coupled with period and responsible party.

Table 6.1: Policy Implementation Plan

SI No	Scoping or Priority policy aspects	Responsible Party	Output	Outcome	Time Frame
01	Enacting new law for Local Government Commissions	Local Government Division	Local Government Commissions Act	Legal climate and mandate to form LG Commissions	January - December 2016
02	Appointment of National and Regional Local Government Commissions	Local Government Division with approval of Cabinet	One National and Eight Regional Local Government Commissions, and their Offices	Expatriate support to LGD to robustly implement the decentralization and local governance policy	January- June 2017
03	Legal Reform for Restructuring Local Government, Establishing Functional Framework and Fulfilling legal Framework	Local Government Division with cooperation from the national and regional Local Government Commissions	A Full Fledged Legal Reform of the Policy is Customized	No legal or substantive inconstancy	July 2017 - June 2018
04	Restructuring Local Government	Local Government Division	A Full Fledged Structural Framework of the Policy is Applied	Unity of diversity with simplified local government structure	July- December 2018
05	Establishing Functional Framework	Local Government Division, Other Departments and Agencies and Local Government Institutions	Established Functional Framework of the Policy	Towards robust local governance	January- June 2019
06	Establishing Full Fledged Democratic Decentralization at all spares of the Local Government	Local Government Division, with cooperation from the National and Regional Local Government Commissions and National Election Commission, and Local Government Institutions	Democratic Decentralization at all spares of the Local Government	Deliberate, participatory and accountable local governance	January - December 2019

07	Establishing Sound Local Government Financial Management, Planning and Budgeting	Local Government Institutions with cooperation from the National and Regional Local Government Commissions	Every Local Government unit has a robust local government planning, budgeting and financial management system	Value for money, transparency, civic engagement and systematic local development	January - December 2019
08	Gender Mainstreaming in Local Governance	Local Government Institutions with cooperation from the National and Regional Local Government Commissions	Every Local Government unit has a gender mainstreaming road map and that in practice	Inclusive and pro-poor local governance	January - December 2019
09	Establishing a balanced and nuanced view of Political, Administrative and Fiscal Decentralization	Local Government Division with cooperation from the National and Regional Local Government Commissions, and Local Government Institutions	Every Local Government unit has a balanced and nuanced outlook of Political, Administrative and Fiscal Decentralization, and those are in practice	Good local governance	January 2019- December 2020
10	Ensuring public services delivery will be made available with fully decentralized approaches	Local Government Institutions with cooperation from the National and Regional Local Government Commissions	Every Local Government unit has a fully decentralized public service delivery system	Civic needs would be satisfactorily met without irrational system loss and/or corruption practices	July 2019- December 2020

Action Plan or Time- Bound Activities and Tasks

See Annex 3

Executing Implementation Plan and Compliance Monitoring

Implementing and Executing the Strategic Policy Implementation Plan

Designing strategic policy implantation plan and implementing and/or executing the same go hand in hand. Both the Minister and

Secretary of the Local Government Division, and Chairmen and Commissioners of proposed Local Government Commissions and heads of related major organizational units are mostly responsible for overseeing the implementation of strategic policy implementation plan.

Implementing a strategic plan, however, is not a job just for organization leaders; rather it is a job for the whole management team. Every manager has an active role in the process of implementing and executing strategic plan. Implementation of the strategic policy implementation plan involves every organization unit, from the head office down to each operating department (adapted from Thompson and Strickland, 1992:216). Successful policy or strategy implementers carefully consider all the internal ramifications of implementing a new strategic plan and diagnose the action priorities and the sequence in which things need to be done, and then they help their organization moving and keep pushing it along (Thompson and Strickland, 1992:217).

Compliance Monitoring and Performance Evaluation on Timebound Activities, and Situational Review, and Reporting

Compliance monitoring and performance evaluation on time bound activities, and also internal and external situation or environment review, and then reporting and documenting are important for the chief of responsible staff for implementing strategic

policy implementation plan.

In addition, situational and planning review,⁴⁹ and documenting progress and lessons learnt, and thus feedback adjustment are essential

⁴⁹ Plans should be re-evaluated regularly to identify progress and make any necessary adjustments. If plans are failing or falling short, managers should review them for common pitfalls. These include problems with employee buy-in, insufficient communication, letting daily duties become more important than long-term goals, and failure to break the plan down into manageable steps. Other problems might be management's apathy toward the plan and business values, failure to review the plan more often than once a year, not providing an evaluation method and plan, not giving employees the skills and responsibility to accomplish the tasks and failure to keep employees and management accountable for achieving the plans. An evaluation schedule should be set when the strategic plan is created (http://www.ehow.com/about_5554369_difference-strategic-planning-strategic-implementation.html?ref=Track2&utm_source=ask).

here. And these are what open the avenue of flexibility for strategic implementation of policy. Certainly, the flexibility is imperative here.

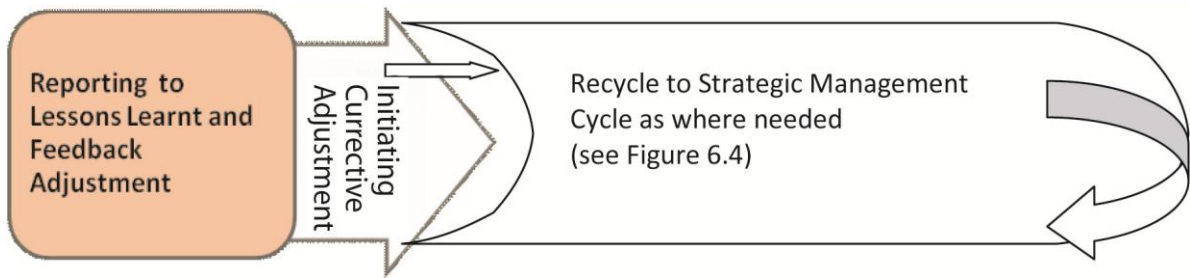
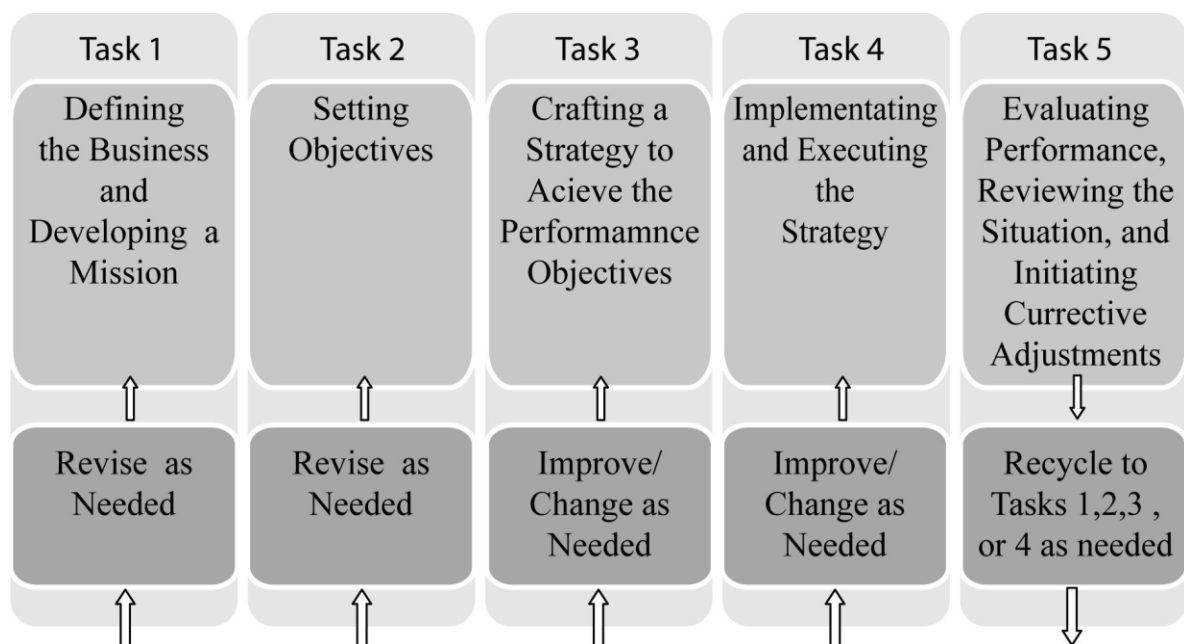


Figure 6.4: The Five Tasks of Strategic Management or Strategic Management Cycle



Source: Thompson A.A. and Strickland Jr. A.J., 1992 (Sixth Edition, p.4)

In brief of this chapter, it is acknowledged that once the policy is approved, the core organizational priority would be to finalize the strategic policy implementation plan, and then to convert the strategic implementation plan into time-bound actions and results. As there is no unique way to manage the implementation process, this proposed strategic implementation plan is tailor-made. As such, executing and monitoring authorities of policy implementation plan are highly expected to exercise leadership skills like strong commitment and judgment, innovation and expertise, and project management tool like Results Based Management (RBM) to get better results here.

CONCLUSION

Even though strengthening local government institutions is imperative here, it has been straining for years merely at academic work, political debates, election manifestos, and at reform objectives and talk shows. The study⁵⁰ identifies that in spite of a long heritage of the Local Government in Bangladesh, there is no sequential development of the local government as well as local governance here. And until recent development, decentralization herein was hardly considered as a pragmatic means to achieve good governance. Moreover, changing pattern as well as power dynamics of the local government structure is a severe challenge for the development of a pro-poor local governance system in Bangladesh.

However, surprisingly evidence of decentralization as well as local governance development was found here predominantly in the autocratic regimes, while those governments had intention to sabotage the democracy at the national level. Importantly, unlikable anecdotes from such type of pretend decentralization make some democratic legislators and public political officers somewhat uneasy to reinforce the democratic decentralization. Nevertheless, the political scenario throughout the world has been changed, autocratic regimes over time for approaching double standards gone away. Now democracy, decentralization and development are equally laudable. Governance is more important than government. People are considered to be both the end and means of the development.

Globally as well as in Bangladesh, there is now an emphasis on democracy as the current round of decentralization. It is widely

⁵⁰ Through in-depth interview of elected representatives and public officials of local government institutions, senior officials of the Local Government Division and Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tract Affairs, and discussion with experts, practitioners and a legislator, and participant observation as well as past professional and consultancy experience.

recognized⁵¹ that unless Bangladesh does have an aggregated or national local governance policy, it will not have a vision and road map for local governance development. Thus, this social input *proposed national local governance policy for Bangladesh* is crafted for consideration of the Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C), Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The proposed local governance policy envisions placing democratic decentralization along with the fiscal autonomy and local administrative reforms in an attempt to develop political capacity of local citizens for ensuring accountability and engaging local authorities towards economic and social advancement of the rural areas.

The purpose of the policy is to develop a fully decentralized local government system at all spheres of the local government units so as to ensure a full-fledged deliberate democracy and good local governance through civic engagement, inclusiveness and empowerment. The purpose also allows ensuring downward, horizontal and vertical accountability, and maintaining robust institutional linkages between national government and local government, and among the local government institutions.

The goal is to guarantee that the local governance policy will be translated fully in laws, rules, regulations and practices by 2018, and to ensure that the public services delivery will be made available with fully decentralized approaches so as to meet the civic satisfaction and needs without irrational system loss or corruption practices by 2020.

The overall objective of the policy is to facilitate political, economic, social, administrative and developmental empowerment of local citizens to attain the rights to development and public services, to ensure access to knowledge and information, to facilitate the citizens' ability to maintain a decent standard of living.

Importantly, even the proposed policy is unique of its kind with crafting vision, mission, goal, objectives and principles, and designing structural, functional and legal frameworks, unless it goes with a strong

⁵¹ See SWOT as well as Force-field Analysis at Chapters 2 and 3.

advocacy strategy for finalizing the policy, it would just be a paper work. Thus, this book focuses on the importance of the policy advocacy strategy (*see Annexure 1-2*). The book also strongly emphasizes on policy implementation strategy that is central to ensuring the successful delivery of the policy. The research comprehends that the policy formulation and implementation are intertwined and interdependent with results in mind.

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ANNEXURE

Annex 1

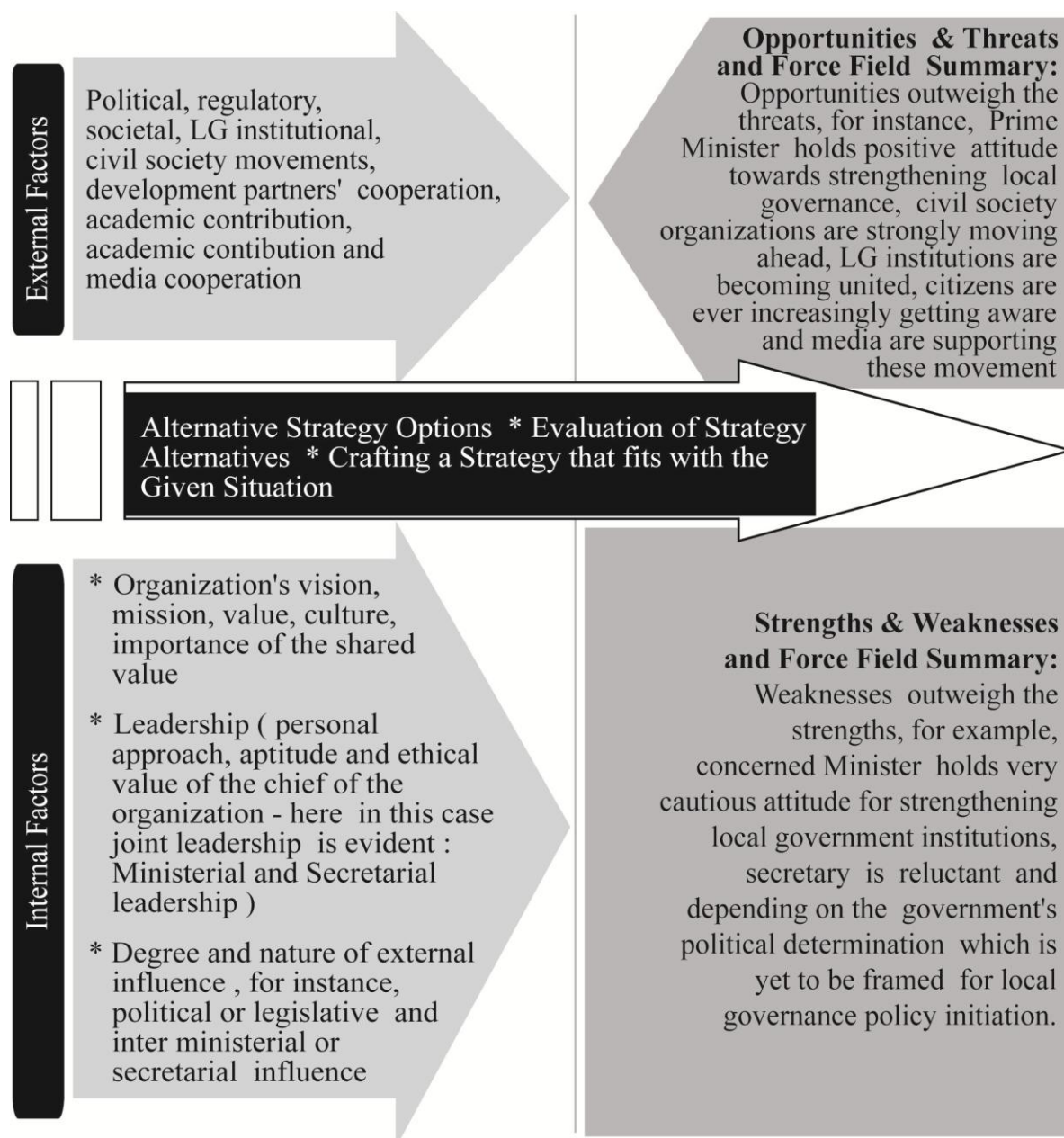
How to Frame the Policy Advocacy Strategy

Among the three strategy making tasks for policy advocacy – developing mission, setting objectives, and forming a strategy – the former two are specified in the proposed decentralized local governance policy, while the latter one depends on external, internal and force field analysis. Annex Figure 1 shows how these factors help shape our advocacy strategy.

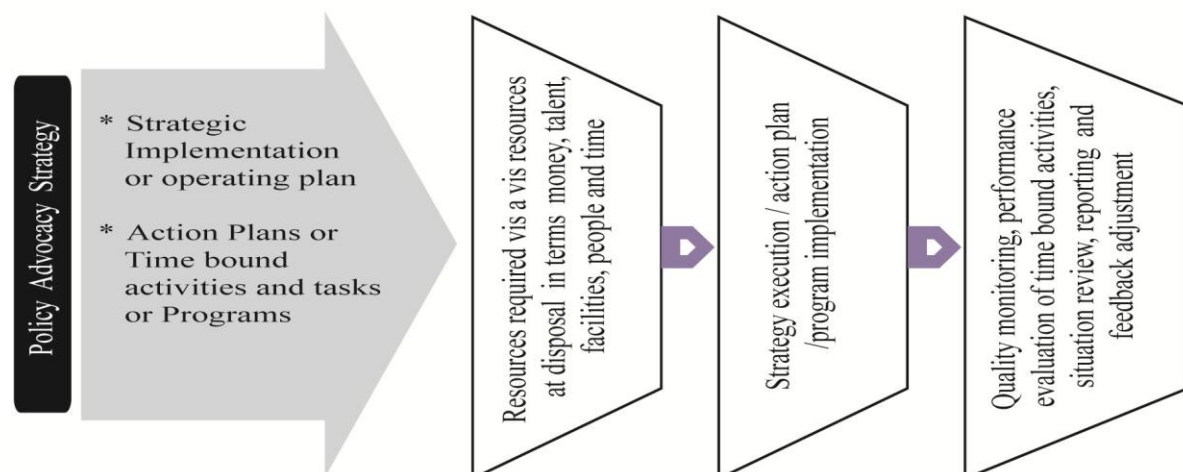
Given the *SWOT* as well as *Force-field Analysis*, the Annex Figure1 is concerned about how internal and external factors along with forces tie-up alternative strategy options. It also helps scrutinize denial of options concerning their implications, results and convenience. Then it crafts a tailor-made policy advocacy strategy.

Once the strategy is crafted, focus will be shifted to the operation plan and action programs coupled with time-bound specific activities and resources (as shown at Annex Figure 2). At this stage, certainly, the central to the attention would be implementing and executing the strategy. Anecdotal evidence suggests that complexity would be inevitable here. No matter, however, how far the complexity level is; rather how efficiently one can handle complexity is more important. In fact, success underlies herewith the managerial efficiency as well as tailoring a good strategy together with an implementation plan.

Annex Figure 1: Factors Shaping our Advocacy Strategy



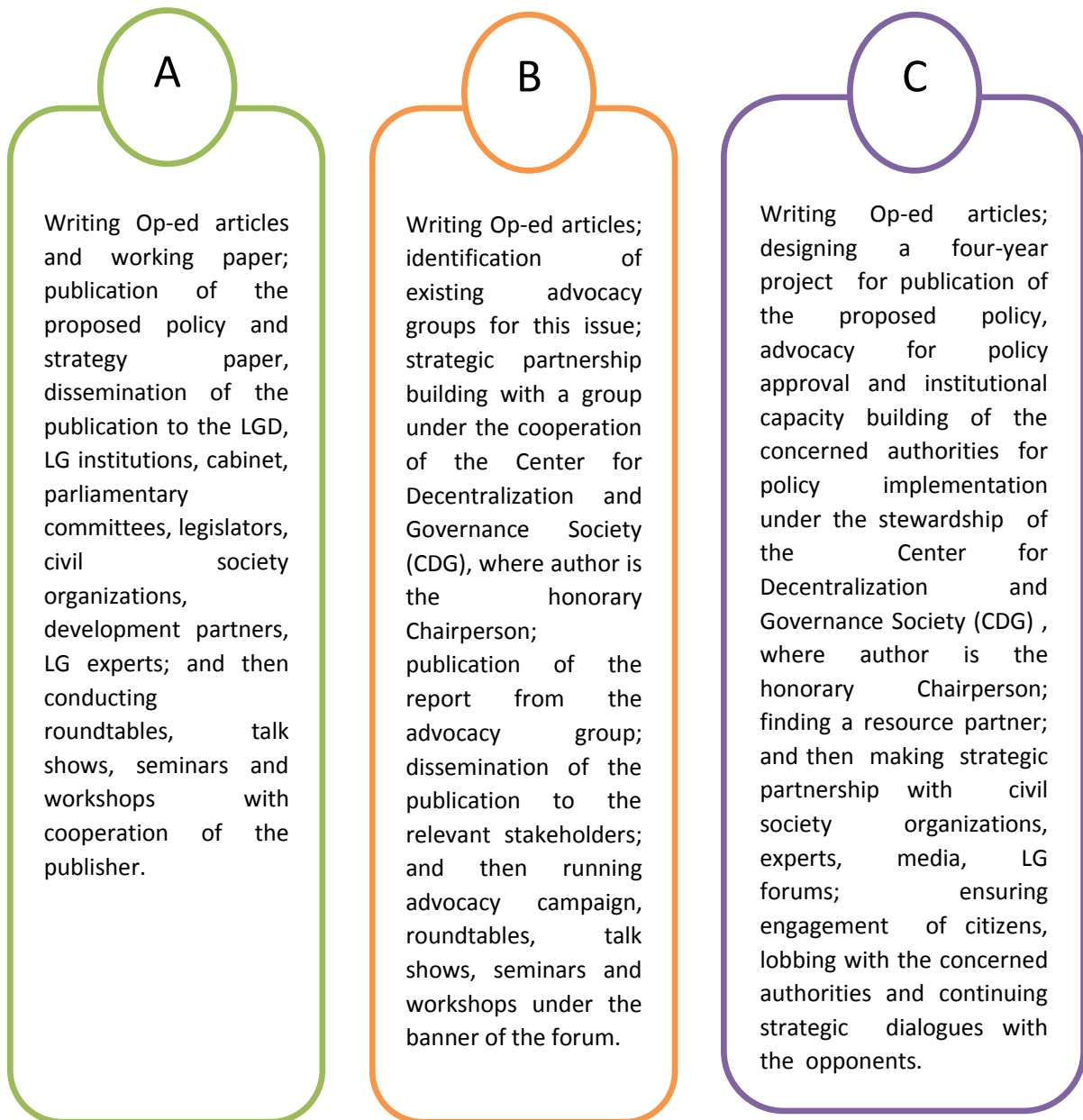
Annex Figure 2: Strategic Operation or Implementation Plan Diagram



Annex 2

Advocacy Strategy for Policy Approval

Annex Figure 3: Alternative Strategy Options

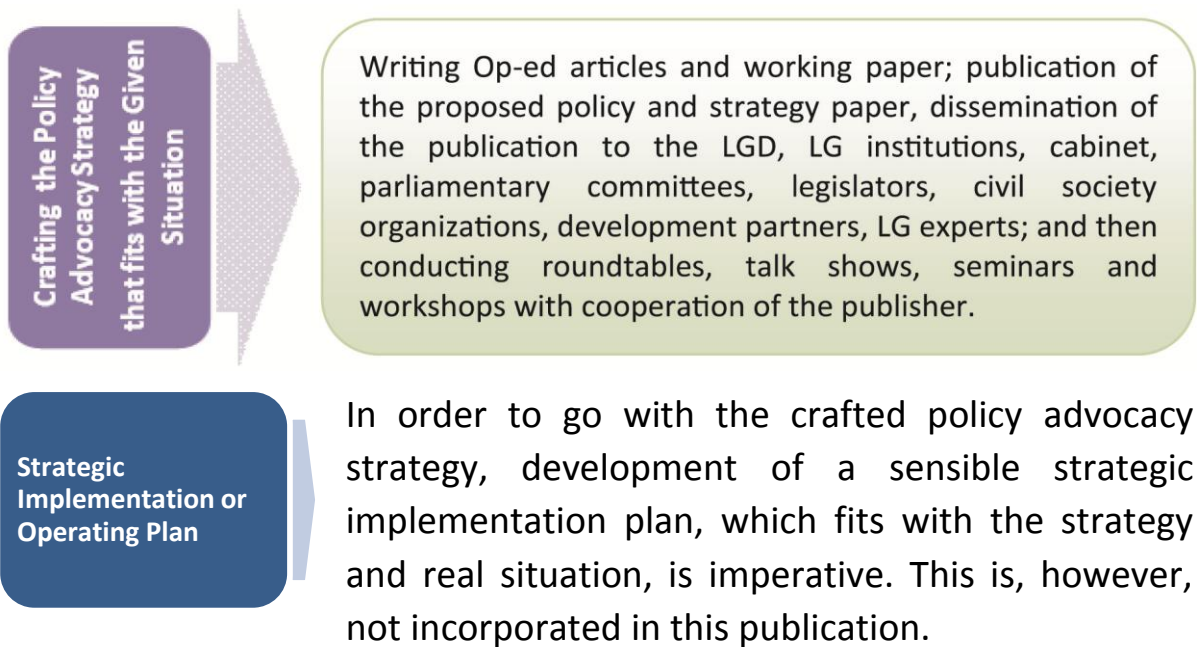


Annex Table1: Evaluation of Strategy Alternatives

Aspects	Strategy Option A	Strategy Option B	Strategy Option C	Recommended Strategy
Feasibility Analysis	This is a pragmatic option and the influence of this strategy to major stakeholders including government and its Local Government Division would be significant.	This is difficult, because there is one existing policy advocacy group – namely <i>Governance Advocacy Forum (GAF)</i> - for this issue, which has its own policy advocacy paper. In spite of the fact that GAF has not drafted a full-fledged policy, the movement of this group is strongly encouraged and supported by all interest groups in favor of decentralization and strengthening local government institutions.	This is also challenging. The influence of this strategy to the greater society, local government institutions, government and its Local Government Division, however, would be very high.	Strategy Option A
	The results of this strategy would depend on other factors, for instance, stability of the government and movement of other advocacy groups. The impact to the greater movement, however, would be significant.	This strategy, however, is likely to help exponential growth towards policy approval.	This is likely to result in policy approval and implementation.	
	Success of this policy depends on the flow of fund, strategic relationship with the other policy advocacy groups and ability to mitigating entry barriers.	Whereas success of this strategy lies on the level of acceptance of the Center for Decentralization and Governance Society (CDG) and the proposed policy to the policy advocacy group, and on the ability of CDG to maintain a continual influence and/or knowledge dominance to the advocacy group.	The success of this strategy, however, depends on whether the sufficient amount of fund would be available.	
Assumptions	Provided that political stability in national governance is likely to keep going.	Provided that political stability in national governance is likely to keep going.	Provided that political stability in national governance is likely to keep going.	

Aspects	Strategy Option A	Strategy Option B	Strategy Option C	Recommended Strategy
	As the same government has come into power for another term, there is likely to have a strong possibility of success in policy approval.	For the same reason possibility of policy approval and implementation would be high.	For the same reason possibility of policy approval and implementation would be high.	
	Provided that the publisher will have a commitment to the agenda.	Provided that Center for Decentralization and Governance Society (CDG) will have a commitment to the agenda, and will be tactical and watchful to the partnership concerns.	Provided that Center for Decentralization and Governance Society (CDG) is visionary and dedicated, and highly committed to the concerned agenda.	

Annex Figure 4: Crafting the Policy Advocacy Strategy



Annex 4
List of Persons In-depth Interviewed

SI No	Name	Position	Date of Interview
1	Dr. Aka Foriz Ahmed	Professor of Public Administration at Dhaka University	08.05.2012
2	Dr. Muslehuddin Ahmed	Professor and Chairman, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University	08.05.2012
3	Md. Azizur Rahman Siddique	Consultant at Jica	08.05.2012
4	Dr. Akhter Hussain	Professor of Public Administration at Dhaka University	08.05.2012
5	Md. Faizur Rahman Fakir	Upazila Parishad Chairman, Mymensingh Sadar Upazila	09.05.2012
6	Muktijodda Nazimuddin Ahmed	Political Activist at Mymensingh	09.05.2012
7	Hossain Shahid	Cluster Leader, CHTDF, UNDP-Dhaka	10.05.2012
8	Dr. Tofail Ahmed	Local Governance Adviser, UNDP-Dhaka	10.05.2012
9	Dr. Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman	Professor of Public Administration at Dhaka University	12.05.2012
10	Ashoke Madhab Roy	Additional Secretary, Local Government Division	13.05.2012
11	Basudeb Acharja	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	13.05.2012
12	Md. Akram Al Hossain	Joint Secretary, Local Government Division	13.05.2012
13	Quazi Meraj Hossain	Chief Executive Officer, Zila Parishad, Narayanganj	15.05.2012
14	Selina Hayat Ivy	Mayor, Narayanganj City Corporation	15.05.2012
15	Abul Kalam Azad	Upazila Parishad Chairman, Narayanganj Sadar Upazila	15.05.2012
16	Jahid H Panir	UNO, Narayanganj Sadar Upazila	15.05.2012
17	Md. Shawkat Ali	Chairman at Baktabali Union Parishad, Narayanganj	15.05.2012
18	AKM Mozammel Haque	Member of the Parliament in Bangladesh	18.05.2012
19	Abdul Karim	Acting Mayor, the then Gazipur Municipality	18.05.2012

GLOSSARY

Act: Formal law, bylaw or the like, by the legislature (here by the parliament of People's Republic of Bangladesh).

Administrative Decentralization: Administrative decentralization seeks to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing public services among different levels of government.⁵²

Administrative Divisions: Territorial divisions of a country defined for the administrative purposes.

Administrative Tribunal: Hybrid adjudicating authorities which render judicial decisions, and which straddle the line between government and the courts.⁵³

Administrative Units: Units of the state with administrative responsibilities.

Attorney General: The person who holds the position of secretary of the Justice Department (see *Princeton Word Net*). In Bangladesh context Attorney General is the chief legal official of the state.

Cabinet: A power board of political officials (usually senior ministers) headed by the Prime Minister basically for planning regulatory and/or key executive decisions.

Cantonment Board: A board or authority, appointed by the government, for administration of a cantonment with a view to improve the services of the cantonment community and to ensure developmental Activities, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Central Government or National Government: Central government or the national government (or the federal government in federal states), is the government at the level of the nation-state.

Census: A census is a systematic procedure of counting the population of a state including other information like size of home, number of people in the family, level of education, etc.

City Corporation: A mega city that operates under a corporate charter granted by the state, and in Bangladesh context it is an urban local government unit.

⁵² <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/admin.htm>

⁵³ <http://www.duhaime.org/LegalDictionary/A/AdministrativeTribunal.asp>

Constitution: Constitution is a fundamental law that determines the principles of a state as regards to civic rights and governance, and political notions of the government (i.e. executive, legislative and judiciary).

Decentralization: Decentralization means the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from the central/national government to local government units, and other government departments, authorities and commissions.

Deliberate Democracy: The most widely debated conception of democracy in recent years is deliberative democracy--the idea that citizens and/or their representatives owe each other mutually acceptable reasons for the laws they enact. Two prominent voices in the ongoing discussion are Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson. *Why Deliberative Democracy?* It is about how democratic citizens and their representatives can make justifiable decisions for their society in the face of the fundamental disagreements that are inevitable in diverse societies⁵⁴.

Deputy Commissioner: A mid career official (Deputy Secretary) of the government who has been given charge or authority to manage a district administration.

Divisional Commissioner: A senior career official (Joint Secretary) of the government who has been given charge or authority to coordinate a divisional administration.

Down-ward Accountability: How an organization engages with its 'beneficiaries', builds relationships, and is accountable for results in ways that enable learning and improvement towards the achievement of its mission (Keystone Study, 2006 - "Downward accountability"):

Empowerment: It is concerned about the freedom of choice or authority to make decision and/ or participate in joint decision making process.

Engagement: Here engagement means a keen emotional connection that a member of the community feels for the concerned local government unit, which influences him or her to exert greater discretionary effort towards

⁵⁴ <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/7869.html>

helping that local government for serving better governance and development.

Fiscal Decentralization: Fiscal decentralization is basically denotes the transfer of expenditure responsibilities and revenue assignments from central to local governments. Both anecdotal and empirical evidence suggest that fiscal decentralization has been linked to a number of outcomes, for instance, economic growth, enhanced public expenditure patterns, resolute fiscal imbalances, reduced government size, good governance and better service delivery. Political as well as administrative decentralization, however, is precondition to bring outcomes of fiscal decentralization. Despite the policy agenda cover to move ahead with widespread notions of the fiscal decentralization, there are, in fact, four basic issues of a decentralized fiscal system: i) the assignment of expenditure responsibilities to different government levels; ii) the assignment of tax and revenue sources to different government levels; iii) intergovernmental fiscal transfers; and iv) local governments' borrowing.

Governance Advocacy Forum (GAF) and Proposed Policy, 2010: Governance Advocacy Forum (GAF) is a renowned platform at national level established in 2007 that aims to promote democratic decentralization and local self government through campaign and policy advocacy. At present, the forum consists of 36 national and international non-government organizations, networks, local government platforms, concerned institutions and civil society representatives working towards local government reforms in Bangladesh. WAVE Foundation coordinates and provides secretarial support to the Forum.⁵⁵ GAF drafted a brief *Proposed Democratic Decentralization Policy in Bangladesh* with the help of a local governance consultant – Professor Dr. Akhter Hussain, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University—in 2010, and handed over the draft policy to the Government on 6 November 2012.

Horizontal Accountability: Here horizontal accountability denotes local governance instances where relationship between the Actor and the accountability forum are level-headed and horizontal, and these types of

⁵⁵ <http://www.gafbd.org/aboutus.php>

accountability mechanism is based on legal and/or norm requirements like access of media, response to association and concerned parishad (council), transparency and freedom of peer colleagues, team spirit, and deliberate democracy and governance.

Ibid: Ibid is an abbreviated form of ibidem. Its use in a footnote or bibliographical entry indicates that the citation is taken from the immediately preceding entry.

Inclusiveness: Means that all citizens have equal rights before the law (such as protection of property) and have equal opportunities to exercise those rights. For good governance, a key right is to participate in the governance process. Thus, inclusiveness means that all those who have a stake in a governance process and who want to participate in it can do so on an equal basis—and that no class of citizens is excluded systematically. In short, there is equal participation. Inclusiveness also means nondiscrimination in access to services that a government is mandated to provide through social consensus, such as public health or education services and public goods (for example, justice and the rule of law). In short, there is equal treatment (World Bank, 2003).

Institutional Democratization: Institutional democratization refers to this shift in values, rules, skills, and interactions, favoring transparency, equity, responsiveness, accountability, and other traditional democratic values (Hodgson, 2006; McGill, 1997; OECD, 1996). Evidence of institutional democratization can be found through functioning oversight and accountability mechanisms and the systematic incorporation of public input into government decision making (Coston, 1998; Klingner, 1996).

Local Government Commission: An authority by legislation for development of a transparent, accountable, efficient and pro-people local government system in practice, and for effecting inevitable changes appearing to the power structure and dynamics of local government in the interests of effective and convenient local governance and development of the community.

Local Government Division: The Local Government Division (LGD) is a division of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The mandate of LGD is

to facilitate, monitor, coordinate and supervise local government institutions, and related other departments and public bodies.

Local Government Institutions: Here in the report local government institutions refer to local government units and these are, in the context of Bangladesh, Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Zila Parishad in rural area, and Municipality and City Corporations in urban area, and also Chittagong Hill District Council and Chittagong Hill Regional Council in special area.

Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs: The Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs is an important ministry of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, for the wellbeing and development of Chittagong hill Tracts that combines three hilly districts of Bangladesh i.e. Rrangamati, khagrachhari and Bandarban districts. The area of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is about 13,295 sq km, which is approximately one-tenth of the total area of Bangladesh. In fact, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is a distinct region in terms of its ethnic, cultural and environmental diversity to the rest of Bangladesh.⁵⁶

Political Decentralization: Political decentralization aims to give citizens and/or their elected representatives more power in public decision-making. It is often associated with pluralistic politics and representative government, but it can also support democratization by giving citizens, or their representatives, more influence in the formulation and implementation of policies. Advocates of political decentralization assume that decisions made with greater participation will be better informed and more relevant to diverse interests in society than those made only by national political authorities.⁵⁷

Raja and Mouza based Headman-Karbari System: The Circle Chief and Headman-Karbari System is a unique traditional system which is a distinct characteristic of Chittagong hill Tracts region. The region is divided into three circles (*Chakma, Mong and Bomang*). For each circle, there is a circle chief who is considered as Raja. In fact, a form of monarchy is evidenced here that includes revenue collection and social judiciary system). Although the circles are named according to the certain ethnic groups, the jurisdiction is determined according to mouza areas. Mouza is the grass-root revenue unit.

⁵⁶ see <http://www.mochta.gov.bd/>

⁵⁷ <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization>

Each mouza is placed under a Headman (or Dewan) appointed by the concerned Circle Chief, in concurrence with Deputy Commissioner. Furthermore, each mouza is sub-divided into smaller units called Para or Adam, which actually contains individual village settlement. Such each village is placed under a Karbari, who is appointed by the mouza Headman, in concurrence with the concerned Chief.⁵⁸

Secretary: Secretary is the Chief Administrative Officer of a Division of a Ministry or Ministry itself in the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. This is, in fact, senior most position in the public bureaucracy in Bangladesh.

Structural Decentralization: Structural decentralization alters the balance of power among levels of government favoring localized levels of government; even to some extent this component allows local peoples' representatives to govern the local government, but values associated with legacy do not always change until it gets touched with institutional democratization.

SWOT: SWOT is a basic, straightforward model that assesses what an organization can and cannot do as well as its potential opportunities and threats. The method of SWOT analysis is to take the information from an environmental analysis and separate it into internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external issues (opportunities and threats). SWOT analysis determines what may assist the firm in accomplishing its objectives, and what obstacles must be overcome or minimized to achieve desired results.⁵⁹

Upazila Nirbhahi Officer (UNO): Chief Executive Officer of an Upazila (sub district), who provides secretarial services to the Upazila Parishad. His/her position in the Public Bureaucracy in Bangladesh is equivalent to the Senior Assistant Secretary.

Vertical Accountability: Here vertical accountability refers to the accountability leverage of local government officials to the elected parishad (council), and the parishad's responsibility to the government (i.e. local government division) and/or to the proposed local government commission, and Auditing Agencies, Anti-corruption Commission, Courts and Ombudsman).

⁵⁸ <http://www.mochta.gov.bd/index.php/cht-issues/hill-Tracts-region/206-tribal-chief-and-karbari-in-cht>

⁵⁹ <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/swot.asp#axzz1yh4WrqC3>

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