



MUHAMMAD AZIZUDDIN

Administrative Reform and Capacity Building

The case of primary education in Bangladesh



ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of
the Board of the School of Management of the University of Tampere,
for public discussion in the Paavo Koli Auditorium,
Kanslerinrinne 1, Tampere,
on June 25th, 2014, at 12 o'clock.

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

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Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1950
Tampere University Press
Tampere 2014

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

University of Tampere
School of Management
Finland

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Cover design by
Mikko Reinikka

Distributor:
kirjamynti@juvenes.fi
<http://granum.uta.fi>

Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1950
ISBN 978-951-44-9500-7 (print)
ISSN-L 1455-1616
ISSN 1455-1616

Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis 1435
ISBN 978-951-44-9501-4 (pdf)
ISSN 1456-954X
<http://tampub.uta.fi>

Suomen Yliopistopaino Oy – Juvenes Print
Tampere 2014



Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures	ix
List of Maps.....	ix
Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	x
Glossary and Definition of the Terms.....	xiii
Acknowledgements	xv
Abstract	xv
Abstrakti	xviii
Chapter 1: Introduction and Research Description	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Context and Significance.....	1
1.3 Research Problem	4
1.4 Research Philosophy and Viewpoint.....	7
1.5 The Bangladeshi Case	9
1.6 Research Aims, Objectives, and Questions.....	12
1.7 The Research Focus and Scope	15
1.8 Research Limitations	15
1.10 Summary.....	20
1.11 Structure of the Dissertation.....	20
Chapter 2: Public Administration Reform and Capacity Building: A Theoretical Overview	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Public Administration and Administrative Reform	26
2.2.1 Making the Public Administration Capable in Need.....	26
2.2.2 Traditions in Administrative Transformation.....	26
2.2.3 Differentiations in Administrative Transformation	28
2.2.4 Perspectives on Integrity and Governance	32
2.3 Administrative Reform Issues	33
2.4 The Capacity Dimension.....	35
2.3.1 Capacity as a Concept.....	36
2.3.2 Capacity Building.....	38
2.3.2 Levels of Capacity	41
2.5 Administrative Reform in Bangladesh	43

2.6	Local Administration in Bangladesh	46
2.7	Primary Education in Bangladesh	49
2.8	Institutional Capacity in Public Service Delivery Context	51
2.9	Summary of Theoretical Focus	52
2.10	Chapter Summary	55
Chapter 3: Research Method and Design.....		56
3.1	Introduction	56
3.2	Methodology.....	57
3.2.1	Key Features.....	57
3.3	Research Design.....	67
3.3.1	Data Collection	67
3.3.2	Information Sources	69
3.4	Data Organization, Presentation and Analysis	82
3.4.1	Data Presentation.....	83
3.5	The Strengths and Weakness of Research Methodology.....	84
3.5.1	Data Strengths.....	84
3.5.2	Data Weaknesses	86
3.6	Validity, Reliability, Representativeness of Research Data	87
3.7	Chapter Summary	89
Chapter 4: Millennium Development Goals.....		91
4.1	Introduction	91
4.2	Background of Millennium Development Goals	91
4.3	Origin and Development of Millennium Development Goals	92
4.3.1	The World Summit on Social Development (WSSD).....	92
4.3.2	A Better World For All.....	93
4.3.3	The United Nations ‘Road Map’ Document.....	95
4.4	The Millennium Development Goals	97
4.4.1	Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.....	99
4.4.2	Achieve Universal Primary Education.....	99
4.4.3	Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women	100
4.4.4	Reduce Child Mortality	101
4.4.5	Improve Maternal Health	102
4.4.6	Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases	103
4.4.7	Ensure Environmental Sustainability.....	104

4.4.8	Develop a Global Partnership for Development.....	105
4.5	The Millennium Development Goals and Bangladesh	105
4.5.1	The MDGs Programme in Bangladesh.....	105
4.5.2	Assessment of the MDGs Interventions in Bangladesh.....	107
4.6	Chapter Summary	111
Chapter 5:	Primary Education in Bangladesh.....	112
5.1	Introduction	112
5.2.1	The Overall Educational Scenario	113
5.3	Legacy of Primary Education	121
5.4	Primary Education in Perspective	123
5.5	Administration and Management of Primary Education.....	127
5.6	Legislative Concerns for Primary Education	128
5.7	Reform Efforts in Primary Education.....	130
5.8	The Millennium Development Goals and Primary Education	133
5.9	Chapter Summary	136
Chapter 6:	Contextual Description of Administrative Reform, Local Administration and Primary Education in Bangladesh.....	138
6.1	Introduction	138
6.2	Administrative Reform Scenarios.....	139
6.3	Local Administration in Bangladesh	141
6.3.1	General Framework of Public Administration	141
6.3.2	Local Administration and Governance	144
6.2.3	Reformation in Local Administration.....	147
6.3	The Local Administration of Upazila Parishads	152
6.4	Local Upazila Administration Service Delivery	155
6.5	Primary Education.....	157
6.5.1	Administration and Functioning of Primary Education.....	157
6.5.2	Organization of the Upazila Education Office	160
6.5.3	The Primary Education Staffing System	162
6.6	Chapter Summary	163
Chapter 7:	Examining Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education in Bangladesh	165
7.1	Introduction.....	165
7.2	The Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazilas.....	165
7.2.1	Case Study I: Biswanath Upazila.....	168

7.2.1.1	Geographical Location	168
7.2.1.2	Local Administrative Context.....	170
7.2.1.3	Public Service Delivery Contexts	172
7.2.1.4	Primary Education in Biswanath Upazila.....	173
7.2.1.5	Puran Gawn Primary School	180
7.2.2	Case Study II: Gobindagonj Upazila	183
7.2.2.1	Geographical Location	183
7.2.2.2	Local Administrative Context.....	186
7.2.2.4	Primary Education in the Gubindagonj Upazila	191
7.2.2.5	Kuti Bari Primary School	199
7.3	Chapter Summary.....	202
Chapter 8: Reflections on Interviews on Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education		204
8.1	Introduction	204
8.2	Overview of Interview Information.....	205
8.3	Elaborations of Interview Experiences	208
8.3.1	Administrative Reform Initiative (Objective I).....	208
8.3.2	Role of Administrative Reform on Capacity Building (Objective II)	215
8.3.3	Local Administration Capacity and Public Service Delivery (Objective III).....	219
8.4	Research Information on Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education Service Delivery.....	230
8.4.1	Self-rule State of Local Administration	230
8.4.2	The Capacity of Local Administration for Public Service Delivery	232
8.4.3	The Idea of the Millennium Development Goals.....	233
8.4.4	Facilities of Teaching and Learning.....	234
8.4.6	Task Environment of Primary Education Learning	236
8.4.7	Economic and Social Security of Primary School Staff.....	237
8.4.8	Standard of Teaching and Learning Delivery	238
8.4.9	Organization and Management of Primary School.....	239
8.4.10	The State of Primary Education	240
8.4	Chapter Summary	241
Chapter 9: Key Research Findings and Conclusion.....		242
9.1	Introduction	242
9.2	Research Findings.....	242
9.2.1	Major Research Findings	242

9.2.2	Research Findings in the Framework of Research.....	245
9.2.3	Analysis on Research Findings.....	251
9.2.4	Brief Summary.....	263
9.3	Concluding Remarks.....	264
9.3.1	General Summary.....	264
9.3.2	Contribution to Knowledge.....	265
9.3.3	Need for Further Research: Macro and Micro Level Focus.....	268
9.4	Overall Conclusion.....	270
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....		273
APPENDICES.....		316
Appendix 1:	Field Research.....	316
Appendix 2:	Qualitative Questions.....	325
Appendix 3:	Charter of Duties of Upazila Education Officers.....	331
Appendix 4:	Administrative Units in Bangladesh.....	336
Appendix 5:	List of Ministry/ Division and Department / Directorate in Bangladesh.....	343
Appendix 6:	The Millennium Development Goals at a Glance.....	350
Appendix 7:	Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazial at a Glance.....	354
Appendix 8:	Understudied Upazilas, and Primary Schools in Picture.....	356

List of Tables

Table 1: General Developmental Feature of Selected Developing States	10
Table 2: A General Socio-political Feature of Selected Developing Nations	11
Table 3: Keywords in Defining the Capacity notion/dimension	40
Table 4: The Capacity Dimension	41
Table 5: Field Study Plan- data source, collection and strategy	68
Table 6: Informants at a Glance	80
Table 7: Informants background of education, age, and sex	81
Table 8: Reconciliation of two sets of goals.....	96
Table 9: the MDGs and their Domains.....	98
Table 10: the MDGs and the Bangladesh PRSP Sectors.....	107
Table 11: MDGs Status in Bangladesh.....	109
Table 12: The Status of MDGs in Bangladesh	110
Table 13: Educational category and their levels in Bangladesh.....	115
Table 14: Level-wise schooling and institutions in Bangladesh	118
Table 15: Technical Education in Bangladesh	119
Table 16: Madrasah Education in Bangladesh	120
Table 17: A General Scenario of Primary Education in Bangladesh	124
Table 18: Institutions of primary education in Bangladesh.....	126
Table 19: Overview of Major Administrative Reforms in Bangladesh.....	140
Table 20: Local Administration and Governance in Historical Perspective	146
Table 21: Thana Board and Upazila Parishad Compared.....	148
Table 22: The Demographic State of Local Administration in Bangladesh.....	152
Table 23: Local Upazila Administration Service Delivery in Perspective.....	156
Table 24: Primary Education Institutions in Biswanath.....	173
Table 25: Education Committee of Biswanath Upazila Parishad.....	176
Table 26: Staffing Strength of Biswanath Upazila Education Office.....	178
Table 27: Clusters in Biswanath Upazila Primary Education.....	179
Table 28: Structure of Puran Gawn Primary School Management Committee.....	181
Table 29: Standing Committees for Service Delivery in Gobindagonj Upazila.....	189
Table 30: Primary Education Institutions in Gobindagonj	191
Table 31: Primary and Mass Education Standing Committee in Gobindagonj	193
Table 32: Upazila Education Committee of Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad	194
Table 33: Staffing Strength of the Gobindagonj Upazila Education Office.....	196
Table 34: Clusters in Gobindagonj Upazila Primary Education.....	198
Table 35: Structure of Kuti Bari Primary School Management Committee.....	200
Table 36: Details of Research Informants as a Whole	205
Table 37: State of influence of national government on local administration.....	231
Table 38: State of capacity of local administration for service delivery	232
Table 39: Idea about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	233
Table 40: State of standard facilities of learning and teaching in schools.....	234
Table 41: Adequacy State of Primary Teaching and Supportive Staff.....	235
Table 42: Task environment of primary education.....	236
Table 43: Economic and Social Security of Primary School Staff.....	237
Table 44: State of teaching and learning standard of primary teachers.....	238
Table 45: State of activities of School Management Committee (SMC)	239

Table 46: State of Primary Education.....	240
Table 47: Summary of Research	247
Table 48: Challenges and Opportunities of Local Capacity for Service Delivery in Bangladesh.....	252

List of Figures

Figure 1: Research Aim, Objectives and Questions	14
Figure 2: Structure of the Dissertation at a Glance.....	21
Figure 3: Concetual Framework	53
Figure 4: Applied Research Methods	59
Figure 5: Information Sources	69
Figure 6: Research Data Management.....	90
Figure 7: Evolution of MDGs.....	111
Figure 8: Organizational Structure of Primary Education in Bangladesh	127
Figure 9: Public Administration Structure in Bangladesh.....	143
Figure 10: Arrangement of Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh	145
Figure 11: Historical Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh.....	147
Figure 12: Present State of Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh.....	149
Figure 13: Typical Structure of Upazila Parishad in Bangladesh.....	153
Figure 14: Structure of the Upazila Parishad.....	154
Figure 15: Functioning of Primary Education at Upazila Level.....	158
Figure 16: Organization of Upazila Education Office.....	161
Figure 17: Structure of the Biswanath Upazila Parishad (BUP)	171
Figure 18: Primary Education in the Biswanath Upazila	175
Figure 19: Structure of the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad (GUP)	187
Figure 20: Primary Education in operation in Gobindagonj Upazila	192

List of Maps

Map 1: Upazila Map of Bangladesh	167
Map 2: Map of Biswanath Upazila.....	169
Map 3: Map of Gobindagonj Upazila.....	185

Acronyms and Abvreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADC	Additional Deputy Commissioner
AC	Assistant Commissioner
ADM	Additional District Magistrate
AO	Administrative Officer
MLSS	Member of Lower Support Service
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
BUP	Biswanath Upazila Parishad
GUP	Gubindagonj Upazila Parishad
SCPME	Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education
BANBEIS	Bangladesh bureau of Educational Information and Statistics
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
BMEB	Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board
MTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
CAG	Comparative Administration Group
CARI	Centre for Administrative Research and Innovation
CARR	Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization
CDRB	Centre for Development Research Bangladesh
CIA	Central Intelligence America
CPD	Centre for policy Dialogue
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFA	Dakar Framework of Action
DPEO	District Primary Education Office/ Officer
DPI	Directorate of Public Instructions
DS	Deputy Secretary
EMIS	Education Ministry Information Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPA	Grade Point Average
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IDE	Institute of Developing Economies
IDGs	International Development Goals

IIEP	International Institute for Education and Planning
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LLDCs	Landlocked Least Developed Countries
M Phil	Master of Philosophy
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOLGRDC	Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Cooperatives
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NAEM	National Academy of Education and Management
NAPE	National Academy of Primary Education
NEPAD	New Economic Plan for African's Development
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NPA	New Public Administration
RG	Reinventing Government
USA	United State of America
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
CB	Capacity Building
LCB	Local capacity Building
UP	Union Parishad
GPRB	Government of People Republic of Bangladesh
DfID	Department for International Development
NPM	New Public Management
ODI	International Development Institute
OSDER	Organization for Social development and Research
PDA	Planning and Development Academy
PEDP	Primary Education Development Project
PEIMU	Central Primary Education Monitoring Unit
PFDS	Public Food Distribution System
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
POSDCORB	Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PTI	Primary Training Institute
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes

SIDs	Small Island Developing Countries
SMC	School Management Committee
SDO	Sub-Divisional Officer
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
PARC	Public Administration Reform Committee
UDA	Upper Division Assistant
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IMF	International Monitoring Fund
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
MP	Member of Parliament
UEO	Upazila Education Office/ Officer
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
DC	Deputy Commissioner
AUEO	Assistant Upazila Education Officer
ADP	Annual Development Programme
BCS (admin) Aca	Bangladesh Civil Service (administration) Academy
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TB	Tuber Colosis
UCCA	Upazila Central Cooperative Association
UEC	Upazila Education Committee
UHO	Upazila Health Organization
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Funds
UNPF	United Nations Population Funds
URC	Upazila Resource Centre
URT	Upazila Resource Team
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USCPME	Upazila Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education
UZP	Upazila Parishad
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Social Development

Glossary and Definition of the Terms

Academic and Expert Observer	the persons who have public administration as academic background and doing research in this field of administrative reform and local governance.
Administrator	employees serve the government in any capacity as the member of the Bangladesh Civil Service or civil bureaucracy.
Ebtedayee Madrasah	modern religious Islam based primary education institution.
Field Administration	tradition administrative unit of government at sub-national level.
Imam	person who leads the regular worship in a Mosque.
Research Participant/Interviewee	four categories of research respondents / informants for this research.
Local Administration	the administrative unit of the country with elected local bodies responsible for public service delivery, the Upazila Parishad at the local level.
Madrasah	modern religious Islam based education institution.
Maktab	Muslim community religious primary education institution.
Mosque	Rrgular worship place for Muslims.
Munshi	Muslim religious community education teacher.
Parishad	elected council at local level.
Patshala	ancient secular primary education institution.
Paurashava	the local government unit in the sub-national urban areas in the country.
People's Representative	popularly elected representative as the Member in the national parliament and functionaries of local government institutions like Upazila Parishad and Union Parishad.
Pondit	ancient secular primary education teacher.

Routin Administration	tradional administration of revenue collection, maintaining law and order, and social justice.
Teacher and Others	the primary school teachers, the persons directly related to primary education and management like member of the School Management Committee.
Thana	the pre-reformed traditional unit of field administration at the sub-national level in the country.
Union Parishad (UP)	lowest tier of local government with limited administrative functionaries at local level.
Upazila	the second lowest level of the administration. It is a special combination of state administration and on the other hand, local self governance. This is the reorganized unit of administration after administrative reform.
Upazila Parishad (UZP)	lower middle tier unit of government administration in the sub-national level with elected local government institution in Upazila at local level in the country.
Zila	upper middle level unit of administration in the country.

Acknowledgements

This volume is an outcome of an examination of the public sector capacity linking public administration reform and delivery of services in primary education in the peripheral Bangladesh. It is a result of my sincere efforts. As a result, I am indebted, first of all, to my supervisor Professor Emeritus Dr. Juha Vartola. I greatly acknowledge his advice and support, and valuable guidance, suggestions, and unconditional help. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Timo Keski-Petäjä for his valuable suggestions throughout my research. I would like to thank sincerely Professor Dr. Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman and Dr. Aminu Mamman for their constructive pre-examination reviews. My special thanks goes also to Professor Jari Stenvall and University Instructor Elias Pekkola for their overall cooperation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the School of Management for offering me the position of ‘Tohtoriopiskelija’. It was almost impossible for me to continue this research without it. This enabled me both socially and financially to complete this research. I am grateful to them. Thank you!

I would like to say thank you to all my teachers, colleagues, friends for their cooperation, help and well wishes. Professor Dr. Muhammad Anisuzzaman, Professor Dr. Lutful Haq Chowdhury, Professor Dr. Mohammad Asaduzzaman (deceased), Professor Dr. Aka Firowz Ahmad, Professor Dr. Akhtar Hussain, Dr. Abu Elias Sarker, Dr. Zheng Zuting, Mr. Yohannes Mehari, Mr. Michael Herman, Professor Dr. Taibur Rahman, Professor Dr. Syeda Lasna Kabir, Dr. Mohammed Asaduzzaman, Dr. Mohammad Zahidul Hasan Bhuiyan, Engineer Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Sari Saastamoinen, Sirpa Rämö, Mr. Ali, and Mr. Razzab are some of those deserve to be mentioned on this occasion. Moreover, I would like to express my gratitude to all my research participants and informants.

A special thank you also goes to my colleagues from the University of Tampere, Dr. Tapani Turkka, and Dr Tarja Seppä for their help in translating the abstract from English to Finnish.

I would like to reserve my heartiest thanks and endless gratitude to Dr. Farhad Hossain for his relentless encouragement and help. Our ‘Chachi’, Mrs. Sazedra Mannan, also deserves thanks for her motherly inspiration.

I am deeply indebted to all of you, as indeed to others whose names are not mentioned.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and respect to my deceased parents whose countless valuable supports are always memorable in my life.

Abstract

The capacity of administration to deliver services is a crucial issue for all governments. The overarching goal of this research is to explore the role of administrative reform in institutional capacity building for public service delivery in Bangladeshi public sector with reference to the universal primary education of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This study examines the capacity of the local administration of Upazila¹ to deliver services, linking public administration reform and delivery of services in primary education in the peripheral Bangladesh. It examines the broader socioeconomic environment along with politico-administrative framework affecting the ‘quality gap’ at local level service delivery. It further explores the windows of opportunities of the public administration system for further enhancing quality and capacity building for service delivery in public sector.

The study used a qualitative triangulation approach, analysing the issues of governance with information from different sources of historical document, case study, and interview. Administrative reform, capacity building, service delivery and primary education in Bangladesh with reference to MDGs universal primary education are highlighted as continental themes.

Local administration in Bangladesh has paved the way for institutional capacity building. It has considerable potential to respond to developmental needs such as the provision of primary education. However, the study finds that the capacity of local administration to provide such services is limited. Administrative reform initiatives were incomprehensible. They provided an unrealistic policy standard given socioeconomic conditions and politico-administrative realities.

¹ Upazila in Bangladesh is the second lowest level of the administration. It is a special combination of state administration and on the other hand, local self-government.

Therefore, the study also finds, the reforms do not correspond to the ‘contextual governance philosophy’ (Vartola, 2011), and administrative reform measures and capacity building elements have not been implemented effectively. While such efforts, adhered to external prescriptions, they do not reflect indigenous values, ethics, and culture. Although the local administration in Bangladesh is officially recognized as a decentralized authority, their power to exercise authority is limited and there is a general lack of capacity to provide basic services. The study concludes, there is a ‘low modicum of self-governance’ (Straussman, 2007), and that administrative reform, seeking to improve institutional capacity building has thus far generated mixed results.

Keywords: Governance, Public Administration, Administrative Reform, Capacity Building, Local Administration, Primary Education, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Upazila, Bangladesh.

Abstrakti

Hallinnon kyky tuottaa tehokkaasti palveluita on olennainen kysymys kaikille valtioille ja hallituksille. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on ymmärtää Bangladeshin julkisen hallinnon reformien vaikutuksia Upazila-tason² paikallishallinnon kykyyn tuottaa vuosituhattavoitteiden mukaisia peruskoulutuspalveluita urbaanien alueiden ulkopuolella (sub-national areas). Tutkimuksessa kuvataan hallinnon uudistamisen sosioekonomisen ja poliittishallinnollisen ympäristön vaikutusta sen politiikkatavoitteiden ja käytännön tulosten välisiin eroihin. Tutkimuksen avulla kartoitetaan mahdollisuuksia kehittää julkisten, erityisesti peruskoulutuksen palveluiden laatua ja palveluiden tarjoajien osaamista.

Tutkimuksessa käytetään laadullista aineistojen triangulaatioon perustuvaa lähestymistapaa. Paikallistason hallintaa lähestytään dokumenttiaineistojen, tapaustutkimuksien ja haastatteluiden avulla. Haastateltavina oli yhteensä 40 kansalaisten edustajaa, akateemisia ja muita asiantuntijoita, hallintoihmisiä sekä opettajia. Hallinnon muutoksien vaikutuksia peruskoulutuksen tuottamiseen arvioidaan vuosituhattavoitteiden viitekehyksessä, so. analysoiden onko maassa kyetty saavuttamaan asetetut tavoitteet peruskoulutuksen osalta.

Bangladeshissa Upazila-tason paikallishallinnon toimijat ovat olleet edelläkävijöitä institutionaalisen kapasiteetin vahvistamisessa. Paikallishallinnolla voidaan nähdä olevan valmiuksia peruspalveluiden kuten perusopetuksen kehittämiseen. Tämän tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan kuitenkin todeta, että paikallishallinnon kyky tuottaa peruspalveluita on rajallinen. Hallinnonmuutoksen tavoitteet eivät ole olleet kokonaisvaltaisia ja käytännöllisiä, vaan pirstaleisia ja abstrakteja. Ne ovat olleet epärealistisia, eivätkä ne ole huomioineet vallitsevia sosiaalitaloudellisia ja poliittishallinnollisia reunaehtoja.

² Upazila on Bangladeshin hallinnossa toiseksi alin taso. Se on erikoinen yhdistelmä valtionhallintoa ja toisaalta paikallista itsehallintoa.

Tutkimuksen mukaan uudistukset eivät ole vastanneet paikallista hallinnan filosofiaa. Näistä syistä myöskään tavoitteita ei ole saavutettu, tai edes kyetty mittaamaan tehokkaasti.

Koska hallinnon uudistamispyrkimykset ovat perustuneet keskushallinnon omille toimintaperiaatteille, ne eivät läheskään riittävästi ota huomioon paikallisia arvoja, etiikkaa ja kulttuuria. Paikallisten elinten valtuudet ja resurssit tuottaa julkisia palveluita ovat rajallisia, vaikka paikallinen hallinta Bangladeshissa on virallisesti hajautettua. Tutkimuksen johtopäätöksenä voidaan todeta, että itsehallinto on todellisuudessa ollut varsin heikkoa – kuten usein köyhissä kehittyvissä maissa - ja että hallinnollisten uudistuspyrkimysten tavoite parantaa instituutioiden kykyä tuottaa palveluita on vain osittain onnistunut.

Avainsanat: hallinta, julkinen hallinto, hallinnolliset reformit, kapasiteetin rakentaminen, paikallishallinto, peruskoulutus, vuosituhattavoitteet, Upazila, Bangladesh

Chapter 1: Introduction and Research Description

1.1 Introduction

This study examines local administration capacity for primary education service delivery in Bangladesh. It explores the role of administrative reform in capacity building in the Bangladeshi public administration. Public administration, as ‘government in action’ (Richardson & Baldwin, 1976, p. i), functions in Bangladesh within its broader socioeconomic environment and politico-administrative framework with a formal organizational setting and functional stability, with legislative guarantees (Ciprian, Gabriela, & Dimbu, 2010, pp. 37-38). Administrative reform seeks to reduce this gap by facilitating opportunities of public administration capacity building for service delivery. A general introduction to the study is presented in this chapter. The chapter provides a background and articulates the key problems under investigation. The research context within which the study is situated is also presented. The chapter also provides background information of the issues discussed and situates Bangladesh in a developing country context. It establishes the purpose, scope, objectives and questions asked in the study. It then provides a brief summary of the research and describes its limitations, distinctiveness and structure.

1.2 Research Context and Significance

Administrative reform, known as ‘special public policy’ (Ciprian, Gabriela, & Dimbu, 2010, p.37) is the reorganization of the institutions of governance aimed at optimising the service delivery capacity of public institutions. Such institutions must cope with changing local and global social, economic and political environments (Fuller, 2010, p. 1) to meet objectives ranging from ‘crisis management’ to overall national development (Wart & Kapucu, 2011, p. 489). It has far-reaching implications for institutional

capacity building of organizational apparatus. It “tries to head off crises in the capacity to govern” (Caiden & Sundaram, 2004, p. 373, as cited in Dror, 2001). Reform initiatives can also “aid in the capacity building process” (Jooste, 2008, p. 18).

Administrative reform efforts in developing countries have gained momentum in the post-independence period. Such efforts represent, relatively speaking, “a mosaic of alternatives, marked by spells of progress followed by long periods of stagnation” (Khan, 1999, p. 256). The need for administrative reform with modernization was recognised in a number of developing countries during the last quarter of the twentieth century. International development organizations like the World Bank (WB) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) led to the rise in popularity of the New Public Management (NPM) perspective in the threshold of 21st century ed to an intensification of these efforts. Until then, the state played the leading role in administration and development. This generally implied a centralisation of administrative power. In the new context authority and power has become more diffuse, with the role of the government shifting from administrative to that of welfare and development (Vartola, 1984, pp. 119-120). There is now almost a worldwide consensus regarding public administration reform, which sees a close relationship between effective public administration and national development (UNGA, 1996).

International concern formally came into being with the decision of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1996 the United Nations (UN) committed to the creation of a poverty-free world with sustainable human development by 2015 (UN, 2001, p. 1). This was to be achieved by strengthening governmental capacity for policy development, administrative restructuring, civil service reform, human resources development, public administration training, improving performance in the public sector, financial management, public-private interaction, and the management of

programmes emphasizing the development of sustainable national state capacities (Rahman, 2001, pp. 2-3). Additionally, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), launched in 2000 had eight ambitious goals, including universal primary education, to be achieved by 2015 (Hulme, 2010, p. i).

Within the general pattern of underdevelopment, there are diverse socio-political, economic, and cultural variations and differing historical inheritances and legacies. Developing countries also vary greatly in levels of political stability, quality of administration, the degree to which they are connected to global economic flows, linkages to other countries, living standards, productivity, population growth and dependency burdens, agricultural production and primary-products exports, and the prevalence of imperfect markets. Within these variations, dependence and vulnerability are common features across all developing societies. Bangladesh, as a developing country, represents an interesting case for research for the following reasons:

- The government of Bangladesh is making efforts to improve the system of public administration by building up the institutional capacity of public administration for public service delivery;
- As a member of United Nations and signatory of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Government of Bangladesh has also made efforts to achieve its targets and implement its goals, including universal primary education, by the specified timeframe of 2015;
- Little is known about the available sources of information on administration in the country. A comprehensive overview of the reform efforts and implementation of these objectives since the 2000s has not been undertaken; and
- A study of the Bangladeshi context may provide information of wider relevance to similar societies facing similar problems.

This research seeks to explore the effects of administrative reform on institutional capacity building in public service delivery with reference to the MDGs' goal of universal primary education. The Bangladeshi situation displays some features unique in the developing world context. A study of this nature should therefore be of significant interest. Taking Bangladesh as a case has provided some valuable references en-route to a better understanding of public administration capacity in developing countries. Thus the study explores the role of administrative reform in building institutional capacity in the public sectors of aid dependent developing countries worldwide.

1.3 Research Problem

Problems of poor governance in developing countries has led to a consensus in the international community that ending poverty and sustainable human development can only be achieved if governmental service delivery capacities are improved. This has paved the way for public administrations to face 21st century challenges with an increasingly popular administrative philosophy known as the New Public Management (NPM). It has accelerated growing sentiments among researchers and practitioners on the role of public administration reform (Christiansen & Gazley, 2008, p. 265) and its capacity of responsiveness to the needs of citizens. Administrative reform, known as 'special public policy' (Ciprian, Gabriela, & Dimbu, 2010, p. 37), is a policy instrument which "tries to head off crises in the capacity to govern" (Caiden & Sundaram, 2004, p. 373, as cited in Dror, 2001).

A lack in programme performance and institutional capacity of public administration has been identified as one of the leading problems in developing countries (DFID, 2011; Scott, 2011; ADB, 2010). Scholarships on government and administration such as Grindle (1997), Batley and Larbi (2004), Kauzya and Balogun (2005), Zafarullah and

Rahman, (2008) delineate the challenges of administrative capacity building in developing countries and include discussions on Bangladesh.

Grindle (1997) describes numerous failures and misspent resources in the administrative reform efforts of developing countries. Drawing comparative lessons from the private sector, he has argued that “capacity building in states requires appropriate innovative ideas, considerable time, firm commitment stakeholders, consensus building among the actors, new rules of the game, efficient design and resource allocation, and considerable good luck” (p. 2). Batley and Larbi (2004) have argued that crises during the last quarter of the 20th century called into question the developmental role of states in their economies. Providing an overview of new approaches to public sector management, they came to the conclusion that there have typically been a number of constraints and capacity limitations in developing countries (p. ii). An examination of administrative reform by Bangura and Larbi (2006) has also revealed limited positive outcomes in developing countries. Kauzya and Balogun (2005) have highlighted the lack of capacity of actors to carry out reform programmes aimed at improving governance and public administration under the New Economic Plan for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), a development programme of the African Union. Zafarullah and Rahman (2008, p. 739) have identified general trends and dynamics of state capacity building within a broad framework of governance in developing countries like Bangladesh. Poor governance in that country, they argue, has resulted in a weak and fragmented state.

Governments in developing countries often deal with administrative reforms and institutional capacity building (Jooste, 2008, p. 7). “Reform efforts aim at strengthening the capacity of public administrative systems [have resulted] in major changes in policy, process and practices” (Antwi, Analoui, & Cusworth, 2008, p. 253) in a wide variety of developing countries. They mostly fail to meet their objectives or come to a premature

end (Polinado, 2001, 345). Thus, the degree of success falls below expectation (Spink, 1997, p. 1). It can therefore be assumed:

- Each of the countries operates under different socio-economic and politico-administrative realities;
- The tools of reform do not necessarily correspond to the contextual governance philosophy (Vartola, et al. 2010, pp. 198-199, Vartola, 2011);
- The notions of administrative reform and capacity building are not addressed in unanimity (Jooste, 2008, p. 4); and
- ‘Imported’ ideas do not necessarily work in an indigenous context. Their use often limits the effectiveness of domestic administrative reform efforts to ‘catch up’ to the developed world. (Hossain, 2007, p. 2).
- So, poor governance is always there in Bangladeshi public administration in general, and local administration service delivery in particular.

The research examines administrative reform and institutional capacity building of local administration in the context of public service delivery in Bangladesh with reference to the primary education sector. At an empirical level, the research also examines the challenges and opportunities presented by the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the primary education sector at the local level during the first decade of the 21st century. This provides a cumulative perspective of the phenomena under examination.

The study explores the dynamics and evaluates the achievements of administrative reform in Bangladesh and makes generalized observations about countries at a similar

level of development. Very little research has been undertaken in this area in the Bangladeshi context. The research seeks to fill this gap and invite further debate into the issues discussed.

1.4 Research Philosophy and Viewpoint

This Research makes use of an organizational development and change perspective. It derives from ontological, epistemological and methodological theories of post positivism. It aims to “describe and explore in-depth phenomena from a qualitative perspective” (Crossan, 2003, p. 46). Outcomes are “broadly determined [by] the context for the conclusions of the evaluative inference [for this research], even though they are rarely made explicit” (Butler et al., 2003, p. 55, as cited in Hughes, 2011, p.458).

Administrative organisations vary substantially from environment to environment and country to country. The success and failure of reform initiatives generally depends on time and space relative to the respective organizations. Almost all organizational change initiatives were less successful (Hammer & Champy, 1993; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Kotter, 2008, Senturia et al., 2008, and Keller & Aiken, 2009). 70 to 80 per cent of programmatic organizational change initiatives do not fully achieve the intended results (Hughes, 2011, p. 452; Kotter, 2008; Senturia et al., 2008).

Evaluative research is generally referred to as a ‘programme’ or ‘project evaluation’. Over the last few decades, performance evaluation has become widespread in academia, governmental and public organizations and businesses throughout the world. Evaluation of “an innovation or an activity, a curriculum or organisational change, raises a series of sometimes difficult or contentious issues” (Silver, 2004, p. 4) which are commonly experienced in qualitative traditions of social research. This research employs a range of qualitative methods. These include document search, case studies, qualitative

interviews, general observation, and tacit knowledge (Silver, 2004, p. 6). It systematically acquires and assesses information from the field and provides findings and results as feedback regarding the implementation of MDGs primary education in Bangladesh (Trochim, 2002, p. 1). These findings will then be generalised and related to countries at a similar developmental level (Fain, 2005, p. 150).

The foundation of this research is that theory approximates reality. It operates under the assumption that the organizations and organizational developments/changes guiding this research explain systematically the phenomena under examination. This combination of different approaches provides a systematic application of social research procedures as evaluative research and generates further insights into the investigation (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2003, p. 2). More specifically, a set of key concepts of organization and development theory such as administrative reform, capacity building, and service delivery along with governance, decentralization, and NPM serve as the theoretical basis and analytical framework for this research (Dubois & Fattore, 2009, p. 704).

In the study of public administration “the explicit theoretical models have been less important than practical institution-specific knowledge” (Olsen, 1991, p. 126). This allows researchers and academics to break away from vested traditions and conventional interpretations of doing things (Bogason & Toonen, 1998, p. 205). With the very nature of public administration as an integrated field of practical art and academic research (Olsen, 1991, p. 126) and the general implications for positivist traditions of social science, the positivist traditions were in use in conjunction with post-positivist ones in this study (Polit et al, 2001, p. ii). This has been in the guise of methodological metaphor (Smith, 1975; as cited in Jick, 1979, p. 602) of ‘triangulation,’ which gives way to both qualitative and quantitative methods (Letourneau & Allen, 1999, p. 623). It is considered a methodologically pluralist approach (Olsen, 2004, p.

103). The perspective of multiplism (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 195) has paved the way for this research “to define research goals, to choose research questions, methods, and analyse, and to interpret results” (Crosson, 2003, p. 53, cf Cook, 1985).

1.5 The Bangladeshi Case

Bangladesh is a Southeast Asian developing country with a population of 162 million people and 144000 sq km surface area. The country shares common characteristics with other developing countries, such as high levels of poverty and economic dependence on the advanced countries. It has limited financial and human resources, and almost universally suffers from administrative weaknesses. These countries are characterized by large proportions of the population living in a non-monetized subsistence economy which further complicates the task of administration (Ray, 1998, p. 27). The distinction between the government and the administration in these countries, including Bangladesh is either blurred or non-existent.

The history of the country is closely intertwined with that of India and Pakistan, of which it was once a part. Thus, as a technical former British colony “the upsurge of needs and demands in the aftermath of colonial rule in the independent states placed a heavy burden on the state machinery that was ill-prepared to cope with them” (Monteiro, 2002, p. 3).

As indicated in table 1 below, Bangladesh can be seen to share similar features to developing countries such as Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, and Nepal.

Table 1: General Developmental Feature of Selected Developing States

Countries Factors	Bangladesh	Nepal	Botswana	Ghana	Kenya
Size (sq km)	144, 000	140, 000	600, 000	239, 400	582,000
Population (m)	161.1	29.89	20.98	25.24	43.01
Industrial Rate	7.4%	1.4%	7.4%	3.8%	3.8%
Population Growth Rate	2.6%	1.77%	1.48%	1.79%	2.44%
GDP per capita	\$1700	\$1300	\$1700	\$3100	\$1700
And Growth	6.3%	3.5%	6.3%	13.5%	4.3%
Unemployment	40%	46%	40%	20%	40%
Poverty Level	31.5%	30.9%	31.5%	28.5%	50%
Literacy Rate	48 %	48.6%	81%	57.5%	85.1%

Source: The World Factbook 2012, CIA. . <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

These similarities become clearer when socio-political characteristics are added, as demonstrated in table 2.

Table 2: A General Socio-political Feature of Selected Developing Nations

Countries Factors	Bangladesh	Nepal	Botswana	Ghana	Kenya
Independence	1971	(1951)	1966	1957	1963
Start of Democratisation	1990s	1990s	1980s	1990s	1990s
Government system	Parliamentary Democracy	Parliamentary Democracy	Parliamentary Democracy	Constitutional Democracy	Constitutional Democracy
Administrative Origin	Colonial	Colonial	Colonial	Colonial	Colonial
Aid Dependency	High	High	High	High	High
Social Structure	Agrarian and Traditional				

Source: The World Factbook 2012, CIA. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

All of the above countries achieved independence from the United Kingdom following World War II after lengthy periods of colonial rule. They share similar problems relating to poverty, low levels of literacy, high external debt, high military spending and political instability. Most of the governments are preoccupied in dealing with numerous internal problems such as political instability in the form of public uprisings, poor economic performance, inter-and intra-party feuding, insurgencies and consistently declining standards of living (Haque, 2002, p. 103). Nepal, Botswana, Kenya, and Ghana appear on this basis to pose more-or-less similar socio-economic and politico-administrative developmental backgrounds as developing nations. Hence we might

expect conclusions drawn from the Bangladesh case to have some wider relevance to these nations.

Although gradual changes have taken place, Bangladesh has generally continued historical socio-political and administrative practices. This is also the case in many other developing countries in Southeast Asia and Africa. In light of its post-independence reform efforts, it represents the typical case of a developing nation (Monteiro, 2002, p. 4) in which capacity weaknesses in the public sector co-exist with corruption and other features of underdevelopment.

1.6 Research Aims, Objectives, and Questions

This research aims to explore the role of administrative reform in institutional capacity building of local administration public service delivery with reference to primary education in Bangladesh. Governments in developing countries always find administrative reform and capacity building a challenging task. Administrative reform initiatives intend to bring about governance changes in policies, processes and practices overcoming the constraints and shortcomings through strengthening the capacity of public administrative system (Antwi, Analoui, & Cusworth, 2008, p. 253).

The study has the following objectives:

- i) To review past administrative reform initiatives in Bangladesh, paying special attention to recent efforts;
- ii) To examine the role of administrative reform initiatives in building institutional capacity of public administration at local level in Bangladesh;
- iii) To examine how capacity building initiatives affect service delivery of developmental programmes at the local level, with reference to the

primary education target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

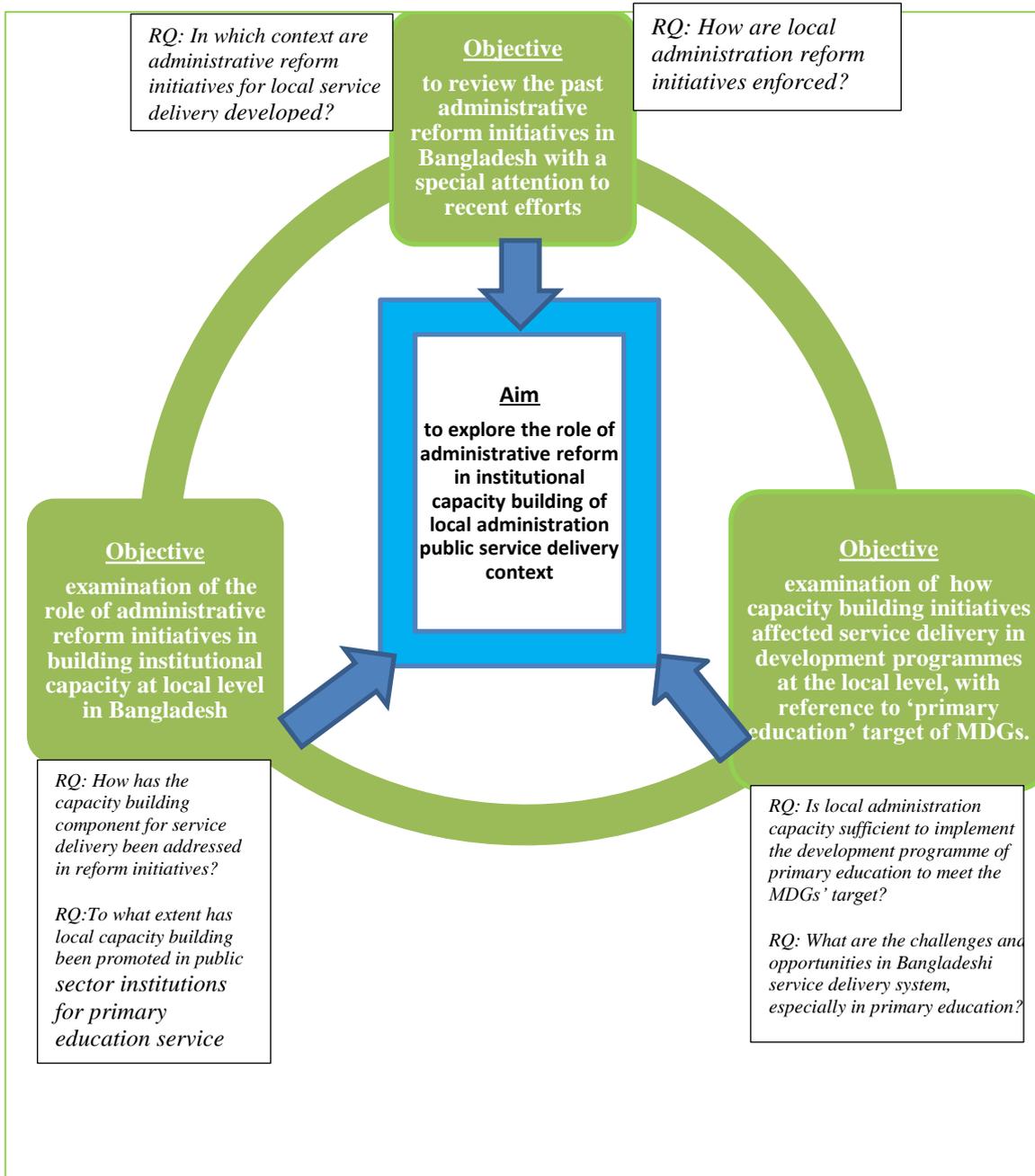
The central research question guiding this study is the following: *‘Do administrative reform initiatives make local administration better equipped for primary education service delivery?’* In order to explore the above question and objectives, research is broken down into the following specific questions:

- i) In which context are administrative reform initiatives for local service delivery developed?
- ii) How are local administrative reform initiatives enforced?
- iii) How has the capacity building component for service delivery been addressed in reform initiatives?
- iv) To what extent has local capacity building been promoted in public institutions for primary education service delivery?
- v) Is local administration capacity sufficient to implement the development programme of primary education to meet the targets of the MDGs?
- vi) What are the challenges and opportunities in Bangladeshi service delivery systems, especially in primary education?

It is well known that implementation of programmes at the local level is central to the local administration governing process. Local administration serves as “frontline institutions in responding to the increasing service delivery requirements of their constituents [and] has the primary responsibility in the implementation of the MDG responsive programs and activities.” (Panadero, 2004, p. 1). In the Bangladeshi case, they shoulder the primary responsibility of implementing the programmes of the MDGs. The effects of administrative reform on local administrative institutional capacities for service delivery in developing countries such as Bangladesh have not yet been the subject of academic research. This study seeks to fill this gap. It examines the role of

administrative reform in building the institutional capacity of public administration with reference to the implementation of the MDGs' target for primary education in Bangladesh. The research framework is presented in figure 1.

Figure 1: Research Aim, Objectives and Questions



1.7 The Research Focus and Scope

Systems of public administration in developing countries reflect considerable social and economic pressures as well as the interplay of different political forces. It has been evident that the existing tradition of governing public administration contributes less to improve the institutional capacity of the public sector to meet the new challenges of service delivery.

Administrative practices in Bangladesh are closely linked to its colonial past. Numerous efforts at reform were initiated by numerous regimes following independence in 1971. However, these efforts met with limited success. The major focus of this research has been on contemporary administrative reform and capacity building efforts by the state to improve primary education service delivery. Specific attention has been paid to the recent past, with an empirical investigation of the universal primary education programme of the MDGs.

While this research focuses primarily on reforms implemented after the adoption of the MDGs, it will also examine reforms implemented following democratisation in 1991. It was recognised at that time that the public sector needed to be capable of responding to social and economic variables as well as the need for nation-building and development (Zafarullah, Khan, & Rahman, 2001, p. 25). The study examines all notable internal and external reform efforts.

1.8 Research Limitations

Although there are many positive aspects of this research design, the research is not beyond weaknesses that might affect the quality of the results.

Limited amounts of time and financial resources for conducting fieldwork and develop the theoretical framework was the most constraining aspect of this research design. However, given the importance of public administration in government and politics, I have endeavoured to make full use of the available tools and resources to complete the study in an acceptable time frame.

It is widely recognized that a universally acknowledged methodological approach to the study of public administration is yet to develop (Kotchengura, 2008, pp. 19-20). Identification of a theoretical basis and the selection of appropriate methodological tools was thus an essential task. Attendance, participation and involvement in numerous public administration related research seminars, workshops, and conferences and personal contacts with members of the academic community served as a source of inspiration for the continuation of these activities. This research may be viewed as the extension of a broader governance and administrative science research agenda.

There were no other significant challenges to generating research outcomes. However, some difficulties regarding data generation were encountered. Not all the targeted units/individuals were found to be cooperative. Considerable legwork, phone calls, visits, lobbying and generally 'putting myself about' (Murray & Lawrence, 2000, p. 60), required considerable, energy, money and effort to ensure an appropriate and reasonably targeted number of respondents was represented in the sample size.

It was understood that interviewing elites might potentially present some challenges, inasmuch as it might have been a challenge to speak to them in a way they understood and with which they felt comfortable. It was also expected that interviewees might be suspicious, given that I was "a stranger to them" (Oppenheim, 2000, p. 141). These

concerns proved to be unfounded, however. Indeed, no situations were encountered which could be labelled 'unmanageable'.

Alreck & Settle (1995) speak of "many bias factors that may originate from data collection, interviewing and interpreting data" (p. 80). Many things came out during interviews and discussions which did not fall within the purview of the interview questions and schedule. Sometimes these were additional facts related to the phenomenon under study and sometimes they were not. Judging from the balance of both positive and negative comments by respondents, it seems that the researcher's efforts to neutralize the worse biases were relatively successful.

Another constraint consisted in different, often contradictory understandings of the terms 'public administration reform', 'public sector reform', 'administrative reform' and 'civil service reform' in countries. For example, administrative reform in Bangladesh is perceived as a reform of national and local level administrations. For pragmatic reasons the analysis focuses mainly on the local level; although attention to the national level was paid whenever it was deemed appropriate.

'Writing well' was one of the most difficult tasks to carry out (Moley et. al, 2002, p. 18; Brause, 2000; Woods & Catarzara, 1988). Writing the dissertation was a troublesome exercise which had to ensure that the "findings speak for themselves" (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1997, P. 4). Operationally, writing this qualitative research was a complex process of rewriting in order to "be able to do justice to the fullness and ambiguity of experience of the real contexts" (Manen, 1997, p. 349).

1.9 Research Distinctiveness

The Bangladeshi state, along with other national and international actors, was vigorously involved in efforts to strengthen governmental operations. Despite this, the results of reforms so far remain below expectation. The overview of available literature has shown that no in-depth and thorough academic studies have been done regarding the administrative reform of public institutions in Bangladesh responsible for the delivery of services. Although some studies are extremely detailed, they are largely descriptive in nature. Explanations for the failure of various reform initiatives are generally made without thorough empirical investigation. It is impossible to understand the social, political, administrative, and economic context of these reform efforts and the barriers to their success without examining the efforts made by governmental bodies, civil society and external actors.

Previous literature broadly relies on historical documentary analysis and is often based on personal experiences and observations. The current research, however, has employed the ‘triangulation’ method: interviews, data surveys and document analysis, which should make its conclusions better founded on a stronger methodological base than previous studies. Alongside examining documents and speeches, and the context of the reform programmes, the study has generated data through a wide-ranging programme of unstructured interviews. Triangulation provides qualitative research with a greater likelihood of overcoming the likely biases or weaknesses of single method approaches (Hayhoe 1998, p. 129).

Public administrations deal with considerable pressure both from within and without the country to improve service delivery. Despite the importance of the issue for Bangladeshi society, little detailed research has been carried out on the contemporary

system of public administration. This study, details the role of administrative reform in building the institutional capacity of public administration for service delivery in Bangladesh. It examines the implementation of the MDGs of achieving universal primary education through an empirical investigation of the issue at the local level, or local administration of Upazila in the country. It is one of the first comprehensive studies of administrative reforms seeking to improve institutional capacity for the provision of primary education service delivery at local level in the country.

In terms of achieving distinctive solutions to the problem in hand, this research, with the help of triangulation methods, demonstrates new insights into the complex structural factors at play in Bangladesh, such as historical legacy, a poorly institutionalized state with weak policy development capacity, the carelessness of local context in formulating and executing reform efforts and the existence of entrenched administrative groups. Taken together these factors render the prospects for wider reform unlikely.

Such efforts, which have been frequently undertaken since independence from Pakistan in 1971, have been mostly on a piecemeal basis. This has led to unexpected negative outcomes regarding public administration capacity building. This study seeks to pave the way for further research to develop a more appropriate framework for governments in developing countries to improve the service delivery capacity of public institution at local level. Apart from academic interest this work also has certain practical significance, in particular, for those who design and manage administrative reforms in post-colonial societies.

1.10 Summary

This research seeks to understand the capacity of public administrations in developing nations to deliver public goods. It sheds light on the link between national administrative reform programmes and their implementation at the local level. It makes specific reference to the provision of primary education as it relates to the MDGs programme in Bangladesh. Throughout the investigation the thrust has been to find answers to the inquisitive question in mind. The investigation has sought to answer the question: *Do administrative reform initiatives make the public administration of Bangladesh better equipped to deliver services?*

The research field is broad; one study is only able to explore the issues within certain limits. Because local administration delivers a variety of public services, including primary education, it would be almost impossible to cover these as a whole within one study. Research therefore concentrates on the provision of primary education. It focuses specifically on local administration units known as Biswanath Upazila and Gobindagonj Upazila.

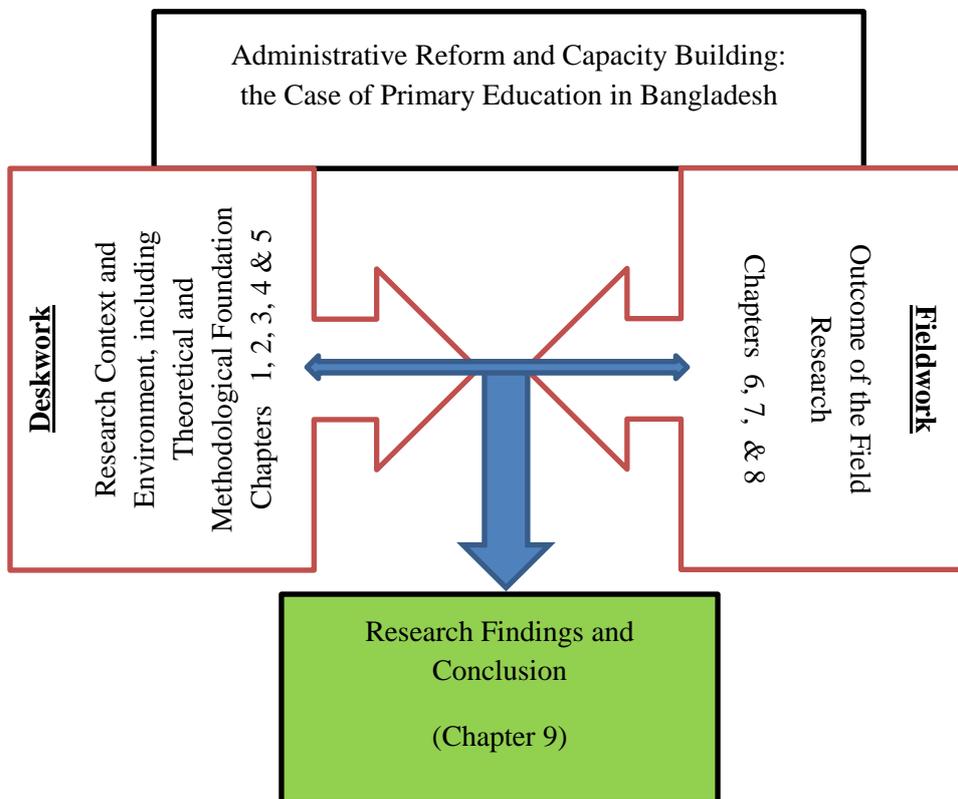
The study restricts itself to a specific field of public administration practice: service delivery by local administration. It is a case study of certain local administrative units and their practices of service delivery. However, this research has broader implications for the understanding of other units of local administration related to service delivery; especially those related the primary education.

1.11 Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation consists of nine chapters. The arrangement is determined by its aim, objectives and research questions as well as by the selected theoretical and methodological approach. Chapters 1 to 5 present the research interest and research

environment along with a theoretical and methodological background of the dissertation. Chapters 6 to 8 present the outcome of the field research, and Chapter 9 presents the key research findings and conclusions, with discussions on various issues of administrative reform and local administration service delivery capacity relating to the provision of primary education. The structure of the dissertation is presented in figure 2.

Figure 2: Structure of the Dissertation at a Glance



Chapter 1: Introduction and Research Description. The chapter provides background information and outlines the purpose and scope of the research together with the research aim, objective and research questions of the study. It provides an overview of the Bangladeshi situation relative to countries at a similar level of development. Finally, it delineates the limitations and distinctiveness of the study and provides a brief summary of the project.

Chapter 2 reviews the available literature, with the aim of situating the study in the context of previous scholarships and establishes the theoretical basis for research. The review provides useful empirical evidence on administrative reform for capacity building of public institution for service delivery.

Chapter 3 deals with the research methods and design which form the methodological base for the study. Methodological adoption is heuristic in nature. It combines historical inquiry and analytical use of recent materials regarding the state-of-affairs of public administration reforms in Bangladesh. It uses case studies and primary interviews and supplementary information for the other sources. These provide the basis for the findings and conclusions of this research

Chapter 4 describes the MDGs as a whole. The MDGs constitutes an assemblage of narrowly focused sector-specific development ideas and campaigns over the past. They set targets related to most aspects of development: poverty, education, health, gender, environment, and international partnership, be implemented by 2015. They have resulted in a global imperative to solidarity to poor and to make the world poverty-free, as a whole.

Chapter 5 describes the primary education in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country with varied multiple systems of secular and religious education. Primary education is

generally constrained by historical factors and has been subject to numerous reforms since independence from Pakistan. The Government of Bangladesh has sought to deal with primary education in line with achieving the MDGs target. However, these efforts have generally been unsuccessful. Improvement of learning and reduction of disparities remains a challenge at all levels of the system.

Chapter 6 provides a contextual description of administrative reform, local administration, and primary education in Bangladesh. It visualises the historical information derived from documentary sources and expands upon the contextual background of the phenomena under examination.

Chapter 7 provides an examination of the local administration capacity for primary education service delivery. This is mainly articulated using existing case studies. Primary education service delivery by local administrations is delineated with a view towards assessing institutional capacity. This is substantiated through two case studies of the Biswanath Upazila and Gobindogonj Upazila local administration units and makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information.

Chapter 8 comprises of interview transcriptions and the reflections of interviewees on local administration reform and capacity of primary education service delivery.

Chapter 9 describes the findings of the research and makes conclusions on that basis, which summarizes the principal results and inferences of the research. The chapter delineates the major findings of the research and support the argument that public service delivery for primary education at the local level in Bangladesh is in a state of distortion. It compares them to the original research aim, objectives and questions and established theoretical approaches and propositions.

Each chapter begins with a short introduction and ends with a brief summary. Throughout, the text has been interspersed with detailed quotations from transcribed primary and secondary sources. Bibliography and finally, detailed appendices are provided at the end of the dissertation to substantiate the research sources.

Having discussed the introduction and research description we now move on to the literature review and theoretical overview of the research.

Chapter 2: Public Administration Reform and Capacity Building: A Theoretical Overview

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical overview of the phenomena under examination. The literature review focuses mainly on the theoretical and empirical aspects of government and public administrative reform. This provides practical and theoretical insights into the issues in developing countries. Primarily recent publications, in the form of books, research papers, and study reports were consulted. A systematic approach was used to determine the relevant literature (Timmins & McCabe, 2005, p. 41). Academically popular books and top research journals on governance, politics, public administration, and management were consulted. The literature so far consists of both academic and empirical research, with secondary and primary data. They demonstrate the achievements of administrative reform scholars in various dimensions; for example: research focus, research findings, theoretical frameworks, research approaches, research methods and units of sampling (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 2).

The following section (2.2) reviews the evolution of public administration as a discipline. Section 2.3 examines the administrative reform issues. The capacity dimension is reviewed in Section 2.4. Section 2.5 deals with the capacity issue in public administration. Key literatures on local administration and primary education in Bangladesh are reviewed in sections 2.6 and 2.7 respectively. Section 2.8 deals with institutional capacity in a public service delivery context. Section 2.9 presents a summary of the theoretical focus. The final section provides an overview and offers some concluding remarks on the issues discussed.

2.2 Public Administration and Administrative Reform

2.2.1 Making the Public Administration Capable in Need

Public administration can be referred to a function of government. It is “a social reality of people and organization, budgets” as well as “a specific academic field of study, i.e., the science or study of public administration” (Rutgers, 2010, p. 03). It “deals with values, depending on beliefs,” which shape world views, and government visions with differing in praxis in reforms and changes (Rommel & Christiaens, 2006, p. 616). The discipline has shifted over time from the traditional paradigm of bureaucracy to current perspectives on public management and governance. This entails a movement from “an instrument of ruling into an integral part of the ruling system” (Vartola, 1984, p. 118). In other words, policy-makers sought making public administration people-oriented and capable of effective public service delivery instead of structure-bound.

2.2.2 Traditions in Administrative Transformation

Reform in public administration typically occurs when there is a need to strengthen social, economic and political institutions when “historical [factors], revolution, [changes] in circumstances, intolerable conditions, [a] desire for change, precipitating events, crises, failed states, market failures, and others occur” (Fuller 2010, p. 1). The corpus of public administration theory can be broken down into two distinct phases. The classical approach distinguishes between neither the relationships between administration and government nor that of administration to the public. The neo-classical approach operated within the same basic paradigm, seeking to address perceived theoretical weaknesses by incorporating the idea of the ‘politics-administration dichotomy’. This idea found expression in Taylor’s *Scientific Management* (1910), Fayol’s POSDCORB, notably articulated in *General and Industrial Administration* (1916) and Gulick’s fourteen principles of management in

Notes on the Theory of Organisation (1937). Perspectives on public administration have evolved considerably in the modern setting.

Brillantes and Farnadez (2008, p. 3) describe the evolution of public administration in two major phases: the traditional / classical phase from the late 1800s to the 1950s, to the modern phase from the 1950s to the present. Further sub-phases, such as Development Administration (1950s and 60s), New Public Administration (NPA) (1960s and 70s), New Public Management (NPM) and Reinventing Government (RG) (1980s onward), and finally, public administration as governance (1990s onwards) are also described. Rutgers (2010) observes that “[T]he 1960s saw the development of an autonomous study of public administration” (p. 10). The state-centred NPA tradition was dominant throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Rutgers, 2010, p. 10-12). During the 1980s, the study’s mainstream “trended towards a practically relevant, empirical public policy making and public management” (Rutgers, 2010, p. 17).

Modern theories of public administration distinguish themselves from classical and neo-classical approaches because they “continue “to identify the crisis of public administration that served as a theme that led to the emergence of the New Public Administration movement in the 1970s” (Brillantes & Fernandez 2008, p. 4). It is characterized by “attempting to combine practical and scientific or academic objectives as well as eclecticism and by what nowadays is often called a multi- or interdisciplinary orientation” (Rutgers, 2010, p. 11). Vigado (2003) summarises the scope of modern public administration theory thusly:

It is larger than ever before, and it still expanding; It is more complex than in the past, and becoming increasingly so by the day; It has many more responsibilities to citizens, and it still has to cope with increasing demands of the people; It is acquiring more eligibilities, but must restrain its

operation and adhere to standards of equity, justice, social fairness, transparency and accountability; Modern public administration is considered a social science, a classification that carries high esteem but also firm obligations and rigid constraints; For many individuals who decide to become public servants it is also a profession and occupation to which they dedicate their lives and careers; and Public administration is one of the highly powerful institutions in modern democracies (p. 4).

2.2. 3 Differentiations in Administrative Transformation

Administrative reforms have been pursued in numerous ways across and within different countries, with schools of thought emerging in both the United States and Europe. In the American case, Woodrow Wilson's classic work, *The Study of Public Administration* (1887) "began a long academic train of thought that led to [the] 21st Century consciousness regarding public administration" in the United States (Carte, 2003, p. 1). However, academic exercises in the field of administrative reform began in the 1960s as the logical extension of the comparative public administration movement initiated by the Comparative Administration Group (CAG) and is considered essential in the Development Administration school of thought. Vartola (1984) asserts that "there has been an increasingly lively and increasingly important discussion about what administration, which would be an improvement on the present form, would be like"(p. 117). The emergence of the New Public Administration (NPA) school of thought in the mid-20th century is a significant departure from this thinking. The approach – which shares some of the basic features of Development Administration – sees public administration primarily as a means to achieve social justice, equity, relevance and socio-economic progress on top of traditional routine administration (Frederickson, 1980, p. 2).

In the threshold of the 21st Century the work of Osborne and Gaebler (1993) ‘Reinventing Government’ popularised a more market-based approach to public administration:

Most entrepreneurial governments promote competition between service providers. They empower citizens by pushing control out of the bureaucracy, into the community. They measure the performance of their agencies, focusing not on inputs but on outcomes. They are driven by their goals- their missions- not by their rules and regulations. They redefine their clients as customers and offer them choices... They prevent problems before they emerge, rather than simply offering services afterward. They put their energies into earning money, not simply spending it. They decentralize authority, embracing participatory management. They prefer market mechanisms to bureaucratic mechanisms. And they focus not simply on providing public services, but on catalyzing all sectors- public, private, and voluntary- into action to solve their community problems (as cited in Ocampo, 2000, p. 248).

Ocampo (2000) concludes that:

Reinventing Government was written to map out “a radically new way of doing business in the public sector” (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993: xviii). According to the authors, reinvention is a “(r)evolutionary change process” that had happened before in the Progressive and New Deal eras in the U.S. and has been occurring again in local governments and elsewhere. Instead of originating the model, they pieced the ideas embodied in it from the actual practices of those who have dealt with government problems in innovative ways. The model represents a basic, ‘paradigm shift’ from the New Deal paradigm of 1930s to 1960s toward the ‘entrepreneurial government’ model that they now advocate (p. 248).

Public administration in Europe has been marked with unity and differentiation (Casini, n.d.) and stems from multiple historical traditions, such as “Prussian cameralism, French rationalization, and English self-government” (Dunsire, 1973, p. 54). Dunsire (1973) states “[T]he development of machinery that [the] extension of royal activity required was paralleled in each country; and indeed, one sovereign copied another’s innovations... where centralisation of all authority had gone farthest” (p. 53). The committee system of Spain, the Secretary of State system of Elizabethan England, the French revenue collection system, organized recruitment and training for functionaries system of Prussia are all cases in point (Dunsire, 1973, p. 56).

Systems of administration, regardless of the theoretical origins of their welfare models all face similar problems of poverty, unemployment and unemployability. The capacity of governments to deal with these challenges can be linked to the nature of the state and its political will and administrative support. Administration has gone from a Weberian bureaucratic model to a Public Management approach following the New Public Management (NPM) philosophy, which “grew from neo-liberalism, particularly market values to the right [of] the political spectrum” (Fuller, 2010, p. 1). New Public Management, according to Ocampo (2000)

is “shorthand for a group of administrative doctrines” in the reform agenda of several OECD countries starting in the 1970s. According to the OECD (Kickert, 1997: 733), “a new paradigm for public management” had emerged, with eight characteristic trends (listed below in modified order, to range from internal to external concerns): “(1) strengthening steering functions at the center; (2) devolving authority, providing flexibility; (3) ensuring performance, control, accountability; (4) improving the management of human resources; (5) optimizing information technology; (6) developing competition

and choice; (7) improving the quality of regulation; and (8) providing responsive service. (P. 249).

In fact, NPM is “coined in the late 1980s to denote a new stress on the importance of management and ‘production engineering’ in public service delivery often linked to doctrines of economic rationalism” (Rahman, Liberman, Giedratis, & Akhter, 2013). It reflects “the ideas of Woodrow Wilson, Taylor and even cameralist and mandarin writers” (Ocampo, 2000, p. 250). However, it “is different from the New Public Administration (NPA) that sought also to depart from Progressive-era doctrines but flowered only briefly during the late 1960s and early 1970s” (Hood, 1996, p 268; cf. Kaul, 1997, as cited in Ocampo, 2000, p. 250). NPM seeks to make public administrations capable of effective service delivery by increasing the economy and efficiency of administrative functions. This implies a much broader notion of administrative ‘governance’ than encountered in the early twenty-first century (Peters & Pierre, 1998, p. 224).

Given their specific national development objectives, developing countries often require administrative reform. As such, scholars in developing countries have also engaged in the theoretical, academic and intellectual debates surrounding administrative science. The system of their governance, in fact, historical with progressive practice in modern thoughts. Local self-government in British colonial India, also known as the panchaet system, is considered the historical originator of current local administration systems in Bangladesh (Aminuzzaman, 2010, p. 2). Atrya & Armstrong (2002) assert that “they are a powerful institution developed mainly in the colonial era” (p. 2). However, local institutions in Bangladesh “have not had any opportunity to act as effective tiers of governments with mandates and funds to carry out their roles and responsibilities” (Aminuzzaman, 2010, p. 4).

In the late 20th century the (then) newly independent countries initiated a series of administrative reform, which were seen as an influential catchword for modernisation (Siffin, 1991, p. 531). Rahman, Liberman, Giedraitis, and Akhter (2013) asserts “[D]ecolonization after World War II and adoption of modernization as primary motive necessitated administrative reform in developing countries like Bangladesh” (p. 299; Caiden, 2001). In developing countries such as Bangladesh, administrative reform has been pursued at both the national and local levels. Policymakers “have [been influenced by] Max Weber, Herbert Simon, the Washington Consensus, *homo economicus*, New Public Management, World Bank indicators, the rule of law, [and] many other [ideas]” with the intention of bringing about changes in policies, structure, and the functions of the institutions of public administration (Fuller, 2010, p. 1). The ultimate goal is to achieve maximum efficiency, organizational effectiveness and institutional capacity for service delivery (Raul, at al., 1985, p. 212).

2.2.4 Perspectives on Integrity and Governance

Public administration as a discipline has weathered various identity crises in different phases of its development (Rutgers, 2010, p. 2). These have also been interpreted as “cooperation, collaboration, and a share of information and knowledge” (Vigado, 2003, p. 3), and seeing the issues of government and administration from different perspectives, using multiple theories and methods. Klein (1990) is of the opinion that “interdisciplinarity is neither a subject matter nor a body of content. It has been a process to achieve an integrative synthesis, a process that usually begins with a problem, question, topic, or issue” (cited in Rutgers, 2010, p. 36). For Vigado (2003), “public administration in our time wields considerable power and influence in policy framing, policy making, and policy implementation. Hence it is subject to growing pressures of political players, social actors, managerial professionals, and the overall

economic market” (p. 04). As Jreisat (2004) observes, “public administration is facing new challenges, new needs, and different demands with times” (as cited in Hossain, et al, 2012, p. 3).

In the late 20th century, public management stood as a “non-integrated set of comments on theory and practical conditions of public administration indicating the existing problems in the domain of public administration and making practical measures to remove and modify these problems inevitable” (Nargesian, Esfahani, & Rajabzadeh, 2010, p. 246). However, these theories, concepts, and models have so far been less able to meet the demands of growth, complexity and change in the field. Nevertheless, a “proliferation of alternative approaches to the study [continue]” (Rutgers, 2010, p. 7). Inspired by administrative practice, Reinventing Government (RG), or New Public Management (NPM) became a core topic in the theoretical debates of the 1990s. Debates on the scientific status of the study have since resurfaced. Indeed, “by the late 1990s and early 21st century calls for a broadening of the field from ‘public administration’ to ‘governance’ were heard” (Rutgers, 2010, p. 10).

2.3 Administrative Reform Issues

The corpus of administrative science is vast and murky. Terms like, ‘public administration reform’, ‘public sector reform’, ‘civil service reform’ and ‘governance reform’ are often use interchangeably and to some extent, confused with ‘administrative reform’. Definitions often differ according to context, which makes the term difficult to conceptualize. Furthermore, understanding of the terms also varies between countries and governments depending on the goal and purpose of reform initiatives (Ahmad & Azizuddin, 1995, p. 52).

There is no agreed-upon definition of administrative reform. The process primarily refers to the transformation of or changes in administrative systems. Beyond this, there is no consensus on a definition in the scholarly literature. Indeed, definitions tend to vary according to goals, contents and strategies of administrative reform. Caiden (1969) considers it an “artificial inducement of administrative transformation against resistance” (p. 1). Lee (1970) defines it as “an effort to apply a new system with a conscious view to improving the system for positive goals of national development” (p. 177). Dror (1970-71) sees it as the “directed change of managing features of an administrative system” (p. 67), while Quah (1981) holds as “a deliberate attempt to change both the structure and procedures of the public institution, and the attitudes and behaviour of the public bureaucrats involved in order to promote organizational effectiveness” (p. 68) for public service delivery and to attain national developmental goals and quality public service delivery. Mosher (1967) goes further. He defines the process broadly as “changes in purpose, procedure functions and relationship in organization” (p. 12). Anisuzzaman and Khan (1980) review the definitional issues of administrative reform following a descriptive method. They proceed in a generalized way but do not give any comprehensive perspective of administrative reform. In addition, the discussion does not indicate the boundaries and coverage of the issue - the *locus* and *focus* of administrative reform.

Whatever the discourse, the theory of administrative reform concerns itself with changes in systems of public administration. Its effectiveness lies in the degree to which changes can be introduced into the system, be it a national or local administrative unit. It is a goal-oriented process through which paradoxes are often found in the both declared and undeclared goals. Two sets of broad objectives of administrative reform, the “promotion of organizational effectiveness and attainment of national development

goal, with some specific objectives of efficiency, mobilization and democratization. The specific objectives are instrumental to broader developmental activities of service delivery” are worth mentioning (Minoru, 1988, p. 24).

In sum, administrative reform is used conceptually to “describe many changes, from minor adjustments to management arrangements to fundamental changes in ownership, governance and management arrangements” (European Commission, 2009, p. 17). The purpose is to create high-quality and professional administration systems which effectively provide services. Levels of economic development, social structure, cultural and ethical values and prevailing social or political conditions are also important components in administrative reform (Minoru et. al., 1988, p. 2).

2.4 The Capacity Dimension

‘Capacity’ refers to the ability of institutions of governance to perform the functions of service delivery effectively (Barakat & Chard, 2002, p. 817). Broadly, it is the “capability of somebody or an organisation to complete some tasks or mission” (Hossain et al, 2012, p. 12). It can be defined as “an ability to perform the specific assigned task effectively and efficiently on a continuous basis” (Waheed, 1999, p. 913). The literature review so far demonstrates that a clear definition of the concept is lacking. Likewise, there exist a number of different definitions of the concept of capacity in the literature of organisation and management and development studies. Definitions range from general and broad to specific and narrow perspectives (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 1).

Research on capacity is wide-ranging. Research extends well beyond the academic sphere. International development institutions and governments in countries have also undertaken research into the issue (Hossain, et al., 2012, p. 2). It is important to note

that ‘capacity’ and ‘capacity-building’ are always not same. While some describe capacity and building as separate notions, others highlight the separate nature of these concepts (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 4). Larbi (1998), for example, argues that “the absence of capacity necessitates capacity building, and ... capacity building should be based on the first” (as cited in Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 5).

2.3.1 Capacity as a Concept

Capacity can generally be described as the “capability of somebody or an organisation to complete some tasks or mission” (Hossain, et al., 2012, p. 12). It is, characteristically, about empowerment and identity, to do with collective ability, inherently a systems phenomenon, is a potential state, and is about the creation of public value (Morgan, 2006, p. 2). The resources, systems, structures and processes essentially to distribute the essential level of performance in completion of the mandated objectives are its subject and object (Bhatta, 2003, p. 403). However, to get a clearer view of the concept, it is useful to have some definitions and how is used in the literature from different contexts.

The Merriam Webster Dictionary (2009) describes capacity as “legal competency or fitness; the potential or suitability for holding, storing, or accommodating; an individual’s mental or physical ability; the facility or power to produce, perform, or deploy” (p. 211). Lindley (1975), broadly describes it as “the ability to choose what ends to pursue and the will to take actions to achieve them” (p. 794). Perhaps most relevant to this discussion is Linnell’s (2003) definition. He argues that capacity is “an organization's ability to achieve its mission effectively and to sustain itself over the long term. It also refers to the skills and capabilities of individuals” (p. 1).

Saldhana (1994) and Larbi (1998, p. 35) relate capacity to a public sector context. For Saldhana (1994), capacity relates to the “abilities of governments to plan, manage and sustain the development process of their economies and societies; and in keeping with the aspirations and potential of their respective countries people” (as cited in Larbi, 1998, p. 37).

Lane and Wolf (1990) discuss the concept of capacity in a public policy context. For them, capacity is the “ability to govern, which rests on the human resources of governmental agencies – the people who participate in and enable the process of governance i.e. their collective memory, commitment, technical proficiency and programme competence” (Lane & Wolf, 1990, p. 2). They speak about “people’s ability to govern, and emphasize the role of participation in defining capacity” (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 9). They argue that “administrative capacity rests on people and thus issues like motivation, attitudes and performance are of importance” (cited in Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 9).

Grindle and Hildebrand (1995) define capacity simply as “the ability to perform appropriate tasks” (p. 100). Implying that “capacity is task performance; i.e., what is required to achieve purposes effectively, efficiently and sustainable either at individual, group, community, organization or governmental level” (Antwi & Analoui, 2008, p. 600). Development partners, including the UNDP, have concerned themselves about public administrative capacity for public service delivery in developing countries. For the UNDP, it is the ability to set objectives; develop strategies; draw action plans; develop and implement appropriate policies; develop regulatory structure and systems; build and manage partnerships; foster an enabling environment for poverty reduction; mobilize and manage resources; implement action plans; monitor progress (2008, p. 4-6). Development researchers argue that the above factors indicate the capability of

public sector for service delivery. It is the ability of the state within the tradition of public administration: policy formulation and implementation, maintaining a work environment conducive for public service delivery (Schnell, 2010, p. 12).

The literature suggests capacity can be built on “five core capabilities, which can be found, to a greater or lesser extent, in all organizations or systems: the capability to act, the capability to generate development results, the capability to relate, the capability to adapt and finally, the capability to integrate” (Morgan, 2006, p. 8). Taskey, et al., (2012) argue that as “a latent concept: it is different from *effectiveness*, which is the extent to which the government actually achieves its policy objectives, and which in turn depends also on the wider institutional environment and the incentives that drive the behaviour of public sector organizations” (p. 10).

2.3.2 Capacity Building

‘Capacity building’ commonly refers to “a process that supports or creates capacities” and “alludes to an assumption that there are no existing capacities to start from” (UNDP, 2008, p. 5). It has been a ‘buzz-word’ since the last quarter of the 20th century. It has enjoyed widespread adoption by non-governmental organizations (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 7). Researchers have pointed to the ambiguity of both its terminology and practices (Morgan et al., 2010, p. 27). It is distinguished from human resource development, training, human resource management, organizational strengthening, and institutional reform (Jooste, 2008, p. 19; Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1995, Eade, 1997). This indicates the individual, organizational and institutional dimension of capacity in public administration (Crisp et al, 2000, p. 101).

Capacity is often associated with empowerment, ‘participation’ and ‘gender-equity’ (Eade 1997, p. 4). Furthermore, it concepts, such as ‘enabling’, ‘empowerment’,

‘partnerships’, ‘decentralisation’, ‘devolution’, ‘deregulation’ and ‘privatization’ (Paoletto, 1999, p. 3). It signifies the process of enhancing institutional, community, organisational and individual abilities (Crisp et al., 2000, p. 102). In governance, it is characteristically considered an enhancement of managerial or administrative effectiveness and efficiency in a given polity. Thus the concept can be deployed in numerous situations: capacity building for organization and development; capacity building for service delivery; organisational capacity building; and individual capacity building (Hossain et al, 2012, p. 3).

Capacity building, Pazirandeh (2010) argues, is “strengthening organizational or individual abilities in order to sustainably achieve its objectives” (p. 10). Philbin (2009) presents capacity building in a general view as the “process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world” (cited in First51a, 2009, p. 1). This is a broad view generally expressed in the literature.

Linnell (2003) is of the opinion that “capacity building can be in the context of any process within an organization” (p. 17). This includes improvement of governance, leadership, mission and strategy, administration, including human resources, financial management, and legal matters, program development and implementation, fundraising and income generation, diversity, partnerships and collaboration, evaluation, advocacy and policy change, marketing, positioning, planning, etc. In this instance, capacity building is characteristically considered “the managerial or administrative enhancement which is equally perceived as same as ‘organisational capacity’” (Honadle, 1981 as cited in Hossain et al., 2012, p. 12).

Eade (1997) discusses the idea of ‘capacity building’ in more depth. He states that

[C]apacity-building is an approach to development, not something separate from it. It is a response to the multi-dimensional processes of change, not a set of discrete or pre-packaged technical interventions intended to bring about a pre-defined outcome. In supporting organisations working for social justice, it is also necessary to support the various capacities they require to do this: intellectual, organisational, social, political, cultural, material, practical, or financial (p. 28).

Capacity building can be connected to “diverse understandings and attitudes, and a wide array of opinions for conceptualizing them” (Roheetarchoon & Hossain, 2012, p. 12).

The notion can be understood as the enhancement of administrative workability in different levels featuring an individual or organization capable of effective and efficient service delivery, be it public or private (Teskey, 2012, p. 2).

The underpinnings of the capacity dimension of administrative reform are summarised below. Table 3 describes the key concepts associated with capacity and capacity building.

Table 3: Keywords in Defining the Capacity notion/dimension

Capacity	Knowledge, Resilience, Potential Ability, Produce Perform, Deploy
Capacity Building	Strengthening, Developing, Improvement, Program, Development, Empowerment, Effectiveness Survive, Adapt, Thrive, Better service, Sustain

Source: adopted from Pazirandeh, (2010, p. 9).

Capacity can likewise be described as the knowledge, resilience, potential, or ability of an individual or community to produce, perform, deploy, or manage its objectives in a sustainable manner (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 10).

2.3.2 Levels of Capacity

The term ‘capacity’ “is embedded in different levels of public sectors” (Jooste, 2008, p. 14). The literature identifies three levels of capacity. Terminology, which is not consistently applied, can be confusing. Generally speaking, levels can be broken down into the following: individual, organizational (sometimes referred to as the institutional level), and enabling environment level (also referred to as the institutional or sometimes societal level) (UNDP, 2008, p. 5). A large body of literature has dealt with the capacity issue from different perspectives (Morgan, 2006, p. 6). Table 4 summarises the levels, focus and attributes of the capacity dimension.

Table 4: The Capacity Dimension

Level	Focus	Attributes
Individual	Human Resource Development	Personal skills, competence, professionalism (Grindle and Hilderbrand, 1995; Frank, 1999; Levy, 2007, Antwi et al, 2008)
Organizational	Organizational Strengthening	Organization and management structure, work network, resource mobilization, managerial improvement (Grindle, 1997; Teskey et al, 2005; Levy, 2007)
Institutional	Administrative Reform	Organizational system, environment, cheque and balance institution, policy framework (Grindle, 1997; Levy, 2007)

Source: Adapted from Jooste, (2008, p. 18).

Levels focus on human resource development, organizational strengthening, and institutional reform respectively. Human resource development is the focal point of individual capacity building. It is concerned with “aspects of capacity entrenched in ... public sector employees, aiming at staffing competent individuals with appropriate order and structures and improving ... working conditions for public sector personnel” (Antwi, Analoui, & Causworth, 2008, p. 254). Individuals are expected to “convey efficiency and effectiveness to each assignment, project, organisation, policy, and policy implementation” (McCourt, 2006, Morgan & Baser, 2007, Hope, 2009; as cited in Roheetarachoon & Hossain, 2012, p. 3). Capacity building at the individual level is the “process of equipping people with the understanding and skills, and the access to information and knowledge to perform effectively” (Wakely, 2000, p. 1). Jooste (2008) elaborates further: “[I]nterventions targeted at [this level of] capability building includes: education and training programs, improving knowledge management through tools such as databases and libraries, and programs for knowledge and skills transfers through networking, twinning arrangements, workshops, and seminars” (p. 16).

The organizational level relates to organisational strengthening. It promotes managerial improvement initiatives. Batley and Larbi (2004) emphasize the importance of professionalism and decentralization for strengthening managerial autonomy. At this level, capacity is considered “the ability of organisations to carry out, effectively and efficiently, programmes of coordinated action in pursuit of formal organisational goals” (Teskey et al, 2005p. 10). It has “included reform based on disaggregating, downsizing and emphasizing organizational and individual performance management” (Jooste, 2008, p. 7). Krishnaveni & Sripirabaa (2008) further argue that “capacity building could be conducted at the macro level focusing on organisational capacity while at the micro level focusing on individual capacity” (as cited in Hossain et al, 2012, p. 13).

Institutional reform facilitates and aid in building capacity in an enabling environment. It aims at “creating a stable environment, both in terms of institutional context and the action environment, conducive to capacity building for public service delivery” (Jooste, 2008, p. 9). The rules, norms, and values which determine the human behavior are come to the scope of institutional context on capacity building (Scott, 2001, p. 11). In terms of work environment, the reform initiatives that aid capacity building involve “the development of legal systems, policy regimes, mechanisms of accountability, regulatory frameworks, and monitoring systems that transmit information about and structure the performance of markets, governments, and public officials’ (Grindle, 1997, cited in Jooste, 2008, p. 17). Capacity building is the combination of strategy directed to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of government performance. This is broken down into three areas: development of human resources, strengthening organization and institutional reform (Grindle, 1997, pp. 1-2).

2.5 Administrative Reform in Bangladesh

Given its unique history, it is perhaps unsurprising that public administrations in Bangladesh closely resemble to those of Pakistan, whose own administrative systems retain the basic colonial structure inherited from British India. Recent studies have examined contemporary administrative reform efforts in various ways. These have tended to be descriptive. While some of these studies, such as Ahamed and Nazneen (1988), Khan (1991; 1998), and Muhit (2001), argue that the colonial legacy continues to have a profound influence on the Bangladeshi public administration system. Still others (Sarker, 2001; 2004; 2005 and 2006; Muhit, 2001) point to overly ambitious reform efforts which overestimated the service delivery capacity of public institutions (p. iii). Some studies, like Obaidullah (1992; 1999), Zafarullah (1998, Alam et al. (1998), World Bank (2002), Zafaarullah and Rahman (2008) criticize the traditional

structure of administration and the political leadership of the country. The government of Bangladesh has established numerous committees and commissions aimed at reforming public administration (Azizuddin, 2008, p. 79). Government proposals tended to be over-ambitious, without much attention paid to detailed implementation. Studies commissioned by international donors were more-or-less prescriptive and not always workable in the Bangladeshi context. More varied in terms of methodology and approach, these studies suggested improvements in efficiency, and greater accountability and transparency in public administration.

Hossain's (1976) study of evolution of the public administration system in British India, argued that reform efforts were less successful owing to a lack of public consensus (Hossain, 1979, p. i). A study of the history of public administration in Bangladesh was written by Anisuzzaman (1982) followed by similar studies by Ahmed (1999; 2000). Khan (1980) argued that bureaucratic resistance to reform was the primary factor for the failure of major administrative reform initiatives in Pakistan. Conversely, Ahmed and Nazneen (1988) argue that "the extent of administrative reform depends mostly on the nature and orientation of the political leadership of the country" (p. 2). Khan's provides a history of all the major administrative reform initiatives in Bangladesh. His analysis (1991; 1998) focused on understanding the effects of reforms, the involvement of international donors; and finally, why these attempts failed. Obaidullah (1992) examined major administrative reform efforts made in the first decade of the country, which had a direct bearing on the efficiency, dynamism and morale of public administration in Bangladesh (Obaidullah, 1999, p. vi).

Miah (1997) conducted a study of administrative reform in Bangladesh which discussed bureaucratic structure and the consequences of reforms. Conversely, Rahman (1997) examined bureaucratic responses to administrative decentralisation. Zafarullah (1998)

argues that “reforms have been mainly externally induced”, but the government is lethargic in applying them (p. 97).

Focusing on the procedural aspects of Bangladeshi bureaucracy Alam, Momen, Haque, and Choudhury (1998) found that conflicts between different teams of public servants also frustrated efforts. Rahman (2001) emphasized the urgency of reforming national public services in order to enhance their role, prestige, performance and professionalism. Ahmed (2001) examined organizational practices within Bangladesh’s public administration.

Based on a historical-interpretive approach, Zafarullah, Khan, and Rahman’s (2001) focused on the bureaucratic elite of public administration in the country. They considered that both the performance and legitimacy of the public administration were determined by the desired and actual behaviour of bureaucracy in the context of its relationship to the political structure (Zafarullah, Khan & Rahman, 2001, p. 24).

Muhit (2001) describes the “immutability of the basic colonial structure of public administration in Bangladesh” (p. 2). He highlights the need for more accountability and transparency in modern Bangladesh and the role of government in public service.

A structured understanding of the governance challenges confronting Bangladesh and the role of NGOs was discussed in a government-funded paper by Rahaman (2001). It has been said that traditional administrative reform and allied approaches have met with virtually no success in Bangladesh. The paper argued that reform efforts could improve the general capacity of the government as an agent of development but were “dependent on the political will of the government to make the necessary changes and to deal with the other social and political forces which may subvert reform” (Rahaman, 2001, p. 64).

Sarker, (2001) describes the difficulties of implementing market-based public administration reform. He (2004, 2005, and 2006) argued that institutional capacity is affected by the political, economic, social and administrative realities in the country which made some of the more ambitious reform programmes difficult to implement.

Jahan (2006) identified a lack of meritocracy in staffing practices, particularly recruitment, in the civil bureaucracy and studied its effects. Kim et al (2007) studied the involvement of the UNDP in the development of reform initiatives. The study emphasized the need for a meritocratic approach within bureaucratic structures.

Kim and Monem (2008) argued that the structure of the bureaucracy remains basically unchanged despite reform efforts. The study discussed the structural dimensions of the civil service directing public administration reform but did not pay much attention to capacity issue. Zafarullah and Rahman (2008) argue that the fragile and dysfunctional political situation of Bangladesh is responsible for less successful service delivery within public institutions. The issues of state capacity-building by reform therefore “come to the forefront within a broad framework of governance” (Zafarullah & Rahman, 2008, p. 739).

2.6 Local Administration in Bangladesh

Local administration in Bangladesh is the sub-national government administrative unit. It is closely resembles the English form of self-government established during the colonial period in urban areas of British India to facilitate political education, cater to the process of institutional learning of local people, and to create conducive environment for colonial administration (Choudhury, 1987, pp. 2-3; Aminuzzaman, 2010). Very little has been written about administrative reform related to local administration capacity for primary education service delivery. Studies have hitherto

focused on the Union Parishad (UP) – the lowest tier of local government in the country – and relate to the process of decentralization. The local administrative functions and issues relating to service delivery have received comparatively little attention, especially that relating to the public provision of primary education. Indeed, the studies of Choudhury (1987), Karim (1991), Murshed (1997), Aminuzzaman (1993; 2010), Siddiqui (2005), Islam & Fujita (2008), As- Saber & Rabbi (2009), Khan (2009), Rahman, (2010), Bandyopadhyay, (2011), Rahman (2012), and Ahmed, Ahmed & Faizullah (2012) all fall within the decentralization subset.

Choudury's (1987) work focused on the Union Parishad (UP). The study gave a critical appraisal of the system of local government operating in Bangladesh and offers recommendations regarding its reorganization. Karim (1991) analysed the politico-administrative dynamics of Upazila system, concluding that “neither... its achievements are spectacular nor its failures entirely disappointing” (p. 63).

Murshed (1997) critically examined governmental positions on administrative decentralization and bureaucratic behavior towards decentralized administrations. The study focused specifically on the civil-service sub-system and decentralisation processes at local levels. These are designed to accelerate the pace of development particularly at the grass-root level. Siddiqui (2005), on the other hand, studied the effects of local government, local administration and civil society on the local governance mix.

Aminuzzaman's (2007) assesses the local government support project building strategy at local level of UP in Bangladesh. The study emphasized the need for a “capacity building system with highest priority” (p. 1). The study examined public capacity-building initiatives of the Upazila Resource Team (URT) and private initiatives by NGOs.

Islam and Fujita (2008) examined the prospect of building a decentralized local government in Bangladesh at the local level. The study found that the system is financially dependent on the national government in almost every respect (Islam & Fujita, 2008 p. 1). As-Saber & Rabbi (2009) explored whether a more democratic Upazila Parishad would enhance responsiveness and accountability. The study argued that “[P]arishads in Bangladesh with democratically elected representatives have somewhat failed to enhance their responsiveness and accountability to the people” (As-Saber & Rabbi, 2009, p. 53).

Khan (2009) argued “the local government bodies, or more specifically the Union Parishad, are struggling in delivering expected public services to the common people at the grass root level mostly due to lack of appropriate administrative and financial authority as well as institutional capability” (P. iii). Aminuzzaman’s (2010) study on local government Union Parishad’s service found that “although democracy has brought popular representation to local government ... this has not been accompanied by effective powers and a political culture to enact the local popular will” (p. 3).

Rahman (2010) examined governmental attitudes in Bangladesh. The study examined the role of the state in local government reforms. It concluded that “the reform process is hazy and characterized by implicit action by law makers and political leaders” (p. 259).

Bandyopadhyay, (2011) analysed local governmental institutions (LGIs) in a number of south Asian countries. He found that political instability and “the presence of autocratic and military rulers or ethnic violence” adversely affected capacity development (p. xi).

Rahman (2012) argued “the democratic Upazila Parishads in Bangladesh ... failed to be more responsive to the needs of the people” (p. 100). He demonstrated that the national

government tended to interfere with local administrations, with a lack of awareness of incumbent roles and functions being mainly responsible for this state of affairs.

Ahmed, Ahmed and Faizullah (2012) explored different dimensions of the working of Upazila Parishads which delineated the strengths and weaknesses of the institution's internal processes. The study found that "the system kicked off its journey more or less systematically after its reintroduction in 2009 with a good start. However, no significant achievement has been observed yet" (p. iv).

2.7 Primary Education in Bangladesh

Primary education paves the way for further education and development in various ways. Efforts to improve the quality of primary education teaching and learning in Bangladesh have been in operation from the independence of the country in 1971. These efforts originated from multiple sources, such as the national government, international organizations and bilateral development agencies. Numerous organizations of different scales from small, medium, and large contributed to the operations of primary education in the country.

Primary education is regarded as the basic education for human development. It is considered the foundation of learning for further education of secondary and tertiary education. All categories of general, technical and professional education kick off their journey through it. Primary education takes place between the ages of 6 and 11 and is followed by secondary education. State funded and private initial learning stage institutions both fall under the rubric of 'primary education'. Basic knowledge of core subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology (ICT) is taught in this educational phase. The general aim is to offer

opportunities to all children, irrespective of age, gender, to achieve a balanced cognitive, emotional and psychomotor development (Pitri, n.d., p. 2).

The Bangladesh Education Sector Review (BEPS) of USAID (2002) found that “the main weaknesses in its instructional system are the many poorly trained teachers and the absence of any functioning assessment system. Both the governance and management systems of primary education need improvement. Stakeholders have little voice in guiding policy and practice, and management is extremely top-down, depriving even mid-level officials of authority to make decisions.” (USAID, 2002, p. vi).

The GPRB and DfID’s (2004) study of the quality of primary education in Bangladesh drew on anthropological and ethnographic research traditions to identify factors necessary for effective learning in the Bangladeshi context. These included: strong community participation in school improvement, leadership quality of the school heads, teachers’ active participation in mentoring the learners, healthy teaching learning atmosphere in the classrooms, putting students in the centre of educational setting, and learning achievement of the students (GPRB & DfID, 2004, p. iii).

The Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2008), argued that while primary education in Bangladesh has largely achieved the gross enrolment rate regarding gender balance, it noted that “institutional capacity and quality aspects have not improved much” (ADB, 2008, p. vii). Further effort is needed to streamline institutional arrangements and improve the quality of education.

Riddell (2011), whose work for UNESCO and the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) focused on ‘capacity development for achieving the Education for All goals’. “The focus has been on educational planning and management as stronger capacities in these areas should lead to important improvements in the education system

as a whole” (Riddell, 2011, p. 9). The study argued that reform initiatives “have usually strengthened the skills of individuals, but have not always succeeded in improving the effectiveness of the ministries and other organizations where those individuals are working” (p. 9). While organizational capacity exists in other sectors of the country, it is lacking in the field of education.

Sommers (2011) examined the quality of learning and degree of access to primary education with a focus on social justice within a multi-tiered and poorly regulated system. She concluded that “the responsibility ultimately falls on the government to ensure quality education for all children in its own government-funded schools” (Sommers, 2011, p. 1).

2.8 Institutional Capacity in Public Service Delivery Context

The institutional capacity of public administrations comprises of the three areas: policy development, resource and programme management (Christiansen & Gazley, 2008, p. 265). These are regarded as the “fundamentals for government to make ... public institutions capable for service delivery” (Teskey, 2012, p. v). ‘Policy’ can be defined as the performance of need assessment, goal setting, and evaluation. Resource management entails the creation of basic administrative tools and techniques. Programme management is the mechanism for successfully fulfilling stated objectives and meeting the needs of stakeholders (Christiansen & Gazley, 2008, pp. 265-266).

Public service delivery can be regarded as the implementation and rendering government services to citizen through its institutions. Similarly, it also involves ensuring that education, utilities, and health services reach the people and places for which they are intended. Waheed (1999) describes a number of criteria for effective service delivery: “improvement in the ability to identify problems for public actions,

assess options for responding to these problems, formulate policies that constructively address these problems, implement activities required by the policies, and sustain such activities over sufficient time to have an impact on conditions for economic and social development” (pp. 914-916).

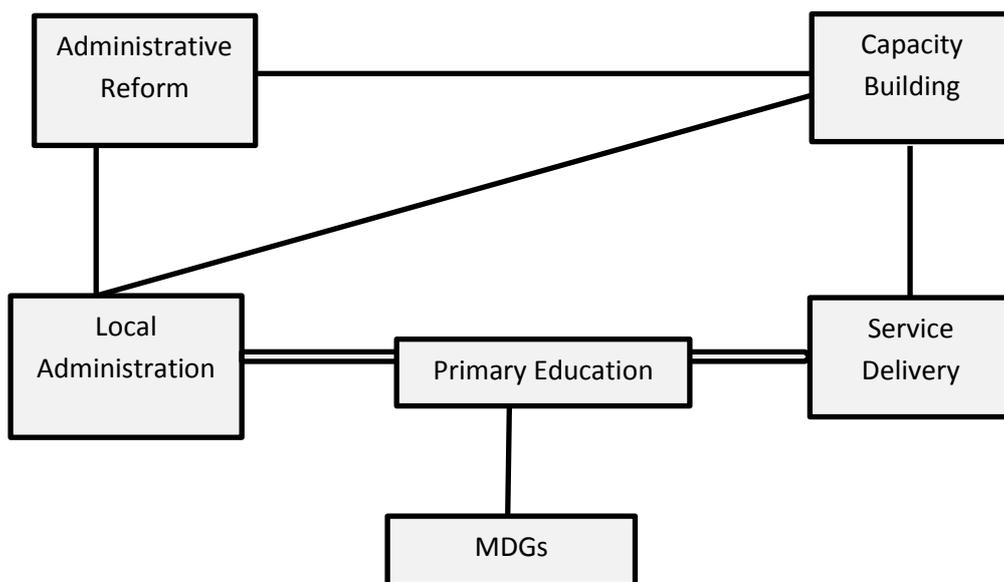
Mengesha and Common (2006) emphasized the need for an appropriate monitoring system for services. Commitment, ownership, and the drive for change are considered as the important prerequisite for institutional capacity for public service delivery (p. ii). Mwita (2000) argued that “the absence of credible decision-making power at local governmental level [within developing and transitional economies] has [resulted] in a lack of accountability among public sector employees, thereby raising questions about the quality of public services” (as cited in Abay & Parkins, 2010, p. 81). Institutional capacity requires appropriate power and authority structure of respective institutions of public administration – in this case the local administration of Upazila – to effectively provide services.

2.9 Summary of Theoretical Focus

The literature in the field of public administration dealing with administrative reform and capacity building for public service delivery is growing. Much of it has focused on specific universal problems which affect all administrative jurisdictions. This study instead chose to focus on literature dealing with theoretical and practical issues affecting developing countries. Specifically, it examined how Bangladeshi public administrative capacity can be improved, how such improvements can be applied to primary education service delivery, and the central role of local administration in achieving this and other development goals.

Administrative reform is “the induced systematic improvement of public administration operations with practical context of local circumstances rather than idealistic and universal solutions” (Caiden and Sundaram , 2004, p. 375). It is to build the capacity of service providing institutions of government such the local administration of Upazila in Bangladesh. Capacity building is the process of strengthening capacity. This often requires administrative reform efforts that can provide an environment for more effective service delivery (Levy & Kpundeh, 2004, p. ii). Reforms should build and enhance the ability of the state to define and realize goals (Mili, 2008, p. 58). Capacity building for service delivery is considered as the continuous process resulting in administrative reform for effective and efficient responses to changing needs (Cuthill & Fien, 2005, p. 63). There is a functional relationship between administrative reform, capacity building and service delivery and they can be considered as complementary tools for sustainable governance. Figure 3 is a graphic representation of the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 3: Concetual Framework



Administrative reform initiatives generally seek to improve the capacity of local administration for service delivery provision. In this case, they relate to the primary education developmental goals of the MDGs. Administrative reform and capacity building are viewed as the principal canons of this research. The study focuses its analysis on local administration, public service delivery, primary education, and the MDGs in Bangladesh. Literature dealing with service delivery capacity of administration at the local level in Bangladesh is still relatively scarce. This study seeks to fill this gap. The institutional capacity for public service delivery is regarded as a fundamental issue of public administration (Brillantes & Fernandez, 2008, p. 1). Scepticism exists in the literature as to whether public administrations are capable of effective service delivery (Roheetarachoon & Hossain, 2012, p. 2) and “whether their capacity can genuinely be built in such PSR [Public Sector Reform] scenarios” (Roheetarachoon & Hossain, 2012, p. 2). Capacity discourses on public administration service delivery remains ambiguous and vague (Pazirandeh, 2010, p. 11).

Capacity building for service delivery through administrative reform is the offspring of the fields of public administration and governance (Heeks, 2001, p. 1). With the increase of state functions “public administration is more and more being seen as taking care of matters of common concern, as provider of societal services, and in general a positive phenomenon” (Vartola, 1984, p. 124). Administrative reform has been tagged as a ‘special public policy’ (Ciprian, Gabriela, & Dimbu, 2010, p. 1) to facilitate the capacity for the reorganization of the institutions of governance aiming at rationalizing and building the capacity of administrative machinery to adapt public administration to changing environment (Flynn, 1998, p. 2).

Development studies scholars have devoted much attention to capacity building, since reforms require effective states if they are to be implemented successfully. However,

administrative reform initiatives also try to “head off crises in the capacity to govern” (Caiden and Sundaram, 2004, p. 373, cf Dror, 2001) and “can aid in the capacity building process” (Jooste, 2008, p. 18). It can be considered the ‘means to the end’ of building institutional capacity of public administration for public service delivery at the national or locals. Stimulating institutional capacity building and improving service delivery also makes public administrations more responsive to the needs of citizens.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has covered the theories of public administration and governance relating to administrative reform, capacity building, service delivery, and primary education. The purpose of the chapter was to gain a fuller understanding of administrative reform and capacity building. This was then related to primary education service delivery at the local level in Bangladesh and referred to the universal primary education programme of the MDGs. The literature review in this chapter provides useful empirical evidence on the issues and it sought to determine the theoretical and practical feasibility of the issues under examination. And thus the dissertation seeks to add to this debate by specifically addressing the capacity dimension to public service delivery. Having overviewed the theoretical literature now we move on to research method and design.

Chapter 3: Research Method and Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter defines methodological aspects for this research under examination. The study of public administration is a field characterized by an assortment of research methods and a mixture of basic and applied research (Bowen, 2005, p. 208-209, Olsen, 1991, p. 125). The diverse methodological issues ranging from personal knowledge to experience and observation for ages have come within its scope. This ensures the reliability of research data, validity of results and improves the academic standard. This study explicitly brings methodological issues to the forefront to establish firmly its validity and soundness. It seeks to establish a clear and consistent research methodology and research design in order to “make the process as transparent as possible” (Bowen, 2005, p. 216).

A case study method of qualitative analysis involving very careful and complete observation has been used (Gerring, 2004, p. 341). A single should not form the basis of serious scientific study. Thus, an assortment of ideas and techniques were used which followed a ‘triangulation’ approach (Jick, 1979, p. 603).

The study is mainly based on the philosophical traditions of post-positivism, which aims “to describe and explore in-depth phenomena from a qualitative perspective” (Crossan, 2003, p. 46). The research generally deploys an evaluative approach to understanding public administration and its functions. The triangulation approach derives its conclusions by combining both primary and secondary sources and employs a case-study based form of historical inquiry, unstructured interviews, observation and personal knowledge. Documents related to administrative reform, capacity building and primary education were reviewed. Scholarly analysis and reports prepared by national and

international development partner agencies, along with documents published by the government of Bangladesh were also used.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Key Features

“Method is not solely, or even most importantly, a matter of technique; it is a first and foremost way of thinking” (Caldwell, 1968, p. 219). The methodological approach of any study is normally confined by the nature of its aims and questions. This research is mainly qualitative. Qualitative research is a well-known field of assorted research methodologies and practices covering “a multitude of non-positivist research stances” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 20). This style of research directs attention to the differences and particularities in human affairs and “promotes the social scientists to discover what people think happens and why” (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 10). To attain reliable data it is often necessary to combine both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods are traditionally considered to cover a wider area, while qualitative methods go deeper into the material (Hossain, 2011, p. 164; Hellevik, 1984; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Since the research seeks to gain deeper insights into a specific phenomenon within the field of public administration, a qualitative method seemed most appropriate (Patton, 2002, p. xxi-xxiv).

The study seeks to evaluate the success or effect of a service programme; in this case, Bangladesh’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the provision of universal primary education. It seeks to “assess the effectiveness of specific projects to see if the original aims have been achieved” (Burton & Bartlett, 2009, p. 4). This study does not follow the methodological approaches of pure or basic research, applied or field research, or action research. However, elements of these approaches were utilised where appropriate.

This research uses a case study approach. Case studies are empirical inquiries which generally “investigate a single phenomenon, instance, or example” within its real-life context (Gerring, 2004, p. 342). It enables the researcher to understand the phenomena under study as part of a larger picture. It enables one to develop an intimate familiarity of the subject and to collect rich data to facilitate better understanding about the ways in which different aspects of government work come to be interwoven and related (Becker, 1986, p. 4).

To explore these dynamics, different methods, approaches and research techniques were deployed using a *triangulation* approach (Jick, 1979, p. 603). This is regarded as a “between [or across] method” and “within method” which combine methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Denzin, 1978, p. 291 & 302). It “allows the use of multiple approaches to investigate a research question in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings” (Bryman, 2012, p. 1). This is to “ensure variance reflected that of the trait and not of the method ‘and enhances our belief that ‘the results are valid and not a methodological artifact’ (Boucherd, 1976, p. 268, as cited in Jick, 1979, p. 602). Thus, it allowed me to be more confident about the results of this research. A graphical representation of the research design is presented in figure 4.

Figure 4: Applied Research Methods



The research design features qualitative research, evaluative research, case studies and triangulation. This ensures “convincing and [accurate] findings as well as [improving] the quality of the research” (Yin, 2003, p. 10).

3.2.1.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a process of inquiry aims to achieve understanding through subjective analysis of phenomena. It emphasizes the context by which things happen. It is based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry which explore a social or human problem. In this case, the researcher builds a complex as well as holistic picture, analyses words, reports, and detailed views of information, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell, 2008, p. 27). The aim is to describe a phenomenon using observed data, documents, interviews, experimentation, and interpretation. Typically, it involves the analysis of information gathered via document review, interviews, documentation, and audio/visual aids. It is “accepted to use qualitative research in all areas of social sciences for research designs based on methods generating qualitative data” (Zydziunaite, 2007, p. 8). The contributions of qualitative research include development of concepts, generation of theory, related implications and contribution of rich insights.

Qualitative research seeks to construct social reality. It focuses on interactive processes and events with present and explicit values, analyses thematically, and subjects few cases. Authenticity and researcher's involvement is the key (Neuman, 1997, p. 10). Qualitative research concerns itself with how people make sense of the world and how they experience events (Willig, 2001, p. 3). Letting the subjects being studied provide better and richer answers to questions posed by the researcher is the advantage and uniqueness of qualitative research. In the words of Hossain (2011), "qualitative researchers examine the 'why' and 'how' questions and not just the 'what', 'where', and 'when' questions" (p. 144). It interprets the observed phenomenon and explains why a certain phenomenon behaves in a certain way, with subjective data collected by the researcher. The qualitative researcher adopts and uses one or more strategies of inquiry as a guide for the procedures in a qualitative research (Hossain, 2011, p. 143).

Qualitative procedures stand in unambiguous contrast with the methods of quantitative research as qualitative enquiry employs different knowledge claims, strategies of enquiry, and methods of data collection, presentation, and analysis (Creswell, 2008, p. 34). Creswell identified additional characteristics of the qualitative method (cited in Hossain, 2011, p. 148):

- Qualitative research takes place in natural settings. The qualitative researcher often goes to the site (home, office) of participants to conduct the research.
- Qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic. The methods of data collection are growing, and they increasingly involve active participation by participants and sensitivity to the participants in the study.
- Qualitative research is emergent rather than tightly prefigured. Several aspects emerge during a qualitative study. The research questions may

change and be refined as the inquirer learns what to ask and to whom it should be asked.

- Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive. This means that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data. The researcher filters the data through a personal lens that is situated in a specific sociopolitical and historical moment.

Qualitative research is conducted following specific philosophical bearings that are connected to each observable fact. The results are presented as themes, with a small sample size. All participants will be asked the same questions (Hossain, 2011, p. 149-153). The philosophy underpins its mode of inquiry as well as, to some extent, in methods, models and procedures used to form the non-positivist philosophical stands of the interpretivist paradigm in social research (Kumar, 2005, p, 17).

Qualitative research methods allow researchers to refine and improve their knowledge base. Such methods are useful for exploring little-known phenomena or for understanding the cultural perspective of a minimally understood population (Richard, 1996, p. 201; Pope, 1995; Stange, 1994; Black, 1994). The method includes “action research, case study, ethnography, grounded research, semiotics, discourse analysis, hermeneutics and narrative” (Myers, 2009, p. 8). One of the greatest strengths of the qualitative approach is “the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions” (Hossain, 2011, p. 145). It might make surprise “those who are not familiar with qualitative methodology that the sheer volume of data and the detailed level of analysis that results even when research is confined to a small number of subjects” (Hossain, 2011, p. 145-146; as cited in Neill, 2006, p. 3; Myers, 2000, Myers and Avison, 2002).

3.2.1.2 Evaluation Research

Evaluative research seeks to determine whether a programme or activity is meeting or has met its objectives. Over the past decades, both academics and practitioners in the field of public administration have increasingly recognized the significance of assessing the public service (Shi & Levy, 2005, p. 267). Clarke & Dawson (1999) suggest that “the importance of systematic evaluative research as a phenomenon across the social sciences has been evident in recent years” (as cited in SFU, 2010, p. 2). This method has gained popularity in practical settings (Weiss, 1998, p. 6; Powell, 2006, p. 104).

Evaluative research is can either have specific research techniques, programme evaluation, or employs standard method for evaluative purposes (Powell, 2006, p. 102-103). It can generally be perceived “as a type of study that uses standard social research methods for evaluative purposes, as a specific research methodology and as an assessment process that employs special techniques unique to the evaluation of social programmes” (Powell, 2006, p. 102). It attempts to assess the effectiveness of social programmes.

When evaluative research is treated as a research method, it is likely to be seen as “a type of applied or action research, not as basic or theoretical research” (Powell, 2006, p. 102). However, there is no single research method for the approach. It is not a methodology, but a class of research with common features for evaluating programmes. The differences centre on the orientation of the research, not on the methods employed (Childers, 1989, p. 251). It is “a systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation, and utility of social interventions programmes” (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2003, p. 5). It has been recognised as “an elastic word that stretches to cover judgments of many kinds” (Weiss, 1972, p. 1). It involves the use of social research methodologies “to judge and to

improve the planning, monitoring, effectiveness, and efficiency of health, education, welfare, and other human service programmes” (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2003, p. 19). It is an all-encompassing approach to research which deals with initiation and implementation of policies and programmes concerning services focusing. It seeks to evaluate an event and to make judgments about its usefulness.

Evaluative research is mostly qualitative. However, both quantitative and qualitative methods have an important place in programme evaluation (Shi & Levy, 2005, p. 266). It deals with policy process – development, formulation and implementation. Childers (1989) notes that “evaluation research is usually be employed for decision making; deals with research questions about a programme; takes place in the real world of the programme; and usually represents a compromise between pure and applied research” (p. 250). It often attempts to assess the effectiveness of a programme or service, more specifically, be used to support accreditation reviews, needs assessments, new projects, personnel reviews, conflict resolution, and professional compliance reports (Powell, 2006, p. 109-110). In this case, the research seeks to evaluate the capacity of local administrations in Bangladesh to implement the MDGs of providing universal primary education.

3.2.1.3 The Case Study Approach

“A comprehensive study of a social unit, be it a person, a group, a social institution, a district, or a community, is called a case study” (Young, 1977, p. 247). It is an approach for an extensive investigation of a social phenomenon (Willig, 2001; Maylor & Blackmon, 2005). It is not a research method itself; instead, it constitutes an approach in the study of singular entities. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) further stated: “case studies are often seen as prime examples of qualitative research – which adopts an interpretative approach to data and studies ‘things’ within their context” (p. 18). They involve the use

of a wide range of methods of data collection and analysis (Willig, 2001, p. 67). The strength of a case study is that it can take an example on an activity – ‘an instance in action’ – and use multiple methods and data sources to explore it and interrogate it. Thus, it can achieve a rich description of a phenomenon (Stark & Torrance, 2005, p. 106). Neuman (2006) states, “a qualitative researcher may use a case study approach to gather a large amount of information on one or few cases, go into greater depth, and get more details on cases being examined” (p. 102). The approach enables researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events – such as individual life cycles, organizational and managerial processes, (Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case study researcher examines data in a different way in comparison to researchers using a quantitative approach.

Public administration as an empirical research field is “dominated by case studies and description in general” (Gill & Meier, 2000, p. 193). In the context of governance-related research, it is an ideal method; especially when research seeks to study phenomena such as administrative reform processes, administrative development approaches and so on (Galliers et al., 1995, p. 152). Case studies are also appropriate for complex, practice-based problems. This includes all aspects of administration in a broader public administrative context (Walsham, 1995 & 2006, p. 320). It views any social unit in its totality. It examines seeks to examine all potential perspectives on a given issue or programme; in this case, the public service delivery dimension of the MDGs.

An objective assessment of a phenomenon, whether social or natural, is almost impossible without detailed information derived from a systematic empirical investigation. A case-study approach was considered the most appropriate means of empirical study. This facilitates the investigation of the phenomenon under study to

answer the research question/s that may be fairly loose to begin with. It seeks to find a range of evidence in the case setting. This has to be abstracted and collected to the best possible answers for the research questions (Gillham, 2000, p. 211).

Case studies are an important tool of social investigation. They provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. The approach is regarded as best suited studies for tracing the evolution and growth of a social problem in its different aspects (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003, p. 61). It appears especially useful in a developing country like Bangladesh with varied social and political institutions interactions. The case study in this research has answered multiple questions. They begin with 'how' and 'why' and are targeted to a limited number of events or conditions and their inter relationships. It utilizes evidence generated from a variety of information-gathering techniques (Yin, 2003, p. 97). This particular case study makes use of documentary/ historical sources and interviews of key stakeholders.

Case orientated strategies adopted for this research are comprehensive in character and integrated in nature. The study starts from the specifics and peculiarities of public administration reform and the capacity of public sector institution and builds reasonable theoretical generalizations (Ragin, & Amoroso, 2011, p.43). The case study method is often criticized for non-generalizability. It is true that interpretive research based on a case study cannot offer generalizations in the statistical sense (Robson, 2002, p. 19). However, it results in a cycle of check and elaboration, in which data collection and data analysis are interrelated (Robson, 2002).

Generalizations in the context of the interpretavists tradition differ from those of the positivist tradition. Its conclusions depend upon the time and place where the research is carried out. The research has discarded the idea of using theory as a precursor to this

investigation as “the discipline of public administration has been, through most of its history, a practical art rather than theory-based discipline” (Olsen, 1991, p. 126). Much of the theoretical reflection occurs during or near the end to the data collection process. Some theoretical insights about the subject matter have been considered prior to fieldwork. The study therefore combines the case study method with the conceptual tools provided by organizational theory. This has been used sparingly to explain administrative reform to improve the capacity of the state to provide primary education in Bangladesh (Zifcak, 1992, p. 17).

3.2.1.4 Triangulation

This study assumes the position that no single method is good enough to get a valid result in social science research. Triangulation is regarded as a means to overcome the limitations inherent in single –method research. The term derives from surveying, where it refers to the use of a series of triangles to map out an area (Bryman, 2012, p. 1). It generally means “the multiple employments of sources of data, observers, methods, or theories, in investigations of the same phenomenon” (Ammenwerth, Iller, & Mansmann, 2003, p. 239). The “mixing of data or methods so that diverse viewpoints or standpoints cast light upon a topic” is its main focus (Olsen, 2004, p. 2). It is a 3-dimensional approach to research which is used in social science research to investigate the same phenomena using data sources, observers, methods, or theories, with the twin objectives of supporting “a finding with the help of the others (validation)’ and complementing ‘the data with new results, thus [finding] new information, [getting] additional pieces to the overall ‘puzzle’” (Ammenwerth, Iller, & Mansmann, 2003, p. 239-40).

Triangulation is often associated with *multi-method evaluation*. However, it is not limited to the combination of methods. It also describes the combination of data sources, investigators, or theories (Ammenwerth, Iller, & Mansmann, 2003, p. 244). Denzin

(1978) divided triangulation into four types which can be applied at the same time: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and method triangulation. This is distinct from the conventional use of the term (p. 290).

Data triangulation can be defined as “gathering data through several sampling strategies, so that slices of data at social situations, as well as on a variety of people, are gathered” (Bryman, 2012, p. 3). In other words, various data sources relating to time, space, or persons can be used. For example, this research uses interview informants from different areas and categories. Investigator triangulation entails gathering and analyzing data with observers or interviewers with specific professional or methodological backgrounds. The use of computer literacy and social research knowledge in this research to analyze and interpret results from interviews is an example of this. Theory triangulation refers to the use of more than one theoretical position in interpreting data. More specifically, data are analyzed using various perspectives, hypotheses or theories. For example, administrative reforms are analyzed using different change theories. Methods triangulation is the application of various methods for the gathering and analysis of data.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Data Collection

Fieldwork to gather both primary and secondary data was carried out in Bangladesh between September and November 2012 and in December 2013. Data collection covered key areas within and outside the public service. A number of qualitative investigative tools, conventional social science presenting techniques and systematic processes of analysis were used either separately or combined. The tool used depended on the circumstances of each interaction. Both descriptive discussion and inferential analyses contributed to research outcomes. Table 5 presents a summary of the fieldwork undertaken.

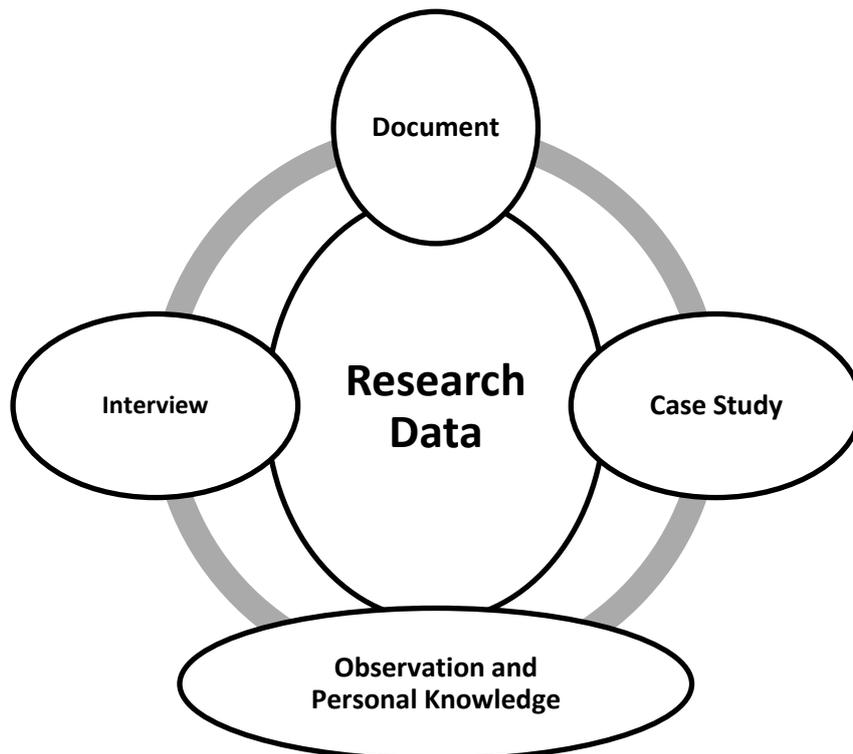
Table 5: Field Study Plan- data source, collection and strategy

SI No	Data Source and Technique of Collection	Location										
1	Document Search: visiting learning resource centres and libraries for documentary resources	University of Dhaka Central Library, Dhaka, Libraries of BCS (admin) Academy, NILG, BPATC, BMDC, BENBAIS, P&D Academy, IER, CPD, CDRB, BIDS,NAEM, NAPE.										
2	General Observation: Government offices, Learning delivery in primary schools	Gobindagonj: Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad, UNO Office, Education Office, URC, and Kuti Bari Primary School										
		Biswanath: Biswanath Upazila Parishad, UNO Office, Education Office, URC, and Puran Gawnn Primary School										
3	Case Study	Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad and Kuti Bari Primary School										
		Biswanath Upazila Parishad and Puran Gawnn Primary School										
4	Interviewing: Pre-testing, purposive sampling of non-probability sampling technique with unstructured interview schedule. Total informants= 40	Dhaka: University of Dhaka, BCS (admin) Academy										
		Dhaka: 2 Member of Parliament (MPs) (MP Hostel, Dhaka)										
		Gobindagonj: 4 local People’s Representatives + 2 administrators + 5 primary school teachers										
		Biswanath: 4 local People’s Representatives + 2 administrators + 5 primary school teachers and others										
		Dhaka: 10 Academics and Expert Observers										
		Dhaka and London: 6 Administrators (1 in London)										
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>No (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>People’s Representatives</td> <td>10 (25%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Academics and Expert Observers</td> <td>10 (25%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Administrators</td> <td>10 (25%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teachers and others</td> <td>10 (25%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>40 (100%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	No (%)	People’s Representatives	10 (25%)	Academics and Expert Observers	10 (25%)	Administrators	10 (25%)	Teachers and others	10 (25%)
Category	No (%)											
People’s Representatives	10 (25%)											
Academics and Expert Observers	10 (25%)											
Administrators	10 (25%)											
Teachers and others	10 (25%)											
Total	40 (100%)											
5	Informal Discussion: Chatting with Potential resource persons	University of Dhaka, BCS (admin) Academy Library, Government Offices, Private Houses, Dhaka New Market Bookshops Area, and Tea-café shops in Dhaka.										

3.3.2 Information Sources

Access to data sources has been gained through personal networks. My years-long association with the discipline of public administration has generated a number of contacts in academia, as well as researchers, administrators, and teachers. Considerable leg work, phone calls, visits, lobbying and generally ‘putting myself out’ (Murray & Lawrence, 2000, p. 12), was done to ensure sufficient data to prove the assumptions and to get answer research questions. In gathering information for this research, documentary sources have been substantiated and supplemented by case study, interview, observation, and personal knowledge (Finnegan, 1996, p. 147).

Figure 5: Information Sources



3.3.2.1 Documentary Sources

Documentary sources took the form of books, essays and research papers in public administration journals / periodicals, seminar papers, research reports, government publications and documents, newspaper/magazine, etc. (Mogalakwe, 2006, p. 223). The use of documents has been “helpful in verifying the correct spelling, titles, and names of organizations that will be mentioned in the interviews” (Yin, 2002, p. 86). A review of documents enabled me to look for facts and to read between the lines and pursue corroborative evidence elsewhere (Yin, 2002, p. 89). A variety of information repositories were used to collect documentary information for this research (Marshall, Herman, & Rajan, 2006, p. 174). They included government offices and archives, academic and non-academic libraries, governance and administrative research bodies, personal collections of free-lance researchers on government and politics, unpublished personal records, international development partner organizations, civil-society organizations, pressure group’s organisations, book shops, publishers’ displays and published electronic source like eJournals and online search engines.

Archives preserve unpublished and unique historical records on the basis of cultural, historical or evidentiary value. Government offices have contemporary information. Academic books, research journals and magazines, both printed and electronic were sourced from academic and non-academic libraries, research institutes and professional training centres. Governance and administrative research bodies which disseminate research on various issues of public administration were also consulted. Rare collections of materials by free-lance researchers on government and politics also proved useful. Unpublished personal records such as memoirs, diaries, letters, etc. have also been valuable. Occasional and annual reports, project proposals, impact and evaluation studies and reports of international development partner organisations such as the UN,

WB, UNDP, IMF, ADB, UNICEF etc. all had useful publications on offer. Pressure group hand-outs and papers were an additional source of information. Book shops and special collections, both recent and old, as well as publication catalogues also served as documentary sources. Independent observations, analysis and suggestions also enriched the quality of data underpinning this research.

Published eJournals, ebooks, records and other online resources were used extensively. Personal knowledge was also viewed as an important a source of information. “The amount of knowledge which we can justify from evidence directly available to us can never be large. The overwhelming proportion of our factual beliefs continues, therefore, to be held at second hand through trusting others, and is the great majority of cases our trust is placed in the authority of comparatively few people of widely acknowledge standing” (Polanyi, 1964, p 3).

The study made extensive use of primary documents. The idea of documentary research tends “to conjure up a mental image of a researcher digging around in a dusty archive amongst historical developments” (Mason, 1997, p. 71). Primary documents were sought to “[reveal] recent historical experiences” (Postan, 1971, p. 24) along with set paths of historical development.

The evidence on which the social sciences are based “always relates to past human behavior” (Finnegan, 1998, p. 150). The social sciences “are interested in [the] regularities, tendencies and repetitive elements of social behavior” (Shafer, 1969, p. 6). The documents used in the study were useful sources of information regarding the development, implementation and outcomes of reform processes in Bangladesh. They provided insights into reform process which were not available in other forms. They were as a basis to verify or contextualize the data derived from other sources. Private

documents and administrative records, which, for Hakim (1987) amounted to “vast quantities of information ... collected and recorded by organizations and individuals for their own purposes, well beyond the data collected by social scientists purely for research purposes” (p. 36).

Seminar papers, research reports on governance issues in developing countries and Bangladesh preserved at the research bodies located in Dhaka such as the University of Dhaka’s Centre for Administrative Research and Innovation (CARI), the Organization for Social Development and Research (OSDER), the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), the Centre for Development Research Bangladesh (CDRB) as well as personal collections of free-lance researchers on politics and government in Bangladesh have been consulted. A wide range of essays, newspapers and magazines, official documents and records, and research reports were also consulted.

Libraries are the primary knowledge repositories of source materials for research. This study made extensive use of materials available in a number of libraries: The University of Tampere library, The British Library in London, the Library of the University of Dhaka, the Bangladesh Secretariat Library, the Library of Planning and Development in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Civil Service (administration) Academy Library, the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) Library, the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) Library, the National Institute of Local Government (NILG) Library, the National Academy for Educational and Management (NAEM), The National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE), and the Library of Institution of Education of the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The study sought wherever possible to consult with people directly or indirectly associated with the phenomena under study (Skocpol, 1995, p. 16). These included

politico-administrative and academic elites, who were regarded as the witness of the events or narrator of the history. Those who actively observed the occurrences made the establishment of an organic historical timeline easier and perhaps more authentic. Indeed, their experiences and memories provided a rich source of data in this regard. However, given their status as members of the elite (Zafarullah, 2007, p. 161), they were sometimes reluctant to disclose information publicly. In some cases, conclusions had to be drawn on the basis of available resources.

3.3.2.2 Case Source

Cases were selected for the study using *purposive sampling*. This ensured in depth information-rich cases “from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance for the purpose of the research” (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Two primary schools from the Sylhet and Gaibandha districts under the Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazilas, Puran Gawn Primary School and Kuti Bari Primary School, were examined. Sylhet is located in northern Bangladesh and Gaibandha the northeast. They were selected for their differences in region, geography, population, size and economic status as well as some shared features, which are described in more detail in chapter 7.

3.3.2.3 Interview Sources

The research *interview*; literally an *inter-view*, is an interpersonal situation which interchanges views between and among persons about a theme of mutual interest that proceeds rather like a narrow conversation. It has a specific purpose and structure characterized by a systematic form a questioning (Kvale, 1996, p. 10). It is recognized as the familiar asymmetric relationship between and among the researcher and subjects (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p. 2). This is because “the interviewee's responses are merely a means of keeping the interview and the informant on track” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p. 3). As a research method, the use of the interview is nothing new or

mysterious. Disciplines of social sciences such as anthropology and sociology have long used interviews to obtain knowledge from informants (Kvale, 1996, p. 11). However, in this study, it was treated as a distinct method located within the broader methodological category of surveys, case studies and life histories (Platt, 2002, p. 102).

The interview in this research represented a meeting or dialogue between people where personal and social interaction occurred (Davies, 2006) and was used as a qualitative method for encouraging experts to share their opinion and experience in the phenomena under study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2). The purpose was “not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypothesis”, but rather “an interest in understanding the lived experience with other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). One of the tools and techniques for collecting data was to ask questions in person (Richards, 1996, p. 199). In this regard, my efficiency as a researcher and familiarity with the Bangladeshi social context played important roles in determining which problems were to be tackled and the environment from which data was to be collected. The study focused on content specified by systematic description, prediction and explanation (Robson, 2002, Cohen & Manion, 2000, p. 2).

Cohen et al (2008, p. 284) has argued that a sample of a minimum of thirty informants is required to perform data analysis. In this case, forty key stakeholders from different areas of public administration in Bangladesh were interviewed with a view towards adding establishing empirical validity. Research using the positivist approach is generally of a larger scale. Interpretivist research, on the other hand, involves a smaller sample size. This is in part due to practicality (Cohen et al, 2008, p. 584; Clough & Nutbrown, 2008, p. 5; Burton & Bartlett, 2009, p. 2). Informants related to the objectives of the research. Stakeholders included policy-makers/ public representatives, administrators, academics and expert observers and primary school teachers. The

process entailed interview design, choosing, contacting and meeting the interviewees and pre-testing the interview schedule (Seidman, 2006, p. 12). It entailed considerable telephoning, emailing, purposive sampling, and making use of the snowball effect (Richards, 1996, p. 206). Face-to-face meetings, unstructured questionnaires, thematic interviews, and informal discussion were used to substantiate data collected via other means.

Pre-testing, otherwise known as piloting, involved testing interview questions in similar conditions to interviews to pick up on potential difficulties which might not be revealed in a pre-test with informants. Contacting people for interviews via email and telephone people was convenient and saved time, money and energy. Potential interviewees were often identified using the snowball effect, or, purposive sampling, from one interviewee to another. Face to face meetings generally led to positive work outcomes given informants were generally well-versed in the subject under examination. Unstructured thematic interviews were used to allow informants the space to say what is important to them and the freedom to express it in their own words. Interviewing in this manner was time-consuming but informants often produced newer viewpoints for consideration.

Informal and unplanned conversations initiated discussion on relevant issues with experts in the field with a relaxed atmosphere. The quality of these discussions ranged from worthless, to profound, to mischievous questions of an off-the-record nature. Observation is a tool of doing social research where the researcher takes on a role in the social situation under observation. In qualitative research, it is often referred to as 'unstructured' (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 3), which sometimes described as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, p. 1).

An interview schedule for conducting a detailed field study can be semi-structured or

unstructured. In this study unstructured interviews were used. The interview questions focused on gaining the perspectives of those involved in administrative reform. It is believed that good interviews are those in which interviewees are at ease (Biklen, 1992, p. 9). In addition, interviews provided the opportunity to observe informants and the situation in which they were responding to the questions posed (Ary et. al., 1985, p. 56). The interview schedule and other discussions were designed to provoke more clarifications from the informants.

Interviews can be targeted and insightful. They can also be biased due to poorly constructed questions, which may lead to poor responses and inaccuracy due to poor recollections (Soy, 1996, p. 9). The interview schedule confirmed general assumptions related to the problem under study. While this research examined the capacity dimension of administrative reform in Bangladesh regarding the provision of primary education, it also assumed that respondents would not always have meaningful understandings of the issues under study.

Service delivery in Bangladesh is hampered by poor institutional capacity in the public administrative system. Problematizing Bangladeshi shortcomings of skilled manpower, management and logistics is far easier than affecting change on the ground. The interview schedule included questions designed to provoke insights into these problems. Interviews focused on issues raised by the objectives of the study and research questions posed. The schedule began with questions introducing the topic. Various questions relating to the research were then posed. The schedule ended with asking for suggestions for future policy measures.

Murray & Lawrence (2000, p. 7) argue that research which has not tested its own methodology cannot be considered 'reflective'. Pre-testing of planned data-gathering

techniques with a restricted group was carried out to establish the adequacy and functionality of data-gathering techniques. The process provided useful information regarding other aspects of data collection, interview processes and research content (Alreck & Settle, 1995, p. 53). The interview schedule proceeded using a *progressive focusing* approach (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012, p. 817; Parlett & Hamilton, 1972).

There is no single and hard and fast rule for sample size, in principle, which can be used to select informants. Generally speaking, it “depends on the importance, time, and resource of research” (Baker & Edwards, n.d., p. 3). As previously mentioned, “one should include at least thirty” (Ary & Razavieh, 1985, p. 147; Cohen, Glimm, & Porter, 2008, p. 584). In this case, forty interviews were conducted, with representative groups of individuals included among informants to generalize outcomes. A great deal of time was spent (September–November, 2012 and December, 2013) in Bangladesh traveling and interviewing concerned people, both currently serving and retired, to collect data. Interviews took place at government offices, training institutions, universities, think tanks, primary schools, and private houses.

Access to interviewees, their public role or title, and closeness to the administrative process and public representativeness were the main criteria for selection. It was impossible to get in touch with many of those, both currently working and retired, who had been associated with the developing, formulation and implementation of administrative policy. Consequently, research relied ‘purposive sampling’ of *non-probability sampling techniques* (Bulmer & Urwick, 1993, p. 15), where personal judgment and research interests were used to select potential informants. Targeted informants were often accessed using the snowball method (Richards, 1996).

In the interviews the informants were ready to respond. Issues were discussed thoroughly and responses were often quite revealing. A number of informants were acquaintances, friends of friends or contacts of friends. In this sense, the subject matter predetermined its method: the network of informants was largely intertwined with my personal network. Due to the latter, it was effective. For instance, a number of some high-ranking senior officers gave their time only because of recommendations from previously interviewed third parties and trusted personal contacts.

A distinctive feature of the process of contacting informants is that the research was concerned with the perspectives of elites regarding the phenomenon under study. The character of those who agreed to be interviewed varied from fully competent experts to informed participants. To assure the quality of data, informants of diverse personal experience or expertise were selected. Interview techniques were refined to increase the level of comfort, and to encourage informants to talk about what they normally talk about. Indeed, “good interviews are those in which subjects are at ease and talk freely about their points of view” (Biklen, 1992, p.79). Informants were approached at the outset informally and then formally, mostly on the basis of assumed knowledge on the subject. It is also worth mentioning that not all the information for this study was obtained in organized interviews. The study also draws on notes taken following spontaneous discussions.

To facilitate frank answers and views, all informants were assured that their names would not be mentioned and their comments would be treated confidentially, unless permission to the contrary was granted. Nevertheless, to make the interview as thorough, realistic and objective as possible, informal discussions with the informants were held to obtain agreement in principle. All informants were offered the opportunity to remain anonymous and, where informants wish, all information given would be treated for

research only and with the strictest confidentiality. The nature of research – academic, the benefits to gain – to write a doctorate level academic research dissertation, was explained to make them attentive to the needs of the study.

Existing documentation and reports have been made available in the libraries mentioned. Informant diversity was also considered. In this regard, the educational background, level of involvement and gender of informants was also considered. Their views were instrumental in this study bearing fruit results.

All interviews were conducted in both English and Bangla (Bengali). An important consideration when conducting interviews was to provide informants with such a friendly environment which make them feel free to talk. Use of a preferred language was important for the informants, as it helped open their minds and tongues. Although the original interview schedule was designed in English, Bengali, the native language of the informants and the researcher, was taken as a means of explanation of interview terms for many of the informants, particularly people's representatives and primary school teachers. Academics and expert observers and administrators were more at home in English; using the Bengali language was out of their normal linguistic practices. In cases, notes were taken in English and incorporated carefully in the outputs. To sum up, using the Bengali language at some stages of interviews was useful for squeezing additional information out of informants.

Though interviewing was time consuming, it was a flexible and adaptive means of enquiry. As it was face to face, information in this study was verified easily by encouraging informants to speak further and paying attention to attitudes and gestures. Given the backgrounds of the informants, it would have been almost impossible to complete the study without interviews.

Informants were divided into four categories: People’s representatives; administrators; academic and expert observer of public administration; and primary school teacher and related to primary education management. Ten informants from each group were interviewed. In the people’s representative category, two were representatives at the national level i.e., Member of Parliament (MP), and eight were representative at the local level. Among Academic and Expert Observer, seven were lecturers employed at different universities. The remaining three were policy analysts and consultants. Administrators were part of the civil bureaucracy and serving at both national and local levels. The fourth category comprised of primary school teachers and related to primary education management. Table 6 illustrates interviewees’ demographics as a whole.

Table 6: Informants at a Glance

Category	No. of Informants	%
People’s Representatives	10 (2+8)	25%
Academics and Expert Observers	10 (7+3)	25%
Administrators	10	25%
Teachers and others	10 (5+5)	25%
Total	40	100%

Interviews took place in Bangladesh between September and November, 2012. As indicated in Table 7, thirty-three informants were males and seven were females. When broken down by education level 7 of informants held a Ph.D., 21 held Master’s degrees and 12 held Bachelor degrees. Informants fell between the ages of 25 – 70.

Table 7: Informants background of education, age, and sex

Education		Age	Sex
Ph D	07	25 to 35 --- 10 35 to 45 --- 14	Male: 33 Female: 07
Master	21	46 to 55 --- 12 56 to 70 --- 04	
Graduate	12		
Total:	40	Total: 40	Total: 40

Informants were chosen for their diversity, as the study required a wide range of opinions on the issues under examination. *People’s representatives* are elected by citizens in different bodies at national and local levels. They are responsible for developing policies which cater to the needs of the electorate. Other bodies at local level are comprised of elected representatives from local areas. Representatives are responsible for monitoring and implementing public policies. Both categories of representatives make up the key informants for the research. *Academic and expert observer* are the university teachers and personalities who examine policy processes make up the next category. These informants usually examined policy issues of a country from an own academic or journalistic viewpoint. The *Administrator* category was comprised of members of the Bangladeshi civil service responsible for the implementation of government policies. Informants came from the national and local levels of public administration, as well as other organs of government related to central personnel agency and training institutions like the National Institute of Local Government (NILG), Bangladesh Public Administration Training Center (BPATC),

Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy (BCS Admin Academy), and the Planning and Development Academy. The *School teachers* and other education management personalities were interviewed to provide factual accounts of the teaching and learning situations in Puran Gawn and Kuti Bari Primary schools. Chapter 8 of this dissertation represents the results based on the information derived from interview source for this research.

3.4 Data Organization, Presentation and Analysis

Organization, presentation, and interpretation of data was done using commonly applied qualitative techniques and aimed to reinforce analytical generalizations. The techniques used in this research include ordering, clustering and grouping data to detect general issues; patterning and categorizing data to detect specific trends; factoring, synthesizing, associating, conceptualizing, hypothesizing, and abstracting to the existing theoretical framework (Robson, 2002, p. 8; Bryan, Alan & Burgess, 1994, p. 3). Efforts were taken to preservation of anonymity of the informants during the transcription and interpretation of interviews and to ensure the accuracy and quality of interview data.

Repeated reading and rewriting helped produce accurate data and a systematic presentation (Bowen, 2005). It improved the quality of research and provided opportunities to creatively present the narrative. Common non-textual elements such as charts, figures, graphs, flowcharts, histograms, illustrations, maps, pictographs, symbols and tables provided alternatives means to communicate ideas and were useful summary tools. They highlighted important pieces of information without breaking the narrative flow of the research to support key findings (Libguides, 2012, p. 1).

3.4.1 Data Presentation

Existing patterns of the phenomena were visualized with a clear understanding of the problem in order to delineate more effective ways to address it. The research made extensive use of tabulation; or “the process of transferring data from the data-gathering instruments to the tabular form in which they [were] systematically examined” (Biklen, 1992, p. 166). Informant’s opinions were used directly or indirectly to support and substantiate documentary sources. Non-textual elements were constructed and handled independently of any explanation or elucidation of their significance. While the tables and figures in this research may require further clarification, they could stand on their own to a greater extent than is possible with qualitative data (Corrie & Zaklukiewicz, 1985, p. 205).

3.4.2 Data Analysis

3.4.2.1 Framework of Data Analysis

The aim of analysis is “to convert a mass of raw data into a coherent account. Whether the data are quantitative or qualitative, the task is to sort, arrange, and process them and make sense of their configuration. The intent is to produce a reading that accurately represents the raw data and blends them into a meaningful account of events” (Weiss, 1998, p. 271). Most data analysis, whether quantitative or qualitative in nature, employ strategies like describing, counting, factoring, clustering, comparing, finding commonalities, examining deviant cases, finding co-variation, ruling out rival explanations, modeling, and telling the story. In this case data were analyzed following a practice of descriptive and inferential data analysis. Previous studies were used to minimize the influence of pre-conceptions of the data.

The use of software for qualitative data analysis can be useful for certain purposes (Richards & Richards, 2002, p. 2), but they can also constrain researchers who need flexibility and multiple methods. In fact, there is no one best programme to follow. Various computer programmes are there as the aids for analyzing the qualitative data like the interview have also been explored. They have been good at fabricating rudimentary links; but not completely free from missing important fragments from the interview excerpts that are relevant but not directly linked to the identified categories (Fotaki, 2001, p. 187). Ultimately, abstract and concept insights qualitative material can often only be analyzed by machine or by a researcher other than its chief designer (Bryman & Burgess, 1994, p. 49). However, Microsoft Words were a regular part of the qualitative research process (Weitzman, 2000, p. 928).

Extensive use of quotations drawn from interviews and other documents were used. By presenting research material “in original and unadulterated form, readers can more readily make their own judgments as to the validity of [the researchers’] understanding of the events” (Zifcak, 1992, p 3). This research began with a descriptive analysis which summarized data findings. From descriptive discussion it moved to inferential analysis in order to generalize likely outcomes.

3.5 The Strengths and Weakness of Research Methodology

3.5.1 Data Strengths

One of the strengths of the study is that data traces the translation of administrative reform initiatives in Bangladesh from theory to practice. This was achieved by conducting document reviews and interviews. This has facilitated the identification of the various constituents and key obstacles hindering the improvement of institutional service-delivery capacity-building at local administration of Upazila level in Bangladesh.

Another advantage of this research lies in its use of an integrated approach to data collection and management. It allowed repeated cross-checks of the reliability and objectivity of the information by posing the same question to informants from different sectors or agencies. In other cases, simply cross-checked informant views by relying on other data collection technique have been sufficient. For example, apart from the interviews, many discussions happened spontaneously, notes were taken afterwards. The study was able to fill information gaps which one type of data alone cannot do. The literature engendered a clear understanding of the issues prior to the conducting of fieldwork.

The study explicitly sought to move beyond the 'project bias' (Chambers, 1983, p. 18). A conscious effort was made to talk to a wide range of actors by interviewing key stakeholders in the administrative process. The views of local employees were sought when considerable research time was spent collecting historical and documentary data. Sometimes, these encounters involved unplanned conversations with library employees and offices with vast experiences in respect to length of service in their chosen fields. They were initially surprised that their opinions were being solicited. However, once approached they were relaxed and offered useful insights.

Substantive, extended personal discussions with those who formulate and implement policies in Bangladesh were invaluable. Field research sought to bring methodological challenges to the forefront. Generalizations which ignore the concreteness and distinctiveness of the object being investigated were flawed, on the one hand. On the other, sound generalization evolves from an aggregate of particular facts which have been reliably established. Thus, the essential particularities of the subject matter were provided by the research, while facilitating the necessary aggregation for establishing dependable generalizations (Jreisat, 1995, p. 221). Generalizations were ultimately refined in a way which is common in case studies (Stake, 2005, p. 443).

While much of the literature and historical documentation on the subject was available in Bangladesh; some of it was in Bengali. As I am fluent in Bengali and my academic background in administrative science did not prove to be a significant problem. It was especially useful to be able to grasp concepts first and reproduce them in English at a later date. Finally, my status as a Bangladeshi conducting research at a well-known Finnish University proved useful in gaining access to senior government officials and well-known scholars (Bulmer & Warwick, 1993, p. 5).

3.5.2 Data Weaknesses

Some potential pitfalls in the data exist. Informant opinions might not be absolutely free from individual reflection of the subjects, socio-political affiliation and bias. Consequently, informant opinions were carefully cross-checked and corroborated by other sources. Interviewing high-ranking personnel presented other difficulties by way of time pressure, exclusive locations, and so on. This bridge was crossed by much leg-work. In many cases, telephone and email interactions were a gateway to the informants. Email was especially helpful to reach some socially remote people, for whom sacrificing some time for an atypical meeting was very hard.

The problem is that, as Jreisat (1995) states, “such information generated from interviews and discussions with many of these persons often dwindles from the level of authenticity and facts to a level of an oratorical match, in which responses are designed to impress, justify, or protect rather than to illuminate a problem or suggest a solution” (p. 225). However, the interviews provided a greater understand the perspectives of those at the heart of administrative reform efforts in Bangladesh. This revealed the challenges public administrations face regarding service delivery capacity-building and aided the study to identify needs and the necessity for further action.

Last but not least, the amount of time and money available to conduct fieldwork in Bangladesh was one of the most constraining aspects of the research design. Frugality was essential during fieldwork. While living arrangements, especially in Dhaka city, where most of the time was spent during the fieldwork, proved challenging, the fieldwork was nevertheless completed successfully.

3.6 Validity, Reliability, Representativeness of Research Data

Qualitative research is geared towards generating conceptual insights and theory rather than identifying statistically-proven causal relationships or making generalizations about a wider population on the basis of case study findings (Gomm, Hammersley, & Foster, 2000, p. 1). However, qualitative researchers need not be apologetic about limited generalizability or predictive value of qualitative data (Bryman, 2012, p. 4). Instead, qualitative research and case studies should be judged in terms of the adequacy of the theoretical inferences that they help to generate (Bryman, 2012, p. 11). In this research design, the emphasis was on identifying phenomena in government's administrative reform efforts and on drawing out the theoretical implications of such findings rather than on pretending to find a statistically-proven 'blueprint' for the successful implementation, or proving that the exact same pattern and phenomena will reproduce themselves elsewhere. Having said this, the study utilized methodological techniques which sought to strengthen - although they could not guarantee - the validity, reliability, generalizability/ representativeness of the data.

In addition to presenting myself as an independent researcher to informants, the validity of the data was enhanced through 'triangulation' (Burgess, 1991, p. 2). This was done through the 'methodological integration' (Burgess, 1991), of diverse yet complementary data collection methods. This enabled phenomena to be measured using literature

reviews, document analysis, unstructured interviews, and informal conversations. This increased the chances that the phenomena which were claimed to be measured were being measured. In so doing, information was confirmed and new dimensions to the issues were discovered.

A frequent criticism of qualitative and case study research is that reliability is low because so many findings depend on the capacity, personality and observations of the researcher. In order to enhance the reliability of the research interview schedules were redesigned after pre-testing. This allowed flexibility informants regarding the time and space and content of interviews.

Much time was spent explaining questions which might not otherwise be clear to informants. This helped this research get the questions across – an achievement later reflected in the thoughtfulness of responses. The reliability of data was also improved by reducing the chances of ‘subject bias,’ or the tendency of informants to try to please the tester. This is a common problem in most studies relying heavily on interviews (Robson, 2002, p. 7).

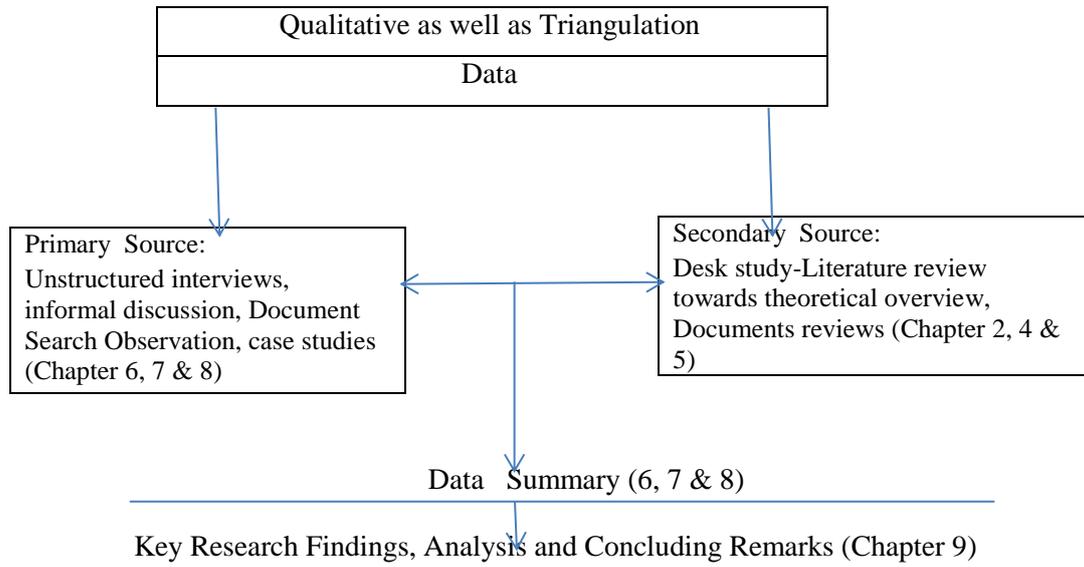
It was essential to gain a diverse range of perspectives. For this reason, informants working in different capacities, as well as from different groups or sectors were sought in order to limit potential damage from subject bias. A conscious effort was made to interview key stakeholders within each of the sectors, talking to informants with a range of personal traits: both men and women; higher educated to normal graduate; higher level to lower level officials; and intellectuals and practitioners – which Burgess refers to as ‘person triangulation’ (Burgess, 1991, p. 4). This large and varied number of interviewing gave the researcher the ability to not to rely too heavily on one informant whose information might be unreliable.

Qualitative research is predominantly based on case studies. Non-probability samples have very limited generalization, and their representativeness are either uncertain or unknown (Bulmer & Warwick, 1993, p. 16). The kind of purposive and snowball sampling in this research is not statistically representative of a universal population (Robson, 2002, p. 19). However, issues were tested by consulting different sources of information to establish whether the research findings are applicable beyond Bangladesh. The study found that a number of the trends identified are generalizable and reproducible across many developing countries. However, being aware of all limitations of one's research findings is an important one as being aware of its wider relevance and crucial step towards identifying areas in need of further research and reflection in the future.

3.7 Chapter Summary

To conclude, the methodological adoption in this research is heuristic in nature. It combined historical inquiry of the past and analytical use of recent materials on local administrative capacity-building through public administration reforms for primary education service delivery in Bangladesh. Case studies and interviews, which were the sources of primary and secondary information, provide the basis for the conclusions drawn by the study. Figure 6 presents a bird's-eye-view of the process.

Figure 6: Research Data Management



Chapter 4: Millennium Development Goals

4.1 Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals, otherwise popularly known as MDGs, are eight time-bound universal development goals. Adopted by the UN in 2001, the MDGs are a major anti-poverty initiative for global sustainable human development. The programme seeks to improve the situation of those left behind in an increasingly prosperous and technologically advanced world. The MDGs was the outcome of a series of discussions, meetings, and conferences which have taken place in development circles since the 1990s. The goals cover a range of issues. These included social development, nutrition, human rights, women's rights and others (Hulme & Scott, 2010, p. 1). The MDGs pursue socio-economic development activities to reach particular targets and achieve specific universal goals. It can be considered an “emerging field of global public policy” (Hulme, 2007, p. 1).

This chapter devotes to examine the MDGs. It describes the background, its origin and development, a general discussion on MDGs, and the operation of MDGs in Bangladesh. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

4.2 Background of Millennium Development Goals

The MDGs are an action plan for international development with eight ambitious goals to ensure better living for the poor (Hulme, 2010, p. i). They “address poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health, combating AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development” (bdnews24.com, 2013, p. 1). They were prepared by a multilateral working committee which included members of the World Bank (WB), International

Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), World Health Organization (WHO) and Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They were adopted as an anti-poverty ‘road map’ by the UN in 2001 following the Millennium Declaration (UN, 2000, p. 1). The road map was considered “a useful guide for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration by the United Nations system” (UN, 2001, p. 1). It differed from other global initiatives in their comprehensiveness for global socio-economic development. The initiative sought to take systematic efforts to specify, finance, implement, monitor and advocacy methods in a distinctive way (Hulme, 2007, p. 1). The MDGs gave the multi-lateral group the opportunity to work together for developing countries using a common platform. The project was a result of collaboration between the OECD, WB, and IMF. Against this backdrop, the MDGs’ emerged in 2000 as the ‘road map’ of the Millennium Declaration (UN, 2001, p. 1).

4.3 Origin and Development of Millennium Development Goals

The ideas of the MDGs were an assemblage of a number of sector-specific development ideas and campaigns. For example, the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), 1995 in Copenhagen helped to establish the basis for subsequent agreements for the MDGs. The OECD’s report, *A Better World for All*, introduced the concept of international development goals, or IDGs.

4.3.1 The World Summit on Social Development (WSSD)

The WSSD was held in 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark. It was the first major UN conference to focus specifically on social development issues. There were more than 14,000 delegates from 186 countries. Some 2,300 representatives from 811 non-governmental organizations were among the attendees (UN, 1995, p. 2). The conference resulted in the ‘Copenhagen Declaration’ (UN, 1995, p. 3), which recognized the need

to put people at the center of development. It pledged to end poverty, improve employment opportunities and foster social integration (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. v). The ten commitments included: The eradication of absolute poverty by a target date set by participating countries, full employment as a basic policy goal, promotion of social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights, achievement of gender equality and equity, acceleration of the development efforts of Africa and the least-developed countries (LDCs), inclusion of social development goals with structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), more allocation of resources to social development, the creation of an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment which will encourage social development, the attainment of universal and equitable access to education and primary health care, and, strengthening the cooperation for social development through the UN. These commitments can be traced to UNICEF's 1990 World Summit for Children, which took place in New York. Recommendations for sustainable development have origins at the UN Conference on Environment and Development, which took place in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. Processes can be traced to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which took place in Cairo (Hulme & Scott, 2007, p. 7).

4.3.2 A Better World For All

The first report of its kind, the document introduced the concept of 'international development goals' (IDGs). It has addressed the most compelling of human desires – “a world free of poverty and free from the misery that poverty breeds” (IMF & Others, 2000, p. 1). The report identifies six IDGs such as: Halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, enrolment of all children in primary school, empowering women and eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education, reducing the infant and child mortality rates by two-thirds, reducing maternal mortality ratios by three quarters,

providing the access for all who need reproductive health services, implementing national strategies for sustainable development, and reversing environmental degradation at both global and national levels (IMF & Others, 2000, p. 3).

It is also worth noting that the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD produced a report in 1996 entitled *Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Co-operation* just after the Copenhagen conference of 1995. It also dealt with poverty, education, gender equality, infant and child mortality, maternal mortality, reproductive health, and environment and set to achieve by 2015. The report's stated goals bear a striking resemblance to the Copenhagen commitments (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 10). The committee called for a reduction of one-half in the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, establishment of universal primary education in all countries, progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, a reduction by two-thirds in the mortality rates for infants and children under age 5, a reduction by three-fourths in maternal mortality, access to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages as soon as possible, and the implementation of national strategies for sustainable development for all countries by 2005 (OECD, 1996, p. 3-6).

International development agencies and institutions with anti-poverty agendas have produced a number of initiatives delineating comprehensive plans for international development. Plans to develop a global partnership for development were recognized in a 2001 UN General Assembly Resolution (UN, 2001). This coincides with the publication of the 'Road Map Towards the Implementation of United Nations Millennium Declaration' which created the eight specific MDGs (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 2).

4.3.3 The United Nations ‘Road Map’ Document

The Millennium Development Goals were first introduced in the 2000 UN document entitled ‘Road Map Towards the Implementation of United Nations Millennium Declaration’. This was the final outcome of the Millennium Declaration of 2000 signed by 189 countries, including 147 Heads of State on the 8th September 2000 (UN, 2000, p. 2). Its eight goals were to serve as a framework for the development activities of over 190 countries in ten regions (UN, 2008, p. 1). Initially, the IDG goals comprised of 18 targets with 48 indicators (UN, 20001, p. 3). The MDGs have expanded these to 21 targets and 60 indicators (UN, 2008, p. 2) through a process of ‘learning by doing’. The MDGs also included separate indicators for Least-Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and African states.

It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the IDGs of *A Better World For All* were the primary inspiration for the MDGs. For Hulme (2007) “[t]his authoritative listing [of the MDGs] was carefully qualified. The list of millennium development goals does not undercut in any way agreements on other goals and targets reached at the global conferences of the 1990s” (Hume, 2007, p. 15). Table 8 demonstrates the evolution of these agendas.

Table 8: Reconciliation of two sets of goals

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)	Internation Development Goals (IDGs)
1 Poverty Reduction 2 Water 5 Slums 6 Digital [divide]	1 Poverty Reduction
2 Education: Universal Primary education	2 Universal Primary Education
3 Gender equality	3 Education: Gender Gap
4 Health: HIV/AIDS 2 Water	1 Infant and Child Mortality 2 Maternal Mortality 3 Reproductive Health

Source: Hulme, 2007, cf Colin Bradford, 2002.

The MDG's targets and indicators for monitoring are inter-related and should be seen as a whole. They are "linked post hoc with indicators, for the purposes of measurement, and with goals, for the purpose of conceptual simplicity" (LIDC, 2010, p. 3). They established a partnership between developed and developing countries, which sought "to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which [was] conducive to development and the elimination of poverty" (UN, 2000, p. 9). However, the MDGs are yet proved a viable strategy to escape poverty. According to the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE):

Although the MDGs have encouraged improvements in the livelihood of the poor throughout the world by stressing the necessity of providing food, education and health, a strategy for the poor to actually get out of poverty has yet to be formulated. Since the only resource, the poor possess for earning income is labor, employment must be a key. However, employment is not placed in the center of the MDGs. Meanwhile, the experience of poverty reduction in East Asia reveals that the creation of employment opportunities in the export-oriented industrial sector is critical. The East Asian pattern of poverty reduction through industrial development is now occurring in South Asia as well. This observation may imply that the East Asian strategy can be applied to current low-income countries (IDE JETRO, 2005, pp. 39-40).

4.4 The Millennium Development Goals

The goals have extensively influenced development agendas and human capital investments. However, [O]verall, progress towards meeting the MDGs has been described as ‘patchy’ and ‘uneven’ (LIDC, 2010, p. 2). Few goals were entirely on track globally. Others displayed substantial variations, with the least progress being made in Africa and South Asia (Manning, 2009, p. 4).

The 8 goals of the MDGs related to different socio-economic development domains, including poverty, education, health, environment, and development cooperation. Table 9 shows the various domains of the MDGs.

Table 9: the MDGs and their Domains

MDGs	Domain
MDG-1	Poverty
MDG-2	Education
MDG-3	Women and Development
MDG- 4, 5, and 6	Health
MDG-7	Environment
MDG-8	Development Cooperation

MDG-1 is related to socio-economic development and the alleviation of poverty. This is the principal goal of the MDGs programme. MDG-2 is concerned with the provision of formal and informal education. It emphasized the importance of primary education and adult literacy. MDG-3 focused on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment through education and political participation. MDG-4, 5, and 6 relate to various health affecting the poor. MDG-7 relates to the promotion of global environmental sustainability. Finally, MDG-8 calls for sustainable development and international development cooperation.

The overall status of the MDG's was summarized in 2010 UN report (UN, 2010), which found that progress toward achieving the first goal was on course. Improvements have been made regarding aspects of the sixth goal. Insufficient progress has been made towards achieving the second, fourth and fifth goals. Steps towards achieving the third

goal were labeled 'sluggish'. The 'alarmingly high' rates of deforestation hampered goal 7. The report further stated that Africa was being 'short-changed' by aid flows (UN, 2010, p. vii). Brief descriptions of the 8 MDGs follow below.

4.4.1 Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

The primary goal of the MDGs is to combat poverty. The remaining seven goals support this overarching goal. Three specific targets and their respective indicators relate to poverty relief. Targets 1A and 1C sought to halve the number of people with income under US\$ 1 per day by 2015 and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. Target 1B sought to achieve full and productive employment, particularly for young people and women. Health-related goals sought to reverse incidences of malaria and other major diseases. The proportion of population living in poverty, the poverty gap ratio, the share of the poorest quintile in national consumption, GDP growth rate, employment ratio, prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age, proportions of population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption are the indicators for measuring progress so far. (LIDC, 2010, p. 4).

While global poverty levels are generally declining, extreme poverty still affects millions of people. The numbers are greatest in South Asia, but the proportion of poverty ridden people is highest in sub-Saharan Africa (UN, 2008a, p. 1). Moreover, "global progress against poverty appears threatened by the foreboding economic lull across the world" (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 36).

4.4.2 Achieve Universal Primary Education

MDG-2 emphasizes basic learning skills such as reading and writing; or, primary education, as the entry point to other levels of education. Universal primary education is aimed to be achieved by 2015. A major component of this goal is gender equality:

boys and girls should have equal treatment and priority of access to learning and be able to complete grades 1-5 at minimum. Progress is measured by monitoring net enrolment ratios, the proportion of learners starting grades 1–5, and the literacy rates of 15-24 year-olds (LIDC, 2010, p. 4).

The DAC has strongly supported the primary education of MDG: “[P]roviding universal primary education remains a great challenge and a great opportunity. Success will give millions more the skills to rise out of poverty. But failure will fuel an educational and social crisis in the decade ahead” (UN, 2001, p. iv). This viewpoint is echoed by Scarnecchia and McKeegan, who argue that educational opportunities “will have an immediate, verifiable and measurable impact on the well-being of the people around the world and on their sustainable development” (2009, p. 41).

4.4.3 Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

MDG-3 advocates the promotion of gender equality and female empowerment regarding employment, choice of profession and political participation. The MDGs emphasizes the importance of education at the primary level. Indeed, gender equality is more likely to be promoted in societies where girls have sufficient access to education. It is generally accepted that “educated girls “have many more choices - in marriage, in childbearing, in work, in life. They can seize more economic opportunities. And they do more to shape their society’s political, social, economic and environmental progress” (IMF & others, 2000, p. 10).

Issues of gender equality and female empowerment in the developing world have been pursued both multilaterally and nationally in recent years. The MDGs specifically targets the elimination of gender disparity through all levels of primary, secondary, and tertiary educations. Progress, which is measured through observing ratios of girls to

boys in education, wage sharing, and the proportion of female representation in national parliaments, has been significant.

MDGs progress reports, using statistics from 2005, state that “about 94 girls per 100 boys went to primary school as a whole in 2006, ranging from 89:100 in Southern Asia and Oceania to 97:100 in Latin American, including the Caribbean and also 99:100 in Eastern Asia” (UN, 2008, p. 12). There have been many initiatives to improve employment parity and increase levels of political participation by women in developing countries. However, progress regarding employment and political participation has fallen below expectations. Much more needs to be done to reach the target by 2015.

4.4.4 Reduce Child Mortality

MDG-4 to 6 relate to health. MDG-4 aims to reduce the under-five child mortality rate by two-thirds by 2015. Progress is measured in terms of overall declines in mortality rates of children younger than five years, infant mortality rates, and the proportion of one-year-old children immunized against measles.

Child mortality is most often the result of unhealthy conditions around the time of birth. The ratio between the developed and developing countries is approximately 1:13 (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 44). About 40% of under-5 child deaths occur in the first month of the newborns’ life and most in the first week. The rest die from malnutrition, HIV, vaccine preventable and other communicable diseases, including pneumonia, diarrhea, and other causes (GPRB, 2012, p. iv). While the overall trend is one of decline, significant variations persist between countries. Much has still to be achieved by the deadline.

Child mortality is linked to unsafe water, inadequate immunization, war and civil conflict, high levels of poverty and malnutrition, poor access to basic education, especially for girls, the spread of HIV/AIDS and the resurgence of malaria and tuberculosis (IMF & others, 2000, p. 5). These are often interrelated and create a miserable picture of national health in developing countries. A focus on immunization, national awareness campaigns on the treatment of diarrhea, special programmes to reduce pneumonia-related deaths, better sanitation and better access to safe water, strong community participation in the delivery of basic social services, grants for girls and the expansion of micro credit for women were considered key to success.

4.4.5 Improve Maternal Health

MDG-5 aims reduce maternal mortality by 75 percent. Indicators to measure progress include maternal mortality ratios and proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. No significant progress in this area has been achieved in the developing world: A decrease in maternal mortalities of less than one percent has been observed (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 48). However, these indicators are not always accurate. Indeed, the UN considers them mostly ‘unreliable’ with ‘wide margins of uncertainty’ (UN, 2008, p. ii).

The majority of the maternal deaths occur in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The overall rate was 1000:10 in 2000 and 1000:6 in 2010 (GPRB, 2012, p. 3). The MDGs seeks to have skilled attendants at 90% of births by 2015. However, skilled health workers and health advocates are often not routinely available in such countries. Factors like infections, blood loss and unsafe abortion are the root-cause of the majority of the maternal deaths. Most of them are preventable and can be reduced with time and effort. The reduction of maternal mortality rates greatly depends on the

capacity of states to meet the health care needs of pregnant women (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 56). A comprehensive care package can improve both the maternal and child health situation (WHO, 2010, p. 1). To do so, more investment in health systems is needed to improve the quality and coverage of services. The provision of prenatal and postnatal care for the poor deserves due attention (IMF & Others, 2000, p. 4).

4.4.6 Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

MDG-6 relates to HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Epidemics affect the national health and increases vulnerability to disease. This, in turn, reduces the quantity and quality of national human resources. The goal aimed to reduce the severity of epidemic diseases which commonly affect developing societies. Specifically, it sought to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) by 2015.

Progress is measured by a number of indicators: HIV prevalence among young pregnant women; the rate of contraceptive use; the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS; prevalence and death rates associated with malaria; the proportion of population in high risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures; prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis, the proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment.

HIV/AIDS has devastated much of developing Africa since it first appeared (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p.57). This has left behind millions of children orphans with great losses of national spending and human resources. Malaria afflicts millions a year, killing one million annually (UN, 2008, p. iv). 1.7 million people die from tuberculosis each year (UN, 2008). Halting and reversing the incidence and spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB is considered central to the eradication of poverty.

However, implementing policies to meet the MDGs targets presents significant challenges for many developing nations.

4.4.7 Ensure Environmental Sustainability

The seventh MDG is related to the global environment. Ideas can be traced back to the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The summit sought to address climate issues related to global warming and its effects on the poor. The poor “depend directly on the environment - agriculture, forestry and fisheries - for their livelihoods. [They] are also most likely to be hurt by air and water pollution and unsustainable practices for food production” (IMF et al, 2000, p. 18).

Progress is monitored by 10 indicators and four targets related to sustainability, biodiversity, access to drinking water and improving the lives of slum dwellers. The MDG sought to ensure environmental sustainability and reverse losses of environmental resources and reduce the rate of biodiversity loss. It aims to halve the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015. It introduced steps to improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

About half of the world’s population, mostly in North Africa and South-East Asia, live in areas where there is a dearth of environmental sustainability. Almost one billion people live in slums “characterized by overcrowding, little employment or security of tenure, poor water, sanitation and health services, and widespread insecurity” (UN, 2005, p. iii). The UN has expressed concern for bio-diversity and for the approximately 10,000 species under threat in these areas (UN, 2008, p. iv). Appropriate and timely policy measures and better environmental management strategies are certain to improve this situation.

4.4.8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development

The final MDG encouraged the international community to coordinate socio-economic development activities. It sought to further integrate international efforts for sustainable human development and poverty alleviation.

The goal is divided into six targets and sixteen indicators specifically targeted at LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and African nations. The MDG emphasizes good governance, development and poverty reduction. It also addresses the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states, tariff and quota-free market access for LDCs, long-term debt-sustainability burden, access to essential drugs and improving Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure.

Ideas such as good governance, proper disbursement of development aid, poverty reduction, market solutions to developmental issues, private sector development and reciprocal cooperation have long been central to development discourses at the multilateral level. However, little improvement in these areas has occurred. For example, debt relief accounted for more than half of the increase in foreign aid during the last decade (MDGs, 2006, iii). Although, development aid is at an all-time high in recipient countries, “it remains at its lowest level, for example, as a percentage of donor country income since 1990” (Scarnecchia & McKeegan, 2009, p. 67). In practice, multilateral cooperation between developed and developing nations is both declining and improperly implemented.

4.5 The Millennium Development Goals and Bangladesh

4.5.1 The MDGs Programme in Bangladesh

Since their adoption in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals have become the comprehensive and multidimensional development framework for international

development (UN, 2010, p. 2). They accurately reflect the needs and general situations in developing countries and have set the standard for measuring and tracking socio-economic improvements (Alam, 2006, p. 5). The government of Bangladesh has initiated various national programmes to implement the MDGs locally.

Development policy in Bangladesh has been implemented using the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) approach. It is a country-specific national strategy document which delineates a three year plan for economic growth, poverty reduction and social development. The approach was introduced by the IMF in 1999 to manage overall socio-economic development strategies for developing countries (IMF, 2012, p. 3). PSRP's are usually prepared by member countries in broad consultation with stakeholders and development partners. A PRSP contains an assessment of poverty-levels and describes the macroeconomic, structural and social policies that "a country will pursue over several years to promote growth and reduce poverty, as well as external financing needs and the associated sources of financing" (IMF, 2012, p. 1). The document encompasses a range of socio-economic development issues including employment, nutrition, quality education (particularly in primary, secondary and vocational levels with strong emphasis on girls' education), local governance, maternal health, sanitation and safe drinking water, criminal Justice, and monitoring (IMF, 2005, p. 3).

Twelve sectors were identified for the Bangladesh PRSP (GPRB, 2005, p. ii). These were closely related to the MDGs aim of providing "the crucial link between national public actions, donor support, and the development outcomes needed to meet the UN' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are centered on halving poverty between 1990 and 2015" (IMF, 2012, p. 1). Table 10 presents the intersections between the PRSP and the MDGs at a glance.

Table 10: the MDGs and the Bangladesh PRSP Sectors

MDGs	PRSP Sectors	
MDG 1 and MDG 7	1	Agriculture and environment, including forestry, land use, safe water supply, and water resources management
	2	Rural development, including food security, disaster management, safety net programmes, micro-credit, and rural non-farm activities
	3	Domestic Resources Mobilization.
MDG 1 and MDG8	4	Macroeconomic stability and pro-poor growth
	5	Finance sector reform, including banking, trade and globalization;
	6	Private sector development
MDG 2 and MDG 3	7	Education, including primary and mass education, female education, vocational and technical education.
MDG 3	8	Women and child advancement and rights
MDG 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7	9	Health, including population planning, nutrition and sanitation
MDG 8	10	ICT and technology policy
Cross-cutting all MDGs	11	Reforms in governance, including civil service reforms, judicial reforms and law and order
	12	Infrastructure development and reform including power, energy and communications.

Source: adapted from IMF, 2005; UN-GPRB, 2005.

4.5.2 Assessment of the MDGs Interventions in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is generally on track to reach its MDGs targets, though in a somewhat scattered manner. “In relation to the MDGs targets such as reduction of infant mortality and child mortality, expansion of primary and secondary education, reduction in many aspects of gender disparity, eradication of hunger and environmental sustainability, Bangladesh has done well comparing the situation in the year 1990 with the year 2000”

(Alam, 2006, p. 3). Several of the MDGs are likely to be met, although “some may not be attained so this is a serious shortcoming” (ODI, 2010, p. 5). The targets like halving poverty and improving access to safe water and education are less likely to be met. Health-related targets are unlikely to be met.

The 8 goals and 21 targets have been yet to be in active operation in the country. They have also yet to be measured against progress indicators. Measures combating extreme poverty (MDG-1), improving net primary enrolment rates (MDG 2), increasing gender parity in primary and secondary education (MDG-3), decreasing child mortality rates and improving immunization coverage of (MDG-4), rolling back malaria and controlling tuberculosis (MDG-6), and improving the supply of drinking water supply (MDG-7) are in operation throughout the country. However, the country has been unable to reach the optimum level of progression. Measures to reduce poverty, improve primary-school completion rates and mental health have fallen below the mark. Table 11 presents the current status of the Bangladeshi MDGs programme.

Table 11: MDGs Status in Bangladesh

Millennium Development Goals		Current Status
	Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger	Below to the mark
2	Achieve Universal Primary Education	Partial progress
3	Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women	Below to the mark
4	Reduce Child Mortality	Progress made so far
5	Improve Maternal Health	Below to the mark
6	Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases	Below to the mark
7	Ensure Environmental Sustainability	Not Mentionable
8	Develop a Global Partnership for Development	Not Mentionable

Source: GPRB, 2011, UN – GPRB, 2012.

Generally speaking, Bangladesh lags behind in achieving the MDGs. Major challenges remain. Much more needs to be done if all the goals are to be achieved. The following areas require further attention: poverty reduction and employment generation (Goal 1), primary-school completion and adult literacy rates (Goal 2), wage employment for women (Goal 3), the maternal mortality ratio and number of skilled health professionals at delivery (Goal 5), knowledge of HIV/AIDS (Goal 6), forest coverage (Goal 7) and coverage of ICT (Goal 8) (ODI, 2010, p. 2). There has been some progress in ICT coverage, however. New technology such as mobile phones are becoming increasingly

prevalent (GPRB, 2012, p. 4). The national poverty target might just be met (taking into account the effects of the 2008 financial crisis). The rural poverty target is off track (ODI, 2010, p. 1). Table 12 represents a general status of the MDGs in Bangladesh as of 2013.

Table 12: The Status of MDGs in Bangladesh

Generally Successful	Moderately Successful	Unsuccessful
MDG 1 Eradicate extreme poverty (national) MDG 2 Universal primary education (not completion rates) MDG 3 Promote gender equality and empower women MDG 4 Reduce Child Mortality MDG 6 Combat HIV/AIDS	MDG 5 Improving maternal health	MDG 7 Promote a sustainable environment MDG 8 Developing a Global Partnership for Development

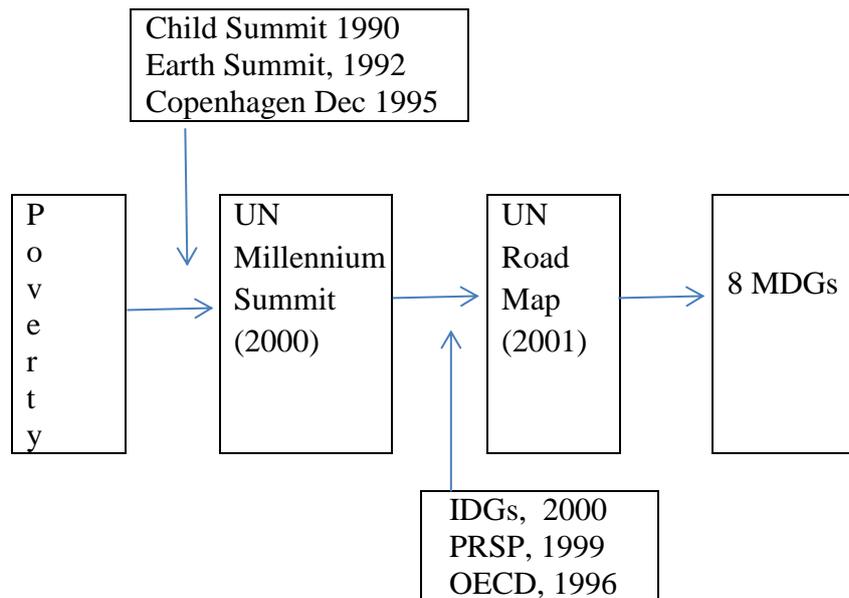
Source: Financial Express, 10.01.2013

The table 4.5 indicates the MDGs status in Bangladesh. Some of the goals have met with success; some have been moderately successful; some have fallen short of the target. Bangladesh has tried to achieve the goal nationally. While considerable progress has been made overall it is nevertheless unlikely that the 2015 deadline will be met wholesale.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The MDGs are the outcome of a much longer and complex process of multilateral efforts to reduce global poverty and ensure sustainable human development in the 21st century. The evolution of the MDGs is presented in figure 8.

Figure 7: Evolution of MDGs



The MDGs constitute an assemblage of narrowly focused sector-specific development ideas and campaigns. The goals are broad, providing targets related to most aspects of development: poverty, education, health, gender, environment, and international partnership. Given the processes and influences out of which they originated and developed, the goals are coherent. They “could stimulate a change in national priorities if donor funding for MDGs causes governments to change their strategies to take advantage of opportunities for external investment” (LIDC, 2010, p. 24). They recognize the need for solidarity with the poor and the need to address issues of extreme poverty.

Having discussed the MDGs and their status in Bangladesh we move on to a discussion of the main focus of this research: Primary Education in Bangladesh.

Chapter 5: Primary Education in Bangladesh

5.1 Introduction

Primary education in Bangladesh is the foundation learning and entry point for young children to experience further levels of education. It is a primary concern for all governments. This chapter examines primary education in Bangladesh. It discusses the education system, its historical development, governance and critically examines national and international initiatives to improve primary education. The chapter ends with a brief summary of the issues raised.

5.2 Education System in Bangladesh

Education is the cornerstone of development process in any society. It is “the key indicator of the people’s progress and prosperity” (Haq, 2004, p. 12). It is considered a vital means to combat poverty. It has long been a focal point of developmental policy at the multilateral level. A significant proportion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relate to education. Citizens of Bangladesh are constitutionally entitled to basic education.

Quality education, skills, specialization, and professionalism can only be developed if there is a solid foundation for learning. Primary education paves the way for further levels study at junior, secondary, vocational and professional schools as well as tertiary, research, and development institutions. Both international development institutions and national governments have emphasized education as one of the most important tools in the fight against poverty (UN, 2000, p. 1). Indeed, making primary education universally available by 2015 remains a key goal for the UN’s MDGs. Bangladeshi citizens are currently entitled to five years of free primary education. Policy-makers

have also sought to improve access to - and the quality and efficiency of - the education sector. This is a national endeavour to improve the quality of human resources and encourage nation-building and economic development.

Education can be formal and informal in nature. They are complementary to each other. Informal education can be loosely defined as 'lifelong education'. This begins in childhood and ends with 'learning by doing' throughout working life. Formal education takes place at institutions of learning, and is overseen by the community, government and administration.

The formal education system is a space for systematic learning. It is comprised of different stages, from primary to secondary school, followed by higher/ tertiary education. Primary education is the entry-point to learning and begins during childhood. It constitutes the beginning of the formal education process.

5.2.1 The Overall Educational Scenario

There are three nationally recognized public education systems in Bangladesh: the secular general education system, the technical-professional education system and the Islam-oriented religious education represented by the madrasah system. Each of these has their own curriculum of learning in line with the national curriculum and textbook board authority in the country. They are organised into five tiers of learning: i) Primary, ii) Junior, iii) Secondary, iv) Higher Secondary, and v) Tertiary. Primary, junior, secondary and higher-secondary education takes place in primary schools/ Ebtedayee madrasahs and high schools, and technical/vocational institutes, respectively. Tertiary education takes place in universities. There are also specialised colleges and universities for further higher education in engineering, technology, agriculture and medicine.

The 'education system' refers in most cases to general education, both public and private. It takes 16-17 years of schooling from primary to postgraduate Masters-degree level. The Technical-professional education system provides courses related to various applied and practical areas of science, technology and engineering education. It focuses on a specific specialized area, ranges from three months to four/five years of learning. This kind of education is, usually, the 1-3 year schooling of technical education imparted in vocational learning institutes, after 8 years of general schooling. The madrasah education system is the religious Islam-based education in religious environment parallel to general education, with 17 years of schooling.

Bengali is the primary medium of learning instruction. English is optional. Some madrasah courses are offered in Arabic. Private schools tend to use English as the language of instruction. All three systems are regulated by the board of authority, the Education Board. Alongside the national educating system, private English-language schools cater to affluent, mostly urban, pupils and offer O and A-level equivalent courses.

Religious-based public education parallels the general secular education system. It emphasizes the Arabic medium and is regulated by the Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board, which operates within the Ministry of Education. Table 13 below gives an overview of the Bangladeshi education system.

Table 13: Educational category and their levels in Bangladesh

Category		Levels	Grades
Secular	General Education	Primary, Junior, Secondary, Higher Secondary, and Tertiary	I-V, VI-VIII, IX-X, XI-XII, & XIII-XVII
	Technical Education	Secondary, Higher Secondary, and Tertiary	IX - X, XI-XII, & XIII-XVII
Religious	Madrasah Education	Primary, Junior, Secondary, Higher Secondary, and Tertiary	I-IV, VI-VIII, IX-X, XI-XII, & XIII-XVII

Besides the public madrasah system, a number of private organisations also offer traditional Islamic learning and teaching facilities to Muslim students. These are known as *Furqania Madrasahs*, *Hafizia Madrasahs* and *Quami or Darse Nizamiah Madrasahs*.

Furqania Madrasahs offer basic education of 1+ year of schooling on Islam, basic Arabic language skills, Quran recitation, elementary Bengali and simple arithmetic. This non-formal primary education is very popular in the country. Children of the earliest possible age group attend these institutions and complete their basic primary learning there. These institutions are usually attached to a local *Mosque* and are established and administered by local communities. *Hafizia madrasahs* are devoted to memorising the entire text of the Quran. This takes approximately 2-3 years of schooling. Such schools are also established and administered by local communities. *Quami or Darse Nizamiah Madrasahs* divide their academic programme according to grades of one year each, from Grade I to XIV. Certificates are awarded to the students after successful completion of the final grade called *Daurah*. Additional specialised courses, which take 2-3 years to

complete, are also conducted in some of the Quauami Madrasahs. (BANBEIS, 1987, p. 7-10).

5.2.1.1 General Education

The national general education system in Bangladesh can be broadly divided into primary, junior, secondary, higher secondary and tertiary stages of learning. Every academic programme focuses primarily, on preparing of students for entrance into the next academic level. The primary level is the entry point for five-year schooling from grades I-V, the junior level for three years from VI-VIII, the Secondary level for two years continues from grades IX-X. Grades XI and XII constitute the higher secondary level. Secondary level education is completed after a public examination conducted by the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board. Universities offer four-year schooling at undergraduate level education as well as medical and engineering degrees which require 5-6 years of schooling. They also offer one or two-year Master's degrees, Master of Philosophy (M Phil) degrees, and doctoral programmes (Ph.D.).

Primary education begins at the age of 5+ and finishes at 11. There are five grades in primary schools: class I to class V with a uniform curricular structure. For each grade, an annual examination is held for each subject. Students must pass all examinations in order to be promoted to the next class. Finally, a public examination for primary school graduation is held which is administered by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPI) under the administrative authority of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME). The Upazila Education Office (UEO) is for providing academic and logistical support to the local Administration of Upazila to run the primary education as public service delivery.

Junior, secondary and higher secondary levels can be grouped together as 'secondary' education. Secondary education is offered with a uniform curricular structure of general education up to grade VIII at the junior level. Secondary level educational is known as high school. It offers a diversified curriculum of science, commerce, and humanities. Higher secondary level also offers a diverse curriculum of science, commerce, and humanities at the intermediate level of high-school as well as intermediate and general degree colleges.

High-school is comprised of two grades; i.e., classes IX and X. Intermediate Colleges constitute class XI and XII. High Schools are generally combined with junior schools. There are many high schools in Bangladesh which are combined with the primary stage (class I-V) and teach to class X. Another type of institution, called junior high schools, have been teaching facilities from Class VI to Class VIII. The secondary level of education is administered by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education under the Ministry of Education, which field offices at every division, district headquarters, and local administration of Upazila in the country.

Secondary education is concluded with a public examination called the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination. Higher secondary or intermediate culminates in a Higher Secondary School (HSC) examination. Results are awarded by a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 5-1. Academic matters up to the higher secondary level of general education are administered through five education boards overseen by the Ministry of Education (MOE). At present there are 105126 institutions providing general education in the country. The schooling and institutions of general education in Bangladesh are shown in table 14.

Table 14: Level-wise schooling and institutions in Bangladesh

Stage	Primary School	Secondary School	Higher Secondary	University	Total
School Year	5 Years	(3+2) 5 Yrs	2 Yrs	4-5 Yrs	16-17yrs
No of institute	82674	19040	3324	88	105126

Source: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. www.mopme.gov.bd and www.moe.gov.bd

5.2.1.2 Technical Education

Technical Education in Bangladesh is organised in three tiers: trade level training programme, technician level education, and graduate level study in engineering and technology. This form of education aims to produce skilled manpower at different levels and fields to meet the needs of industry and various service organisations operating in the country (BANBEIS, 1988, p. 1). Trade level training is a certificate programme at the secondary level of general education and requires approximately one year of schooling. Technical level education requires 2-3 years of schooling in technical institutions. This is equivalent to higher secondary level education and produces diploma level technicians. The graduate tier is for higher education and research in the engineering universities. At present, there are 2848 institutions providing technical education in the country. Table 15 provides an overview of the technical education system in Bangladesh.

Table 15: Technical Education in Bangladesh

Institution	Equivalent to General Education	Qualification Offered	No of Institution
University	Tertiary	Graduation Degree and above	18
Technical	Higher Secondary	Diploma	2848
Vocational	Secondary	Certificate	not available

Source: Ministry of Education. www.moe.gov.bd

It was necessary strengthen and develop the technical education in different fields after the country gained independence in 1971. Technical courses ranged from auto-repair, carpentry, drafting, electrical work, farm mechanics, steel work, machining, masonry, radio and television broadcasting, refrigeration and air-conditioning, welding, civil, electrical, mechanical, and chemical engineering, architecture, radio electronics, textiles, and health engineering. Vocational and technical curricula are regulated and examinations are required. Certificates are issued by a board of authority called the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB).

5.2.1.3 Madrasah Education

Madrasah education runs parallel to the general education system. It offers religious instruction to Muslim students. Madrasah education is comprised of five stages: Ibtedayee, Dhakil, Alim, Fazil, and Kamil. Ibtedayee and Dhakil are the equivalent of primary and secondary level schooling. They have a 10-year duration, with 5 years devoted to each level. Alim is the higher secondary of 2 years of schooling after Dhakil. Fazil and Kamil are the graduate level equivalents and require 3 years of schooling after the Alim level, and 2 years of schooling after Fazil respectively. Apart from the

Ibtedayee, every stage of Dhakil, Alim, and Fazil has a diversified curriculum comprised of humanities, science, and commerce. The Kamil stage has four groups of traditional Islamic studies like 'Hadis' (the prophetic tradition) 'Fiqh' (Islamic jurisprudence), 'Adab' (Arabic literature), and 'Tafsir' (Quranic explanation and interpretation). At present there are 16243 institutions providing madrasah education in the country. Table 16 below presents a general overview of the madrasah system in Bangladesh.

Table 16: Madrasah Education in Bangladesh

Stage	Duration of Schooling	Grade	Equivalent to General Education	No. of Institution
Ibtedayee	5 Years	1-5	Primary	6768
Dhakil	5 Years	6-10	Secondary	6771
Alim	2 Years	11-12	Higher Secondary	1487
Fazil	3 Years	13-15	Graduate (Bachelor)	1022
Kamil	2 years	16-17	Master's or equivalent	195
Total				16243

Sources: GPRB (2010), New National Education Policy, Ministry of Education. www.mopme.gov.bd and www.moe.gov.bd

The core subjects of studies in Madrasah focus on the study of the Quran, Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh, Usul, Arabic language and literature, Islamic history and Islamic Philosophy. In addition, provision has also been made for the teaching of General Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Bengali and English at appropriate levels. In all stages except Ibtedayee, public examinations of Dhakil and Alim stages are administered by the Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board (BMEB), who also award certificates. The Ibtedayee public examination is held by the Board as well under the auspices of the Ministry of Education.

Examination results are awarded in GPAs of 5–1. Fazil and Kamil certificates are issued and awarded by Islamic University, located in Kushtia, Bangladesh.

It is interesting to note that primary education attached to Madrasah education is regulated by the Ministry of Education (MOE). They are not under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) even though they make up a substantial contribution to primary education in the country.

5.3 Legacy of Primary Education

Bangladesh has a mixed educational and cultural heritage dating back to ancient Bengal in India. The primary learning activities took place in Buddhist monasteries, Hindu temples and Muslim mosques. They were predominantly part of the theological tradition and philosophical in perspective. They offered systematic learning of basic language skills such as reading and writing, as well as core subjects like arithmetic, mathematics, and religious literature. Primary schools were introduced in pre-colonial times. They were known as ‘Patshalas’ and were led by ‘Pondits’ and. Learners in the Patshalas were mostly boys. The main purpose of Patshala primary education was to prepare students for jobs that required literacy. The medium of instruction was predominantly Sanskrit, the ruling and upper caste language in the region (Khatun, 1992, p. 6-9).

Another education system parallel to the Patshalas was widespread in the country. This took place in mosques and ‘maktabs’ between the 16th and 18th centuries. They were led by an ‘Imam’ and taught by religiously educated ‘Munshi’. A ‘Maktab’ is a designated house for primary education in an Islamic religious environment usually adjacent to a *mosque*. “The curriculum of education was mainly centred on Islamic religious values [and t]he society used to attach great value to Islamic education as a preparation for worldly as well as life hereafter” (Manik, 2010, p. 3). The languages of instruction were

Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. Arabic was the language of religious Islam. Persian and Urdu were the languages of rulers and literature in the region during this period.

During the initial stage of the British colonial rule of the 18th century, educational initiatives were not the concern of government. However, a group of British missionaries took steps by the mid-19th century to introduce modern western learning which eventually replaced the existing educational system (Haque, 2004, p. 5). A few English-language missionary primary schools were established around Bengal which introduced British curricula, teaching methods, text-books and writings, and offered education to girls for the first time. The colonial government introduced different types of primary educational institutions, including English-language secular schools. These schools were principally to prepare educated locals for administrative and clerical positions. During this time, indigenous primary education in Bengal suffered many setbacks (Khatun, 1992, p. 14).

At the turn of the 20th century, the colonial administration initiated steps to establish a Western education system with educational infrastructure designed to reinforce colonial rule. A Department of Education was created under the Government of India in 1910. In 1930 the government enacted the *Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act of 1930* (Manik, 2010, p. 7). This paved the way for universal modern primary education in Bengal, under which District School Boards were set up to control, direct and manage the dissemination of education. The ultimate goal was to provide universal, compulsory and free primary education totalling four years of schooling. When British rule ended in 1947, there were 29,633 primary schools in Bangladesh (Ahmad, n.d., pp. 168-170).

Bangladesh, as East Pakistan, was the part of independent Pakistan from 1947 - 1971. This period coincided with mostly unconstructive experimentation in education policy, administration and management. British-style District School Boards were dissolved.

Management, control and administration of the primary education system was handed to the District Primary Education Office. The former District Inspector of Schools was appointed as Chief Executive of the office under the guidance of the Deputy Commissioner of the district administration.

The government amended *the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act* in 1951 making the provision of compulsory primary education in the country. 5000 primary schools were selected to run as ‘compulsory primary schools’ (Khatun, 1992, p. 53). The most significant development during this period was the introduction of a 5-year programme of schooling instead of 4. Educational failures during this period can be attributed to disparities between eastern and western Pakistan and the central government’s non-committal and indifferent attitude to educational policy in East Pakistan. At the end of the Pakistani rule of 24 years in 1971, the new state of Bangladesh was left with almost same number of primary schools (Khatun, 1992, 54).

Primary education in present-day Bangladesh is a result of changes made by various regimes at different times. The country inherited a well-established but diverse primary education system. It was imperative for the newly-independent Bangladesh to redesign the primary education in the country to reflect its social needs. The government placed due importance on primary education, making its provision a constitutional obligation of the government (GPRB, 2009, pp. 9-10). A number of initiatives have been undertaken to fulfil this constitutional mandate and meet international obligations to improve the capacities of local administrations to provide primary education.

5.4 Primary Education in Perspective

Bangladesh currently has one of the largest and most complex primary education systems in the world, characterised by multiple state, quasi-state and non-state providers (Ahmed, 2011,

p. 1). The system is comprised of eleven different types of primary educational institutions. Nearly 17 million primary school-aged children were enrolled in over 82,674 primary level institutions with 380957 teachers in 2012 (GPRB, 2012, p. 29). It has a gross enrolment ratio of 97.40 percent. The completion rate is 67.2 percent as of 2010, with parity between boys and girls (GPRB, 2012, p. 30 & 31). Different types of schools include: Government primary schools, registered non-government primary schools, experimental schools, community schools, non-registered non-governmental primary schools, kindergartens, cadet schools, NGO schools, primary sections of secondary schools (high-school attached), satellite schools, Ebtedayee madrasahs and primary sections of Dakhil, Alim, Fazil and Kamil madrasahs (high madrasah attached). A general idea of primary education can be gained from table 17.

Table 17: A General Scenario of Primary Education in Bangladesh

Age group	6-10 years
Duration of Schooling	5 years
Grades of Schooling	5 (Class-I, II, III, IV, and V)
Number of Primary School	82674
Number of Student	16904546 (boys: 8367960, 49.50%) (girls: 8536586, 50.50%)
Number of Teacher	380957
Teacher Student Ratio	1:44

Sources: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. www.mopme.gov.bd.

Government Primary Schools are the mainstream independent primary level institution. They are spread over the country and administered and financed by the government. They are generally called ‘primary schools’. *High school attached* schools are the primary

sections of secondary schools. They are also mainstream primary school and the general public education and teach the national curriculum. **Registered non-government primary schools** are fully-fledged primary education institutions registered with the government. They are private entities which teach the national curriculum and comply with the rules and regulations of the government. They are eligible for benefits and subsidies from the government, and generally seek government primary school status. **Experimental schools** are the seats of learning for young children from grade 1-5 attached to the 54 primary teacher's training institutes (PTI) in the country. **Community schools, non-registered non-governmental primary schools** are privately established on a non-profit basis and teach the national curriculum. They are funded by tuition fees and other charges. **Kindergartens** are early learning educational institutions for children of 3-6-year age. English is usually the medium of instruction. They are mostly found in urban areas. They are private initiatives, both individual and collective and use their own curriculum and textbooks, mostly in English. **NGO schools** are run by non-governmental organisations. These schools began in the middle of the 1980s and are classified as 'non-formal primary education'. They are supportive of mainstream primary schooling. The schools usually have one classroom and one teacher with a mutually agreed schedule between parents and the teacher. **Satellite schools** are semi-formal primary schools. They are usually located in private houses and for grades 1-2. These are meant for primary school going children who live in areas where there are no schools and are therefore deprived of the opportunity to receive formal education. Satellite schools provide schooling to poor children, especially girls, to ensure school attendance. **Ebtedayee Madrasahs** are independent fully-fledged primary education institutes catering to grades I-V. Based on Islamic learning and the primary sections of Dakhil, Alim, Fazil and Kamil madrasahs are the primary seats of

learning in a religious educational environment for grades I-V. Table 18 presents a preliminary picture of the types of primary education institutions found in Bangladesh.

Table 18: Institutions of primary education in Bangladesh

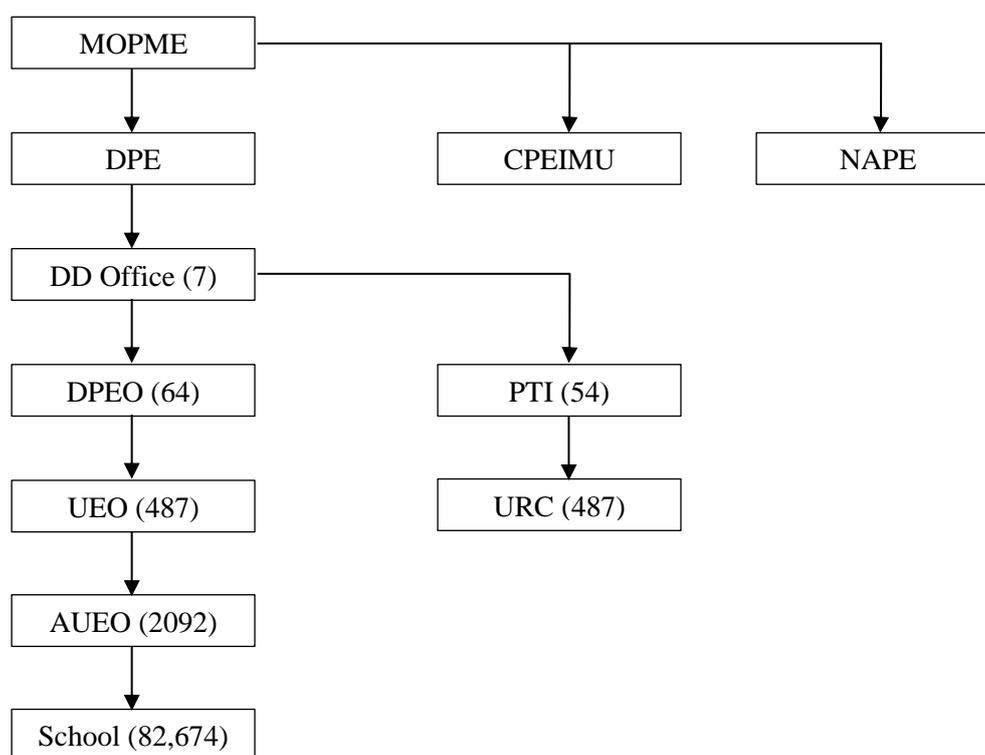
Institution	No of School	Coverage of Children
Government Primary School	37,672	58%
High School Attached	1,353	2%
Registered Non-Government Primary School	19,682	22%
Non Registered Non-Government Primary School	986	Not available
Experimental School	54	0.5%
Ibtedayee Madrasah	2305	5%
High Madrasah Attached	8,329	7.1%
NGO School	289	Not available
Kindergarten School	2,281	Not available
Satellite and Community School	3,027	3%
Total	82,674	97%

Source: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. www.mopme.gov.bd

5.5 Administration and Management of Primary Education

Primary education is administered by the Directorate of Primary Education under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. It has field offices in every District headquarters and local administration of Upazila at the local level. Of the total number of 82,674 primary schools in the country, 37,672 are directly managed by local administration with government funding. The rest are run and managed by community – either privately or collectively. Primary education in government primary schools is free. The oval governance mechanism of the primary education in Bangladesh is shown in figure 8.

Figure 8: Organizational Structure of Primary Education in Bangladesh



Source: Primary Education in Bangladesh, Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2013.

Note: MOPME= Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, DPE= Directorate of Primary Education, DDO= Deputy Directorate Office, DPEO= District Primary Education Office, UEO= Upazila Education Office, AUEO= Assistant Upazila Office, CPEIMU= Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit, NAPE= National Academy for Primary Education, PTI= Primary Training Institute, URC= Upazila Resource Centre.

The *Ministry of Primary and Mass Education* (MOPME) is responsible for policy formulation, planning, evaluation and execution of plans and initiating legislative measures relating to primary and non-formal education. The *Directorate of Primary Education* (DPE) as an independent organization controls, coordinates and regulates the field administration of the primary education, with a Director-General as its head. At the field level, there are 7 Regional Offices (DDO) in administrative divisional headquarters, 64 District Primary Education Offices (DPEO), and 487 Upazila Education Offices (UEO) at the local-level administration. They are assisted by 2092 Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEO) at the local level.

The *Compulsory Primary Education Implementation Monitoring Unit* (CPEIMU) was established in 1991 with a Director-General as the head. This was created as per the Primary Education (Compulsory) Act of 1990. CPEIMU is tasked with monitoring the compulsory primary education programme at the field level. It conducts child-surveys to collect information on the numbers of primary school-age population relative to those attending school. The *National Academy for Primary Education* (NAPE) is an apex institution for training and research in the field of primary education. It is headed by a director and governed by a board of governors headed by the Secretary of the Ministry of MOPME. There are 54 Primary Training Institute (PTI) in the country. They offer a one-year certificate programme in education to teachers of primary schools.

5.6 Legislative Concerns for Primary Education

The Bangladeshi government has undertaken many initiatives to improve the provision of primary education in the country. Legislative measures for primary education include:

A ***Constitutional Obligation*** stipulates that primary education shall be the responsibility of the State. Article 17 of the Constitution entitled ‘Free and Compulsory Education’ states that “The state shall adopt effective measure for the purpose of

- a) Establishing a uniform, mass- oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stage as may be determined by law;
- b) Relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve hose needs;
- c) Removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law”
(GPRB, 2009, p. 14).

The ***Primary Schools (Taking Over) bill, 1974*** obliged the government to bring the primary education under a centralized administration in order to nationalization education in structures. It was the first of its kind following independence from Pakistan in 1971. Instead of providing good results, the policy had some problems in the overall management of the primary education system (Khatun, 1992, p. 22).

The ***Primary Education Act 1981*** sought to establish education authorities at the local level. A separate Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) was created with structures in local-level Thana administrative units (now local administration of Upazilas). The Act also provided for local management and the formation school management committees (SMCs). This was, however, promulgated as a decree by the then government, and was not followed up with necessary administrative steps for implementation (Haque, 2004, p. 14).

The ***Compulsory Primary Education Act 1993*** was promulgated by the government just after the restoration of democracy in the country. This is considered the first of its kind at the turn of the 21st century. Its targets are in line with the MDGs. The legislation

stipulated that five years of primary education should be provided free of charge in all public primary schools in the country.

A *national education policy* was adopted by the government in 2000 and amended in 2010. The new version centres on meeting MDGs targets. High priority has been given to achieving universal primary education. The government's major objectives and policy priorities in the medium term include: (a) rapid progress towards achieving universal access and participation, (b) improving quality of instruction, (c) enhancing equity, (d) strengthening management and efficiency, (e) extending the duration of compulsory education from the present 5 grades to 8 grades, (f) establishing a common system of basic education, (g) encouraging community involvement, and (h) requiring minimum professional qualifications for teachers. It recommended the introduction of one year of compulsory pre-primary schooling for children of 5 years and above to be available in all primary schools. The introduction of multiple delivery modes in basic education with common core curriculum and standards is an important measure of the policy for quality primary education. However, this has yet to be realised.

5.7 Reform Efforts in Primary Education

The primary education system in Bangladesh has changed significantly since independence. Systematic reform efforts have gained momentum since the beginning of 1990s, when the country signed the World Declaration on Education for All. Reforms have sought to improve the quality of education, increase the pool of skilled labour available and tackle the country's high rate of poverty. Outcomes include:

- i) The provision of free and compulsory primary education for all young children of 5-11 age-group;
- ii) 90% enrolment and 50:50 gender equity;

- iii) Free education for girls up to grade VIII; and
- iv) The establishment of the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) in 1992.

The various reforms are summarised below:

The *General Education Project* and *Primary Education Development Projects* was initiated in 1992 on five-year project cycle and ended in 2003. They intended to comply with the international programme of the Education for All movement and to increase access and improve quality and equity of primary education in the country.

Infrastructure was developed with financial assistance from the World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other bilateral aid agencies. A new curriculum and textbooks were produced. A separate administrative ministry, the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) was established in 1992. It exists as a separate institution independent from the Ministry of Education (MOE) and answers directly to the Prime Minister (PM). The reforms of the 1990s were directed mainly at the primary sector of the formal school system. Increased attention has been paid to pre- primary education following the implementation of the Dakar Education for All Framework for Action. Other initiatives have received relatively little attention (USAID, 2002, p. 3). The country has nevertheless “made significant progress in increasing enrolment in the decade of the 1990s without tangible improvement in quality of education” (Ahmed, 2011, p. 5).

The Second Primary Education Development Programme was launched in 2004 and ran from 2004 - 2009. This was a continuation of the 1990s programme for primary education development. The programme followed sector-wide approaches and emphasised coordination of the mechanisms and procedures for external funding. The ultimate aim

was to expand access to quality primary education for all eligible children. It also gave prominence to national government leadership, which has generally been taken as the cue for excluding non-governmental organisations and bodies as channels for external assistance and implementation partners (Ahmed, 2011, p. 9).

The programme's main reform initiatives included (MOPME, 2003, p. 45):

- i) Development of the Upazila Education Office (UEO) and the Upazila Resource Centre (URC) as key outreach and support mechanisms.
- ii) Systemic reform, capacity building and organisational reform at all levels in order to ensure the most effective and efficient delivery of primary education nationwide.
- iii) Integration of the PEDP II programme within the organisational and operational systems of the Ministry and DPE to ensure that policy, procedures, processes and resources are harmonised to support project activities and to ensure institutionalisation and sustainability.

These measures century resulted in some superficially positive developments. While the programme successfully established URC's in every Upazila, they were inadequately equipped. "While access and gender targets have been largely achieved, the quality and institutional capacity aspects, together with the equity in access by the poorest groups, have not improved much" (Ahmed, 2011, p. 15). There is much more to be done to achieve an acceptable standard.

5.8 The Millennium Development Goals and Primary Education

At the turn of the 21st century, the effects of poverty in developing countries were widely known. A lack of human resources was recognized as a major stumbling block to economic and social development. The Eight MDGs sought to confront developmental issues head-on, with the goal of eradicating poverty by 2015. Bangladesh, a signatory of the 2000 Millennium Declaration, has committed to achieve the MDGs. Education is considered an effective way to alleviate poverty and is a large part of the MDGs programme. Bangladesh is considered on track towards achieving these goals (UN-GPRB, 2012, p. v).

Since the early 1990s, the government has adopted a number of demand-side intervention programmes to aid achieving the target of universal primary education. These include the Food for Education programme, the Primary Education Stipend Programme and the Primary Education Development Programme.

The Food for Education Programme (FFE) was an innovative idea launched by the Bangladeshi government in 1993. The program provided a free monthly ration of rice or wheat to poor families of children who attended primary school regularly. The FFE program is one of the food grain distribution channels of the Public Food Distribution System (PFDS) of the Ministry of Food (MOF). The Primary and Mass Education Division (POMED) took food grains from the Ministry of Food for the program. It was designed to develop long-term human capital through education.

The transfer of food resources to poor families was contingent upon school enrolment of their children in primary school. It thus served as an incentive for students to continue their schooling. The goals of this program were to increase primary school enrolment, promote attendance, reduce dropout rates, and enhance the quality of education. Two to

three economically backward localities with low literacy rates are selected from each of the local administration of Upazilas. The program covers all government, registered nongovernment, community, and satellite primary schools and one Ebtedayee madrasahs. The FFE program was successful in increasing primary school enrolment, promoting school attendance, and reducing dropout rates. Furthermore, the enrolment increase was greater for girls than boys (GPRB, 2003, p. ii).

The *Primary Education Stipend Project (PESP)* aimed to encourage primary education participation - enrolment, attendance, persistence, and performance of primary school-aged children – among poor families throughout Bangladesh. It provided cash payments to targeted households. The project began in January 2003, with the goal of supporting more than 5.5 million pupils covering more than 65,000 schools at an estimated cost of approximately \$600 million over five years (Project Proforma, Primary Education Stipend Project, 2002). “The project quadrupled the monthly stipend amount, introduced bank-mediated disbursement procedures, and targeted children from poor families throughout rural Bangladesh. It was the single largest program in the country and had been designated a high priority-project in the primary education sub-sector” (Tietjen, 2003, pp. 4-5).

The *Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP)* was introduced in 2000 with had a six year duration. The programme aimed to increase access, quality and efficiency across the board in the primary education sector. The main objectives were to increase primary school access, participation and completion in accordance with government policy related to the Education for All programme and other commitments. It also aimed to improve the quality of student learning and performance outcomes. In 2003, the government prepared a national action plan for in line with the Education for All

movement (2000). The plan had a specific set of goals to be achieved by 2015 and was based on the 2000 Dakar Framework of Action (DFA).

Currently, primary education in Bangladesh is undergoing the second phase of its MDGs. The government initiated another five-year *Primary Education Development Program* which will run from 2011-15. The programme is funded by a series of multi-donor investments in primary education. It aims at improving the quality of education through result-based performance monitoring. It serves as the planning framework and institutional mechanism, through a sector support programme, for resource provisions and coordination. The monitoring of reform and development efforts in the primary education sector of the country falls under its jurisdiction.

The government has also managed to provide material support to primary schools and students. These include textbooks, electronic books, electronic digital learning multimedia and teacher's training programmes as continuous professional development.

Textbooks for primary education are prepared and published by the Textbook Wing of the MOPME. This is usually done in the beginning of the academic calendar year, which begins in January. Electronic primary education textbooks are also available online and can be downloaded as and when necessary. Electronic digital learning materials have been made available in selected primary schools.

Teachers Training Programmes prepare qualified teachers for primary education. There are 54 such institutions throughout the country, including a private Primary Training Institute (PTI). They offer one-year training programmes and occasionally short courses to primary school teachers.

It is a matter of concern for the country to reach the MDGs target by 2015. As of 2010, the country has achieved much its primary education goals. The equitable access rate rose from 85.67% in 2000 to 97.40% in 2010. The primary education completion rate rose from 66% in 2000 to 67.2% in 2010. The adult literacy also rose from 37.2% in 1990 to 60% in 2010 (GPRB, 2012, p. 30 & 31). However, it must redouble these efforts if it is to reach the 2015 target.

5.9 Chapter Summary

Bangladesh is a country with varied systems of secular and religious education. Each of these contributes much to education in the country. Over twenty million learners have been enrolled in the various education institutions. Both public and private learning institutions provide services to deliver education through schools, madrasahs and community-based learning seats using formal and informal channels.

The government of Bangladesh has taken appropriate and timely measures regarding primary education which are in line with the MDGs target. The colonial and post-colonial legacy looms large. Numerous reform attempts have sought to address major deficiencies. Local administrations are entrusted with the delivery of primary education. The government has been commended for its progress over the last decade. However, the capacity of local administrations to deal with the delivery of primary education is a matter of debate. As a result, the completion status of primary education and learning outcomes generally falls below expectation. Improvement of learning and reduction of economic disparities remain a challenge at all levels of the system (GPRB, 2011, p. i). The quality education needs to be improved, especially at institutions serving the disadvantaged.

Having discussed the background of the primary education we move on to contextual descriptions of local administration, administrative reform, and primary education in Bangladesh.

Chapter 6: Contextual Description of Administrative Reform, Local Administration and Primary Education in Bangladesh

6.1 Introduction

Public administration in Bangladesh is an organised entity of the governance system in the country. It “[began] in the nineteenth century, or even earlier, when the country was a part of a larger domain of the Indian subcontinent” (Zafarullah, Khan, and Rahman, 2001, p. 24). Several centuries of dynastic rule on the Indian subcontinent, followed by the period of British colonial rule produced a system which was designed to carry out traditional routine administration. Administrative institutions and local administration units are legacies of this past and have remained relatively constant over time, despite some superficial changes (Ahmed, 2002, p. 322).

In short, the polity was built up by the British in line with the ancient tradition of Mughal and Pakistani rule but altered to preserve their colonial interests. During British - and even the earlier Mughal rule - the bureaucracy was designed to carry out fundamental functions of routine administration. Chief among them was the maintenance of law and order, collection of revenue, dispensation of justice and defense of the country. The government of Bangladesh has taken steps to improve the system’s service delivery capacities since independence from Pakistan in 1971. Although, gradual changes have taken place, public administration and education systems are still predominantly traditional in character: “Social hierarchy is primarily based on economic, social, and political power. Land ownership, income, and social and political influence largely determine access to formal and informal institutions of governance and service delivery systems” (Rahman, 2001, p. 8). In this regard, Bangladesh displays similarities to its South Asian neighbours.

This chapter examines administrative reform and the capacity of local administrations to deliver primary education in Bangladesh. It discusses administrative reform scenarios, the role of local administrations in the overall framework of public administration, and local administration governance. Administrative functioning regarding the provision of primary education at local level is also discussed. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

6.2 Administrative Reform Scenarios

Public administration in Bangladesh was the product of historical development under different patterns of state machinery and government, and took place over a long period of time. As an institution it was greatly reorganized and developed during British colonial rule (1757-1947) when it was designed largely to rule over a subject people. A total of 15 official reports on Indian administration were completed in this period (Haque, 1970, p. 3). With the creation in 1947 of a new state, Pakistan (of which Bangladesh was a part), the role of public administration shifted to promoting popular welfare.

During the Pakistani period 28 separate measures of administrative reform were undertaken (Miah, 1997, p. 27). Subsequently, the Bangladesh government recognized the need for improving the administrative capacity for service delivery. More than 20 further efforts at administrative reform were made in response to this need. Like other developing countries, successive governments attempted reforms, at least in theory. These efforts sought to change the orientations of public administration in general and government institutions like local administration in particular. It is generally accepted in Bangladesh that the MDGs cannot be achieved and no qualitative improvements in the lives of the citizenry can occur unless public administration capacity is improved. A

brief overview of administrative and local administration reform can be shown in the table 19.

Table 19: Overview of Major Administrative Reforms in Bangladesh

Reform Initiative	Focus	Major Recommendation	Observation
Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee, 1972	Civil Service Structure	Unified Civil Service Structure with a continuous grading system from top to bottom	The report was not made public.
Pay and Services Commission 1977	Services Structure and Pay	21 grades of pay scales; 28 services within Civil Service: establishment of Senior Service Pool (SSP).	Implemented
MLC for examining organizational set-up of Ministries/ Divisions/Directorates and other Organizations, 1982	Public Sector Organisation	Reduction of the size of the government; reduction of layers for decision making; delegation of administrative and financial powers down the hierarchy	Reduced Ministries from 36 to 19 ; Other offices from 243 to 18; constitutional bodies from 12 to 9; and lower levels employees from 9,440 to 3,222
Committee for Administrative Reform and Re-organization, 1982	Local Administration	Conversion of <i>Thanas</i> into <i>Upazila Parishads</i> as the focal point of local administration; empowerment of the local authority in relation to service delivery systems	All of 460 <i>Thanas</i> were converted to <i>Upazilas</i>
Commission for Review of Structure of the Local Government, 1993	Local Government Structure and system	UP reorganized into 9 Words, Formation of Local Government Commission, Empowering UP over Government officials and sources local tax collection.	9 words for a local Union Parishad instead of 3.
Administrative Reorganization Committee, 1993 (1996)	Structure and personnel reorganization	Reduction of the number of ministries from 35 to 22 and the number of administrative organizations from 257 to 224; Provisional structure for the Office of Ombudsman; Creation of a Secretariat for Supreme Court.	The report was not made public
Local Government	Strengthening of Local	Govt. employees in UP are the non-voting member of the	Not Implemented

Commission, 1997	Government. Institution	Parishad. Committee system, UP Five Year Plan will be the basis of Upazila Five Year Plan	
Committee for Recommendation of Financial Powers and Sources of Financing LG Institution 1999	Examine the Local Govt. Finance system	5 new sources of income for UP; 2 statutory bodies: LG Commission and Local Government Finance Commission	Not Implemented
Public Administration Reform Commission, 1997 (2000)	Administrative Structure for Improving the quality and standard of service Transparency, and Efficiency in the light of NPM	Determination of missions of public offices; improving the delivery of services; reforming the civil service; formation of the professional policy-making group (senior management pool); recognising institutions and rationalising manpower; restructuring field administration and decentralisation; establishment of an independence commission against corruption; establishment of the Office of Ombudsman; reducing wastage and promoting value for money; strengthening parliamentary oversight; facilitating private investment	Some of the interim recommendations have been implemented

Source: Rabbi & As-Saber, (2012, pp. 23); Morshed, (2006, pp. 143-158); CPD (2001, p.30-37).

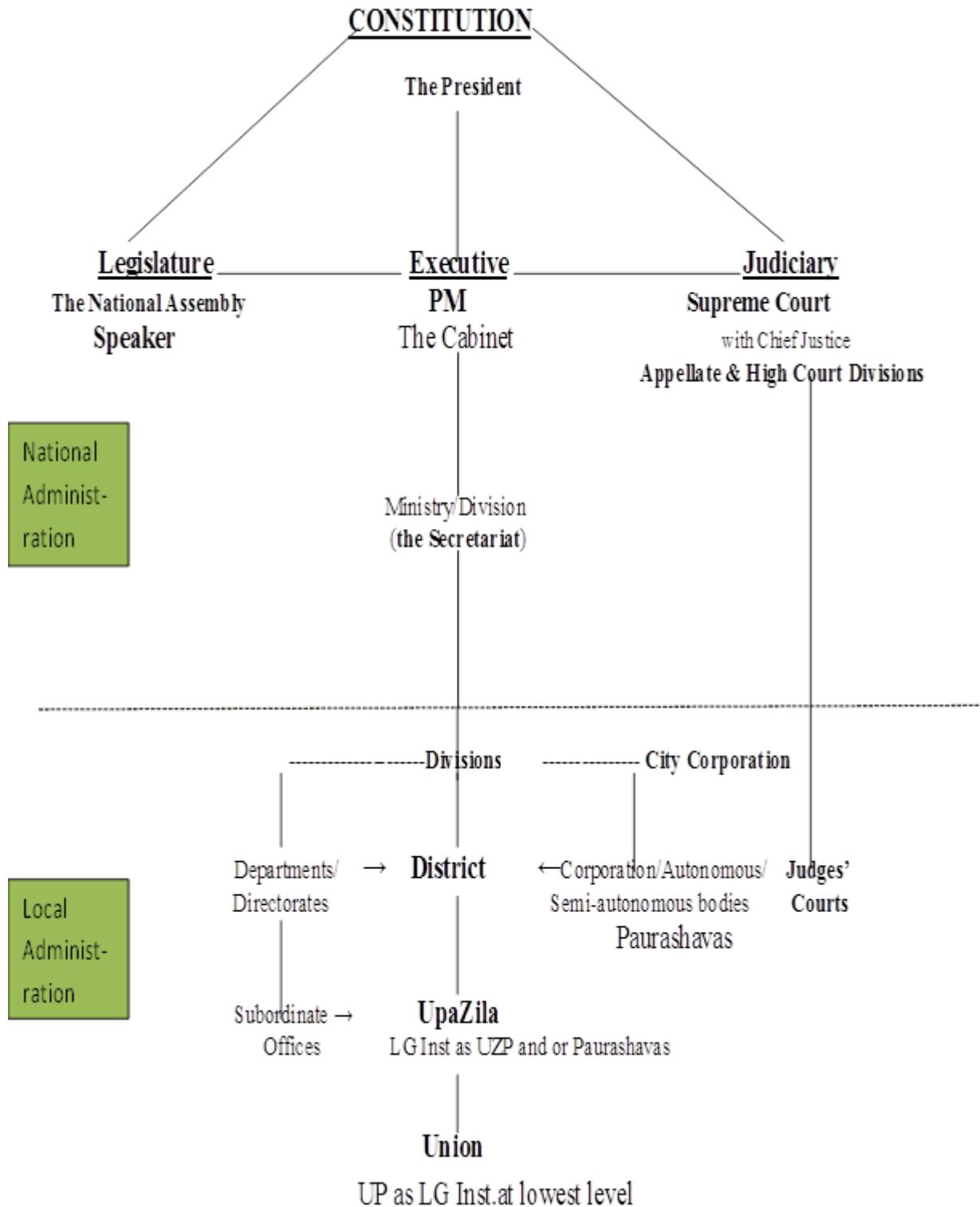
6.3 Local Administration in Bangladesh

6.3.1 General Framework of Public Administration

Public administration in Bangladesh is a two-tier system comprised of national and local levels. The national administration follows an “orthodox pyramidal pattern”, and “is simple in form but complex in style” (Zafarullah, 1998, p. 97). It comprises of legislative, executive and judicial branches with a President as the executive head of the country and a Prime Minister as the functional head of the government. The legislative arm represented by the National Parliament, which comprises of 330 MPs with a Speaker as the head of the Parliament. The judiciary is headed by a Chief Justice and other judges in the Supreme Court. District Judge’s Courts are in operation throughout

the country under its supervision. The executive branch is widely known as the administration and bureaucracy of the country. It has been the main area of academic studies in public administration and administrative reform. The '*Bangladesh Shachibaloy*' (Secretariat) comprises of Ministries and Divisions and is the nerve centre of the government. Departments and Directorates are supporting administrative units and are supposed to "provide policies and perform clearinghouse functions" (Zafarullah, 1998, p. 98). Local or sub-national government comprises of the territorial units of administration: divisions, districts, upazilas, and unions, with attached departments and subordinate offices of national government and city corporations / municipalities in the cities and towns (Ahmed, 2001, p. 234). The responsibilities of districts, upazilas and unions include carrying out general administration and management, public service delivery and implementation of development programmes. Figure 9 illustrates these functions.

Figure 9: Public Administration Structure in Bangladesh

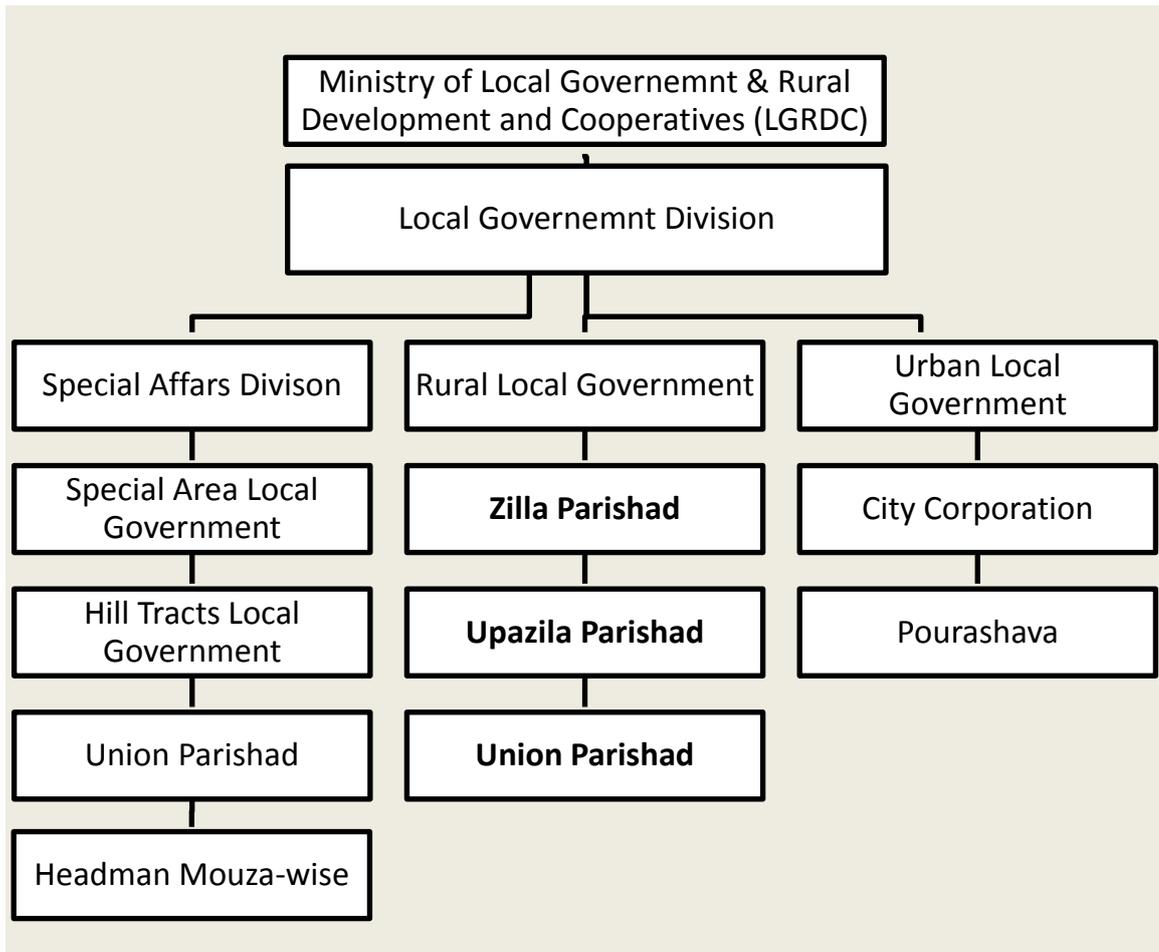


6.3.2 Local Administration and Governance

‘Local administration’ in Bangladesh generally refers to the sub-national level government. Subordinate offices of national government are referred to as ‘field administration’ (Zafarullah, 1998, p. 234). They are usually located in rural areas geographically bordered by small areas of countryside. It is a “by-product of decentralization in which the authority to make administrative decisions are delegated to the local authority and civil bureaucrats working in the field” (Smith, 1967, p. 26).

Local administration is an administrative policy implementing agency of national government for public service delivery, where “the personnel are stationed away from its headquarters into the country, to carry on its work from the numerous sub-centres within the easy reach of the people” (Obaidullah, 1999, p. 96). All the local authorities including Zila (District) Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Union Parishad and City Corporation and municipality fall under the auspices of local administration. They are arranged under the national administrative supervision and control of the Local Government Division of the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRDC), as shown in figure 9.

Figure 10: Arrangement of Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh



Source: Adopted from Ahmed (2000); Mallik (2004, p. 42).

6.3.2.1 *The Legacy of Local Administration*

Throughout the country’s history, “the existing structure of local government [and administration] transformed with the changes of the country’s status, including those that occurred after Bangladesh became an independent country” in 1971 (Rahman, 1997, p. 27). The system dates back to ancient Bengal, Mughul, colonial British and post-colonial Pakistan. It has been organized and reorganized through various administrative reform efforts from time to time. The system of local administration and governance dates back to the Chaukidary Act of 1870 and the Local Self-Government Act of 1885. They are considered important historical milestones in the history of local governance of the country

(Chowdhury, 1987, p. 25). Table 20 breaks down the units of local administration according to historical origin.

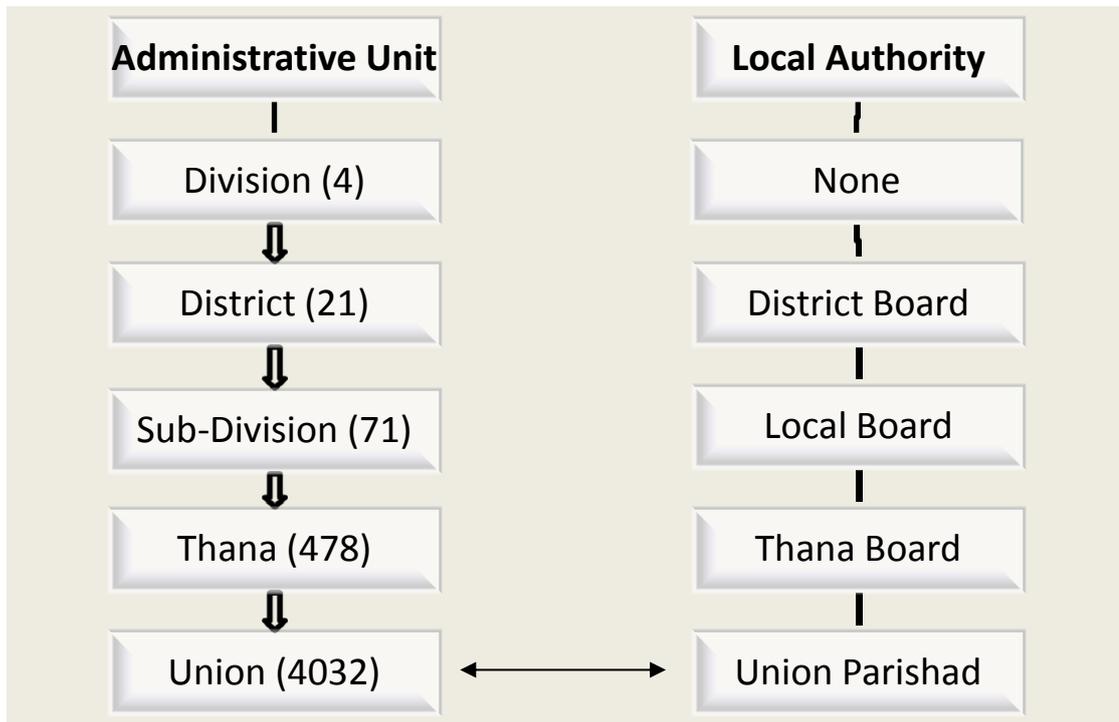
Table 20: Local Administration and Governance in Historical Perspective

Tier Period	Bangladeshi	Pakistani	British Colonial	Mughul
Highest	Division and City Corporation	Division	None	Sarker/ Chakla
Upper	Zila Parishad (District Council) and Municipality	District Council and Municipality	District and Municipality	
		Sub-Division and Municipality	Sub-Division/ Municipality	
Middle	Upazila Parishad/ Municipality	Circle/Thana and Town Committee	Thana/ Police Station	Khalisha
Lower	Union Parishad	Union Council	Panchaet/ Union Committee/ Union Board	Pargona

Source: Karim, 1991; Chowdhury, 1987; Islam and Fujita, 2008; 2012

Bangladesh inherited a five tier system of local institutions: Division is at the highest and Union the lowest strata. There were 4 national administrative divisions, 64 districts, 71 sub-districts, 478 Thanas, and 4032 Union's from 1971 to 1982. Figure 10 depicts the historical structure of local administrative units in Bangladesh.

Figure 11: Historical Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh



Source: Field research, 2012

Note: the downward arrow denotes the hierarchical arrangement and the double arrow is for existence of administrative units and local elected body in operation.

Divisions in the country were without local authority. Districts, sub-divisions and Thanas had authority but were not democratically elected local authority. Rather, they were nominated bodies appointed by the government in power. The Union was the lowest tier of local government without having a full-fledged local administrative apparatus. It had a democratically elected local authority known as a Union council where apolitical democracy practiced.

6.2.3 Reformation in Local Administration

Subsequent Bangladeshi governments have introduced administrative reform initiatives to improve public service delivery since independence in 1971. The Upazila Parishad Ordinance of 1982, and the Local Government (Upazila Parishad) Act 1998 and its subsequent amendments in 2009 and 2011 were legislative measures designed to bring about

change in the inherited traditional system at local level. Efforts to improve institutional capacity were characterized by periods of progress, followed by periods of stagnation in the 1990s and 2000s. These efforts can be traced to recommendations stemming from the Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization (CARR) in 1982. Among its findings, it recommended converting Thanas into Upazilas and aimed to make breakthroughs in the inherited pattern of field administration and make the local administration capable of public service delivery. CARR began the process of administrative reorganization and institutional capacity building at the local level.

The conversion of Thanas into Upazilas in early 1980s was considered as a major departure from the colonial and post-colonial set-up of ‘field administration’. This started a significant transformation from bureaucratic control to the democratic state of affairs of delivering the potential for better public service delivery. The table 21 can be shown for an elastration of the fact.

Table 21: Thana Board and Upazila Parishad Compared

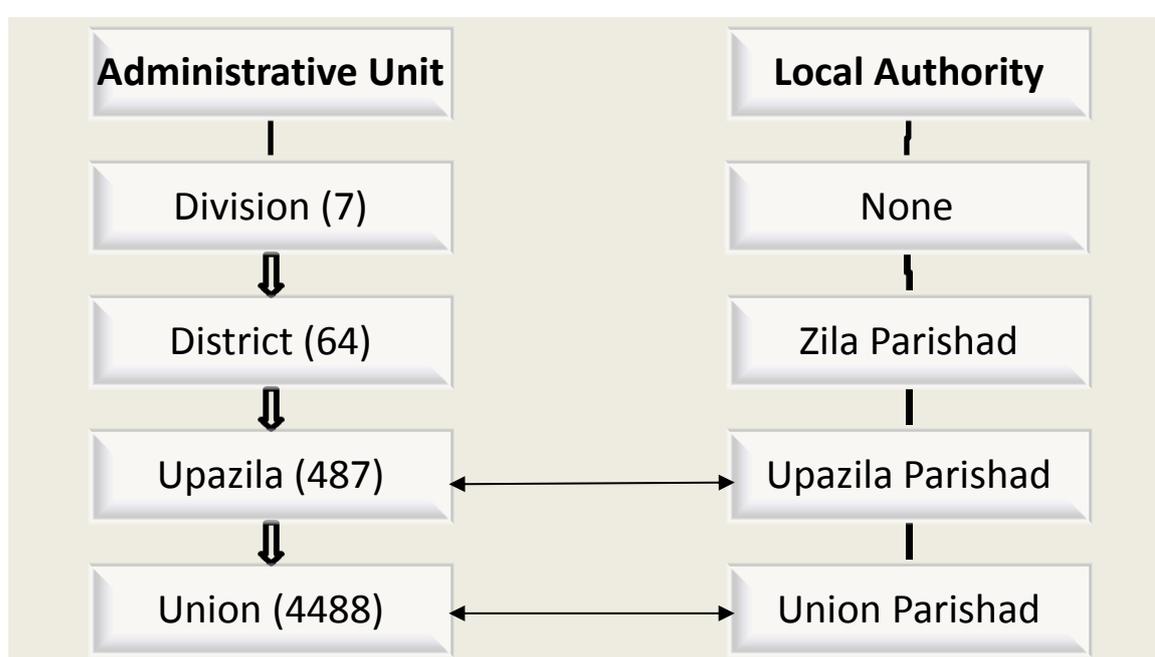
<i>Thana</i>	<i>Upazila</i>
SDO was the ex officio Chairman	Pazila Parishad with elected Chairman
Chairman is not accountable to Thana Board	All Members are accountable to the Parishad
Limited power and scope	Wider power and scope
All members have voting rights	Representative members have voting rights
No accountability of Civil Servants	Civil Servants are accountable to the Parishad
No Power of taxation	The Parishad has certain power of Taxation
the staffing process is done by national government	Officers are deputed to the Parishad
Wide control of District Administration	Coordinating role of District administration

Source: Adopted from Murshed (1997, p. 146); As-Saber & Rabbi. (2009, p. 61).

Note: SDO = Sub- Divisional Officer

A total of 460 Thanas as Upazila, 71 sub-divisions into districts were converted in the early 1980s. As a result, a total number of 64 districts are in existence: 42 new districts were created by upgrading sub-divisions. This process added to the existing 22 districts, unofficially known as ‘greater districts’ (Wahhab, 1996, p. 23). Figure 12 depicts the current state of administration at local level.

Figure 12: Present State of Local Administration and Governance in Bangladesh



Source: Field research, September - November, 2012 and December, 2013.

Note: the downward arrow denotes the hierarchical arrangement and the double arrow is for existence of administrative units and local government body in operation.

Figure 12 illustrates the four tiers of local administration from division to union. The division is at the top echelon without local authority. They are seven in number. The 64 districts are in the upper tier and have government-appointed local authority. Upazilas and unions represent the lower and lowest local tiers respectively and have a directly elected local authority. They number 487 and 4488.

Divisions are comprised of an average number of 10 districts with an around 23 million people and covers 147,000 sq. km. A senior member of the civil bureaucracy with the rank of *Joint Secretary* and the status of ‘Commissioner’, known as ‘*Divisional Commissioner*’ is the head of the unit. The unit is staffed by line and staff officials along with three additional commissioners and a large number of civil servants and support staff. Their role is “confined to the issue of coordinating government activities at the district level, and is responsible for hearing appeals on the decisions of district revenue officer with regard to revenue matters” (Ahmed, 2002, p. 331). Moreover, they also play a supervisory role over departments and agencies of the government in the division.

Districts have been the traditional as well as functional upper tier of local administration in the country. They are run by an appointed local administration authority called ‘Zila Parishad’, which is headed by a government-appointed chairman. They are comprised of an average of 8 Upazilas serving 2.5 people of population and covering 2300 sq km. Functionally, the district administration is headed by a midlevel civil bureaucrat with the rank of *Deputy Secretary* (DS) and the status of *Deputy Commissioner*, popularly known as DC. They are given assistance by line and staff officials such as *Additional Deputy Commissioners* (ADCs), one *Additional District Magistrate* (ADM), a group of *Assistant Commissioners* (AC), and other support staff. The primary functions of the district are revenue collection, maintaining law and order, accelerating economic development, ensuring coordination in all government activities related to nation building, and encouraging and collaborating with local self-government initiatives (GPRB, 2000, p. 15). The DC acts as the chief executive and is the principal channel of communication between the district and higher levels of government (Ahmed, 2002, p. 332).

Upazilas are the lower tier and unit of local administrations with a functional local administration authority called the Upazila Parishad. This is headed by a directly-elected chairman. Upazilas are comprised of an average of 9 unions serving 312,000 people and covering 300 sq. km. An officer with the rank of *Senior Assistant Secretary* and the status of *Upazila Nirbahi Officer*' (UNO) serves as the principal officer of the Upazila Parishad. A number of functional nation-building departments of the national government have sub-national level representatives in Upazila headquarters, with functionaries deputed from the national bureaucracy to work under each Upazila Parishad through general supervision of the UNO.

The Union is the lowest level tier of the local administrative structure and consists of an average number of 20 rural villages and serves an average of 34,000 people and covers 33 sq. km. An elected local authority called the *Union Parishad* is headed by a directly elected chairman and consists of 9 representative wards, with a number of villages are grouped into each ward. This is, in fact, without having a functional administration like Upazila. Officials in departments such as Agriculture, Livestock, Health and Family Planning also work at the Union level. They work under the direct control of the higher authorities in their respective departments and directorates at Upazila headquarters. The Parishad functions with the administrative assistance of a paid secretary. *Chaukidars* (the village police force) are under the direct control of this authority at the local level. It is their duty to maintain the law and order in the village. A demographic breakdown of local administrations is shown in table 22.

Table 22: The Demographic State of Local Administration in Bangladesh

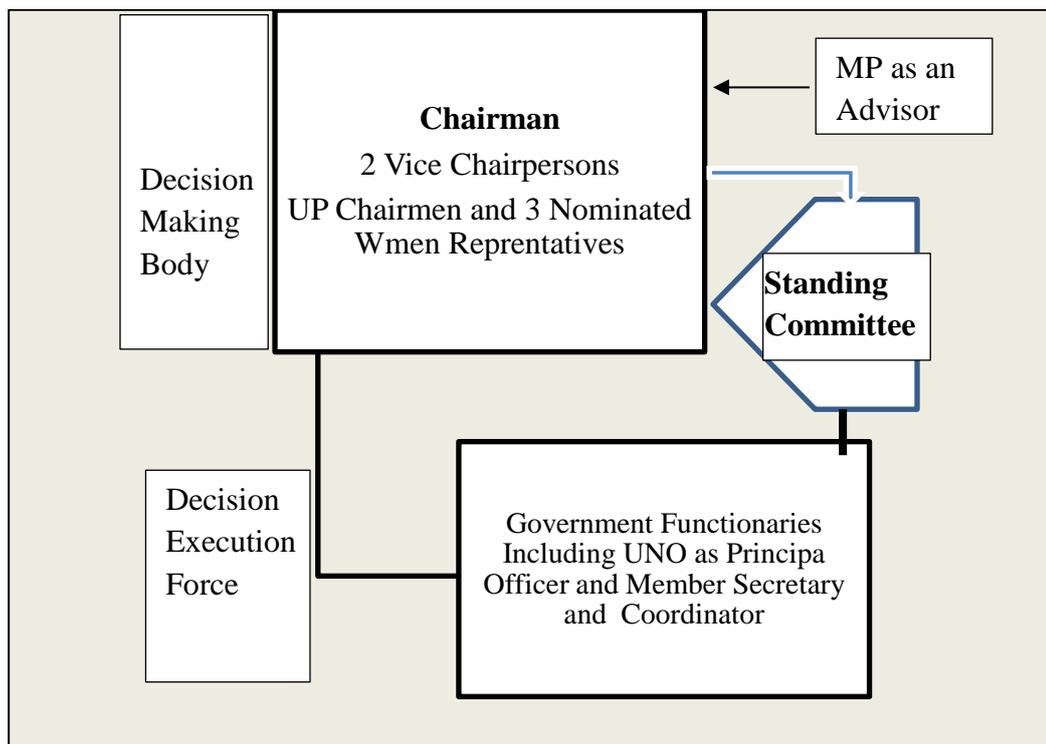
Level of Units	No of Units	Average Units	Average Size of Population	Average Area in Sq Km
Division	7	11 District	23 Millions	147000
District	64	8 Upazilas	2.5 Millions	2300
Upazila	487	9 Unions	312 Thousands	300
Union	4488	20 Villages	34 Thousands	33

Source: Calculated from the Statistical Pocketbook 2011, GPRB (2012a).

6.3 The Local Administration of Upazila Parishads

The Upazila is a mid-level tier and the lowest functional focal point of developmental activities. They are headed by a directly elected chairman. Upazilas are run by a council called the *Upazila Parishad* for a five year term. The decision-making body consists of people's representative members and includes the chairman and two directly elected vice-chairpersons, the chairmen of the Union Parishad, the chairman of the *Pourashava* (municipality), if any exists within the territory of the Upazila, and three nominated female representatives. The *Upazila Nirbahi (executive) Officer* (UNO) and other functionaries of the subordinate offices are placed in local administrations at the Upazila level to support service delivery in the Parishad. The local Member of Parliament (MP) acts as an advisor to the Parishad. Service delivery is scrutinised and examined by the respective Standing Committees and report to the Parishad. Figure 13 represents a typical Upazila Parishad.

Figure 13: Typical Structure of Upazila Parishad in Bangladesh

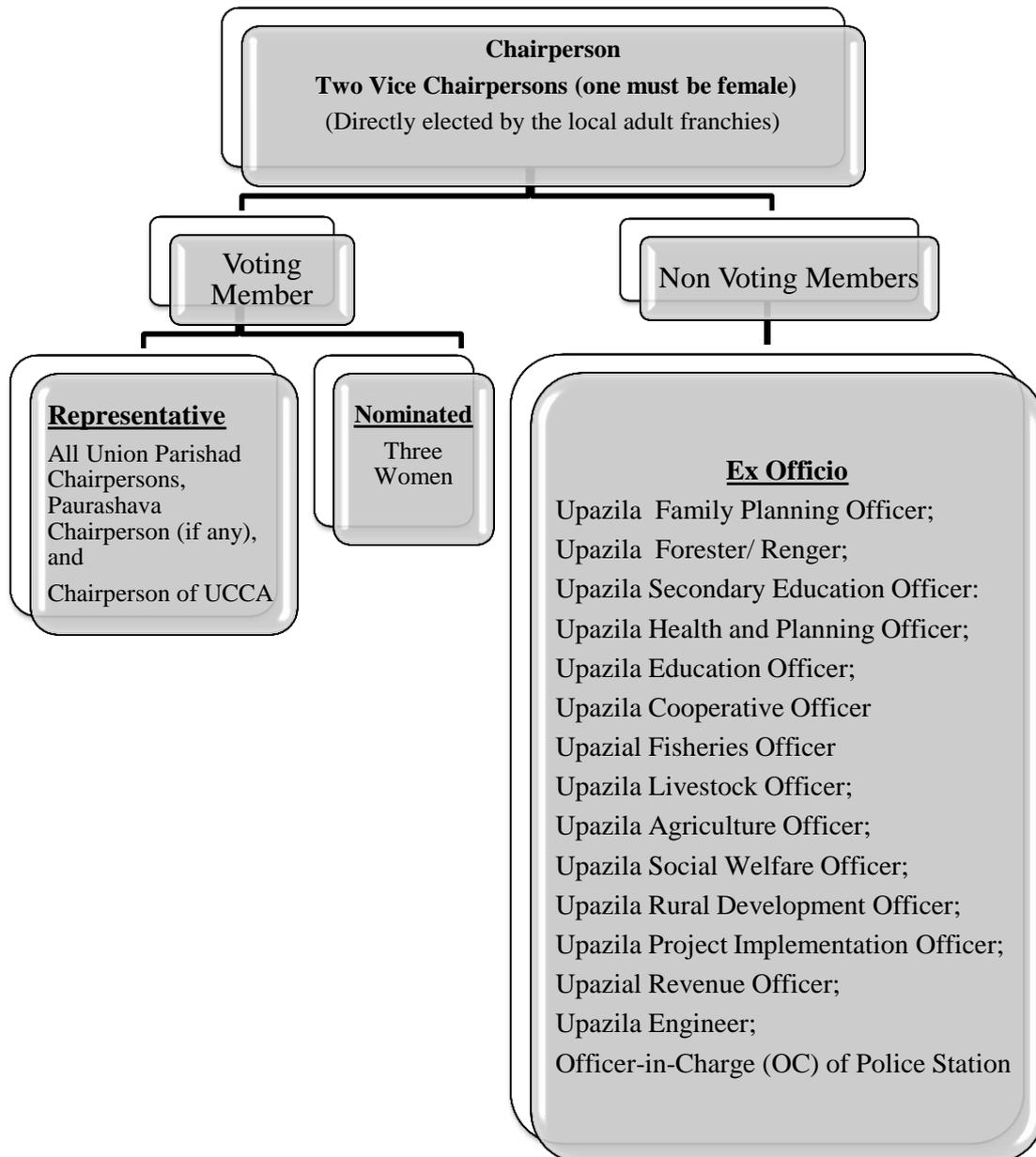


Source: Adopted from As-Saber & Rabbi (2009, p. 59);
GPRB (2011), Upazila Parishad (Amendment) Act 1998;
GPRB (2013), Upazila Parishad Manual.

The functionaries of national administration offices in the Upazila are members of the national civil bureaucracy in the local administration. They are representative of their respective departmental field offices of the national government. They are the executive force and their activities are scrutinized by their respective Standing Committees and reported to the Parishad.

The functionaries altogether make up the Upazila Parishad. At meetings, elected and nominated representatives have voting rights while ex-officio government functionaries do not. A diagrammatic breakdown of the functional composition of a typical Upazila level local administration is shown in figure 14.

Figure 14: Structure of the Upazila Parishad



Source: Adopted from Islam & Fujita (2008, p. 10);
GPRB (2011), Upazila Parishad (Amendment) Act 1998;
GPRB (2013), Upazila Parishad Manual.

The Chairman and two Vice Chairpersons are directly elected by local constituents. The Vice Chairpersons must be male and female. The Chairman is the Executive head of the Upazila Parishad with the Vice Chairpersons being the deputies. The Union Parishad's Chairmen, Paurashava Mayor and other elected officials are the ex officio member of the Parishad. They have voting rights in Parishad meetings and decision-making processes. Civil bureaucrats posted and deputed to the local administration of Upazila are designated as the respective Upazila officers. They are ex-officio member of the Parishad and do not have voting rights. It is their responsibility to assist the Parishad in decision-making and implementation through their administrative and managerial skills.

6.4 Local Upazila Administration Service Delivery

The local administration at Upazila level is responsible for a wide range of public services. Major responsibilities for service delivery are vested to the Upazila Parishad to be discharged within their jurisdiction. They are divided into two categories: 'retained subjects' and 'transferred subjects' (GPRB, 2010, p. 10). Regulatory functions and major developmental activities at the national and regional level fall under the category of retained subjects and are controlled by the national government. All other developmental activities, which are considered local, are recognised as transferred subjects. Responsibility is devolved to the *Upazila Parishad*.

Transferred subjects include: agriculture and irrigation, primary education, health and family planning, rural water supplies and sanitation, rural works, disaster relief, food-for-work programs, cooperatives, and fisheries, environment and forestry, and livestock development. Retained subjects include: law and order, justice, central revenues, large-scale irrigation, large scale industries, and higher and technical education. A large number of junior members of the civil service belonging to different departments of

national government have been deputed to the local administration under the authority of the Upazila Parishad. The state of the public services, subordinate offices and their respective responsible officers, attached departments and ministries is shown in table 23 below.

Table 23: Local Upazila Administration Service Delivery in Perspective

Nature of Service	Name of the Subordinate Office	Respective Officers	Department/ Directorate	Ministry/ Division
Executive and Magistracy	General Section	Senior Assistant Secretary as Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)	Ministry of Public Administration	Ministry of Public Administration
<i>Primary Education</i>	<i>Upazila Education Office</i>	<i>Upazila Education Officer (UEO)</i>	<i>Primary Education</i>	<i>Ministry of Primary and Mass Education</i>
Health and Family Planning	Upazila Health and Family Planning Office	Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer	Directorate of Health and Family Planning	Ministry of health and Family Welfare
Agriculture	Upazila Agriculture Office	Upazila Agriculture Officer	Directorate of Agricultural Extension	Ministry of Agriculture
Food and Relief	Upazila Food and Disaster Management Office	Upazila Project Implementation Officer	Directorate of Food/ Directorate of Disaster Management	Ministry of Food and Disaster Management
Social Welfare	Upazila Welfare Office	Upazila Social Welfare Officer	Directorate of Social Welfare	Ministry of Social Welfare
Fisheries and Livestock	Upazila Fisheries and Livestock Office	Upazila Fisheries Officer	Directorate of Fisheries	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
Livestock		Upazila Livestock Officer	Directorate of Livestock	
Women and Children	Upazila Women and Children Office	Upazila Women Officer	Directorate of Women	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Youth and Sports	Upazila Youth and Sports Development Office	Upazila Youth Development Officer	Directorate of Youth Development	Ministry of Youth and Sports

Local Infrastructure Development	Upazila Engineering Office	Upazila Engineer	Local Government Engineering Department	Ministry of Local Government,
Local Public Health Infrastructure		Assistant Engineer	Public Health Engineering Department	
Rural Development and Cooperative	Upazila Rural Development and Cooperative Office	Upazila Cooperative Officer	Department of Cooperative	Rural Development and Cooperative Division
Land Record and Revenue Concern	Upazila Land and Revenue Office	Upazila Land And Revenue Officer	Directorate of Land and Revenue Board	Ministry of Land and Internal Resource Division
Law and Order	General Section	UNO and Officer in Charge (OC) of the Thana	Directorate of Police	Ministry of Home Affairs
Secondary Education	Upazila Secondary Education Office	Upazila Secondary Education Officer	Directorate of Secondary and Education	Ministry of Education
Environment and Forest	Upazila Forest and Environment Office	Upazila Forester/ Ranger	Directorate of Environment and Directorate of Forest	Ministry of Environment and Forest

Source: GPRB (2013), Upazila Parishad Manual, and Field Research, 2013

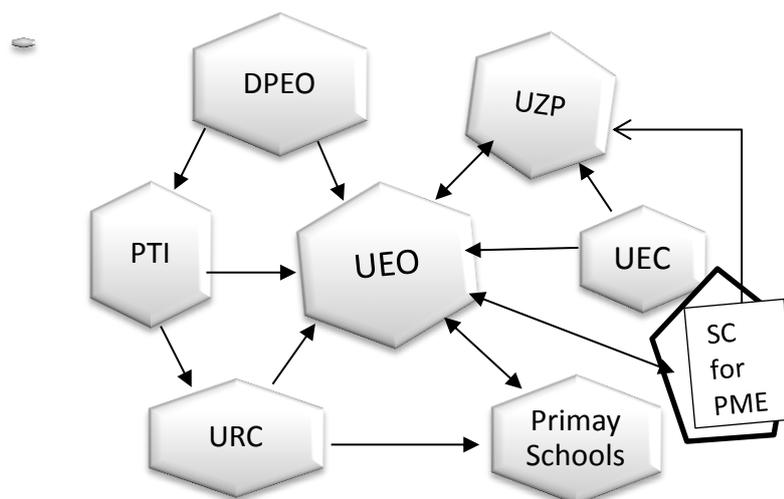
6.5 Primary Education

6.5.1 Administration and Functioning of Primary Education

Primary education belongs to the category of transferred subject to local administration in Bangladesh. Administrative reform has given the decentralized local Upazila administration the responsibility of providing primary education in the country. The system is centred around the Upazial Parishad (UZP), the Standing Committee, the Upazila Education Office, the Upazila Education Committee (UEC), primary schools,

and the Upazila Resource Centre (URC). Figure 15 provides a graphical representation of this organizational structure.

Figure 15: Functioning of Primary Education at Upazila Level



Note: UZP= Upazila Parishad, DPEO= District Primary Education Office, UEO= Upazila Education Office, and URC= Upazila Resource Centre, PTI= Primary Training Institute, and UEC= Upazila Education Committee, UESC= Upazila Educational Standing Committee.

The Upazila Education Office is entrusted with the responsibility of implementing primary educational policies and programmes of both national and international origin. It is a sub-institution of *Upazila Parishad* at local level. It is the centre-point of the administration and management of local educational governance and the lowest level unit for the delivery of primary education. It provides administrative facilities for education and learning to primary education institutes. Primary education services are provided as a result of its administrative support and assistance. The immediate departmental line office of the Upazila Education Office is the District Primary

Education Office (DPEO), which is run under an attached department: the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MPME). The DPEO supervises the operations of the Upazila Education Office through inspecting the functioning of primary schools. It is responsible for ensuring the overall quality of primary education and learning.

The **Upazila Education Committee** (UEC) administers and manages overall primary education services in the Upazila. The committee consists of eighteen members headed by the Chairman of the Upazila Parishad. The Committee consists of two Vice Chairpersons, a UNO, an Upazila Health Officer (UHO), an Upazila Engineer, one Union Parishad chairman, two local educationists, two primary head teachers, two primary School Management Committee (SMC) presidents, and the Instructor of the URC. The UNO acts as the Executive Vice Chairman and the Upazila Education Officer (UEO) acts as the member secretary to the Committee. The local MP serves in an advisory capacity.

The **Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education** consists of five members: a chairman, three members and a secretary. A vice chairperson acts as the chairman of the committee. Three UP Chairmen are the members on it. The Upazila Education Officer acts as the member secretary to the committee. The committee meets quarterly to assess the local primary education system and reports to the Upazila Parishad.

Primary schools are the principal units of educational learning. They are spread out over the Upazila. They are run by a School Management Committee (SMC) and staffed by a head teacher and assistant teachers with the academic support of the Upazila

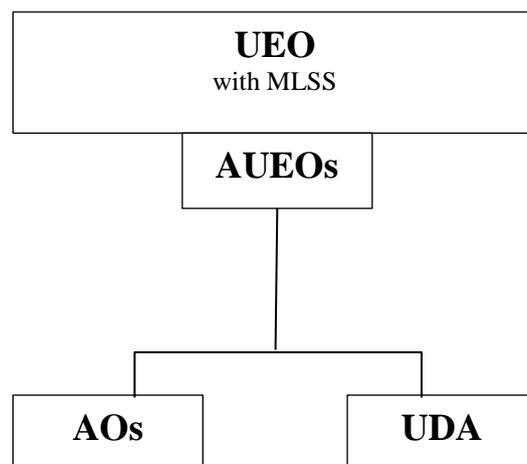
Resource Centre (URC) under the administrative control of the Upazila Education Office.

The **Upazila Resource Centre (URC)** is a local educational resource centre which provides academic support to primary schools in the Upazila. It is supported logistically by the Primary Teachers Training Institute (PTI). The URC is usually set up on the premises of a ‘model school’ usually in centre of the Upazila. It provides academic support to teachers through in-service training and short course and refreshment training. There are 487 URCs throughout the country. They are comprised of an Instructor, Assistant Upazila Education Officer, data entry operator and other support employees.

6.5.2 Organization of the Upazila Education Office

The Upazila Education Office (UEO) is comprised of an Upazila Education Officer (UEO), Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs), ULD, Office Assistants (OA), and Member of Lower Subordinate Service (MLSS). The UEO has the overall responsibility for national government employees. She is usually deputed to local administrations of Upazila to run primary education services under the immediate administrative supervision of the UNO and assisted by the AUEOs. The UDAs, OAs, and MLSS assist with office management. Figure 16 presents the organization of Upazila Education Offices.

Figure 16: Organization of Upazila Education Office



Note: UEO= Upazila Education Office, Upazila Education Officer,
AUEO= Assistant Upazila Education Officers,
UDA= Upper Division Assistant
AOs= Administrative Assistants
MLSS = Member of the Lower Subordinate Service

The Upazila Education Officer (UEO) plays multiple roles in administration and educational governance at local level. He is the executive chief of the Office and government employee responsible for educational service delivery in the Upazila. Apart from the ex-officio member in the Upazila Parishad, he acts as the member secretary to the Upazila Education Committee. He also acts as a member secretary to the Upazila Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education (USCPME). He is accountable to the committee for primary education in his respective Upazila. AUEOs, AOs, and UDA are also national government employees to the Upazila. The office provides administrative and management support to teaching staff. It is the responsibility of UEO to organize and arrange the recruitment, selection, and appointment of teaching staff. All sub-stipend and merit concerns to improve the quality of education and learning delivery are administered by the Upazila Education Office.

6.5.3 The Primary Education Staffing System

Staffing in primary schools in Bangladesh is entrusted to local administration of Upazila. The process is administered locally by the *Upazila Parishad* with the managerial support of the Upazila Education Office (UEO). The staffing process includes the recruitment, selection, appointment, posting, transfer, and promotion of teaching and support staff. They take place simultaneously with the overall administrative supervision of the District Primary Education Officer (DPEO) in respective districts.

The *recruitment* of teaching staff is followed by public advertisements for vacant primary school teaching positions. Teaching positions are advertised by the Upazila Parishad following recommendations from the Upazila Education Committee. The Upazila Education Office arranges for the publication of an advertisement calling for applications. The application period is usually four weeks. The application delineates employment requirements and provides a detailed job description. A Bachelor's degree is considered the minimum qualification for this position. New teachers begin his or her career as 'Assistant Teacher'.

Valid applicants are short-listed against the position's job description. The *selection* process includes an assessment of eligibility through written and viva-voce examinations. The Upazila Education Office is responsible for assessment and the forwarding of lists of eligible candidates to the Upazila Education Committee (UEO). The Education Committee for the Upazila Parishad is responsible for the final decision regarding the appointment of prospective teachers.

The *Appointment* letter is issued by the Upazila Education Office with the approval of the District Primary Education Office (DPEO). The *posting* of teaching staff to primary

schools is done by the Upazila Education Office under the supervision of the District Primary Education Office (UEO). Teachers are usually appointed and posted to a vacant permanent position. A one-year provisional period must be completed before the position is made permanent. Within this period the teacher has to acquaint themselves with appropriate teaching and learning delivery techniques through educational training and development. Teachers usually stay at their post for three years. They are then transferred to another primary school in the local administration. This is usually done by the DPEO, as the local administration does not have the authority to do so. This is a curious feature of local administration functions regarding primary education in the country.

Upon the fulfillment of certain criteria and the satisfaction of the (national) primary education authority, an ‘Assistant Teacher’ is *promoted* to the position of ‘Teacher,’ with a new pay scale and better remuneration. This usually takes place after a minimum three years of employment. A senior primary teacher is usually promoted to and holds the position of head teacher. An experienced head teacher may be promoted to the position of Assistant Upazila Education Officer (AUEO) in the end of his/her tenure. This happens rarely nowadays.

6.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the results derived from documentary sources of information for this research. It substantiated the contextual background for the phenomena under examination. Local administration, or the sub-national government, operates at local level with subordinate offices of the national government. Local administration of Upazilas is a mid-level local institution and is responsible for the delivery of a number of services. However, reform efforts so far have taken the form of national government

interventions in local administration affairs. The use and misuse of legal provisions relating to administrative reform has resulted in an increased dependence on the central government, managerial instability, and stands the way of meaningful administrative reform – particularly regarding the provision of services such as primary education.

Having described local administration structure and the history of administrative reform and primary education in Bangladesh we now move on to a case-study examination of the capacity of local administration to provide primary education.

Chapter 7: Examining Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education in Bangladesh

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the reform-led capacity of local administration in Bangladesh for the delivery of primary education service. It emphasises the role of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education in the development of Bangladeshi educational policies. The case study is substantiated by both secondary and primary data sources.

Two local administrative units of Bangladesh, the Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazilas, form the basis of this empirical study. The contexts of local administration and primary education in both Upazilas were taken into consideration. The study has provided an opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of the circumstances surrounding administrative reform and capacity development regarding the provision of primary education. A brief summary concludes the chapter.

7.2 The Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazilas

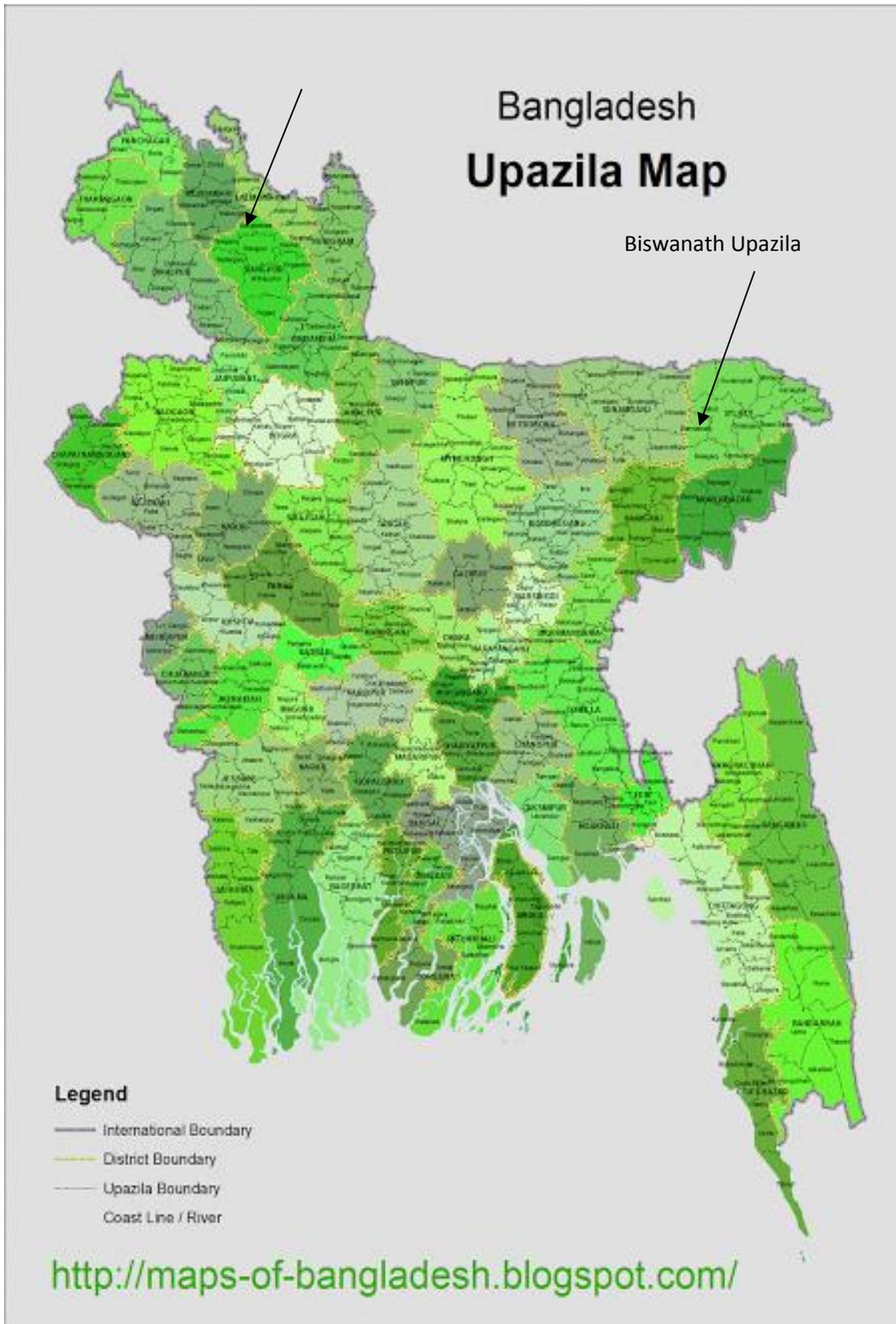
The case studies served as a means to answer research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Two local administration Upazilas from different regions in Bangladesh were used. Biswanath is located in the north-east, Gobinagoni in the north-west. They were selected as the case studies due to their regional, geographic, population, size and economic differences; as well as some shared features.

The research examined the reform led-capacity for the provision of services at the local administrative level. Service delivery is referred to in terms of Bangladesh's commitment to the MDGs of providing universal primary education. Primary schools

from two Upazilas were studied: Puran Gawn Primary School in Biswanath and Kuti Bari Primary School in Gobindagonj.

Biswanath Upazila falls within the administrative Division of Sylhet. Gubindagonj Upozila falls under the Gaibandha district within the Rangpur Division in the country. An Upazila map of Bangladesh (Map 1) provides a visual representation of the geographical locations of the two Upazilas. The case study delineates the common features of public services in Bangladesh. The standard institutional capacity of local administrations to deliver services should be well understood. An attempt was therefore made to evaluate the linkages between service delivery and institutional capacity at the local level.

Map 1: Upazila Map of Bangladesh



Source: <http://maps-of-bangladesh.blogspot.co.uk/2010/06/upazila-map-of-bangladesh.html> as of 02.01.2013.

7.2.1 Case Study I: Biswanath Upazila

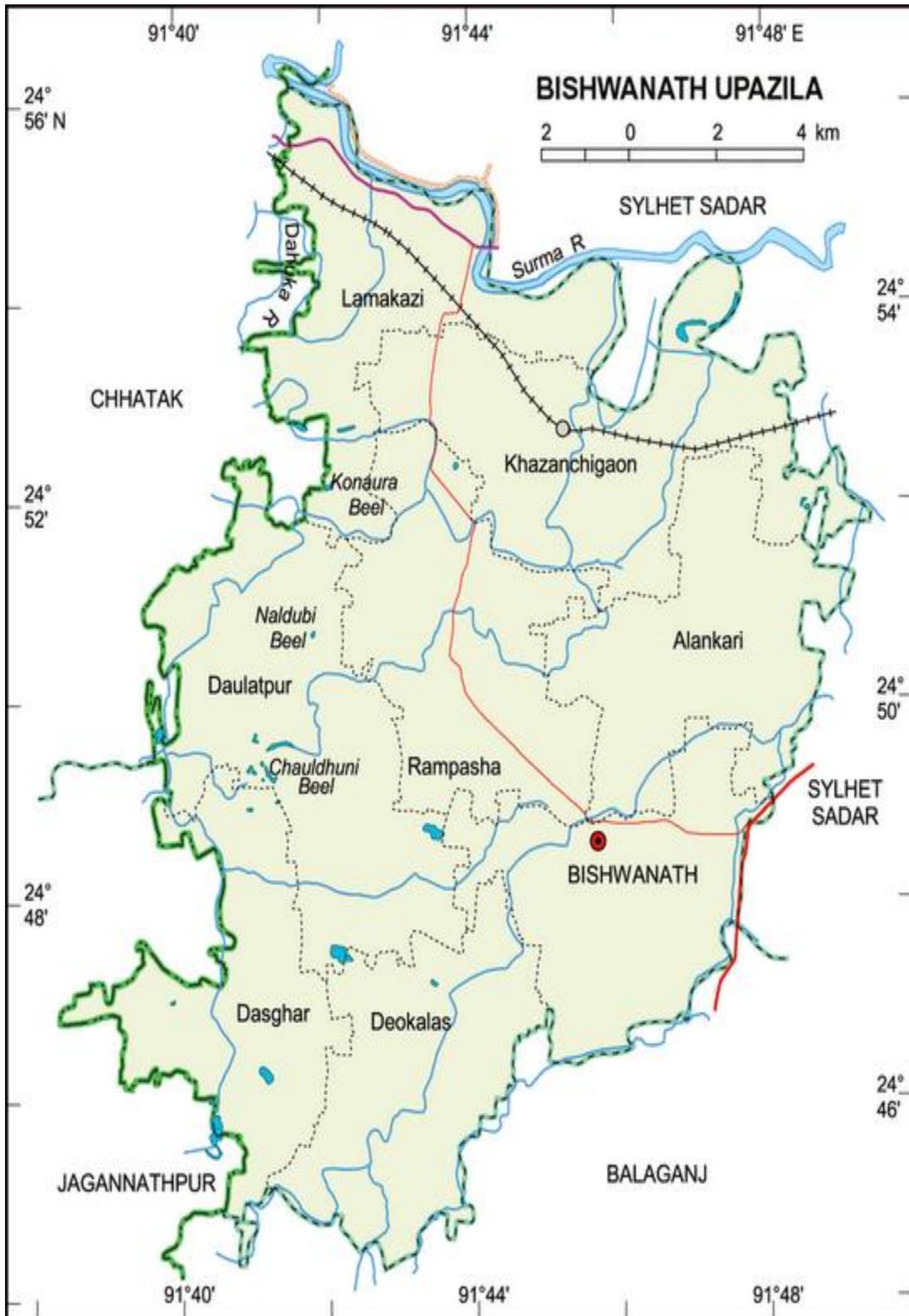
7.2.1.1 Geographical Location

The Biswanath Upazila is a mid-level local administrative unit in Bangladesh. It is situated in the district of Sylhet within the administrative jurisdiction of Sylhet Division in the country. It is located between 24°.44' and 24°.56'N and 91°.39' and 91°.50'E. It has a full-fledged administrative setup for public service delivery with local administration. The area of the Upazila is 214.5 sq. km. It is bounded by Dakkin Surma Upazila on the north and east and Balaganj Upazila on the south and east of Sylhet district, Jagannathpur and Chatak Upazilas of Sunamgonj district on the west. The river Bashiya flows through the Upazila.

The centre of the Upazila, the Biswanath Bazar and its surrounding area were ceded to local feudal lords under the colonial British Permanent Settlement Act of 1793. The Biswanath Police Station and related administrative offices were established in 1922 as the Biswanath Thana. It was named after a local land-owner who donated the property. The Thana was re-designated an Upazila in 1983 as a service delivery unit, local and field-administration with a sub-national government administrative arrangement.

The Biswanath Upazila consists of eight Unions and 236 villages. The Unions are Lamakazi, Khazanchi Gawn, Alankari, Rampasha, Daulat Pur, Biswanath, Deokalash, and Dasghar. They are the public service delivery entities of the lowest level of local governance and do not have a full-fledged local administrative arrangement. Map 7.2 provides a closer look at the geography of the Biswanath Upazila.

Map 2: Map of Biswanath Upazila



Source: <http://mapofbangladesh.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/biswanath-upazila.html>

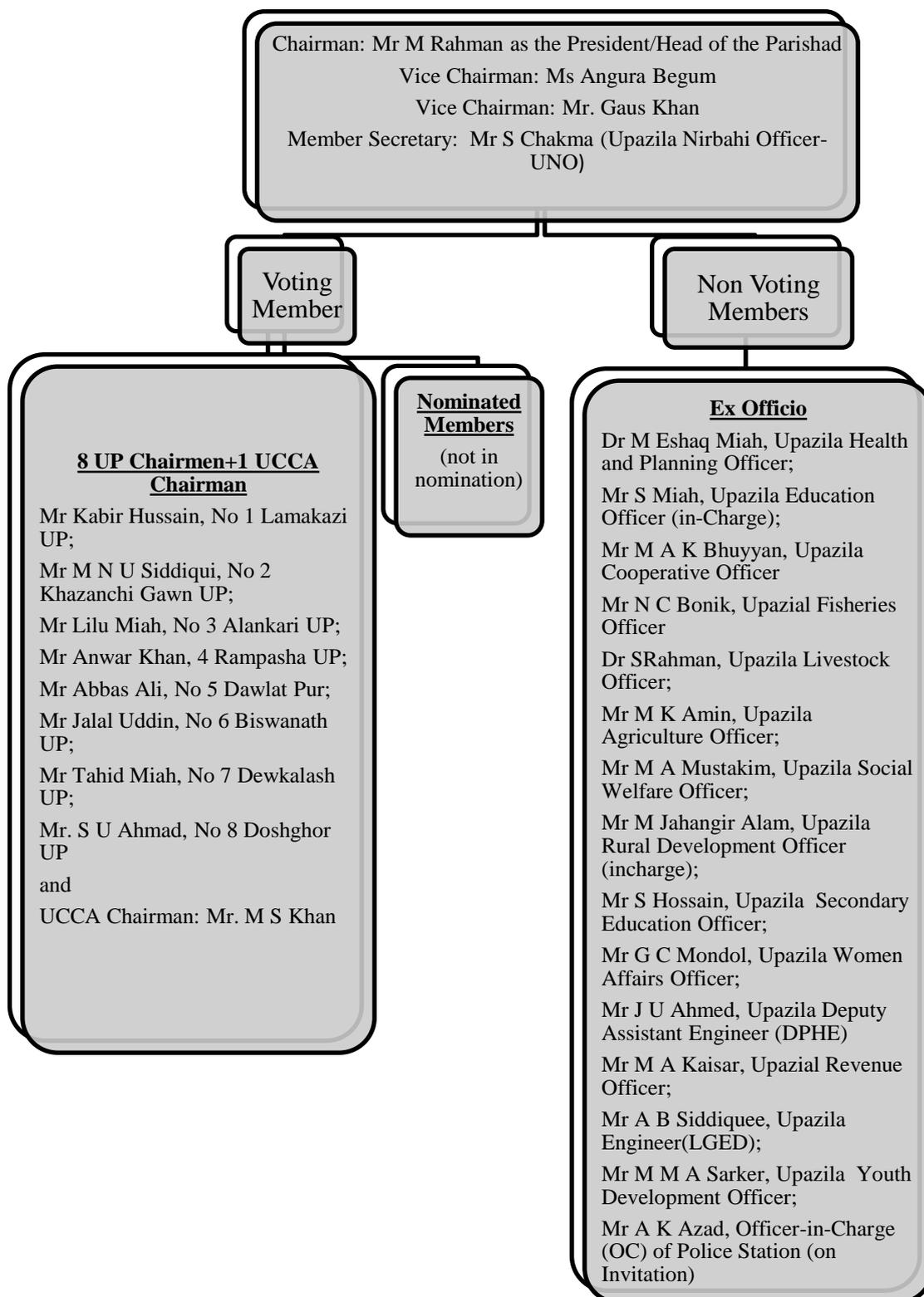
The total population is, according to 2011 census, 232,573 with a density of 1091 people per square kilometre. Male constitute 50.99% of the population while females constitute 49.01%. The average literacy rate is 43.8%. The rate for males is 40% and 38% for females. There are a number of educational institutions in operation in the Upazila, such as primary, secondary, higher secondary, and madrasahs. Primary education institutions are the highest in number. They are 183.

Biswanath is mainly agricultural. Paddy, groundnut, potato, mustard, chilli, lentil, onion, and ginger are the most common crops cultivated. While agriculture is the main source of income, some earn incomes through fishing. Incomes are supplemented by subsistence earnings and foreign remittances.

7.2.1.2 Local Administrative Context

The local administration in the Biswanath Upazila, the *Biswanath Upazila Parishad* (BUP) is a democratic institution. It is comprised of directly elected, selected, nominated, and ex-officio members with and without voting rights. They are the decision making body responsible for public service delivery in the Upazila. The Chairman Upazila Parishad and two vice-chairman are directly elected. Of the two vice chairpersons, one is always female. They cooperate with and are assisted by ex-officio members of the local administration. The UNO of the Upazila administration comes from the national civil service and acts as member secretary to the Parishad. Table 17 describes the present structure of the BUP.

Figure 17: Structure of the Biswanth Upazila Parishad (BUP)



Source: Field research, September-November. 2012 and December 2013

The Biswanth Upazila Parishad (BUP), as figure-7.1 shows, consists of 28 key functionaries. The Upazila Chairman, Mr. M. M. Rahaman, is the executive head. The two vice-chairpersons, Mr. G. Khan and Ms. A. Begum, act as his deputies. The UNO, Mr S. Chakma, is the principal officer and acts as the member secretary to the Parishad. The eight elected chairmen of the local Union Parishads are ex-officio members of the Upazila Parishad with voting rights. The Upazila Central Cooperative Association (UCCA) chairman is also an ex-officio member with voting rights. Members of the civil bureaucracy do not have voting rights. They are tasked with assisting the Parishad with the execution and implementation of policy and performing administrative and managerial jobs in their respective fields. They are also the main source of the information which informs policy development within the Upazila Parishad.

7.2.1.3 Public Service Delivery Contexts

Biswanath Upazila Parishad is tasked with implementing national as well as international programmes such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PSPRs) and MDGs at local level. The Parishad is responsible for maintaining law and order, providing education, health, social welfare, family planning, managing rural development and cooperatives, land and revenue concerns, agriculture and irrigation, fisheries and veterinary issues, youth and sports services, food and disaster management, freedom fighters concerns, environment and forestry, rural communication and infrastructure development. Decisions regarding public services are taken by the Parishad in field-specific committees. Public services are theoretically made accountable and supervised by democratic standing committees.

Nine standing committees comprising of sixteen to nineteen members were formed, with provisions for taking the occasional expansion of membership. No legal procedures have been properly followed in this regard. Approval from the respective ministries of national government has not been forthcoming.

7.2.1.4 Primary Education in Biswanath Upazila

Primary Education Context

In line with MDGs commitments, primary education is one of the major services provided by the Biswanath Upazila Parishad. It is provided through 183 government, non-government, private institutions, and madrasahs. Table 24 lists the types and number of primary education institutions in the Upazila.

Table 24: Primary Education Institutions in Biswanath

Type of Primary Institution	No of Institution
Government	100
Registered non-government	15
Community	11
Kindergarten	26
Ebtadaee Madrashah	18
Qaumiee Madrashah	13
Total	183

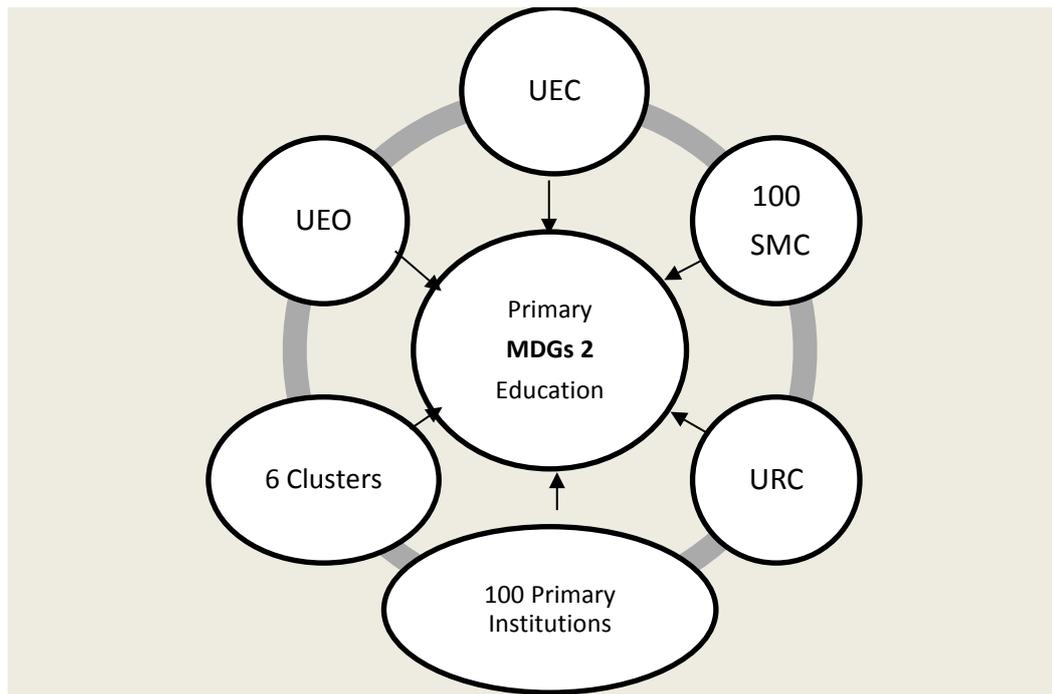
Source: Biswanath Upazila Education Office, December, 2013

One hundred institutions are under the direct control and supervision of local administration of the Upazila. They are funded by the government and run by their respective School Management Committees (SMCs). The 26 registered non-government

primary schools are run and managed privately. They are granted financial and academic assistance from the government. The remaining schools are run through either privately or community initiatives. They must receive accreditation as providers of primary education from the national education authority. Government primary schools have, according to the Upazila Education Office records, 31,998 students and 451 teachers. The ratio between student and teacher is 70:1. The enrolment rate is 99.74%. The dropout rate has been calculated as 14%.

Primary education in the Biswanath Upazila is centred on the Upazila Education Committee (UEC), Upazila Education Office, primary education institutions, the SMC and URC and clusters for government primary schools. The overall structure is illustrated in figure 18.

Figure 18: Primary Education in the Biswanath Upazila



Note: UEC= Upazila Education Committee; UEO= Upazila Education Office; URC= Upazila Resource Centre; SMC= School Management Committee; MDGs= Millennium Development Goals

Primary education is delivered through the combined efforts of several different entities. There are 183 primary education institutions; among them 100 is government funded schools; i.e., schools under the direct supervision of the Upazila Parishad, with 100 SMCs. Schools are grouped by 6 clusters for UEO supervision. Academic support stems from the URC.

The Upazila Education Committee (UEC) consists of eighteen members headed by the chairman of the Parishad, Mr M. M. Rahman, including two vice chairpersons, the UNO, an Upazila Health Officer (UHO), Upazila Engineer, a Union Parishad (UP) Chairman, two local educators, two primary school head teachers, two SMC presidents, and the instructor of the URC. The UNO acts as the executive vice chairman of the committee. The Upazila Education Officer (UEO) acts as the member secretary to the

Committee. The MP of the local constituency- Sylhet 2 of the National Parliament, Mr S. R. Chowdhury, advises the committee. The present education committee is shown in table 25.

Table 25: Education Committee of Biswanath Upazila Parishad

SI No	Designation	Category	Functionaries
01	Advisor	Ex-Officio	Mr S. R. Chowdhury MP, Sylhet 2.
02	President	Ex-Officio	Mr M. Rahaman, Chairman, Upazila Parishad
03	Executive Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio as Administration Executive	Mr Sunamoni Chakma, UNO, Biswanath Upazila
04	Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio	Mr. G. Khan ,Vice Chairman, Upazila Parishad
05	Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio	Ms Angura Begum, Vice Chairman of Upazila Parishad
06	Member	Ex-Officio	Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
07	Member	Ex-Officio	Upazila Engineer
08	Member	Ex-Officio	No 6 Biswanath Union Parishad U P Representative
09	Member	Secondary School Representative	Head Teacher, Ram Sundar High School, Biswanath
10	Member	Women Educationist	Ms KarimunNahar Ruchi
11	Member	Male Educationist	Mr S Asaduzzaman
12	Member	SMC Representative	Mr B. Akhtar, President, SMC, Biswanath Model Primary School

13	Member	SMC Representative	Mr M. Miah, President, SMC, Dhorarai Reg. Non Govt Primary School.
14	Member	Teacher Representative	Mr K. Kanti Das, Head Teacher, Bahara Dubag Primary School.
15	Member	Teacher Representative	Mr M A. Salam, Head Teacher, JonoKallyan Reg. Non Govt Primary School.
16	Member	Academic Support	Instructor, Upazila Resource Centre, Biswanath
18	Secretary	Member Secretary	Mr S. Miah, In Charge UEO, Biswanath Upazila

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013.

The Upazila Education Committee

The Upazila Education Committee (UEC) is responsible for maintaining primary educational facilities in the Upazila. Administrative assistance is provided by the Upazila Education Office and academic support is provided by the Upazila Resource Centre (URC). The Upazila Education Office is located in the Upazila Parishad complex. The URC oversees the nearby model primary. The education office in Biswanath Upazila is officially staffed by one UEO, seven AUEOs, one ULD, two OAs, and one MLSS. However, some positions are vacant. The present staffing strength of the education office is shown in table 26.

Table 26: Staffing Strength of Biswanath Upazila Education Office

Position	Existing	Sanctioned	Responsibility
Upazila Education Officer	0	1	Overall supervision and coordination
Assistant Upazila Education Officer	3	7	In charge of Clusters
UDA	0	1	Administration
Office Assistant	2	2	Clerical
MLSS	0	1	Messengerial
Total	5	12	

Source: Field research, November 2012 and December, 2013.

As the table indicates, only five positions out of twelve are currently filled. The Upazila Education Officer (UEO) and MLSS positions are vacant. There are three AUEOs instead of seven.

The Upazila Resource Centre

The Upazila Resource Centre (URC) is the main source of academic support for primary schools in the Upazila. It is responsible for teacher training, teaching orientation courses, teacher refreshment courses and so on. The centre is attached to the Upazila Education Office and is located by the nearby Janayya Primary School. The resource centre is presently staffed by two persons: an Assistant Instructor (AI) and a member of the support staff. The assistant instructor performs the duties of the instructor, as the position is presently unoccupied.

The Upazila Education Cluster

In order to ensure quality education, the Upazila primary education is divided into six clusters. Each cluster is headed by an Assistant Upazila Education Officer (AUEO). They are responsible for inspecting and monitoring teaching and learning delivery and educational facilities. The officers usually visit the schools once a month. The six clusters are organized into cluster areas consisting of around 17 primary schools. Table 27 lists the clusters and their responsible AUEO.

Table 27: Clusters in Biswanath Upazila Primary Education

SI No	Clusters	Responsible AUEO
1	Gumragul	Mr S. Miah
2	Janaya	Mr S. Miah
3	Doshpaika Anor Pur	Mr A. Razzaq
4	Eklimia	Mr A. Razzaq
5	Doshghor	Mr F. Islam
6	Daudpur	Mr F. Islam

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013

Note: AUEO= Assistant Upazila Education Officer

The School Management Committee

Every school in the Upazila is managed by an SMC typically consisting of 11 members from the school locality. Members consist of parents and guardians, educators, teacher representatives, representative from the Union Parishad, land donors, and a teacher from a nearby secondary school.

7.2.1.5 Puran Gawn Primary School

Institutional Profile

Puran Gawn Primary School is one of 183 primary education institutions in the Biswanath Upazila with a B-grade status. It was established in 1979 by the community to provide education for local children. Puran Gawn is a rural village under the No 4 Rampasha Union Parishad. It is located approximately 3 km from the Upazila headquarters, Biswanath Bazar. The catchment area of the school is the neighbouring villages of Ilamer Gawn and Aat Ghor, including Puran Gawn.

The school came under the local administration of the Upazila in 1988 and became a grassroots level unit delivering primary education. The EMIS (Education Ministry Information Service) code is 602040210. This is under the cluster of Daspaika Anor Pur of the Upazila Education Office. The school has 6 teachers, including the head teacher. The school consists of five classes, which are held two shifts. Classes I and II are taught in the late morning. Teaching lasts for two hours. Classes III, IV and V taught from 11:30 to 16:15. The school has 327 students. 48% are boys and 52% are girls. The teacher-student ratio is about 1:65. The enrolment rate is 99% and is close to complying with the MDGs primary education target.

Management of the School

The school is managed by the School Management Committee (SMC). The Committee consists of 11 persons from the school locality and come from a variety of backgrounds. The committee usually meets monthly, or when necessary. The structure and membership of the SMC is shown in table 28.

Table 28: Structure of Puran Gawn Primary School Management Committee

Sl No	Position	Membership	Functionaries
1	President	Guardian	Mr Jainal Abedin
2	Vice President	Educationist	Mr Abdur Rahim
3	Secretary	Ex-officio	Mr D C Shaha
4	Member	Teacher Representative	Mr Kabir Hussain
5	Member	Ex-officio	Union Parishad Representative
6	Member	Female Guardian Representative	Ms Shopna Begum
7	Member	Female Guardian Representative	Ms Rothna Begum
8	Member	Male Guardian Representative	Sk M Mushahid Ali
9	Member	Male Guardian Representative	Mr G M Alam
10	Member	Land Donor	Mr M S Ali
11	Member	Secondary School Representative	Mr Najrul Islam

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013

Members of the Primary School Management Committee for Puran Gawn are both male and female. They are local council representative, educationists, guardians, and donors of school catchment area. The president of the committee, Mr J Abedin, leads meetings. The head teacher, Mr D. C. Shaha acts as the Secretary to the Committee. He is responsible for convening and organising meetings, minutes-taking, and formalising and circulating committee decisions.

The Learning Environment of the School

The Puran Gawn Primary School is situated in a rural village environment. The school compound is located on a comparatively small piece of flat land. The school itself is a single-storied old fashioned building. The building includes four medium size rooms: an office for the head teacher and three class rooms. The head teacher's office also functions as the school office and a common room for teachers. The school does not have any support staff.

The office is furnished with a medium size table, a few chairs, and some almeries and shelves. The almeries are wooden made and used for the safekeeping of necessary papers, files and class materials. Classrooms are furnished with a chair and table for teachers, and desks and benches for pupils. The classrooms are sparsely decorated with educational aids. Tools for teaching such as blackboards and chalks are available in the classrooms.

The campus of the school is open. The yard of the school building is used as a playground. Toilet facilities are inadequate and unhygienic. A tube well in the corner of the school building supplies pupils and teaching staff with drinking water. There is a paucity of jugs and glasses for pupils. Teaching staff organise and manage drinking utensils and toiletries on their own.

7.2.2 Case Study II: Gobindagonj Upazila

7.2.2.1 Geographical Location

The Gobindagonj Upazila is a mid-level local administration in the Gaibandha district within the administrative Division of Rangpur, Bangladesh. It is located at 25.1333°N and 89.3917°E and is a full-fledged administrative entity. It has an area of 481.66 sq. km and is bounded by the Ghoraghat and Palashbari Upazilas in the north in the Gaibandha district, the Sonatala and Shibganj Upazilas in the south in the Bogra district, the Sughatta and Palashbari Upazilas in the east in Gaibandha district and the Panchbibi and Kalia Upazilas lie in the west in the Joypurhat and Dinajpur districts respectively. The rivers Karatoya and Bangali flow through the Upazila.

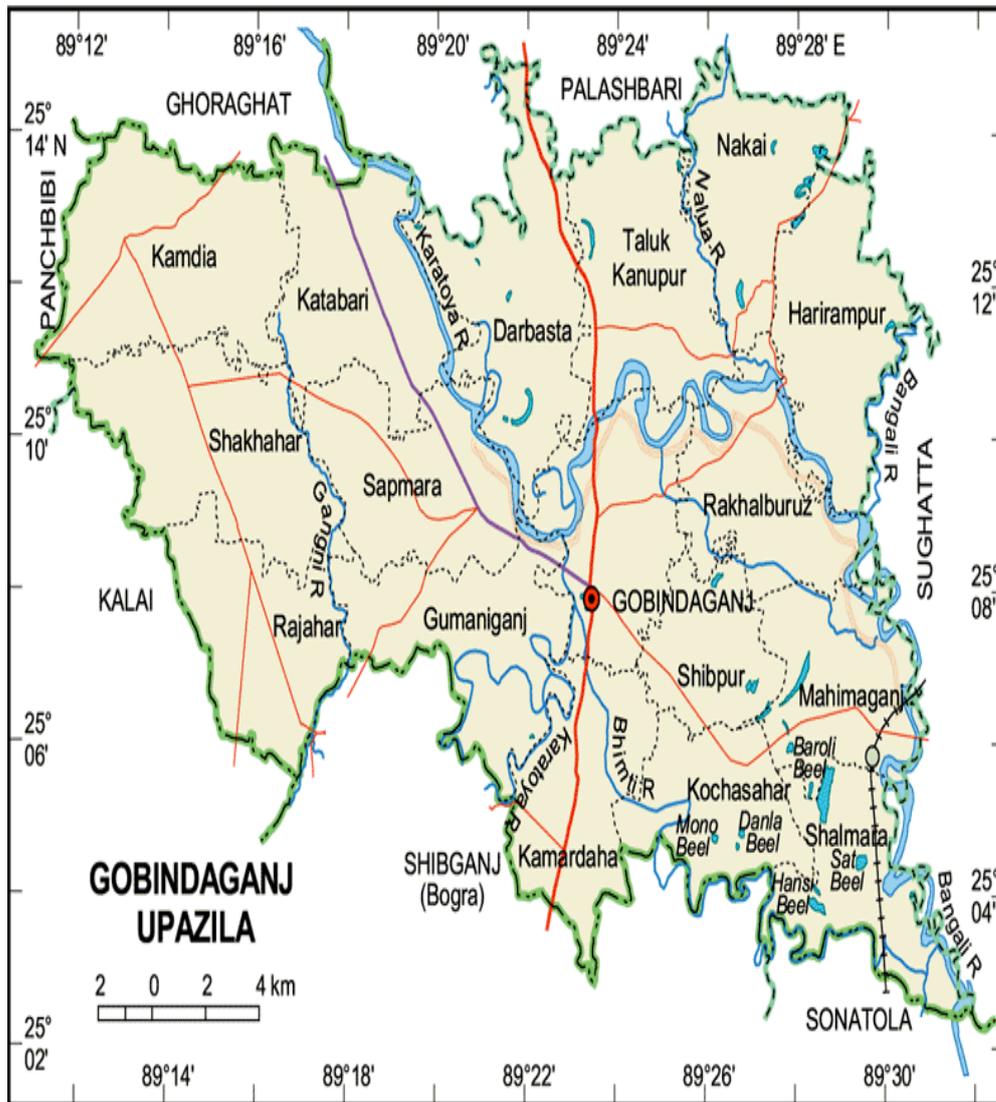
The centre of the Upazila, Gobindagoj and its surrounding area were ceded to local feudal landlords under the colonial British Permanent Settlement Act of 1793. They established open markets in different parts of the area which were in their possession. The then Gobindagonj Police Station and administrative offices were established in 1965 in what was then known as the Gobindagonj Thana. It was named a local land-owner who had donated the land and constructed the buildings. The Thana was re-organised as an Upazila in 1983 as a service delivery unit, local and field-administration with a sub-national government administrative arrangement.

The Upazila consists of seventeen Unions with 387 villages and a Paurashava, called Gobindagonj Paurashava. It is the 2nd largest Upazila in Bangladesh in terms of unions and area and is considered the nucleus of the Rangpur Division. The Upazila comprises of the Kamdia, Mohimagonj, Katabari, Shibpur, Horirampur, Kuchashohor, Talukkanupur, Fulbari, Nakai, Shakhahar, Gunanigonj, Dorobostho, Kamardaho,

Shalmara, Rakhalburuj, and Rajahar Unions. They are lowest level local administrative entity responsibly for service delivery without having a full-fledged local administration. The Gobindagonj Upazila Map (Figure 7.3) presents a closer look at the Upazila.

The Gobindagonj Paurashava is a local urban government unit with an elected chairman and 9 Ward Commissioners. The Paurashava provides civic facilities for a 2.4 sq km. The chairman of the Paurashava is an ex-officio member of the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad and has voting rights.

Map 3: Map of Gobindagonj Upazila



Source: <http://mapofbangladesh.blogspot.co.uk/2011/12/gobindagonj-upazila.html>

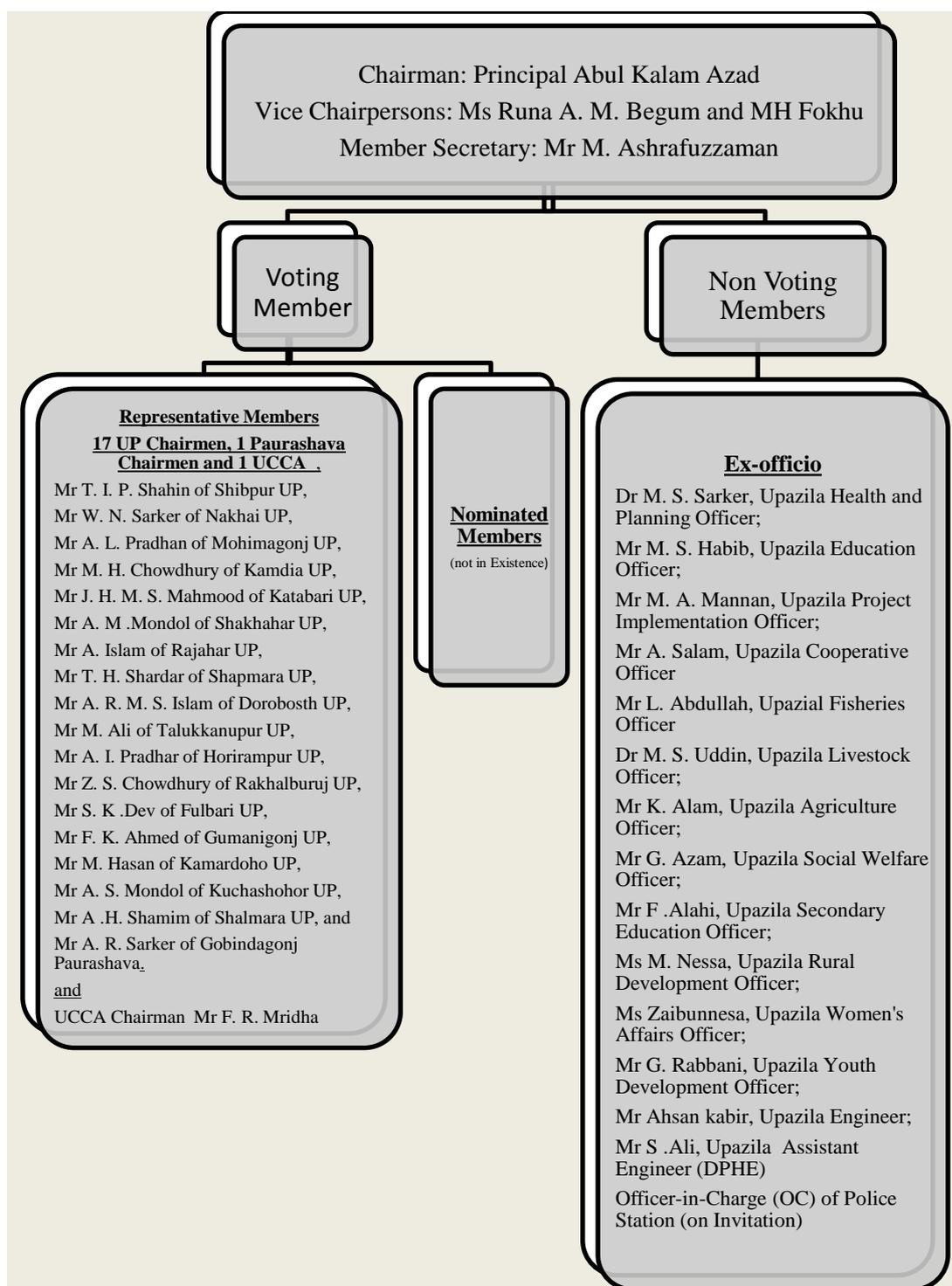
The total population of Gobindagonj Upazila is, according to the 2011 census, 514,696, with a density of 1118 people per square kilometre. Males constitute 49 % of the population and females 51%. The average literacy rate is 73%. The rate for male is 43% and females 33%. A number of educational institutions are in operation in the Upazila primary, secondary, higher secondary schools and madrasahs. The total amount of primary education institutions is 405.

Like Biswanath, Gobindagonj is primarily agricultural. Paddy, wheat, groundnut, sugarcane, potato, mustard, chilli, lentil, chick-pea, onion, ginger are the main crops. Similarly, some earn their livelihoods by fishing. Incomes are supplemented by subsistence earnings and small trading.

7.2.2.2 Local Administrative Context

The local administration in the Gobindgonj Upazila, called the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad (GUP) is a democratic institution. It is composed of directly elected, appointed, nominated, and ex-officio members. Some have voting rights, some do not. The Parishad is the main decision-making body in the region. Parishads share the same basic features across the county. As such, the organisational makeup of the Biswanath and Gobindagoni Parishads are essentially the same. Table 19 presents the current makeup of the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad.

Figure 19: Structure of the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad (GUP)



Source: Field research, September-November. 2012 and December, 2013

Figure 19 shows that the Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad consists of 38 key functionaries. The Upazila Chairman, Mr A. K. Azad, is the executive chief and the two vice-chairpersons, Mr M. H. Foku and Ms Runa A. M. Begum, are his deputies. The UNO, Mr M. Ashrafuzzaman, is the member secretary to the Parishad. The 17 elected chairmen of the local Union Parishads (UP) and 1 Paurashava Chairman, Mr A R Sarker, are the ex-officio members of the Upazila Parishad with having voting rights. The UCCA chairman is also ex-officio member and enjoys the voting rights. Members of the civil bureaucracy are the Parishad members without having voting rights. They are mainly the execution force to assist the Upazila Parishad in execution and implementation of the decisions related to public service delivery by doing administrative and managerial jobs in their respective field. They provide information to policy-makers responsible for service delivery.

7.2.2.3 Public Service Delivery Contexts

The Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad is mandated to carry out national as well international development programmes at the local level, such as the PSRPs and MDGs. The local administration is entrusted with law and order, education, health, social welfare, family planning, rural development and cooperatives, land concern, agriculture and irrigation, fisheries and veterinary, youth and sports, food and disaster management, veterans, rural communication and infrastructure build up and development, and so on. Decisions on public services are taken by the Parishad in field-specific committees such as education, health, communication and infrastructure development and so on. Public services to the people of the Gobindagonj Upazila are supervised and accountability is ensured through the democratic processes of its standing committees. There are seventeen standing committees comprising of five functionaries in operation in the Upazila. Either of the Vice Chairpersons acts as president of each committee. The

responsible government office chief is the member secretary of the respective committee. The remaining three members are randomly selected by the Union Parishad's Chairmen. Table 29 lists public services and their respective standing committees.

Table 29: Standing Committees for Service Delivery in Gobindagonj Upazila

Sl No	Service	Standing Committee Functionaries
01	Law and Order	Mr M. H. Foku, There Chairmen of Kamdia, MohimaGonj, and KataBari UPs, and Officer in-Charge (OC) of the Upazila
02	Communication and Infrastructure Development	Mr M. H. Foku, There Chairmen of ShibPur, MohimaGonj, and HoriRamPurUPs, and Upazila Engineer
03	Agriculture and Irrigation	Mr M. H. Foku, There Chairmen of Kamdia, KochaShohor, and Talukkanupur UPs, and Upazila Agriculture Officer
04	Secondary and Madrasah Education	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, three Chairmen of HoriRamPur, FulBari, ShibPur Ups, and Upazila Secondary Education Officer
05	<i>Primary and Mass Education</i>	<i>Mr M. H. Foku, three Chairmen of ShibPur, Nakai, and MohimaGonj Ups and Upazial Education Officer</i>
06	Health and Family Welfare	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, there Chairmen of ShakhaPur, HoriRamPur, and Kamdia UPs, and Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer
07	Youth and Sports Development	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, there Chairmen of FulBari, MohimaGonj, GumaniGonj UPs, and Upazila Youth development Officer
08	Women and Child Development	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, there Chairmen of Dorobostho, Kamardoho, and Shalmara UPs, and Upazila Women Affairs Officer
09	Social Welfare	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, there Chairmen of RakhalBuruuj, GumaniGonjn and Nakhai UPs, and Upazila Social Welfare Officer

10	Veterans	Mr M. H. Foku, there Chairmen of FulBari, Shapmara, and Dorobostho UPs, and Upazila Welfare Officer
11	Fisheries and Veterinary	Ms Runa A Monuara Begum, three Chairmen of FulBari, KuchaShohor, and Talukkanupur UPs, and Upazila Fisheries Officer
12	Rural Development and Cooperatives	Mr M. H. Foku, there Chairmen of Dorobostho, Kamdia, and Katabari UPs, and Upazila Cooperative Officer
13	Culture	Mr M H Foku, three Chairmen of MohimaGonj, Fulbari, and ShibPur UPs and Upazila Education Officer
14	Environment and Forest	Ms Runa A. Monuara Begum, three Chairmen of Katabari, Rajahar, and MohimaGonj UPs, and Forester, Social Forestry Programme
15	Market Pricing Concern	Ms Runa A Monuara Begum, three Chairmen of UKuchaShohor, Shapmara, and Shakhahar UPs, and Upazila Agriculture Officer
16	Finance, Budget, Planning and Local Resource Collection	Mr M. H. Foku, three Chairmen of MohimaGonj, RakhaliBuruj, and Shibpur UPs, and Upazila Project Implementation Officer
17	Public Health, Sanitation and Pure Water Supply	Mr M. H. Foku, three Chairmen of Kamdia, Kamadoho, and Dorobostho UPs, and Assistant/ Deputy Assistant Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department

Source: Field research, September - November. 2012 and December, 2013

7.2.2.4 Primary Education in the Gubindagonj Upazila

Primary Education Scenario

Primary education in the Upazila is one of the most important services provided by the local administration. Altogether, there are 405 government, non-government, private primary educational institutions and madrasahs. Table 30 represents the various types and numbers of primary education institutions in the Upazila.

Table 30: Primary Education Institutions in Gobindagonj

Type of Institution	No of Institution
Government	153
Registered non-government	94
Community	06
Ebtadaee Madrashah	120
Kindergarten	29
Qaumiee Madrashah	03
Total	405

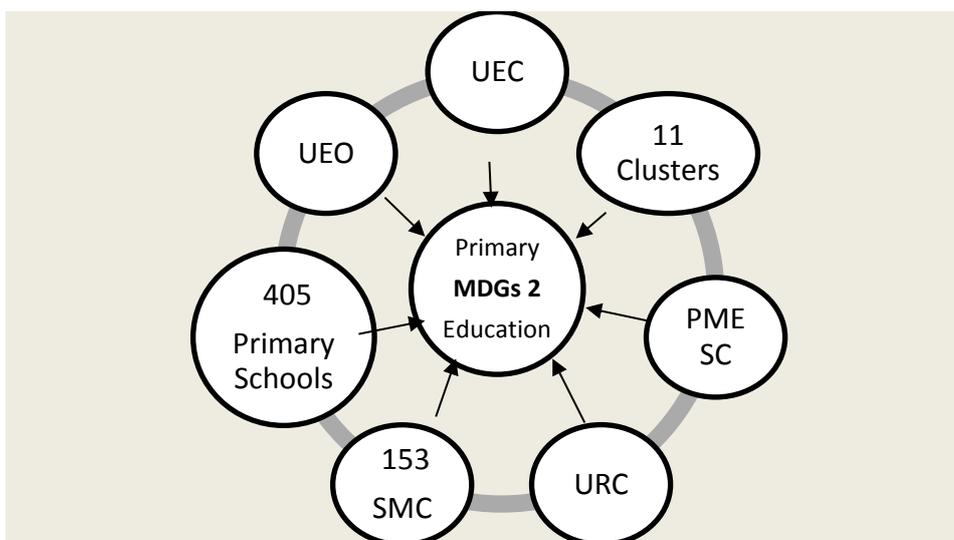
Source: Gobindagonj Upazila Education Office, 2013

Table 30 indicates 405 institutions provide primary educational services in the Gobindagonj Upazila. 153 institutions are under the direct control and supervision of local administration of the Upazila. They are generally government-funded and run by their respective SMCs. 94 registered non-government primary schools are privately run and managed. However, they receive financial and academic assistance from the local administration. The remainder are managed through private or community initiatives and receive accreditation for primary education from the main education. Government-run primary schools, according to the Upazila Education Office record, have 61649

pupils and 814 teaching staff. The student / teacher ratio is 75:1. The enrolment rate is 99%. The dropout rate has been calculated as 10.25%.

The local Upazila administration is responsible for the provision of primary education and meeting the targets of both national programmes (PSPRs) and international programmes (MDGs). The Upazila Education Committee, Upazila Education Office, Primary Schools and School Management Committees (SMC), Upazila Resource Centre (URC), and Clusters for primary schools are main bodies doing work in this area. The administration and management structure of the primary education system in the Upazila is presented in figure 20.

Figure 20: Primary Education in operation in Gobindagonj Upazila



Note: UEC= Upazila Education Committee; UEO= Upazila Education Office; PESC= Primary Education Standing Committee; URC= Upazila Resource Centre; SMC= School Management Committee; MDGs= Millennium Development Goals

Primary education in Gobindagonj Upazila is delivered through the combined efforts of several different entities. There are 405 primary education institutions; 153 are government funded schools; i.e., they fall under the purview of the Upazila service

delivery mandate. Each is run by its own respective SMC. The schools are grouped into 11 clusters for administrative and academic supervision by the Upazila Education Office which provides academic support through the local URC.

The Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education

Overall accountability regarding the quality of primary education lies with the Standing Committee for Primary and Mass Education (SCPME) of the Upazila Parishad. The Committee consists of five functionaries, including people’s representatives and the Upazila Education Officer. Table 31 below lists the membership and duties of committee personnel.

Table 31: Primary and Mass Education Standing Committee in Gobindagonj

SI No	Membership	Functionaries
01	Chairman	Mr M H Foku, Vice Chairman, Gobindagonj
02	Member	Mr T I P Shahin, Chairman, Shibpur UP
03	Member	Mr W N Sarker, Chairman, Nakhai UP
04	Member	Mr A L Pradhan, Chairman, Mohimagonj UP
05	Member Secretary	Ms. S. Pervin, UEO, Gobindagonj Upazila

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December 2013.

Note: UP= Union Parishad, UEO= Upazila Education Officer

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr Foku, is the elected vice-chairman of the Upazila Parishad. The democratically elected chairmen of the Shibpur are from the Nakhai and Mohimagonj Union Parishads. Mr T. I. P. Shahin, Mr W. N. Sarker and Mr A. L. Pradhan are ex-officio members with voting rights. The Member Secretary, Ms S.

Pervin, is the ex-officio Upazila education officer and does not have voting rights. She is responsible for administrative support and assistance.

The Upazila Education Committee

The Upazila Education Committee (UEC) deals with overall primary education facilities in the Upazila. The UEC is consists of eighteen members headed by the chairman of the Upazila Parishad, including two Vice-chairperson, UNO, Upazila Health Officer (UHO), Upazila Engineer, a Union Parishad (UP) Chairman, two local educators, two primary-school head teachers, two SMC presidents, and the instructor of the URC. The UNO acts as the executive vice-chairman of the committee. The UEO acts as the member-secretary to the committee. The MP of the local constituency – Gaibandha 4 of the National Parliament – Engineerr M. H. Chowdhury acts as advisor to the committee. Table 32 presents the present UEC in the Upazila.

Table 32: Upazila Education Committee of Gobindagonj Upazila Parishad

SI No	Designation	Category	Functionaries
01	Advisor	Ex-Officio	Engr M. H. Choudhury MP, Gaibandha 4
02	President	Ex-Officio	Principal A. K. Azad, Chairman of the Upazila Parishad
03	Executive Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio as Administration Executive	Mr Ashrafuzzaman, UNO, Gobindagonj Upazila
04	Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio	Mr. M. H. Foku, Male Vice Chairman of the Upazila Parishad
05	Vice Chairman	Ex-Officio	Ms Ruan Arjumand, Women Vice Chairman of the Upazila Parishad

06	Member	Ex-Officio	Mr A. R. Sarker, Cahirman, Gondagonj Paurashava
07	Member	Ex-Officio	Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer
08	Member	Ex-Officio	Upazila Engineer
09	Member	Nominated, UP	Mr Mushahed Choudury Shuja, Chairman, Kamdia UP. Local Government Representative
10	Member	Nominated, Secondary School Representative	Mr K. Huda, Head Teacher, Gobindagonj High School.
11	Member	Nominated, Women Educationist	Mrs R. Zaman Choudhury
12	Member	Nominated, Male Educationist	Professor M. U. Ahmed
13	Member	Nominated, SMC Representative	Mr M. A. Sufian Mondol, President, Shulagari Primary School SMC
14	Member	SMC Representative	Mr M. Jalal Uddin, President, Amtoli Primary School SMC
15	Member	Teacher Representative	Mr A. B. M. S. Sarker, Head Teacher, Beurgram Primary School
16	Member	Teacher Representative	Mr M. Rafiqul Islam, Head Teacher, Uttar Choighoria Primary School
17	Member, Ex officio	Academic Support	Instructor, URC.
18	Secretary, Ex Officio	Member Secretary	Upazila Education Officer

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013.

Table 32 lists the personnel of Gobindagonj Upazila Education Committee, which has the overall responsibility of facilitating primary education with administrative support and assistance from the Upazila Education Office and the academic support of the URC. The education office is located adjacent to the Upazila local administration complex. The URC is entrusted with overseeing the nearby model primary school in the Upazila Education Office. The education office is supposed to be staffed by 1 Upazila Education Officer (UEO), 11 Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs), 3 Office Assistants (OAs), 1 UDA and 1 MLSS. However, there are some positions have been unoccupied. The present staffing strength of the education office in the Upazila is shown in table 33 below:

Table 33: Staffing Strength of the Gobindagonj Upazila Education Office

Position	Existing	Sanctioned	Responsibility
Upazila Education Officer	1	1	Overall
Assistant Upazila Education Officer	8	11	In charge of Clusters
UDA	0	1	Administration
Office Assistant	3	3	Clerical
MLSS	1	1	Messengerial
Total	13	17	

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013.

There are 13 personnel working in the education office against 17 sanctioned posts. 7 AUEOs do the work of 11 AUEOs. The position of UDA is currently vacant.

The Upazila Resource Centre

The Upazila Resource Centre (URC) is a support education unit for government primary-school teachers in the Upazila. They include, short training, teaching orientation course, teacher refresher courses and so on. The centre is an attached entity of the Upazila Education Office and is located in near Kuti Bari Primary School. The resource centre is presently staffed by two persons - an Assistant Instructor and one support staff. The Assistant Instructor also discharges the duties of the Instructor as the position of Instructor is vacant.

The Upazila Primary Education Cluster

The Upazila is divided into eleven clusters with Assistant Upazila Education Officers (AUEOs) responsible for each cluster. They are responsible for inspecting and monitoring teaching and learning delivery, and educational facilities in the government funded schools. The officers usually make monthly visits to the schools. Each cluster consists of around 14 primary schools. Table 34 below lists the clusters and their responsible UAEO.

Table 34: Clusters in Gobindagonj Upazila Primary Education

SI No	Clusters	Responsible UAEO
1	Gobindagonj Sadar	Mr M A Alam
2	ShibPur	Mr R Amin
3	Nakhai	Mr A Haque
4	Horiram Pur	Mr A Haque
5	Kamdia	Mr B Hossain
6	Durga Pur	Mr A Islam
7	Shohor Gachi	Mr A Islam
8	Chad Para	Mr B Hossain
9	Kucha Shohor	Mr B Hussain
10	Ful Pkuria	Mr N P C Bormon
11	Mohima Gonj	Mr R. Karim

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013.

Note: UAEO= Upazila Assistant Education Officer

School Management Committee

Every school in the Upazila is managed by a School Management Committee (SMC). Each SMC typically has 12 members from the school locality. The memberships can be guardian of the students, educators, teacher representatives, local union parishad members, land donors or a teacher from a nearby secondary school.

7.2.2.5 Kuti Bari Primary School

Institutional Profile

Kuti Bari Primary School is one of 405 primary educational institutions in Gobindagonj Upazila with an A-grade status. It was established in 1959 by the community of Kuti Bari and its neighbouring areas to provide educational opportunities for children in the community. Kuti Bari is in an urban area in Ward 6 within the Gobindagonj Paurashava. The school is situated in Kuti Bari village, which is adjacent to the Upazila complex. The catchment areas of the school are the neighbouring urban villages of Bualia and Kuti Bari.

The school came under the local administration of Gobindagonj Upazila as a government primary school in 1967 and became a grassroots level unit of primary education service delivery. The EMIS (Education Ministry Information System) code number is 108021110. This is under the Cluster of Gobindagonj Sadar for education. The school has 8 teachers, including the head teacher. Of the existing teaching staff, one is on maternity leave for six months. There is currently only 7 teaching staff in the school for both shifts. The school has no support staff. However, a local woman has volunteered for this role and is privately remunerated by teaching staff. Classes in the school are divided into two shifts. Class 1 and II begin in the late morning and last for two hours. Classes III, IV and V are taught in the second shift, which runs from 11:30 until 16:15. The school has 575 students. 52% are male and 48% are female. The teacher-student ratio is 72:1. The enrolment rate is 99%, which almost complies with the primary education target of the MDGs in terms of entry to primary education.

Management of the School

The school is managed by the School Management Committee (SMC). The Committee consists of 12 persons from the school locality. The personnel and duties of the SMC are described in table 35.

Table 35: Structure of Kuti Bari Primary School Management Committee

	Position	Membership	Functionaries
1	President	Ex-Officio, People's Rep	Mr K M J Alam
2	Member-Secretary	Head Teacher	Mr M H Prodhan
3	Member	Educationist Female	Mrs M Begum
4	Member	Educationist Male	K M J Alam
5	Member	Ex-Officio, Land Donor	Assistant Commissioner (Land & Revenue)
6	Member	Secondary School Teacher	Mr M Z Islam
7	Member	Teacher Representative	Ms H A Begum
8	Member	Guardian (Merit)	Ms M Begum
9	Member	Guardian (Female) Representative	Ms T Begum
10	Member	Guardian (Female) Representative	Ms J Aziz
11	Member	Guardian Representative (Male)	Mr K Dotta
12	Member	Guardian Representative (Male)	Mr M M Rahman

Source: Field research, November, 2012 and December, 2013.

The SMC members of the Kuti Bari Primary School Management Committee are framed of male and female personalities of different categories. They consist of the

local council representative, educators, guardians, and donors. The president of the Committee, Mr K. M. J. Alam, presides the meeting. The head teacher, Mr M. H. Pradhan, acts as the member secretary to the committee. He is responsible convening and organising meetings and takes minutes, formalises and circulates committee decisions.

The Learning Environment

Kuti Bari Primary School is situated in an urban village environment. It is a small campus in a piece of flat roadside land adjacent to the Upazila Parishad complex. The school is a double-storied L-shaped old-fashioned building. The building includes six medium size rooms: one for the head teacher, one for URC. The rest are used as class rooms. The head teacher's room is used as the school office and teachers' common room. The office has a voluntary supportive staff paid by the teachers. The head teacher cum office room is furnished with a medium size table, a few chairs, and some almeries and bookshelves. Almeries are used for housing the tools of learning and necessary papers and files. The classrooms are ordinarily furnished with tables and chairs for teachers and two seated desks and benches for pupils. Classrooms, which are sparsely decorated, are equipped with a blackboard and chalk.

The school is open and does not have a security wall. A small yard is used as a playground. Some small biscuits are provided to the pupils during lunch time for refreshment. Toilet facilities are insufficient. Drinking water is supplied from a tube well in the corner of the building. There is a shortage of utensils for drinking, like jugs and glasses for pupils. Teaching staff organizes and manages the drinking and toiletries by their own.

7.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter empirically examined the reform-led capacity of the education system in Bangladesh, referring to local administration at Upazila level in the country. It examined issues of management and governance in a developing country context. Findings suggest that education services are routinely administered without proper attention to personnel adequacy and financial sufficiency.

An overview of the activities of primary education providers in local administrations was presented by using two case-studies. An evaluation of the capacity of local administration was carried out in two Upazilas – Biswanath and Gobindagonj – which are located in different areas of the country and are the basic unit for the provision of educational services.

The contexts of local administration in Bangladesh for public service delivery are diverse within a uniform national framework. There are elected local councils throughout the country which make up the *Upazila Parishads*. Governance in of local administrations at Upazila level varies from one area to another. While the Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazilas function adequately, their performance is unremarkable. Gobindagonj Upazila, for instance, has Standing Committees on service delivery and they have been in operation. On the other hand, Biswanath Upazila is yet to form the Standing Committees properly. Both Upazilas have been faced difficulties in providing quality primary education to varying degrees. The scope and arrangement of educational facilities in terms of structural, functional, and academic tasks is limited. The capacity of local administrations to deal with educational administration and management is at stake in various ways. There has been a good start without satisfactory follow-through

to policy initiatives like the PSPRs and MGDs. The capacity of local administration for public service delivery requires improvement.

Having examined the reform-led capacity of local administrations to provide primary education, we move on to examination of interviews offering reflexions of educational service delivery capacity at the local level.

Chapter 8: Reflections on Interviews on Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education

8.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on interview on the capacity of local administration in Bangladesh to provide primary education in line with the country's commitment to the MDGs. Empirical interview data were collected analysed thematically. The results are presented in this chapter are mainly derived from interviews conducted during fieldwork in Bangladesh from September 2012 to November 2012 and in December 2013. Analysis used qualitative techniques of social research so that the results reflect the phenomena under study (Bowen, 2005). Informants were consisted of forty persons in four different categories, as we have seen in Chapter 3, such as people's representative, academic and expert observer, administrator, and primary school teacher and primary education management personalities. Table 36 represents the brief details of informants. A qualitative interview schedule was used. In addition to the forty research participants, individuals with valuable information on local administration capacity and primary education were met and spoken to on an informal basis. Their views also serve to substantiate the findings and conclusions drawn from formal interviews.

The chapter proceeds from generalities to specifics. A general overview of the interviews follows this section. Informant thoughts regarding local administration capacity building and administrative reform is addressed in 8.3. Specific scenario and understanding of the research interview information on local administration capacity and primary education service delivery is visualised using tables with appropriate sub-headings in 8.4. Finally, a brief summary complements the chapter.

Table 36: Details of Research Informants as a Whole

Category	Informants	%	Breakdown with Education	
People's Representative	10	25%	2 MPs from National level 8 from local level	3 Masters 7 Bachelors
Academics and Expert Observer	10	25%	6 University Teachers 4 Researchers	3 PhD 7 Masters
Administrator	10	25%	4 Senior level 2 Mid-level 4 Junior level	4 PhD 6 Masters
Teachers and others	10	25%	5 Teaching Staff 5 School management related	5 Masters 5 Bachelors
Total	40	100%	40	40

8.2 Overview of Interview Information

Public administration reform is viewed as an important tool for local administration capacity building in Bangladesh. However, administrative reform committees have tended to produce over-ambitious voluminous reports without putting due importance on implementation. Promises of administrative reform have gone unfulfilled by successive governments.

Local administrations of Upazilas are the middle level self-government administrative unit in Bangladesh. They are considered the gateway to development and the platform for policy implementation and programme execution. They have been subject to

numerous administrative reforms and used and otherwise misused. Local administration is in a state of crisis and is unable to function within its means. The national government exerts undue control over its activities. Upazilas generally lack the organisational independence which would allow them deliver services effectively. Excessive national government control and supervision come mostly in the form of administrative supervision and advice. While local autonomy provisions exist in theory they are curtailed through the issuance of administrative notifications, bureaucratic circulars and so on.

Public sector capacity building and improving service delivery are the main aims of administrative reform. The Upazila administrative system in Bangladesh is a subject of interest in this regard. However, the process of capacity building is hampered by government policies and seems to be the 'wrong way around'. While it has been somewhat appropriately guided, it has been wrongly exercised. These are the factors for this unsatisfactory situation. Local administrations lack individual and organisational capacity, in both the primary education office and schools themselves. Logistic support is inadequate and there is a shortage of appropriate skilled administrative and teaching personnel. Educational instruments and their utilization are inadequate.

Service delivery is the main responsibility of the local administration in Bangladesh. There are various factors behind service delivery failures. Maintaining formalities in rendering services to the people is viewed as a general phenomenon. The usual tendency is to take short-cuts to provide services with formal official record keeping. The quantity of service delivery is prioritized over than the quality of teaching and learning. Ambitious inputs tend to have low outputs. Consequently, the state of service delivery is poor. Universal primary education, which is the foundation of future learning, is not effective.

The quality of primary education and possibility to achieve the MDGs' target is questionable.

The involvement of skilled personnel in public service delivery is understood as fundamental for local administration. Local government institutions are run for and by local people. However, how free are the people to exercise their rights and discharge their responsibilities? Local administration is theoretically well arranged and formally well organised with local elected representative; however, service delivery is superficial in practice and not functionally up to mark. Contacts between local people involved in primary education and the organisation and management of primary schools are not well established. This is not well understood by the common people. The functioning of the service delivery is still based largely on traditional practices and subject to complex bureaucratic processes and procedures. Community participation seems to be more ceremonial than functional. In the case of primary education school management, the School Management Committee (SMC) chairman and members are for 'show' on the committee in practice. The primary school head teacher is a 'one man show' regarding the organising, managing, and running of the academic programme.

Civil bureaucracy and personnel affairs at local level are supportive of the decentralised local administration. The staff of the primary education office, for example, usually assists the local administration with organizational and managerial issues. They also provide available logistic support for the implementation of national government primary education policy at the local level. They are overloaded with various academic and non-academic duties. The school is understaffed and underpaid relative to market rates of remuneration and administered by traditional bureaucratic control. Their skills for rendering services are neither properly updated nor properly utilized.

When service provisions of government are concerned, basic needs such as education, health, food, and shelter have come to forefront to the research participants. Primary education is considered a basic public service, essential for future human resource development of the country, irrespective of individual, organizational, and societal perspectives. Children will receive a basic education in primary school will step forwards to secondary and tertiary levels of education. Once a good start has been made at primary level the challenges of other levels of education can be dealt with smoothly.

The local administration of Upazila in Bangladesh is directly responsible for the delivery of primary education. However, this service has not been a high priority. Schools are poorly equipped and exacerbate poor service delivery in practice. They are not able to attain the mandated educational standard. Poorly equipped primary schools impart poor quality of teaching and learning delivery. The MDGs of achieving universal primary education programme is qualitatively much talked about while quantitatively is in a state of disarray.

8.3 Elaborations of Interview Experiences

This section elaborates on the interview process for the study. It provides a qualitative sketch of social research aim, objectives and questions expressed in Chapter 1. Text is interspersed with detailed quotations (in italics) from transcribed interviews with research informants.

8.3.1 Administrative Reform Initiative (Objective I)

This section relates to the first objective of this research. It reviews the recent past administrative reform efforts in Bangladesh.

8.3.1.1 Context of Administrative Reform Initiative? (RQ- i)

Administrative reform initiative contexts in Bangladesh vary. Ever changing social, economic, political, administrative, and technological environments of local, national, and global arenas necessitate initiatives for administrative reform over time and space. The inappropriate nature of existing administrative structures necessitates further actions for administrative reform initiations. According to an Academic and Expert Observer:

“Reform is a continuous process. There is no end in itself. The present administrative structure might not prove to be compatible with the unforeseen challenges ahead. Continuous adjustment is needed depending on the domestic and global situation and public demand.”

It is noteworthy that particular reform measures have a distinct context and impact on public administration. As we have seen in Table 6.1 in Chapter VI, there have been many reform initiatives in Bangladesh focussing on different areas of public administration, including local administration. There is little scope to generalize the context of administrative reform initiatives in the country:

“The magnitudes of reform initiatives are varied and essentially peculiar to the context in which the reform takes place” (Administrator).

The development partner’s influence, pressure from civil society and factors like technology policy, government commitment towards information and communication technology (ICT) through access to public information have played important roles in administrative reform in the country. The 2000 administrative reform initiative (PARC) shown in table 19 in Chapter 6, was based on the NPM philosophy promoted by international institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The UNDP study by Kim et al, (2007), as we have seen in Chapter 2 is another example.

Further, the reform measures were engineered by World Bank and other donor agencies. (Administrator)

Administrative reform scenarios in Bangladesh are different depending on the socio-political environment. Who is responsible for decisive administrative reform initiatives? Informants were almost all agreed that a small section of the people in the higher echelon of government and administration proposes reform initiatives and prepares reports in conjunction with donor assistance and administrative support from senior bureaucrats. The mass people are merely silent observers:

“This is always the higher echelons of government that decide which reform initiatives to be introduced. In that backdrop, donor pressures play vital role to put any reform issues into agenda or action. However, the alliance between civil-servants-turned project director / manager of donor agency and the sponsoring agency may also favour the process of initiation and implementation of reform efforts”
(Academic and Expert Observer).

Bangladesh is a country of post-colonial society with a, as we have seen in Chapter 1, considerably low social, economic, political and developmental profile. Mass people are not in a position to understand the policy issues of government and administration. Those who have good understanding for appropriate administrative reform for the country are somewhat away from the appropriate power position (Ali, 1987, p. 188). Therefore, it is always the case for countries like Bangladesh that a few people contiguous to government and administration will take the chances to play the

influential role in reform and change, without or with nominal success. It was stated thus:

“The members of the public are not a homogeneous lot. A large majority are poor and uneducated and do not even understand the issues at stake while a sizeable minority are educated, understand the problems but are utterly selfish. They are bothered only about their own needs. Only a tiny minority feel strongly about administrative reforms, in general and decentralization, in particular” (Administrator).

The reform measures will invariably lead to a good effect to the quality of local administration public service delivery. The initiatives for administrative reform, as a whole, have been a regular phenomenon of every government in Bangladesh with almost empty promise to implement. This is some sorts of political lip service and attracting the attention of international development partners/donor agencies and gaining their favour for more cooperation in the form of donations and loans.

8.3.1.2 Enforcement of Administrative Reform Initiative? (RQ- ii)

The developing Bangladesh has been in the tradition of forming reform committees and commissions by every government when they come in power to form the government (Khan, 1998, p. iv). Both governments and development partners are keen to take initiatives for public administration reform. There have been numerous administrative reform reports and studies, as we have seen in Chapter 6, since the independence of the country. Fortunately or not, they are mostly full of over ambitious reform proposals compare to the capacity to coordinate or implement (Azizuddin, 2008, p. 59). Only those are minor in nature and those serve the interest of civil bureaucracy is always the case in the cause list of implementation (Azizuddin, 2008, p. 78). The changes so far are superficial in nature. It was intimates thus:

“To the best of my knowledge, there are 17 Commissions that had been formed since independence and more than 20 reports are produced. It is widely acknowledged that majority of the recommendations of these commissions/committees were not implemented. A few recommendations which were implemented were merely for cosmetic changes” (Administrator).

It is evident that the initiatives for administrative reform ended with unsatisfactory results. An inappropriate political framework and system, corruption, a lack of appropriate remuneration for the employees, and undue influence of vested interest groups are responsible for this state-of-affairs (Azizuddin, 2008, p. 89).

“Bangladesh has an over-centralised administration under unitary government structure with very weak local government and a corrupt bureaucracy. The political system is also quite undemocratic, corrupt, and anti-reform” (Academic and Expert Observer).

“Change of government, insufficient salary package and lack of career prospects for the public officials, lack of capacity (in some cases) in public offices, interference from vested quarters” (Administrator).

Effective changes in administration are nominal. Lack of political commitment and administrative support, otherwise known as, ‘weak political leadership’ and ‘bureaucratic resistance’ has been widely blamed for this unsatisfactory state-of-affairs.

Reform efforts are often met with resistance by the civil servants. Their resistance to change is invisible in nature. Putting the reform agenda lower down the list in meetings and delaying the circulation of decisions are some of the ways in which this happens. This kind of behaviour leads to the watering down of proposals and weak implementation. Their active support is a must for effective change to take place.

“Civil servants are experts in resisting reforms. For example, why would they support the merit system if they are themselves the products of the spoils system? Outright opposition, sabotage, slow down, etc. are some of the forms of resistance in this regard” (Academic and Expert Observer).

Bureaucracy is embedded in the process of governance (Subhan, 2001). It is government employees as civil servants in bureaucracy who provide inputs for reform measures. They cannot resist any reform measures if they are endorsed by the government. Resistance, if any, can easily be addressed by strong political will in modern days.

“The days are gone when the public officials could resist any efforts of the government. Public officials, nowadays are very submissive to political government. In general, they are enthusiastic in reform measures as they are very much involved in the policy making process” (Academic and Expert Observer).

More often, the proposed reform is somewhat incomplete with no functional guidelines of what to do and when it is to be implemented. They seem half hearted and questionable and are thus faced with difficulties regarding implementation. The idea was described as follows:

“I think reform measures were half hearted, coupled with equally dubious implementation of the same”
(Administrator).

“I do not think that reform proposals have been implemented to any appreciable extent so far to make any difference”
(Administrator).

The intended follow-up measures for implementation are not clearly spelled out in policy guidelines and programme outlines of administrative reform. On the other hand, the behavioural quality of employees in bureaucracies and contingent support do not match for mostly ambitious administrative reform implementation.

“Reforms set high targets, but law efforts for implementation” (Academic and Expert Observer).

In addition, appropriate arrangements to kick off the reform movement are mostly not in place. The reform proposals are, to most extent, do not commensurate with the time and space relations. This often makes the present government and administration apathetic and somewhat sceptical that led to implementation failure of newly introduced reform measures in public administration. It was said thus:

“The present administration has neither the mindset nor the equipment to carry forward reform proposals.” (People’s Representative)

“In the case of first reform effort in 1973, for example, ...The report however, did not see the light of the day as the then government found the recommendations to be very difficult to implement” (Administrator).

As a whole, the administrative reform efforts made so far have made little contribution to make the administration more dynamic for service delivery as per the time and space relations in the country (Ali, 2010). Surprisingly, most of the comprehensive reform reports were not made public.

“Most of the reform efforts were shelved as classified documents” (Academic and Expert Observer).

Since independence, this has almost always the case. Administrative reform efforts have been enthusiastically initiated and organized through the forming committees and commissions. Either they do not make findings public or they are not implemented properly and end with empty promises and lip service on the part of the government (Ahmad & Ahmed, 1992, p. 73). Efforts for capacity building for public service delivery of local administration seem to be in vain.

8.3.2 Role of Administrative Reform on Capacity Building (Objective II)

This section demonstrates the role of administrative reform initiatives in building institutional capacity in public sector at local level administration in Bangladesh.

8.3.2.1 Addressing the Issue of Capacity Building? (RQ- iii)

Reform initiatives, directly or indirectly, refer to the issue of public administration capacity in Bangladesh. Reforms are meant to bring about efficiency in the service delivery system. Many reform initiatives in the country were concerned mainly with civil service staffing and pay related issues. So far only superficial measures for capacity building have been proposed. Out of twenty initiatives, only a few have addressed the issue of local administration capacity building. The Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganisation (CARR) initiative of 1982 and the Public Administration

Reform Committee (PARC) initiative of 2000, as we have seen in Table 19 in Chapter 6 are the two major reforms dealing with local administration capacity. The CARR has dealt with local administration comprehensively. The PARC has the overall supportive view about local administration capacity context.

“The issue of capacity building is, to most extent, seemed underemphasised or snubbed. It has been addressed half-heartedly. The normative issues of administrative reform that associate with capacity building, like values, competency, patriotism, trust, and ethics, have not got importance yet”
(Academic and Expert Observer).

In line with the CARR recommendations, *Thana* administrations at the lower middle level were converted into Upazilas in 1983. This was considered one of the ideal options for local administration entity in the country. However, it has been used and misused as an instrument of narrow party politics at local level.

“... delivered the model of administrative reform in 1983 which led to the introduction of the Upazila system of administration ... abolished in 1991 and reintroduced in 2009 by subsequent governments respectively.”

(Academic and Expert Observer, translated from Bengali statement).

The capacity of local administration has been superficially addressed through the formation of administrative reform committees and commissions. It is evident in the case of local administration that the functioning of the Upazila Parishad is not fully free from political interference and excessive bureaucratic control from the national government. The basic idea of building service delivery capacity in local administrations has fallen by the wayside.

“Capacity issues are being addressed by the Upazila administration. Capacity would mean strengthening the ability of the elected Upazila Parishad to supervise, coordinate, evaluate and monitor what is going on at this level and on this basis hire, promote and fire officials responsible for implementation at that level. But this is not happening since the implementing officials are controlled by the central government agencies, i.e. Ministries, Departments, Corporations, Directorates, etc. Also, there is no concern for training and grooming them according to the specific needs of an Upazila. So, whether you are referring to primary education or primary health care or construction of physical facilities, everything is being done as a top-down process not through consultation, participation and involvement of the elected elements of the Upazila Parishad but at the behest of Ministers, MPs and senior bureaucrats at the highest levels” (Administrator).

There have been gaps in understanding, prioritising and approaches to administrative reform in the country. Reform can contribute to enhancing capacity of administration to render improved services. However, capacity building in administrative reform initiatives has only been paid lip service by the national government

8.3.2.2 Extent of Capacity Building in Public Institutions? (RQ- iv)

Local administrations are a part of the public sector organisational framework. Institutional capacity building seeks to promote an institution of people for public service delivery at the local level.

“The Upazila system is a model of decentralised administration” (Academic and Expert Observer; translated from Bengali statement).

The full benefits of the Upazila system can be reached if the appropriate supportive task environment exists. Both politicians and bureaucrats unduly influence the activities of local administration and put the system in a mess with their own way of narrow party politics and administrative formalities respectively. There exists a clear lack of political commitment and active bureaucratic support. The informants almost uniformly express that:

“...reforms have to be led by a strong political government which has a political commitment for reforms” (People Representative).

It is necessary to also think about changes in individual. Bureaucrats as public officials support the government by running and implementing development programmes in their individual capacities. This important aspect is often subsumed in administrative reform in Bangladesh (Azizuddin, 2008, p. 79). It was reiterated thus:

“Administrative reforms have to aim at changing the mind-set of the civil servants” (Administrator)

“Administrative reform efforts, among others should intend to change the mind-set of public officials” (People’s Representative).

However, informants for this research are optimistic that the situation is changing and individual capacity and operational skills are being improved. It is not up to mark, however.

“Public officials are gradually being sensitised with pressing public demand. Operational skills are being

improved in Upazila administration. Better infrastructural facilities are being established for primary education. Gender and women empowerment are getting priority”
(Administrator).

To engage in public service, local administration and its functionaries should have the socio-economic security of a certain standard of living and career advancement. The employees are underpaid compare to the private sector in the country (Obaidullah, 1999, p. 174). Extra incentives are not promised by the government for sincere efforts which meet new targets and deal with new challenges.

“It is likely that effective reforms lead to change of mindset, competence and better service delivery provided that the reform measures are supplemented by incentives and career advancement prospects for public officials” (Academic and Expert Observer).

8.3.3 Local Administration Capacity and Public Service Delivery (Objective III)

This section examines how administrative reform-led capacity building initiatives help or hurt service delivery at local level, with reference to the primary education in Bangladesh and the target of MDGs.

8.3.3.1 Capacity Sufficiency to Programme/Project Implementation? (RQ- v)

Capacity issue is an important aspect of administrative reform in countries. As far as the development programme and project is concerned, public sector has a low capacity to carry out project implementation.

Improving implementation capacity of public administration is a matter of urgency. A lack of organizational skills and efficiency in service delivery is apparent in the Bangladeshi public sector. As a result, services like primary education at local level have been hampered by mismanagement, inefficiency and low delivery capacity.

“The capacity issue of public administration is no doubt, important. Since the grassroots level agencies are weak and suffer from inefficiency they can’t take the load of delivering administrative services to their clients efficiently. The Upazila set up is not strong enough to plan and implement important projects. Similarly, the local government set up of Upazila is just incapable of managing primary education efficiently.” (Administrator)

However, the capacity of service delivery is, as a whole, at stake at the local level administration in Bangladesh. It has been a state of British colonial ‘routine administration’ of traditional ‘field administration’ in the name of decentralization of power at the local level (Ahmad and Ahmed, 1992, P. 74). The ‘routine administration’ is the indicative of three functions of administration during colonial era: revenue collection, law and order maintenance, and administration of justice. These were the main functions of public administration that had been during the British colonial period of about two hundred years (1757-1947) role in Bangladesh, as part of British India.

There is almost improper attention on the part of the national government to personnel adequacy and financial solvency at local level. During the British colonial period, revenue collection, law and order maintenance, and administration of justice were routine administrative tasks in traditional field administrations. The capacity of local

officials is limited to carry out even these traditional routine functions of administration with little time and resources to implement development projects.

The MDGs' universal primary education has been a routine case for local administration of Upazila in Bangladesh as something for almost nothing in programme implementation, as we have seen in Chapter 4. The teaching staff in primary schools is mostly uninformed about the MDGs and its primary education target. The schools and staff in particular are not well equipped to carry out the responsibility of meeting this target.

“Government support is not adequate. The teaching staff is not informed. They are not well qualified, trained and motivated. The inadequacy is in terms of number of staff. They are poorly supervised.” (People Representative, translated from Bengali statement)

It is recognised that Bangladesh has made some progress in meeting the MDGs, as we have seen in Table 12. However, the question always regards the extent and quality, the contribution of administration, and the quality of official statistics. The progress in the case of primary education is somewhat exaggerated. An opinion of research participant goes further:

“For example, one can claim that enrolment in primary schools has improved over the years but what quality of education being imparted is another matter. I strongly feel that it has been a case of quantitative expansion against qualitative deterioration.”
(Administrator)

8.3.3.2 Challenges and Opportunities in Service Delivery System? (RQ- vi)

Local administration in Bangladesh has limited scope, authority, orientation and ability to complete tasks. The subconscious practice of traditional ‘routine administration’ has been reinforced by traditional centralised structures of public administration plagued by inefficiency, inappropriate task orientation, lack of knowledge base and so on.

“The system is basically centralized in the guise of decentralization of authority to local level”. (People’s Representative)

“The vast majority of civil servants are inefficient and ... not well equipped to perform their responsibilities in full”.
(People’s Representative, translated from Bengali statement)

“There many causes such as weak knowledge base, politicization, etc” (Academic and Expert Observer).

There have been incongruities in practising the provisions of local administration laws. As we have seen in Chapter 7, in Gobindagonj Upazila, 17 standing committees for public services are working regularly. This is not the case in the Biswanath Upazila, which has no proper standing committees. It has been approximately five years since forming the elected Upazila Parishad. Narrow party politics is mainly responsible for this. This view was expressed as follows:

“Because of conflicting local narrow power politics and the Upazila Chairman’s personal rivalry and his absence from the office, it was not possible to form.” (Administrator, translated from Bengali statement)

The local administration of Upazila has, basically, replaced the organizational machineries of traditional 'field administration' in the country (Karim, 1991, p. 12). All the subordinate offices, including education office are there to support the delivery of public services. Their traditional approach of being an 'administrator' has made services to the people secondary. Official records maintenance is seemed the prime concern for management of the concerned service programme.

It has been observed that organizational machineries for service delivery at local administration, as a whole, are overburdened. Services are expected to 'maximum output with less input'. Functions of local administration are almost double than the capacity they have. As we have seen in Chapter 7, the student- teacher ratio in the primary school, for example, is about 70:1. According to primary school regulation of government, the ratio is supposed to be 40:1. Given the circumstances the teaching quality is not up to mark. They are very much careful about their employment and tenureship, leaving aside the responsibilities to discharge properly. So, the quality of education and service delivery is bound to be what it is.

"Employees (teachers) are doing their job for the sake of their employment" (Teacher, translated from Bengali statement).

The degree of primary education service delivery at local administration is generally low. This is because of poor working conditions at the local level. Central-local relations, for example, are poorly defined. The dual role of the member of parliament as advisor to the Upazila Parishad's development affairs and as the elected chairman's role as the head of the Upazila Parishad further complicates the functioning of local administration and primary school staff (As-Saber & Rabbi, 2009, pp. 59-60).

“Upazilas are now being governed by elected chairmen/vice-chairmen assisted by public officials. Establishing a balance between the elected chairmen/vice-chairmen and the local Member of Parliament regarding the development role seems to be a major challenge. Time is needed to assess whether new measures are needed”. (Academic and Expert Observer)

Local MP's are not welcomed by the elected functionaries of local administration, especially by the Upazila Chairman. Conflicts often arise due to competing political roles. In both Upazilas the local MPs and the Upazila Chairmen were from the same political party. However, they have personality conflicts in exercising their role in local administration development affairs. In Gobindagonj, the local MP has no practical access to the Upazila Parishad affairs. It is the Upazila Chairman who prevents the MP. This situation is different in the two Upazilas. In Biswanath, the Upazila Chairman cannot regularly work from his office in the Upazila complex. The local MP's political group is more forceful than the Upazila Chairman's group. On the other hand, the Upazila Chairman of the Gobindagonj is more influential in the area than the local MP. Narrow power politics have adverse effects on governance in local administration in various ways. The ideals of decentralization and people's participation in local governance are poorly implemented in Bangladesh.

“The status of decentralization is at peril now. Election at local level halted. Local level affairs are managed by the field administrators. A new trend of controversy emerged between elected MPs of the constituency and local elected chairman. MPs role in local administration affairs like allocation of budget, tender processing and adoption and

distribution of development programs are seen as interference.” (People’s Representative)

It has also been noted that an unhealthy task environment exists at the local administration in Bangladesh. Because of conflict between the local MP and the Upazila Chairman, the UNO is in an uneasy situation. The UNO and UEO, who both come from the national bureaucracy, are supposed to work under the supervision of the Upazila chairman, as we have seen in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. Their roles are to coordinate the administration and management working at the local level. At the same time, they are accountable to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) and the District Education Officer in the District – the line of authorities for the civil bureaucracy and to the national MP. The Upazila Chairman and local MP’s narrow vision of politics puts them in an uncomfortable situation.

“... They work, in fact, in a complicated situation”.
(Academic and Expert Observer, translated from Bengali statement).

This conflicting state of affairs among the MP, Chairman, and bureaucrats, in fact, undermines the spirit of decentralization of local administration and people’s constituent participation in local governance and service delivery. Ultimately, this state-of-affairs stands in the way of administrative reform and change. This view was strongly expressed by an administrator:

“... The MPs and civil servants do not want decentralization because that would undermine their authority and powers to call the shots and have things their way” (Administrator).

The service delivery system in local administrations needs to be improved for the sake of own local interest. Some actions introduced in public administration such as

establishment of government websites, citizen charters, grievance redress mechanisms, enactment of the Right to Information Act of 2009, and Union information service centres to make public services delivery faster and more transparent. Voters and the media can meet public officials now more easily than before. Political oversight is getting stronger day by day. Government officials also try hard to respond to public demands as quickly as possible.

“A sense of urgency is prevailing in the minds of public officials particularly who work in vital public offices.

(Administrator)

Maintaining formalities with strict rules and regulation has been the tradition of public administration in developing countries. Bangladesh is not an exception. In an era of global change – especially technological change – service delivery patterns over the long term might improve. More field-oriented practical activities with local participation definitely cater to improving the institutional capacity of local administrations.

Improving the freedom and independence of employees in the public service and levels of reciprocal cooperation between local people and local administration staff in discharging public services is a primary concern. It requires permanent employees responsible for service delivery. An informant suggests:

“Local administration should be run by their own officials rather than sending staff and officers from central bureaucracy from national government” (People’s Representative).

In this respect, sufficient budget, self- sufficiency and adequate managerial deployment are a crucially important investment in human resource management and development.

Favourable working facilities and organizational logistical support for improving facilities in primary schools, sufficient teachers and support staff with educational logistics training, and the socio-economic security of employees of local administrations are necessary for quality primary education in Bangladesh. Research participants were very clear and vocal about this.

“Reform measures have good intentions. However, measures should be supplemented by appropriate work environment with logistic support, adequate salary and fringe benefits to keep the morale of public officials. The salary should match with the prevailing market prices. The salary package should be compatible with the private sector. Continuous training is also needed” (Administrator).

Better service delivery requires better administrative support. A coordinated effort of persons, organisations, and society can make a programme of development successful (Asaduzzaman, 2007, p. 175). This research demonstrates the need for appropriately skilled persons with professional training and experience. Efforts to improve the situation are prioritising with changing needs.

“The administration is updating itself about the latest global development. More and more officers are receiving capacity building training both home and abroad. The number of officers having foreign master degrees including doctoral and postdoctoral degrees is increasing day by day. Civil

service is no longer willing to take the blame that it lacks academic knowledge. The merit is returning back to the civil service. It is not far away to see most of the ministries/divisions being manned by Secretaries having PhDs. Public officials are more responsive to public demands than they were ten years before". (Administrator)

Bangladesh as a developing country is in need of administrative reform for better administration and public service delivery. There have been many different efforts of reform with different perspectives. There is no best way. Some which are appropriate for a given situation may not be suitable for another.

"Yes, it is in need of serious and deep-going reforms. It can happen theoretically in three ways. The leadership by a stroke of luck or conjuncture consists of highly honest and capable people who are determined to carry out reforms from the top, some examples in this regard being Park Chung Hee in South Korea or Lee Kew Yuan in Singapore. The second alternative is a slow incremental process taking a long time, may be 25 years, supported by pressures and facilitation from the international community. The third alternative is a revolution from below. This is difficult to perceive in view of the low level of consciousness among the masses" (Administrator).

There should be alternative approaches to administrative reform suitable to country's given situation. They should be pro-people and appropriate for local needs with indigenous norms and values (Choudhury, 2013, p. 5).

“It [reform] needs to be home grown. Context, local culture and need should be given priority while initiating and implementing reform efforts” (Academic and Expert Observer).

In order to facilitate the capacity of administration for service delivery various measures for implementation can be taken into consideration. Individual capacity of local administration employees and active supervision and coordination of individual and organizational efforts for service delivery can improve the situation.

“It would have improved the capability of public service delivery in two ways. First, we would have more qualified implementers in the system rather than the poor products of a spoils system. Second, the work procedures would have improved because of close supervision and coordination” (Administrator).

Local administrators can develop extra initiatives for learning facilities in primary school along with the regular academic programmes. It was suggested that an extra hour learning activities by the primary school teaching staff after regular academic school hours can into account differentiation in learning levels. They might be termed ‘after-school club’. These have a positive effect on the educational progress.

“I found that after-school club is very useful to improve the quality of primary education” (Administrator, translated from Bengali statement)

It is well known that reform initiatives are do not always favour everyone involved with local administration and management. Employee motivation and appropriate logistic support for change should be in place.

“We have deplorable apathy to implement any reform proposal since it may often go against the existing dominant status and counterproductive to the interest” (People’s Representative).

“However, absence of compatible salary package, lack of career prospects and absence of adequate organisational logistics seem to be acting as deterrents to build up adequate capacity and morale for better service delivery”
(Administrator).

It is significant to note that although reform initiatives at local level were seen as a question in some respects, research participants have contributed much to advocate local for improving administration capacity for service delivery, providing valuable suggestions and proposals. Their information was a source of useful insights in this regard.

8.4 Research Information on Local Administration Capacity and Primary Education Service Delivery

Local administration of Upazila is entrusted with primary education service delivery in Bangladesh. The scenario presented in this section examines local administrative capacity to meet the MDGs universal primary education programme. The understanding is transcribed and presented below in tabular form with appropriate sub-headings systematically (Biklen, 1992, p. 166). The numbers in parentheses in the tables are the amount of research informants.

8.4.1 Self-rule State of Local Administration

Local administration in Bangladesh is intended to be a self-governing unit of administration functioning on its own while following the broad guidelines of the national government. In practice, this is not the case. Local administrations are not free from national government political and bureaucratic interference. This interference is to the most extent undue. Local administrations should be entitled to work freely.

The political party in power has excessive influence over local administrative affairs. Bureaucratically, this exists in the form of formal rules and regulations by the respective line administrative authority. Primary education in local Upazila administrations is mainly controlled by the District Education Office (DEO) - the immediate superior administrative authority of Upazila Education Office (UEO), as we have seen Chapter 5. This is the traditionally established line of administrative authority in the country.

Table 37: State of influence of national government on local administration

Attributes Informants	Poor	Somewhat	Undue	Total
People's Representative	50% (5)	30% (3)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	10% (1)	20% (2)	70% (7)	100% (10)
Administrator	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	00% (0)	00% (0)	100% (10)	100% (10)
Total	20% (8)	17.5% (7)	62.5% (25)	100% (40)

As Table 37 indicates, more than 60% research participants believed the national government exerted undue influence at the local level. Both political and bureaucratic meddling is evident in the affairs of local administrations. Politicians tend to want to reinforce their positions of power, while lacking in understanding of administrative, management and governance processes. As a whole, there is a lack of political education among the local political representatives in local Upazila administrations. Bureaucrats traditionally have the legal authority to deal with service delivery matters at the local level and are maintaining the 'status quo' in this regard. This state-of-affairs

has led to a dearth of local self-governance and, in fact, has led to a standstill in local to improve service delivery capacity building.

8.4.2 The Capacity of Local Administration for Public Service Delivery

The capacity of the local administrations to provide services to their communities is questionable. Excessive bureaucratic control and financial dependence on the national government budget and grants like the Annual Development Programme (ADP) is mainly responsible for the lack of capacity in local administrations.

Table 38: State of capacity of local administration for service delivery

Attributes Informants	Poorly Capable	Somewhat Capable	Capable Enough	Total
People's Representative	50% (5)	50% (5)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	70% (7)	30% (3)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Administrator	34% (4)	70% (7)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	60% (6)	40% (4)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Total	55% (22)	45% (18)	00% (0)	100% (40)

Table 38 shows that 100% of people's representatives interviewed have a strongly negative perception of the state of service delivery at the local level. Academics and Expert Observer and Teacher and Others had an even stronger negative view, 70% and 60% viewing the capacity of local administrations as poor and only somewhat capable respectively. Others views which were not under rated came to 50% and 34%

respectively. It is interesting to note that none of the research participants had a favourable opinion of the service delivery capacities of local administrations.

8.4.3 The Idea of the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not well known at the local level in Bangladesh. Research findings indicate that knowledge and understanding of the MDGs programme is generally poor.

Table 39: Idea about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Attributes Informants	Poor or No Idea	Somewhat Idea	Good Idea	Total
People's Representative	80% (8)	20% (2)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	30% (3)	40% (4)	30% (3)	100% (10)
Administrator	60% (6)	30% (3)	10% (1)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	90% (9)	10% (1)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Total	65% (26)	25% (10)	10% (4)	100% (40)

Table 39 indicates that 65% of the forty respondents have a poor idea about international programmes such as the MDGs. Only 10%, the academics and expert observers, have a good understanding of them. People's representative and Teacher have either a poor idea or no idea about the MDGs.

Academics and Expert Observer, and Administrator usually deal with national and international development programmes because of academic interest or their positions

as governmental employees and policy-makers. People’s representatives and Teacher do not understand the issue well, despite being responsible for the delivery and management of the areas the MDGs seek to improve upon.

8.4.4 Facilities of Teaching and Learning

The standard facilities of teaching and learning in primary schools are not sufficient to maintain the quality of primary education. More than half of the research participants, 55%, indicate that the standards of facilities are unsatisfactory. However, 12.5% of informants considered facilities satisfactory. The study’s general conclusion is that the quantity and quality of teachers and supportive logistics for learning delivery are usually lacking.

Table 40: State of standard facilities of learning and teaching in schools

Attributes Informants	Satisfactory	In-between	Unsatisfactory	Total
People’s Representative	10% (1)	40% (4)	50% (5)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Administrator	20% (2)	30% (3)	50% (5)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	00% (0)	40% (4)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Total	12.5% (5)	32.5% (13)	55% (22)	100% (40)

8.4.5 Adequacy of Teaching and Supportive Staff

Primary schools under the local administration of Upazila are insufficiently staffed to run academic activities. The teaching staff generally work under pressure to discharge their vast responsibility of teaching. They are the line employees and main executors of national education policy and international educational programmes like the MDGs at local level. Support staff such as administrative clerks and MLSS assists teachers. However, primary schools are nevertheless under-staffed compared to prevailing teacher-student ratios.

Table 41: Adequacy State of Primary Teaching and Supportive Staff

Attributes Informants	Sufficient	Somewhat Sufficient	Insufficient	Total
People's Representative	30% (3)	30% (3)	40% (4)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	10% (1)	20% (2)	70% (7)	100% (10)
Administrator	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	00% (0)	00% (0)	100% (10)	100% (10)
Total	20% (8)	17.5% (7)	67.5% (27)	100% (40)

Table 41 shows 67% of research participants to believe that primary schools are staffed insufficiently. While the official teacher-student ratio set by the primary education authority stands at 1:40, the ratio in the two Upazila case studies were closer to 1:70. Local administrations are under considerable pressure to effectively deliver education services.

8.4.6 Task Environment of Primary Education Learning

The work environment of primary education in primary schools is uncongenial. As a seat of basic learning for foundational education the schools are limited almost entirely to reading textbooks and writing. Local administration of Upazila does not provide modern equipment. Even when modern equipment is available there is an absence of appropriate skilled staff for operating and running learning activities which make use of it.

Table 42 shows 55% of the research informants found the work environment in local primary schools do not be conducive to a quality education.

Table 42: Task environment of primary education

Attributes Informants	Congenial	Somewhat Congenial	Uncongenial	Total
People's Representative	50% (5)	30% (3)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	20% (2)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Administrator	10% (1)	30% (3)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	10% (1)	10% (1)	80% (8)	100% (10)
Total	22.5% (9)	22.5% (9)	55% (22)	100% (40)

8.4.7 Economic and Social Security of Primary School Staff

Primary school staff are in a state of economic and social insecurity. They are not well paid and must survive in an unstable economic environment with high priced commodities. While teachers are highly respected in Bangladeshi society; they have a lack of social security. They are often forced to supplement their teaching income by tutoring and other non-educational activities. As a result, teachers have little scope to pay full attention to academic programmes in their schools.

Table 43: Economic and Social Security of Primary School Staff

Attributes Informants	Solvent	Somewhat Solvent	Insecure	Total
People's Representative	30% (3)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	20% (2)	10% (1)	70% (7)	100% (10)
Administrator	10% (1)	30% (3)	50% (5)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	30% (3)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Total	20% (8)	20% (8)	60% (24)	100% (40)

Table 43 shows 60% of the primary school teachers who took part in the study are financially insolvent. All the categories of research participants remained almost the same in their opinions in this regard. In fact, considering market conditions and raising commodity prices, primary school staff are always under pressure financially to maintain their day to day family life. This has an effect on their social life in terms of respect and prestige.

8.4.8 Standard of Teaching and Learning Delivery

The standard of teaching and learning delivery in primary schools is not up to the mark. It has been rated as below the standard required for future human resource development of the country.

Table 44: State of teaching and learning standard of primary teachers

Attributes Informants	Poor	Somewhat Poor	Good	Total
People's Representative	00% (0)	100% (10)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	80% (8)	20% (2)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Administrator	60% (6)	20% (2)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Total	40% (16)	50% (20)	10% (4)	100% (40)

Table 44 shows teaching and learning standard are skewed towards 'poor'. Half of the research informants opined that teaching and learning delivery 'somewhat' maintains the standard quality of education, while 40% of them expressed their views of standards as poor. It is interesting to note that all of the people's representatives considered standard to be 'somewhat' acceptable; as one said, *"I give them a pass mark."*

8.4.9 Organization and Management of Primary School

Primary schools are organizationally managed by School Management Committees (SMC). The committee is, in theory, well maintained. However, in practice, it is only somewhat active in managing the school. It has been observed that the head teacher of the school appears to be a ‘one man band’ in running and managing the school. The committee meets regularly without actively developing education. The members on the committee are for show. Community involvement in primary education at local level is mostly absent in a real sense.

Table 45: State of activities of School Management Committee (SMC)

Attributes	Active	Somewhat Active	Inactive	Total
Informants				
People’s Representative	00% (0)	80% (8)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	00% (0)	100% (10)	00% (0)	100% (10)
Administrator	20% (2)	70% (7)	10% (1)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	00% (0)	80% (8)	20% (2)	100% (10)
Total	5% (2)	82.5% (33)	12.5% (5)	100% (40)

Table 45 shows the School Management Committees (SMC) to be somewhat active in primary educational pursuits. It is interesting to note that almost none of the research informants are in favour of ‘active’ involvement of the committee as a management authority. Some respondents have branded the committee as ‘inactive’ in their functional jurisdiction. The members of the committee from the locality need some kind

of educational, organizational and managerial skills to ensure they actively contribute to school management.

8.4.10 The State of Primary Education

The overall situation of primary education in Bangladesh is unclear. It is not well focussed as an important subject of public service delivery at local level. Learning is continuing and the system is in operation, but it is not making an active and significant contribution towards the development of human resource for future nation building.

Table 46: State of Primary Education

Attributes	Poor	Somewhat poor	Unclear	Total
Informants				
People's Representative	30% (3)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Academics and Expert Observer	20% (2)	10% (1)	70% (7)	100% (10)
Administrator	10% (1)	30% (3)	50% (5)	100% (10)
Teacher and Others	30% (3)	20% (2)	60% (6)	100% (10)
Total	20% (8)	20% (8)	60% (24)	100% (40)

The Table 46 shows that 60% of informants regard the situation as unclear - 70%, 50%, and 60% respectively. Almost all aspects of the supply and demand sides of local administration of Upazila are unanimous about the current miserable state of primary education in Bangladesh.

8.4 Chapter Summary

The chapter has summarised the results of the information obtained from interview sources. It substantiates and supplements other sources of information for this research. This enabled appropriate findings to be drawn and valid conclusions to be made. The views of informants are diverse within a general framework of understanding. Their views were marked with unity and differentiation. They are in generally in favour of primary education capacity building at the local level through administrative reform. However, difference in opinions about its contents and process, and some confusion about how to improve capacity exist. The state of primary education is unclear and the meeting of the MDGs for primary education is in question.

Having examined the interviews about local administration capacity and primary education we move on to research key findings and concluding remarks.

Chapter 9: Key Research Findings and Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings and conclusion of the research undertaken. It provides concrete responses to the research aim, objectives, and questions posed in Chapter 1. They are based on the public administration reform and capacity building theories and research methodology discussed in chapters 2 and 3 and the qualitative data and information collected from Bangladesh and presented in chapters 6, 7, and 8.

The research sought to attain a general understanding of the role of administrative reform initiatives in the building of institutional capacity of local administration for primary education service delivery. Research was qualitative in nature and made use of appropriate qualitative methods. Extensive interpretations of all the available data were done following a qualitative approach of social research. At the outset, the chapter deals with the findings of research undertaken. The concluding remarks for the research follow. The chapter ends with an overall research conclusion.

9.2 Research Findings

The major findings of the study presented in this section support the notion that the capacity of local administration for primary education services in Bangladesh is in a state of disarray. An analysis of the findings uncovering the underlying challenges and opportunities is presented afterward, followed by a brief summary.

9.2.1 Major Research Findings

From the final quarter of the 19s onward there have been rapid changes in the socio-political and administrative capacities of developing countries; Bangladesh is no exception. The capacity of public institutions for service delivery is frequently on the

agenda of national policy-makers and programmes of both national and international development partners and donor agencies. Dating back to the pre-colonial period, local governance institutions in Bangladesh have been subject to administrative reform experimentation regarding institutional capacity for public service delivery. The responses were noted by the political regimes of the country.

Local governance in the country is mainly a three-tier organizational structure with a hierarchy of administrative units: District, Upazila, and Union Parishad. Upazilas are at the middle level local governance institution in the country with a full-fledged administrative arrangement for service delivery at local level. Reform initiatives for local governance of Upazila administrations started in 1983 with the recommendations of the Committee for Administrative Reform and Reorganization (CARR), 1982.

The idea of local administration of Upazila was introduced in early 1980s but halted in the early 1990s. The issue again came to the attention of the government in the late 1990s, with the passing of the Local Government (Upazila Parishad) Act of 1998. It took a more than a decade to implement; an elected authority at local administration of Upazila Parishads came into existence in 2009. A systematic decentralization of power and authority at local level in the country was considered an ideal means to strengthen local administration institutional capacity for public service.

Research finds that the administrative reform initiatives paved the way for capacity building and delivery of public services at the local level. It plays a positive role in bringing about systemic change. Local Upazila administrations have replaced traditional 'field administration' at the then Thana level. The Upazila Ordinance, 1982 formally established the Upazila Parishad of local administration as a people's committee with local decision-making power. The respective committees and subcommittees on

services handle the service delivery of education, health, culture, disaster management, food, and agriculture needs of local people.

The capacity of local administration is a 'low modicum of self-governance' (Straussman, 2007, 1104) to provide public services. While local administrations are officially recognized as decentralized authorities, their power in exercising authority has been limited. Upazila Parishads depend on national financial allocations and approval of the line administrative Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MOLGRDC), and in case of primary education, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) and their attached departments and directorates for decisions and administration. Local administration of Upazila leadership can also be summarily replaced by the Ministry. Undesirable political interference from the national government and insufficient administrative supports has rendered capacity building difficult. Efforts for optimum output have gone in vain and thus an unsatisfactory state-of-affairs prevails in the primary education service sector in the country.

In terms of individual, organizational and institutional capacity, local Upazila administration falls below the standard to function effectively as an institution of local self-governance. Key functionaries in the local administration of Upazila Parishad lack both political and administrative knowledge and the appropriate skills for capacity building. They are apathetic towards the learning process and adapting to change. Organizationally, Upazilas are less able to develop or manage systems, procedures, structures, staffing, decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring. They have thus far maintained the 'status quo' in discharging their duties and responsibilities. Public administration institutions neither learn from their actions nor public feedback. As a result, local administration is not responsive to the needs of the hour. The status of

primary education is unclear and meaningful achievement of MDGs target seems unlikely.

9.2.2 Research Findings in the Framework of Research

Local administration in Bangladesh is a sub-national administrative entity. Upazilas are mid-tier government administrative units which replaced the traditional 'field administration' with a democratically elected local authority. This is a follow-up of an administrative reform process begun in early 1980s to ensure local administration was institutionally capable of service delivery. The reform process has affected the transfer of authority and responsibility for decision making, planning, management or resource allocation from national government to local administration with its subordinate units in the country. There have been spells of progress with long periods of stagnation in the operation of the local Upazila administrations which have hampered the process of local capacity building.

As a result of a administrative reform initiative, the system has increased momentum in 2009, with the formation of an elected Parishad with the authority to provide public services such as primary education. Supervision, control and coordination of employees serving in local administrations are empowered by the Upazila Parishad Ordinance 1982 and the Local Government (Upazila Parishad) Act 1998 and its subsequent amendments in 2009 and 2011.

Government documents demonstrate the expectation for a greater mobilisation of local resources and lesser dependence on national government (Sarker 2006b, p. 1285). Under the system local needs have been better identified and projects are being designed to suit specific needs. The Upazila Parishad has been accorded the status of an executive agency and has been made responsible for most development functions

(GPRB, 2013, pp. 20-22). It has considerable authority to plan and implement projects of local importance and interest and to ensure accountability of its functionaries.

Civil servants working in local administration of Upazila have facilitated faster decision making and a higher quality of service delivery. Supporting functionaries – UNO as principal officer and others officers in the local administration, including the education office and its staff and teachers - have been brought under the control of the Upazila Parishad. However, traditional bureaucratic administrative control, maintaining the status-quo, financial dependence, shortage of appropriate skilled staff, and partisan politics still stand in the way of improving the quality of primary education.

Having said this, the local administration of Upazila has paved the way and provides a reasonable benchmark for institutional capacity-building for service delivery in the country. It has considerable potential to respond to developmental needs such as primary education at local level. Key research findings and practical implications of the research are delineated in table 47.

Table 47: Summary of Research

Research Objectives	Research Questions	Key Research Findings	Practical Implications
<p>Review of the past administrative reform initiatives in Bangladesh with special attention to recent efforts.</p>	<p>In which context are local reform initiatives developed?</p>	<p>Both internal and external contexts necessitate administrative reform. Rapidly changing social, economic, political, administrative contexts and technological innovations effect efforts at the local, national, and global levels. It is necessary to replace the traditional ‘routine administration’ system inherited from the British colonial era with a system which empowers locals based on MDGs. Thus far only empty promises have been made in this regard to attracting aid and assistance from international development partners/ donor agencies</p>	<p>Administrative reform should be an on-going process. Understanding the internal and external contexts of administrative reform in designing and implementing proposals is a pre-requisite for successful reform initiative. Local Capacity building issues for service delivery should get high priority.</p>

	How are reform initiatives enforced?	There has been a populist tendency within a number of Bangladeshi governments to form reform committees. There is a significant gap between proposals and implementation. Initiatives typically end with unsatisfactory results. Meaningful changes in administration do not take place and the issue of capacity building remains mostly unaddressed.	Pragmatic issues of local administration and service delivery should be prioritised. Proposals should be realistic and have achievable objectives.
Examination of the role of administrative reform initiatives in building institutional capacity of public administration at local level in Bangladesh	How has the capacity building component for local administration service delivery been addressed in reform initiatives?	Effective capacity building has eluded a number of Bangladeshi governments. Most reform initiatives were concerned with staffing and pay-related issues. A few out of twenty initiatives have addressed this issue, albeit superficially. The issue of capacity building has been under-emphasized or ignored. Gaps exist between in understanding and prioritising the scope of reform initiatives.	<p>The capacity building component should receive due attention. The formulation of appropriate proposals is the pre-requisite for the successful implementation of reform initiatives.</p> <p>There should be strong political will with firm political leadership and administrative support to implement proposals.</p> <p>The national government should allow local administrations to work without interference.</p>

	To what extent has capacity building been promoted in local administration for primary education service delivery?	Capacity-building has, to some extent, been promoted in public institutions. The establishment of local administration Upazila can be considered as a case in point. The committee system on service delivery has been introduced to build institutional capacity for quality of service delivery; for example, the Standing Committee on Primary Education. However, there is no appropriate scope to play an effective role in practice. It is a significant point of departure to establish local administrations as an institution for public service.	It is very difficult to turn away from established administrative traditions. Incumbent stakeholders should be able to prepare themselves, at least on an incremental basis, for further institutional changes. This will promote capacity building pursuits in public sector institutions. Support systems and adequate administrative assistance should be in place for local administration capacity for service delivery.
Examination of how capacity building initiatives affected service delivery in development programmes at the local level, with reference to the primary education	Is local administration capacity sufficient to implement development projects, such as primary education, to meet the MDGs?	Local administrations face numerous challenges regarding in the area of primary education. Administration has followed traditional patterns without paying proper attention to skill development and the salary concerns of employees. Capacity is both limited and not up to the standard of development projects. The universal primary education of MDGs has been a problem area for local administration functionaries.	Skills development and salary issues within local administrations need to be addressed. Local resource should be mobilised to augment present expenditures. Primary education sector should get due importance and priority to get adequate support for its quality service delivery.

<p>target of MDGs.</p>	<p>What are the challenges and opportunities in Bangladeshi service delivery systems, especially the primary education?</p>	<p>Traditional administrative structures limit the scope and authority and slow down public service delivery. The system of authority is centralized in the guise of decentralization at the local level.</p> <p>Administrative reform aiming to improve service delivery which encourages local involvement in primary education and learning is confined in theory. The system has maintained the traditions of past administrative systems, including centralized hierarchical bureaucratic practice, excessive control and supervision. As a result, the state of primary education at local level in the country is unacceptable.</p>	<p>Local administrations should be fully decentralised. A work environment conducive to effective decision-making and programme implementation is a prerequisite for capacity building within the public sector. There should be no undue interference from the national government in the affairs of local administration service delivery. This undermines the authentic character of decentralization in practice. Primary education as local administrative responsibility should be focused and prioritise in real sense. There should be less bureaucracy in the affairs of national educational administrations and management of local administration in the country.</p>
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9.2.3 Analysis on Research Findings

This section analyses major research findings and uncovers the underlying challenges and opportunities for local administration capacity building for local governance and primary education service delivery. Public administration in Bangladesh has to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. This demands greater institutional capacity for administration and better service delivery. Public administration reform in the country has been so far “represented, relatively speaking, a mosaic of alternatives, marked by spells of progress followed by periods of stagnation” (Khan, 1999, p. 256). Consequently, public administration is not well responsive to needs at the local level. Reform efforts influence the performance of local administration operations in both capacity building and service delivery issues.

9.2.3.1 Challenges and Opportunities

Research has identified challenges and opportunities related to government, administration, and local administrative capacity for service delivery with primary education in Bangladesh. It enumerates the complexities and interlocking challenges confronting local governance institutions in the country. These issues are illustrated in Table 48. The table focuses on the major issues of the phenomena under examination: public administration, administrative reform, local administration, participation, personnel and civil bureaucracy, capacity building, public service delivery, and primary education in the country.

Table 48: Challenges and Opportunities of Local Capacity for Service Delivery in Bangladesh

Issues	Challenges	Opportunities
Public Administration	<p>‘Legacy of the past.’</p> <p>Traditional administrative systems.</p> <p>Centralized and hierarchical structure.</p> <p>Partisan and group interests of political party in power.</p> <p>Tendency of government in power to use public administration for reform experiments.</p> <p>Questionable motivations for administrative reform initiatives.</p>	<p>A comprehensive administrative reform initiative with strong political will and firm managerial commitment.</p> <p>A ‘good governance approach’ to administrative reform to change the bureaucratic centralized hierarchical system.</p> <p>Technocratic and independent leadership free from political interference for minimisation of partisan and group interest context.</p> <p>Lesson learning for meaningful initiatives for future reference.</p>
Administrative Reform	<p>A popular issue for populist politicians in power.</p> <p>Efforts are a ‘mosaic of alternatives’.</p> <p>Overambitious proposals.</p> <p>Spells of progress with periods of stagnation.</p>	<p>Consensus among political parties for nation building.</p> <p>Reforms with appropriate proposals, and creation of a congenial task environment for implementation.</p> <p>Steady continuation of administrative reform efforts for implementation.</p> <p>Long-term vision and functional mission for far-reaching administrative reform.</p>

<p>Capacity Building</p>	<p>Capacity building is much talked about.</p> <p>The efforts, so far, in a piecemeal in nature.</p> <p>There is no scale of standard capacity measurement.</p> <p>The process is ‘marked by spells of progress followed by periods of stagnation’.</p> <p>Organizational capacity of local administration is evolving with no remarkable progress.</p> <p>Individual capacity of local administration functionaries is incompatible over the long-term.</p> <p>The overall capacity building is at stake.</p>	<p>Capacity building issues should be discussed meaningfully. Practical measures should be in place with appropriate, practical and active steps to implement.</p> <p>The process should be continues and take place without the interference of national governments.</p> <p>Reorganization of administration should be commensurate with efforts to build institutional capacity.</p> <p>Information and learning services to individuals can improve the quality of standard to capacity building.</p> <p>Adopting a national policy for administration capacity standard is desirable to measure the quality of service delivery by local administration.</p>
<p>Local Administration</p>	<p>Seen as an extension of national/central government.</p> <p>Acts as a traditional ‘field administration’.</p> <p>Poorly defined relations between national government and local administration.</p> <p>Dependence on national government.</p> <p>Shortage of skilled staff.</p>	<p>Functional leadership of local authority.</p> <p>Independent decision-making and implementation.</p> <p>Transformation of traditional ‘field administration’ to development oriented administration involving local people.</p> <p>Permanently empowering local administrations to ‘hire and fire’.</p> <p>Local resource mobilization for financial solvency and independence.</p>

<p>People Participation</p>	<p>An absence of civic participation at the local level of administration.</p> <p>Little scope for decision-making by the UP Chairmen.</p> <p>People's participation is in use and misuse.</p> <p>Local people tend to be politically motivated or biased.</p>	<p>Active involvement of local elected people in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Introduction of an appropriate material rewarding system for supports.</p> <p>Teaching and learning for service oriented political and managerial education.</p>
<p>Personnel and Civil Bureaucracy</p>	<p>Tendency of being 'administrator' instead of 'civil servant'.</p> <p>Lack of professionalism.</p> <p>Traditional approach to administrative and managerial dealings.</p> <p>Tendency of resistance to change.</p> <p>Local personnel staffing process is in disorder.</p> <p>The bureaucratic hierarchical control over employee relations is excessive.</p> <p>Maintenance of the 'status quo'.</p>	<p>Recruitment of expert, skilled personnel to discharge the voluminous responsibility of public service.</p> <p>A flexible personnel policy with reasonably accepted placement and transfer of local employees.</p> <p>Autonomy for local administration with practical decentralization of authority</p> <p>A dedication to serve the people.</p>

<p>Public Service Delivery</p>	<p>Formalism in service delivery</p> <p>Service to the people is secondary</p> <p>Access to service delivery is somewhat limited</p> <p>Prime concern is for maintenance of official records</p> <p>The services are expected to provide ‘ambitious output with low input’.</p> <p>The poor task environment of service delivery.</p>	<p>More field-oriented activities with greater local involvement.</p> <p>Working freedom for employees responsible for service delivery,</p> <p>The establishment of a favourable working environment and facilities and logistical supports for materializing the provisions of services.</p> <p>Access to public services should be easy. There should be less bureaucratic process and procedure.</p>
<p>Primary Education</p>	<p>The delivery of primary education services is unfocussed.</p> <p>Primary education is in a state of disarray.</p> <p>Poor quality of primary education.</p> <p>Drop-out of pupils high at the end of primary education.</p> <p>Too much responsibility for teaching staff with other non-educational roles.</p> <p>Traditional state of teaching and learning delivery.</p> <p>Lack of appropriate support and assistance for a congenial working environment.</p> <p>Shortage of teaching staff and insufficient contingency support.</p> <p>Primary education and staff are financially and socially</p>	<p>Make primary education the gateway to further education with solid academic foundation of learning.</p> <p>Comprehensive plan for learning and teaching in schools</p> <p>Make primary schools the learning seats for primary education.</p> <p>Pro-people educational governance for national and international programmes of educational and learning.</p> <p>Regular orientation and refreshment training for local administrative staff and school teachers and support staff to adjust to changes and new educational initiatives with national and international development policies and programmes.</p> <p>Staff in primary schools should be employed adequately. Even, there should extra teachers to supplement academic areas in need.</p> <p>Staff should be better paid so that they can devote their time to school academic programmes.</p> <p>Investment in human capital future human resource development.</p> <p>Primary school should represent a complete learning environment with both academic and extra curricula activities.</p>

	<p>in a state of insecurity.</p> <p>Inappropriate task environment for teaching and learning delivery.</p> <p>Little or lack of appropriate orientation and opportunity to primary education as the basis of future human resource development.</p> <p>Poorly trained school staff not effectively monitoring academic programmes.</p> <p>Lack of embedded learning behaviour.</p> <p>Lack of or no understanding about the MDGs and its programmes of universal primary education.</p>	<p>Enough financial support should be ensured to get full benefit of primary education as a foundation for further education. 'After School Clubs' might be an option to address the lack of learning.</p> <p>Active intensive programme and refreshment course for school teachers so they can be informed of learning objectives and goals.</p>
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Public administration

The traditional administrative structure has prevailed in the public administration system in Bangladesh since the British colonial era. The structure is hierarchical and the system is centralized in character. This has been “significantly modelled by almost two centuries of British colonial domination of the Indian subcontinent” (Kabir, 2013, p. 57). This legacy of public administration is a considerable challenge for local administration and governance.

Public administration in Bangladesh as a system of governance has been often subjected to reform experimentations, with successive regimes appointing administrative reform committees and/or commissions. There is little capacity to deal with national or local needs. Partisan interests play a major role in public policy making at national level and service delivery at local level.

The introduction of contextual as well as good-governance approaches to administration is essential to change this scenario. A harmonious and committed political leadership with sound policy objectives is key to minimising partisan interests in governance. This would also have a positive effect on local capacity-building, service delivery and nation-building efforts.

Administrative Reform

Administrative reform has been a critical issue for populist politicians. Administrative reform efforts are the ‘mosaic of alternatives’ with mostly overambitious proposals, and are to some extent inappropriate. There are periods of progress and periods of stagnation in local administration institutionalization. Reform initiatives are often poorly implemented.

However, the door is open for a comprehensive administrative reform initiative which acknowledges indigenous values and culture. A strong political will and firm administrative support is the first step towards developing a system suitable for and responsive to contemporary needs. This can be accomplished in phases over a period of time.

Governments need to provide solutions to the prevailing situation and commit to political and administrative leadership to overcome it. Proposals should be appropriate. A congenial task environment is essential for implementation. This can improve the delivery of services by public institutions. A long-term vision and mission for overall socio-economic development of the country would accelerate the process of capacity building at local level.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is one of the main targets and ultimate goal of administrative reform in Bangladesh. Local administration capacity for public service delivery through administrative reform is seen as an important aspect of this. The role of administrative reform in building the local administrative capacity for service delivery is minimal. There is an absence of a comprehensive reform agenda for this. So far, in the case of local administration of Upazila, the process is 'marked by spells of progress followed by periods of stagnation'. Organizationally, local administrative capacity is not evolving with remarkable progress. The individual capacity of local administration functionaries is incompatible with long term goals. The overall capacity building enterprise is at stake.

The issue of capacity building should be seen in a real sense in administrative reform initiatives. Pragmatic measures should be in place with steps to implement proposals.

The process should be without interference of national governments- regardless of the political party in power. Reorganization of administration structure commensurate with current changes of circumstances is an option to build capacity. Information and learning services to individuals can improve capacity. A national standard for local administration capacity should be developed to measure the quality of service delivery.

Local Administration

Local administration acts as a traditional 'field administration' under the central secretariat administration of the executive branch of national government. Relations between national government and local administration are poorly defined. This leads to weakness in the political leadership and administrative and managerial dependence on bureaucracy.

Local administration should be able to deal with local needs and managerial abilities. It should have greater control over decision-making and policy implementation regarding service delivery. Their activities should be free from interference from the national government.

Transformation of 'field administration' to people-oriented local administrations involving local people make them more capable of service delivery. Positions in local administrations, especially those related to education, should be placed with the local authority permanently, empowering it with a merit-based 'hire and fire' ethos.

Personnel and Civil Bureaucracy

There is a shortage of competent staff. Staffing processes in local administration are in disarray. Partisan local considerations generally determine the placement of service delivery field staff. Centralised hierarchical control of employee relations prevails in the

administration. This has been the traditional staffing practice of the Bangladeshi civil bureaucracy.

The status-quo is maintained in the civil bureaucracy. Officers are deputed for a specific period to local Upazila administration. They generally act as field administrators instead of public service providers.

More skilled personnel are required to handle and discharge the voluminous responsibilities of public service at the local level. A flexible personnel policy should be in place that caters to the local administrative needs. The placement and transfer of field staff should accelerate service delivery and save both time and money.

Local administrative autonomy with decentralised authority to deal with administrative and managerial issues would serve to minimise political interference. Employees especially designated officers from the national bureaucracy should work as public servants in the true sense, leaving aside traditional and colonial bureaucratic elitism. They should dedicate their efforts to nation-building activities which benefit local people and engender a sense of ownership of development programmes.

Peoples Participation

The effective involvement of local communities in local administration is almost absent. As members of the Upazila Parishad, the elected chairmen of the Union Parishads have little role in decision-making and implementation of development programmes. Their attendance at the Parishad meeting serves to either support or oppose the chairman unanimously or on narrow party considerations. Active participation of local people in local administration and decision process is limited to attendance in the meetings of the Parishad. Members of the community on the Primary School Management Committee (SMC), for example, have little input into the decision processes of primary school

academic and management affairs. People on the committee tend to be politically motivated or biased.

Active involvement of locally elected people's representatives in the administration process can make local administration more meaningful. Rewarding for support materially through, for example, providing cash remunerations or other benefits would be an added incentive for locals to get involved. Teaching and learning opportunities for service-oriented managerial and political positions in local administrations especially those relating to primary education would also be beneficial for locals to be involved in local-level governance.

Public Service Delivery

Service delivery is secondary and defined by formalities. This is mostly confined to meetings and seating on the committees. The maintenance of records is the prime concern for management. Services are based on 'maximum output with considerably less input'. Service delivery is poor and piece-meal in nature. This is because of an inappropriate task environment at local level.

Maintaining formalities is the traditional form of public administration in Bangladesh. In an era of technological change, service delivery pattern should improve the quality of services in time and space. More field-oriented activities with active involvement of local people in service delivery is needed. This would build the service delivery capacity of local Upazila administrations.

The freedom of local administration employees and active involvement of eligible local people, their cooperation with local administration staff in discharging services can make services to the people meaningful. Sufficient financial resources and adequate

managerial support are also important. This is also a sound investment in future human resources development in the country.

The existence of a good working environment is a must for public service delivery at the local level. Appropriate administrative and managerial facilities create a congenial environment in this regard. Logistical supports such as the provision of effective infrastructure in primary schools and adequate numbers of appropriately qualified teaching and support staff are essential. Socio-economic security is a powerful incentive for local employees to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

Primary Education

The quality of primary education is, as a whole, at stake. A good start has been made in primary school enrolment. However, the state of teaching and learning remains poor and the dropout rate remains considerably high. Schools are under pressure to achieve national targets and meet international benchmarks without adequate support and assistance from the local administration and the state. The shortage of qualified teaching staff and contingency support in primary schools is acute. The work environment in primary schools is mostly uncongenial. This makes achieving the MDGs target for the country challenging.

Full enrolment in the school and satisfactory completion of primary education leads to develop human resources and paves the way for nation-building. Primary schools in Bangladesh lack creative learning facilities. A comprehensive plan for creative teaching and learning delivery is necessary. The regular supply and availability of learning aids, logistics and contingencies for education would go a long way towards meeting the target of 100% enrolment and completion of primary schooling in the country.

Additional non-academic responsibilities are often assigned to school staff. It has negative impacts on quality teaching and learning delivery. Teachers are often expected to do many government field-activities like child and mother surveys, to which they have to devote their valuable academic time and energy. This forces them to curtail, to some extent, their academic programmes. Primary schools should be for basic elementary education only.

Qualified and sufficient teaching and support staff in the primary school are necessary for smooth running and achieving the MDGs target for primary education. The SMC is seen as a 'pocket committee' of narrow local power politics. The positions on the committee are usually filled by party activists as a reward for party affiliation. Thus the SMC is used and misused politically. The idea of school management through community involvement is not widespread. There should be a pro-people educational governance system which ensures a healthy and congenial educational environment for learning and upholds national and international programmes of education and learning like the MDGs.

9.2.4 Brief Summary

The findings of this research corroborate the findings of a number of studies in administrative science and local governance. The results are presented in accordance with the theoretical focus and in the framework of research aims, objectives, and questions. The findings are derived from different sources of information such as document analysis, case studies, and interviews of research participants.

Capacity building of local administration for service delivery through administrative reform initiatives has so far been incomprehensive, designed in a piecemeal manner and poorly implemented. The issue of capacity has been superficially addressed, and

appears politically motivated. Capacity should be built through ‘collective vision, participatory governance, rational review of powers and functions, allied legal and statutory reforms and also the development of necessary infrastructure and human resources’ (Bandyopadhyay. 2011: 07). The government of Bangladesh is unlikely to address this and efforts towards the capacity building of local administration for primary education service delivery seem to be in vain. A comprehensive administrative reform of existing administrative system which use contextual as well as good governance approaches which incorporate indigenous social values and local culture is a must. Otherwise, national development policies and international programmes such as the MDGs is unlikely to be successful.

9.3 Concluding Remarks

The overarching goal of this research was to explore the role of administrative reform in institutional capacity building for public service delivery in Bangladesh with a central research question of ‘*Do administrative reform initiatives make local administration better equipped for primary education service delivery?*’ Three main research objectives and six corresponding research questions (two for each objective) underpin the structure of the study. Research utilised a qualitative approach of social science. The ‘triangulation’ technique of social research enabled a more thorough investigation of the issues raised by this project.

A general summary of the research follows. It argues why further research is needed in this area of study. Finally, an overall conclusion is provided.

9.3.1 General Summary

The research explored the role of administrative reform in capacity building of local Upazila administrations in Bangladesh with reference to the universal primary education

goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Theoretical and methodological backgrounds of field research in the context of primary education service delivery were systematically discussed. Case studies of two local administrative units in Bangladesh were presented and forty semi-structured elite interviews further illustrated the need for reform. These were the empirical basis for the study.

Capacity building of public sector institutions through administrative reform for public service delivery at the local level with reference to primary education in Bangladesh has been the main focus of this research. The literature and field information for this research indicates that administrative reform is an important tool for institutional capacity building of local administration for service delivery. Various administrative reform initiatives have attempted to accelerate the institutional capacity of local administration for service delivery, although they have been used and otherwise misused for political motives and resisted by the bureaucracy. The research empirically confirms that changes in local administration in Bangladesh as a result of administrative reform have so far been cosmetic and superficial. The institutionalization of service delivery capacities in local administrations, particularly those relating to primary education and learning is needed.

9.3.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed knowledge related to administrative science in different philosophical, theoretical, methodological and practical contexts. It has sought to bridge the gaps in the academic literature of governance and public administration studies. To my understanding and belief, it has added value to the knowledge by inviting debates on the issues under examination. It has confirmed that poor attention has been paid in the study of governance to the role of administrative reform and capacity building of local service delivery – especially those focussing on primary education in the Bangladeshi

context. The study empirically demonstrates that challenges and opportunities exist in local administration institutional capacity building for public service delivery. The research found that the role of administrative reform is positive and it has paved the way to bring about changes in the system, provided that political and administrative support from both national and local governments are in place to meet the capacity building challenges.

The research has gone through the philosophical approaches of ontological, epistemological and methodological theories of post-positivism, as we have seen in Chapter 1. This perspective of combining different approaches to social research has provided opportunities to systematically apply evaluative research procedures and provide further insights.

Theoretically, the use of various issues of governance and contextualization public administration, administrative reform, capacity building, service delivery, local administration in Bangladesh, MDGs and primary education have been the significant efforts in this research (Chapter 2, 4, and 5). This has sought to contribute to the knowledge of administrative science by determining the feasibility of administrative reform and testing of institutional capacity of local administrations for public service delivery in Bangladesh. More specifically, the study referred to the unsatisfactory state of primary education service provision within local Upazila administrations.

Methodologically, the use of 'triangulation' has generated more valid results and allowed concrete conclusions to be drawn. Historical inquiry and the analytical use of more recent materials on public administration and reform (Chapter 6) along with, case studies (Chapter 7), and unstructured interviews (Chapter 8) supplemented information

for other sources and generated concrete findings. This has led to a valid conclusion from descriptive to inferential analysis in order to generalize likely outcomes.

The research has examined a body of literature covering various perspectives of administration and governance in developing countries, especially the public service delivery with primary education in the Bangladeshi context. In situating Bangladesh as a case of administrative reform, the research has revealed that factors like political interference, undue involvement in local affairs, narrow inter-political party conflict, “bureaucratic aversion” (Rahman, 2010, p. 245) halfhearted support for change, petty interests, and lack of awareness among local functionaries are mainly responsible for the situation. This has provided concrete examples for Bangladeshi – as well as other similarly situated developing countries - administration to develop their primary education system, keeping the idea of ‘thinking globally and acting locally’ in mind.

Practically, as this research has sought to understand, examine, analyse and explore the role of administrative reform in institutional capacity building of public sector institutions for service delivery. It referred specifically to the MDGs of achieving universal primary education and evaluated the programme for future reference.

This research has represented a valid case for developing countries. It has employed Bangladesh as a unit of analysis and has explored the role of administrative reform in institutional capacity building in public administrations. The Bangladeshi decision makers in particular and governments in developing countries as well as international development partner agencies in general can benefit from this research, which delineates ways to can rectify, correct, and assess, reassess and improve existing systems of education service delivery.

Bangladesh has faces many developmental challenges. As a subject for this research, it has provided valuable insights en-route to a better understanding of governance capacity and public sector institutional capacity to deliver primary education services at the local level.

Up to now there have been very few academic efforts are there that systematically examine the public service delivery system in developing countries in a reform-led capacity context. Developing countries, particularly the government of Bangladesh, can utilise the findings of this research for future reference in their efforts to build capacity and improve service delivery at the local level.

The study does not claim that the experience of Bangladesh is necessarily representative of all developing countries. However, it describes a set of institutional imperatives that can be seen to differing degrees in other similarly situated nations. This research, therefore, will contribute as a continuous learning experience for governments of developing counties and their development partners, especially for those of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in general and the Southeast Asian countries in particular.

9.3.3 Need for Further Research: Macro and Micro Level Focus

There are challenges and opportunities in the areas of public administration reform relating to institutional capacity-building and public service delivery systems at the local level in Bangladesh. This research has practical policy implications both nationally and globally. It is evident from the limited academic literature that more research, from both macro and micro perspectives, exploring the issues raised by this research is necessary. This will enrich the scholarly literature on governance, public administration, and administrative science as a whole.

Research assessed the capacity of local administration primary education service delivery with attainment of the MDGs' universal primary education programme in Bangladesh. Further research can be undertaken in the areas of health, agriculture, social services, and so on. Comparative research could be conducted between countries at similar levels of development.

This research has raised a number of issues relating to governance and local administration: the role of administrative reform efforts, the effects of these efforts over time, the appropriateness of reform proposals, the effects of rigidly hierarchical bureaucracies, field administration in the name of local administration, local administrative capacity, service delivery, local autonomy and staffing concerns. Research on the role of primary teaching staff and primary education administrative and school management functionaries and their social, economic, and administrative issues should be regarded with due importance.

More specifically, research should be done on how to impart practical political education to local administration functionaries which would enable them to run administrations effectively. The research on the relationship between the teaching staff of primary school, especially the head teacher and School Management Committee (SMC) and between local primary education offices is an option to do so. Research on everyday life of primary school head teachers and teaching staff is a crucial issue from micro level perspective. These have led to widespread dysfunctions in the public sector. Further research needs to examine and analyse these factors in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their effects on governance capacity. This would also serve to identify practical means with which to address the lack of institutional capacity for service delivery regarding primary education.

Research examined the effects of administrative reforms related to local administration service delivery. It analysed the institutional capacity of local authorities to provide meaningful primary education. Academic literature on public administration and local administration service delivery with primary education confirms that both individual behaviour and social aspects influence organizational creativity (Andriopoulos, 2001, p. 834). Individual intellectual capacity, organisational, and social aspects of local administration and primary education personalities play a decisive role in governmental capacity for primary education service delivery. Further research might explore the likely obstacles to institutionalizing administrative autonomy at the local level.

This research attempts to fill the gap in the literature of public administration, local administration capacity and educational governance in developing countries in general and Bangladesh in particular. The themes of administrative reform, institutional capacity building and public service delivery in Bangladeshi context have so far received little scholarly attention. This research has intensively explored these issues with special attention to primary education and MDGs target attainment in the county. By focussing on primary education in Bangladesh in particular, the research could be considered a point of departure in the study of governance and public administration for developing countries in general and public service delivery capacity of local administration.

9.4 Overall Conclusion

Evidence confirmed the assumptions and answered the research questions sufficiently. Research has provided substantial evidence to support the research framework and assumptions from which it began. There has been ‘spells of progress with periods of stagnation’ in institutional capacity building of administration at the local level in

service delivery provisions. A substantial portion of young children especially in economically depressed rural areas are failing to complete primary education. Achieving universal the primary education target of the MDGs remains a challenge.

Local Upazila administrations in Bangladesh, introduced in early 1980s, are considered one of the most ideal options to systematically decentralise power in the country. This has proved as a point of departure for capacity building for service delivery within public sector institutions at the local level. The Upazila administrations by the very nature of their existence are the devolution of authority to local administration. However, the system has been affected by periods of stagnation. It is yet to be fully capable of effective service delivery; especially in the area of primary education. More pragmatic reform initiatives for local administration capacity building for service delivery should be designed with a 'contextual governance philosophy' and be implemented without political interference and bureaucratic resistance. The genuine political commitment of stakeholders, including citizens, is the key to success.

Bangladesh is confronted with a complicated institutional legacy which has had profound effects on public administration, local institutions and the provision of primary education. This legacy has remained largely unchallenged owing to a lack of political will and administrative support from political actors and the bureaucracy. Long term reform initiatives for local administration capacity for service delivery addressing socio-economic and politico-administrative realities in the country were bypassed. Reform initiatives were mostly overly ambitious proposals and undertaken on a piecemeal basis. Moreover, they were guided by external prescriptions rather than reflecting indigenous values, ethics, and culture. Governance contextuality with a micro level focus is mostly overlooked. Local administration in Bangladesh remains in a state of disorder. Public Service delivery institutions like local administration of Upazila are

confronted with numerous challenges with a ‘low modicum of self-governance’ (Straussman, 2007, p. 1104). Administrative reforms to improve the institutional capacity of local administration for service delivery have thus far generated mixed results.

Primary education is the foundation for further education. It paves the way for future human resource development irrespective of whether it occurs in a developed or developing country. An appropriate primary education policy formation and investment in primary education is the far-reaching human capital investment for future human resource development of a country like Bangladesh. We need a proper task environment for a total academic primary school with logistics and other supports (Islam, 2013, p. 44). If the local administration of a country like Bangladesh does not have the capacity to handle and deliver primary education services which fulfil the national development policy goals of poverty alleviation and education for all, educational targets for international development programmes like the MDGs will not be achieved.

It is evident from this research that in the design of administrative reform, programmes of development do not comply with indigenous norms and values, and far reaching goals of the country. The ‘contextual governance philosophy’ (Vartola, 2011) is either intentionally or subconsciously disregarded. The capacity of local administrations to provide services is not up to the mark. As a result, poor governance prevails in the affairs of local administration, especially regarding the provision of primary education. The popular government campaign ‘Administration for Services to the People’ has so far gone in vain.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Field Research

September 2013 – November 2012 and December 2013

Field Research Schedules

Field Research- Documentary and Historical Sources (Chapter VI)

I visited the different academic and research libraries, personnel training institutes, government institutions and offices to get access and talk to the key informants and collect resources for my research. They include,

Cabinet Division Library, Bangladesh Shochibaloy (Secretariat).

Ministry of Public Administration Library.

University of Dhaka Central Library.

Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Academy.

National Institute of Local Government (NILG).

National Academy for Education and Management (NAEM),

National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE),

Institute of Education and Research (IER),

Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM), and

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC).

Field Research- Case Sources (Chapter VII)

I have chosen two local administrations unites – Biswanath Upazila and Gobindagonj Upazila for in-depth study.

Field Research Sub-Schedule 1

Upazila: Biswanath, District- Sylhet, under Sylhet Division, Bangladesh

Date: 14.11.12 – 20.11.12 (Wednesday - Tuesday)

This is Biswanath Upazila, where I am from. I stayed in my parental home and contacted the field research.

14.11.12 morning, (11:30 – 15:00)

I have oriented myself with the Officials of the Upazila, collected basic information about the Upazila;

14.11.12 afternoon, (15:00 – 17:30)

I visited Upazial Education Office and met and told to the key personnel: Upazila Education Officer and Assistant Upazila Education Officers;

14.11.12 evening, (18:00 – 19:30)

I met and told to the Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO);

15.11.12 morning, (07:30 – 14:00)

I met and told to Upazila Chairman;
I visited Upazila Resource Centre and met the Instructor.

15.11.12 afternoon, (12:30 – 17:00)

I met and told to the two Vice Chairmen of the Upazila;

18.11.12 morning (07:30 – 09:00)

I met and told to the Chairman of No 4 Rampasha Union Parishad;

18.11.12 morning, (10:00 – 17:30)

I visited Puran Gawnn Primary School and told to the Head Teacher,
I observed the classroom teaching and learning delivery,
I met a Teacher of Puran Gawnn Primary School,
I met the Chairman of the School Management Committee (SMC).

Resource Persons and Offices of Biswanath Upazila:

The Resource Offices:

Upazial Office (General Section)

Upazial Education Office

Upazila Resource Centre

Puran Gawn Primary School

The Resource Persons:

1. Mr. M M Rahman, Chairman, Upazila Parishad
2. Mr. G Khan, Vice-Chairman, Upazial Parishad
3. Ms A Begum, Vice-Chairman, Upazial Parishad
4. Mr. A Khan, Chairman, No 4 Rampasha Union Parishad
5. Mr. S Chakma, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO)
6. Mr. S Miah, Upazila Education Officer (UEO) (incharge)
7. Mr. S D Shaha, Head Teacher, Puran Gawnn Primary School
8. Mr. K Hussain, Teacher, Puran Gawnn Primary School
9. Mr. A Razzaq, Assistant Upazila Education Officer (AUEO)
10. Mr. A Hussain, Instructor (in-charge), Upazila Primary Resource Centre.
11. Mr J Abedin, President of the Puran Gawn Primary School Management Committee.

Field Research Sub-Schedule 2

Upazila: Gobindagonj, District- Gaibandha, under Rongpore Division, Bangladesh

Date: 4.11.12 – 7.11.12 (Sunday – Wednesday)

I reached Gobindagonj Upazila from Dhaka in the evening of 3rd November 2012. I stayed in the Upazila Nirbahi Officer- UNO's residence. He is my friend. We studied together in graduation and post-graduation levels at the University of Dhaka. I contacted him earlier to do my field research. He, accordingly, was kind to arrange everything possible and it made for me easy access to the related persons and source of information.

4.11.12 morning, (09:00 - 13:00)

I oriented myself with the Officials of the Upazila, collected basic information from them;

4.11.12 afternoon, (14:30 - 19:30)

I met and told to Upazila Chairman and later two Vice Chairman of the Upazila;

5.11.12 morning, (09:00 – 16:00)

I visited nearby Kuti Bari Primary School and told to Head Teacher,

I observed the classroom teaching and learning delivery,

I met the Chairman of the School Management Committee (SMC)

5.11.12 evening, (19:00 - 21:30)

I met Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO);

6.11.12 morning, (09:00 – 10:30)

I met and told to a Union Parishad Chairman

6. 11.12 afternoon, (14:00 – 17:30)

I visited Upazila Education Office, met the Upazila Education Officer and the Assistant Upazila Education Officers

7.11.12 Daytime (11:00 – 13:00)

I visited Upazila Resource Centre and had discussion with its instructor.

I left Gobindagonj Upazila for Dhaka in the evening on 7.11.12

Resource Persons and Offices of Gobindagonj Upazila:

The Resource Offices:

Upazial Office (General Section)

Upazial Education Office

Upazila Resource Centre

Kuti Bari Primary School

The Resource Persons:

1. Principal A K Azad, Chairman, Upazila Parishad;
2. Mr M H Foku, Vice-Chairman, Upzila Parishad;
3. Ms R Arjumand, Vice-Chairman, Upzila Parishad;
4. Mr A H Shamim, Chairman, Shalmara Union Parishad;
5. M Ashrafuzzaman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO);
6. Ms S Pervin, Upazila Education Officer (UEO);
7. Mr. B Hussain, Upazila Assistant Education Officer (UAEO);
8. Mr. T Sarkar, Instructor, Upazila Primary Resource Centre;
9. Mr. M H Pradhan, Head Teacher, Kutibari Primary School;
10. Ms H A Begum, Teacher, Kuti Bari Primary School;
11. Mr K M J Alam, President, Kuti Bari Primary School Management Committee.

Field Research- Interview Sources (Chapter VIII)

Establishment of Contact to the Research Informants: couple of ways

- I visited the local administration units and primary schools and met the informants;
- I contacted potential respondents via their private mobile phone contact. Then, I took appointment and told to them with my interview schedule;
- They discussed and some of them later substantiated their opinions through email and phone contacts;
- I popped in to the training institute like BCS administration Academy, Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC). I approached the administrators in the libraries in the late afternoons - evenings.

The Research Respondents/ Research Participants (40)

Category 1: People Representative (10 persons)

1. Mr A Mannan MP, Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Public Administration. 12.11.12, evening.
2. Mrs Z N Talukder MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. 13.11.12, evening.
3. Mr M M Rahman, Chairman, Biswanath UZP, Sylhet.15.11.12, morning
4. Mr. G Khan, Vice Chairman, Biswanath UZP, and Chairman, Standing Committee on Education. 15.11.12 early afternoon
5. Ms A Begum, Vice-Chairman, Upazial Parishad.15.11.12, late afternoon
6. Mr. A Khan, Chairman, No 4 Rampasha UP, Biswanath, Sylhet.18.11.12, morning.

7. Principal Mr A K Azad, Chairman, Gobindhagonj Upazila Parishad. 4.11.12, early evening.
8. Mr. M H Foku, Vice Chairman Gobindhagonj Upazila Parishad and Chairman, Standing Committee on Education. 4.11.12, early afternoon.
9. Ms R Arjumand, Vice-Chairman, Gobindhagonj Upzila Parishad. 4.11.2012, early afternoon.
10. Mr. A H Shamim, Chairman, Shalmara Union Parishad. 6.11.12, morning

Category 2: Academic and Expert Observer (10 persons)

1. Dr. Firowz Ahmed, Professor of Public Administration, University of Dhaka.12.11.12, morning.
2. Dr. S. Rahman, Professor of Public Administration, University of Rajshai, Bangladesh. 21.11.2012, morning
3. Dr T M Haque, Associate Professor of Public Administration, General and Continuing Education, North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. 21. 11.12, evening.
4. Mr A Islam, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, Jahangir Nagar University, Savar, Dhaka. 21.10.2012 evening.
5. Mr K F Ahmed, Lecturer in Public Administration, Daffodil International University, Dhaka. 15.10.2012, Midday.
6. Mr H Baniamin, Lecturer of Public Administration, Stamford University, Dhaka, 21.10.12. Midday.
7. Mr S. N. Daula, Senior Research Officer, National Institute of Local Government (NILG), Dhaka, 7.10.2012, morning
8. Ms K. Nahar, Research Officer, NILG, 7.10. 2012, afternoon
9. Mr A Taleb, Research Officer, NILG, 8.10.2012, morning.
10. Mr. A. Hussain, Research Officer, BCS (admin) Academy, Dhaka. 8.10.12, afternoon.

Category 3: Administrator (10 persons)

1. Dr K U Siddiquee, Rtd. Senior Civil Servant, Ex Principal Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, Ex Cabinet Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh. July 15, 16, & 18, 2013. London.
2. Mr M, S Alam, Rtd. Senior Civil Servant, Ex Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, Dhaka.
3. Mr Eusuf Ali, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Dhaka. 21.11.12, morning.
4. Mr Ashraf Shamim, Joint Secretary, Cabinet Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka. Several mornings in October and November, 2012.
5. Dr N Ahmed, Deputy Secretary, External Resource Division. 10.10.12, morning. Dhaka.
6. Dr D M H Kabir, Deputy Secretary and Deputy Director, Prime Minister Office, Dhaka. 12.10.2012, morning.
7. Mr P Sarker, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ex UNO, Ministry of Public Administration. 11.10.2012, late afternoon, Dhaka.
8. Dr N A Mazumdar, Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration. Dhaka.
9. Mr M Ashrafuzzaman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Gobindhagonj Upazila, Gaibandha. 5.11.12, evening.
10. Mr. S Chakma, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Biswanath Upazila, Sylhet. 14.11.12, evening.

Category 4: Teacher and Primary Education Concern person (10 persons)

1. Mr. S D Shaha, Head Teacher, Puran Gawnn Primary School, 18.11.12. morning.
2. Mr. K Hussain, Teacher, Puran Gawnn Primary School, 18.11.12, midday.

3. Mr. A Hussain, Instructor (in-charge), Upazila Resource Centre, Biswanath. 15.11.12, afternoon.
4. Mr J Abedin, President of the Puran Gawn Primary School Management Committee, 18.11.12, late afternoon.
5. Mr. S Miah, Biswanth Upazila Education Officer (UEO) (in-charge), 14.11.12, afternoon.
6. Mr. M H Pradhan, Head Teacher, Kuti Bari Primary School, 5.11.12, morning.
7. Ms H A Begum, Teacher, Kuti Bari Primary School, 5.11.12, midday.
8. Mr. T Sarkar, Instructor, Upazila Resource Centre, Gobindhagonj. 7.11.12, morning.
9. Mr K M J Alam, President, Kuti Bari Primary School Management Committee, 5.11.12, late afternoon.
10. Ms S Pervin, Gobindhagonj Upazila Education Officer (UEO). 6.11.12, afternoon.

Appendix 2: Qualitative Questions

Administrative Reform and Capacity Building: The Case of Primary Education in Bangladesh

(Muhammad Azizuddin: azizuddin08@gmail.com)

The study is an academic inquiry into the role of administration reform in institutional capacity building with public service delivery context in Bangladesh. The qualitative questionnaire is designed to contact the field study in Bangladesh. Potential respondents are assured that all the information and comments to be provided by them will be treated for research purpose only, with strict confidentiality. The detailed information will add value to that from other sources to build up a thorough understanding of the problem understudy of public service delivery in Bangladesh.

(Qualitative Questionnaire)

- a) Name (optional):
- b) Gender:

- c) Position/Rank:
- d) Experience:

- e) email:

(For Academic and Expert Observer, and Administrator)

- Would you please say a few words about your professional/ service background? How do you relate yourself to public administration and reform process?

Please have your say...

- In Bangladesh, nearly all government activities are performed by government agencies (public administration). There are Ministries, Departments and Directorates and field level administration in the country. From time to time, many questions have been raised as to the quality, timing and cost of service. Government set up many commissions/committees to improve the services. I believe, you have heard these reports and their recommendations. Do you know any action to improve government service standards that these reports suggested? Please site one or more examples.

Please have your say...

- Could you please assess the reform efforts made so far that could make the administration more dynamic? (lead to capable of public service delivery).

Please have your say...

- How appropriate do you think that certain reform measures for improving public service delivery, such as decentralization of administration, participation of incumbent (otherwise known as people's participation), informal communication, meeting with target groups, etc will improve staff standard and service quality?

Please have your say...

- How do you assess/ think the administrative reform facilitate the capability of government to public service delivery?

Please have your say...

- The reform proposals made that have been implemented so far. What factors, do you think might have assisted/ favoured the process of implementation of reform proposals?

Please have your say...

- What problems do you think might have hindered the process of implementation of reform proposals?

Please have your say...

- To what extent reform proposals are resisted and/or welcomed by civil servants? (What forms of resistance? / How enthusiastically were they supported)

Please have your say...

- What is the current state of decentralization of administration in Bangladesh? How do you like to change the scenario?

Please have your say...

- Taking the reforms as a whole, how did public opinion react to these?

Please have your say...

- What do you think about the existing state of administration? Do you think that the administration is well equipped to carryout reform proposals to build up the capacity to public service delivery?

Please have your say...

- Do you think public administrative system in Bangladesh is still in need of reform? If yes, how?

Please have your say...

- It is recognised the fact that administrative reform initiatives, so far, address the capacity issues of public administration. So, many issues get through in the administrative reform measures. Please feel free to describe how these efforts refer the capacity issues of public service delivery in Bangladesh? (e.g., the services of existing UpaZila administration to different levels like primary education etc.)

Please have your say...

For People's (Local Administration-Upazial Porishad/ Lower local- Union Prishd) Representative

- As a people representative, you are related to local administration and primary education. Would you please express your idea and view about the government programme of education?

Please have your say...

- How would you involve yourself in the local administration and primary education in your area?

Please have your say...

- What supports are there for primary education by the local administration? Do you think they are sufficient? What supports would you think should be for primary education?

Please have your say...

- Do you think the local public administration has the capacity of appropriate support to implement the education programme?

Have your say please.....

Finally, About the MDGs.

Please have your say...

For Head Teacher of Primary School

- The public institutions at local level are responsible for institutional support to school with advice, logistics and inspection etc. Do you think the existing arrangement of local government administration (with which you are working) is appropriate for your (or school's) needs?

Please have your say...

- You are working in the primary school under the local public administration. As a recipient of government services how do you comfortable with your education office?

Please have your say...

- In running the school you are the main executive of the services to exercise. Do you think the local administration is sufficiently supportive to fulfil your needs to the run the school?

Please have your say...

- It is said that the school is not well equipped for smooth running. What are the main problems you normally face in running the school?

Please have your say...

- About MDGs.

Please have your say...

For Upazila Education Officer (s)

- The public institutions at local level are responsible for institutional support to school with advice, logistics and inspection etc. Do you think the existing arrangement of local government administration (with which you are working) is appropriate for your (or school's) needs?

Please have your say...

- You are working with the primary education under the local public administration. As a provider of government services how do you satisfied with your service disposal and discharging the responsibilities?

Please have your say...

- In contacting the primary education under your jurisdiction you have the direct contact to the service recipients. Do you think the local administration is sufficiently supportive to you?

Please have your say...

- It is said that the school is not well equipped for smooth running. What are the main problems you normally face in inspecting and supervising the school?

Please have your say...

- About MDGs.

Please have your say...

People's Representative (Policy level- Member of Parliament)

- As a policy maker of the country, you are related to administration and education. What about your idea about the government programme of primary education?

Please have your say...

- How do you involve yourself in the administration and primary education in your area?

Please have your say...

- What supports are there for primary education by the local administration?

Please have your say...

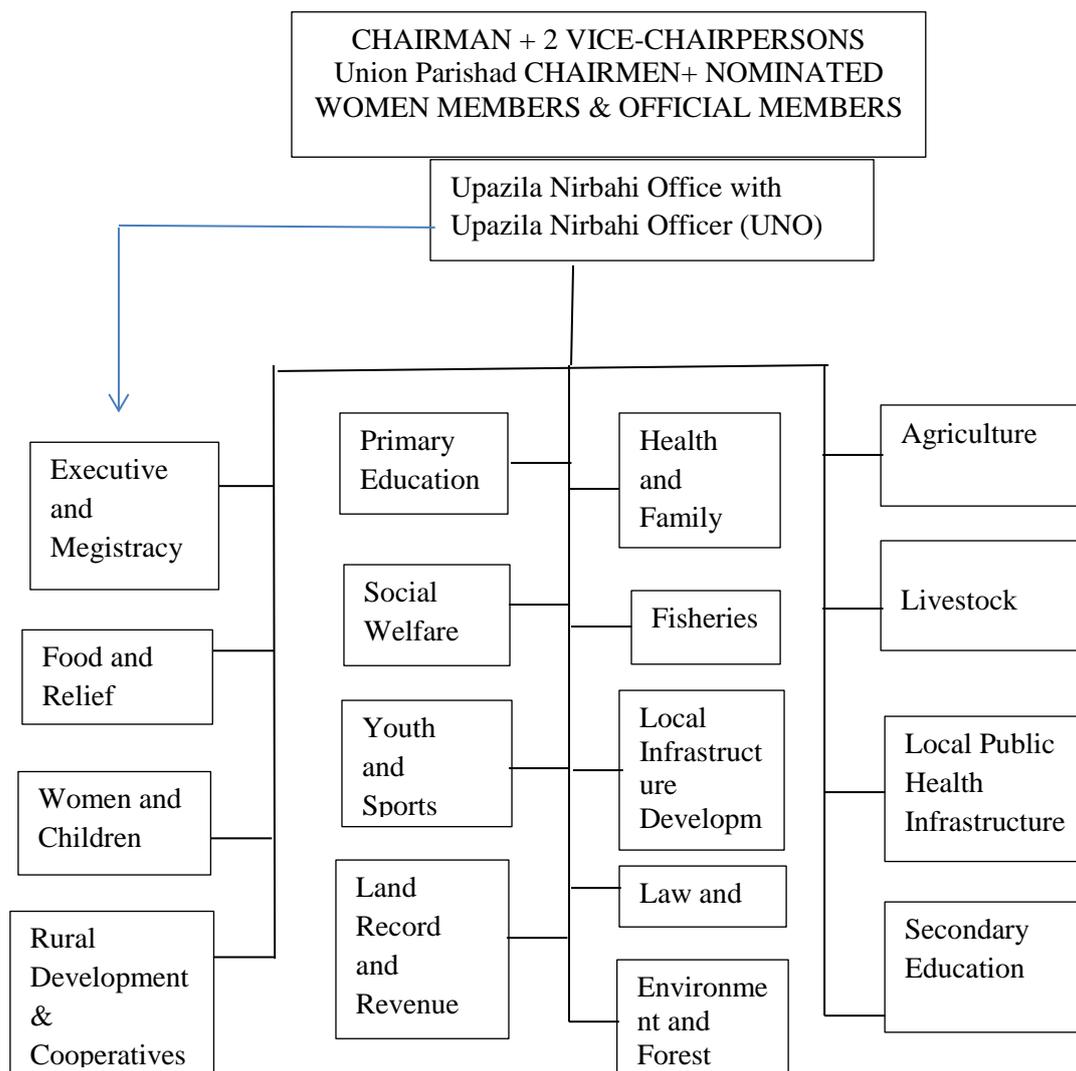
- What supports do you think should be for primary education in the country to achieve the MDGs?

Please have your say...

- Do you think the public administration is capable of appropriate support to implement the education programme in the country? Have your say please.

[The questions were the guidelines to gain knowledge and make inference of information regarding the phenomena understudy. They substitute the documentary sources of information. They were the gateway to make environment for relevant discussion. By doing so, there were more questions as snowball techniques, which complement the information and substituted the interview schedule. This has enriched the knowledge and bridges up the information gap for this study, which might be missing in documentary data.]

Appendix 3: Structure of Local Administration and 17 Service Deliveries



Source: GPRB. (2013). Upazila Parishad Manual. Dhaka.

Appendix 4: Charter of Duties of Upazila Education Officers

Charter of Duties of the Upazila Education Officer

1. He will as the chief functionary of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education at Upazila level and will work under the guidance of Upazila Parishad as co/ordinated by Upazila Nirbahi Officer.
2. He will be responsible for the execution of all directives related to primary education and work under the direction of Primary Education Officer or Area Project Officer.
3. He will make field trips on at least 15 days, including 5 overnight stays, in a month, for the purpose of inspection of schools, supervision and public relations. He will prepare an annual programme for inspection of schools and submit it for approval to Primary Education Officer or Area Project Officer. The annual programme must ensure that every school is inspected at least twice in a year.
4. He will maintain a separate file for every school. This file will contain all information regarding the history and present status of the teachers, students and assets of school. This file will be updated every six months.
5. He will initiate the Annual Confidential Reports of the officers and staff working under him.
6. He will act as the receiving and disbursing officer in respect of the funds made available for payment of salaries to the Assitanat Upazila Education Officers,

other employees and teachers under him and send these proposals to the higher authorities for approval.

7. He will prepare proposals for the payment of pension and gratuity to the employees and teachers under him and send these proposals to the higher authorities for approval.
8. He will specify 15 to 20 schools on the average, for inspection by each of his Assistant Upazila Education Officer, with the approval of Primary Education Officer or Area Project Officer, supervise and evaluate their activities.
9. He will collect with help of Assistant Upazila Education Officer, all the necessary data related to the promotion of primary education in his area and supply these information regularly to the higher authorities.
10. He will supervise the activities of the officers and staff working under him.
11. He will be responsible for all training matters of his department with the Upazila.

Charter of Duties of the Assistant Upazila Education Officer

1. He will help Upazila Education Officer in all activities related to administration, inspection, supervision, counselling and training in the field of primary education within the Upazila and will perform his duties under the direction and guidance of UEO.
2. He will maintain contact with the managing committee of primary schools and local influential in order to ensure effective inspection and supervision of schools,

expansion of primary education and overall development of the schools. He will send regular report to UEO on these matters. On every urgent and important matters, he will send copies of these reports directly to the Primary Education Officer.

3. He will inspect 20 schools every month and plan his tour so as to visit each school at least twice a month. He will prepare his tour plan in consultation with UEO and send copies to the Upazila Education Office as well as Primary Education Office. He will spend at least eight nights in the villages adjoining the schools during his tour and contact local people to gain a proper understanding of performance of the schools.
4. He will inspect and countersign the monthly return and salary bills of the teachers and other employees of the schools allotted to him and submit the same for approval to the Upazila Education Officer.
5. He will grant casual leave of the teachers of the school allotted to him and submit the applications of other types of leave to the UEO, with his own remarks.
6. He will write ACRs of the Headmasters of the school allotted to him and countersign the ACRs of other teachers written by the Headmasters for submission to the UEO.
7. He will maintain a diary of his daily official activities, get the remarks of UEO on his diary and keep it ready for inspection by the superior officers.

8. He will collect, compile and maintain up/to/date information about the primary schools allotted to him and their teachers and other employees.
9. He will regularly inform the UEO about the development activities of the school and problems thereof. He will process the applications for transfer received from the teachers of the schools allotted to him.
10. He will try to improve the professional ability of the teachers through demonstration lessons and local training.

Source: GPRB. (2013). Upazila Parishad Manual. p. 81. (translated from Bengali to English).

Appendix 5: Administrative Units in Bangladesh

Division (7)	District (64)	Local Administration of Upazila (487)
Dhaka	Dhaka	Dhamrai, Dohar, Keraniganj, Nawabganj and Savar
	Gagipur	Gazipur Sadar, Kaliakoir, Kaliganj, Kapasia, Sreepur
	Faridpur	Alfadanga, Bhanga, Boalmari, Char Bhadrasan, Faridpur Sadar, Madhukhali, Nagarkanda, Sadarpur, and Saltha
	Gopalganj	Gopalganj Sadar, Kasiani, Kotalipara, Maksudpur, and Tungipara
	Jamalpur	Bakshiganj, Dewanganj, Islampur, Jamalpur Sadar, Madarganj, Melandah, and Sharishabari
	Kishoreganj	Austogram, Bajitpur, Bhairab, Hosainpur, Itna, Karimganj, Katiadi, Kishoreganj Sadar, Kuliarchar, Mithamain, Nikli, Pakundia, and Tarail
	Madaripur	Kalkini, Madaripur Sadar, Rajoir, and Shibchar
	Manikganj	Daulatpur, Ghior, Harirampur, Manikganj Sadar, Satoria, Shibalaya, and Singair.
	Mymensingh	Bhaluka, Dhubaura, Fulbaria, Fulpur, Goffargaon, Gouripur, Haluaghat, Iswarganj, Mymensingh Sadar, Muktagacha, Nandail and Trishal.

	Narayanganj	Araihazar, Bandar, Narayanganj Sadar, Rupganj, and Sonargaon
	Norshingdi	Belabo, Monohardi, Norshingdi Sadar, Palash, Raipura, and Shibpur
	Netrokona	Atpara, Barhatta, Durgapur, Kalmakanda, Kendua, Khaliajuri, Madan, Mohanganj, Netrokona Sadar, Purbadhala.
	Rajbari	Baliakandi, Goalunda, Pangsha, Rajbari Sadar, and Kalukhale
	Shariatpur	Bhedarganj, Damudiya, Gosairhat, Zajira, Naria, and Shariatpur Sadar
	Sherpur	Jhenaigati, Nakla, Nalitabari, Sherpur Sadar, and Sribordi
	Tangail	Bashail, Bhuapur, Delduar, Ghatail, Gopalpur, Kalihati, Mirzapur, Modhupur, Nagarpur, Shakhipur, Tangail Sadar, and Dhanbari
Khulna	Bagerhat	Bagerhat Sadar, Chitalmari, Fakirhat, Kachua, Mollarhat, Mongla, Morelganj, Rampal, and Sarankhola
	Chuadanga	Alamdanga, Chuadanga Sadar, Damurhuda, and Jibannagar
	Jessore	Abhoynagar, Bagherpara, Chowgacha, Jessore Sadar,

		Jhikargacha, Keshabpur, Manirampur, and Sharsha
	Jinaidah	Kotchandpur, Harinakunda, Jhenaidah Sadar, Kaliganj, Moheshpur, and Shailkupa
	Khulna	Batiaghata, Dacope, Dighalia, Dumuria, Phultala, Koira, Paikgacha, Rupsa, and Terokhada
	Kushtia	Bheramara, Daulatpur, Khoksha, Kumarkhali, Kushtia Sadar, and Mirpur
	Magura	Magura Sadar, Mohammadpur, Shalikha, and Sreepur
	Meherpur	Gangni, Meherpur Sadar, and Mujibnagar
	Narail	Kalia, Lohagara, and Narail Sadar
	Shatkhira	Assasuni, Debhata, Kaliganj, Kolaroa, Satkhira Sadar, Shyamnagar, and Tala
Rajshahi	Bogra	Adamdighi, Bogra Sadar, Dhunot, Dhubchanchia, Gabtali, Kahaloo, Nandigram, Sariakandi, Sherpur, Shibganj, Sonatola, and Shajahanpur
	Chapai Nawabganj	Bholahat, Gomastapur, Nachole, Nawabganj Sadar, and Shipganj
	Joypurhat	Akkelpur, Joypurhat Sadar, Kalai, Khetlal, and Panchbibi
	Naogaon	Atrai, Badalgachi, Dhamoirhat, Manda, Mahadebpur,

		Naogaon Sadar, Niamatpur, Patnitala, Porsha, Raninagar, and Shapahar
	Natore	Baghatipara, Baraigram, Gurudaspur, Lalpur, Natore Sadar, and Singra
	Pabna	Atgharia, Bera, Bhangura, Chatmohar, Faridpur, Iswardi, Pabna Sadar, Santhia, and Sujanagar
	Rajshahi	Bagha, Bagmara, Charghat, Durgapur, Godagari, Mohanpur, Paba, Putia, and Tanore
	Serajgonj	Belkuchi, Chowhali, Kamarkhanda, Kazipur, Raiganj, Shahajadpur, Serajganj Sadar, Tarash, and Ullapara
Sylhet	Hobigonj	Ajmeriganj, Bahubal, Baniachang, Chunarughat, Habiganj Sadar, Lakhai, Madhabpur, and Nabiganj
	Moulvibazar	Barlekha, Kamalganj, Kulaura, Moulvibazar Sadar, Rajnagar, Sreemongal, and Juri
	Sunamgonj	Biswambharpur, Chattak, Derai, Dharmapasha, Dowarabazar, Jagannathpur, Jamalganj, Sulla, Sunamganj Sadar, Taherpur, and South Sunamganj
	Sylhet	Balaganj, Beanibazar, Biswanath, Companyganj, Fenchuganj, Gowainghat, Golapganj, Jaintapur, Zakiganj, Kanaighat, Sylhet Sadar, and South Surma
Barisal	Barguna	Amtali, Bamna, Barguna Sadar, Betagi, Patharghata, and Taltali

	Barisal	Agailjhara, Babuganj, Bakerganj, Banaripara, Barisal Sadar, Gournadi, Hijla, Mehendiganj, Muladi, and Wazirpur
	Bhola	Bhola Sadar, Borhanuddin, Charfession, Daulatkhan, Lalmohan, Manpura, and Tajumuddin
	Jhalokathi	Jhalokathi Sadar, Kathalia, Nalchiti, and Rajapur
	Patuakhali	Bauphal, Dasmina, Dumki, Galachipa, Kalapara, Mirjaganj, Patuakhali Sadar, and Rangabali
	Perojpur	Bhandaria, Kaukhali, Mothbaria, Nesarabad (Shawrupkathi), Nazirpur, Perojpur Sadar, and Zia Nagar (Indurkani)
Chittagong	Bandarban	Ali Kadam, Bandarban Sadar, Lama, Nakhoyngchari, Rawanchari, Ruma, and Thanchi
	Brahmanbaria	Akhaura, Ashuganj, Bancharampur, Brahmanbaria Sadar, Kashba, Nabinagar, Nasirnagar, Sarail, and Bijoy Nagor
	Chandpur	Chandpur Sadar, Faridganj, Haimchar, Hajiganj, Kachua, Matlab (South), Matlab (North)(Chengarchar), and Shahrasti
	Chittagong	Anwara, Banskhali, Boalkhali, Chandanaish, Fatikchari, Hathazari, Lohagara, Mirsarai, Patiya, Rangunia, Raujan, Sandwip, Satkania, and Sitakundu

	Comilla	Barura, Brahmanpara, Burichang, Chandina, Chowddagram, Comilla Sadar, Daudkandi, Debiduar, Homna, Laksam, Meghna, Muradnagar, Nangolkot, Titas, Monoharganj, and Comilla Sadar South
	Feni	Chagalnayya, Daganbhuiyan, Feni Sadar, Parshuram, Fulgazi, and Sonagazi
	Khagrachari	Dighinala, Khagrachari Sadar, Laksmichari, Mohalchari, Manikchari Panchari, Ramgor, and Matiranga
	Laksmipur	Laksmipur Sadar, Ramgati, Ramganj, Raipur, and Kamalnagar
	Noakhali	Begumganj, Chatkhil, Companiganj, Hatiya, Noakhali Sadar (Sudharam), Senbag, Sonaimuri, Subarnachar and Kabir Hat
	Rangamati	Baghaichari, Barkal, Belaichari, Jurachari, Kaptai, Kawkhali, Langadu, Naniarchar, Rajasthali and Rangamati Sadar
Rangpur	Dinajpur	Birampur, Birganj, Birol, Bochaganj, Chirirbandar, Dinajpur Sadar, Phulbari, Ghoraghat, Hakimpur, Kaharole, Khanshama, Nawabganj, and Parbatipur
	Kurigram	Bhurungamari, Chilmari, Fulbari, Kurigram Sadar, Nageswari, Rajarhat, Rajibpur, Rowmari, and Ulipur

	Nilphamari	Dimla, Domar, Jaldhaka, Kishoreganj, Nilphamari Sadar, and Saidpur
	Panchagarh	Atwari, Boda, Debiganj, Panchagarh Sadar, and Tetulia
	Rangpur	Badarganj, Gangachara, Kaunia, Mithapukur, Pirgacha, Pirganj, Rangpur Sadar, and Taraganj
	Thakurgaon	Baliadangi, Haripur, Pirganj, Ranishankail, and Thakurgaon Sadar

Source: GPRB. (2013). Upazila Parishad Manual. Pp.16-19.

Appendix 6: List of Ministry/ Division and Department / Directorate in Bangladesh

Ministries/ Divisions	Attached Department/ Directorate
<p><i>President's Office:</i> Public Division Personal Division</p>	
<p><i>Prime Minister's Office</i> Cabinet Division Armed Forces Division</p>	<p>Board of Investment Privatization Commission, Bangladesh Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) Special Security Force NGO Affairs Bureau ABASHAN (Poverty alleviation and rehabilitation project) Government Forms</p>
<p>Ministry of Public Administration</p>	<p>Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Academy Bangladesh Public Service Commission Secretariat</p>
<p>Ministry of Finance Finance Division Economic Relations Division Internal Resources Division Bank and Financial Division</p>	<p>Bangladesh Bank Internal Resources Division National Board of Revenue (NBR) Economic Relations Division(ERD) Financial Management Reform Programme National Savings Directorate Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh</p>
<p>Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs Law and Justice Division Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division</p>	<p>Parliament Secretariat</p>

<p>Ministry of Agriculture</p>	<p>Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI) Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture Bangladesh Sugarcane Research Institute Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) Cotton Development Board Seed Certification Agency Soil Research and Development Institute (SRDI) Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM) Agriculture Information Service Bangladesh Applied Nutrition and Development Board (BAN-HRDB) SAARC Agricultural Information Centre</p>
<p>Ministry of Food and Disaster Management</p>	<p>Directorate of Food Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation(DRR) Disaster Management Bureau</p>
<p>Ministry of Post and Tele-communication</p>	<p>Bangladesh Post Office Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board</p>
<p>Ministry of Information</p>	<p>Press Information Department Department of Mass Communication Bangladesh Film Development Corporation Bangladesh Film Archive Bangladesh Film Censor Board Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Bangladesh Betar (Radio)</p>

Ministry of Religious Affairs	Bangladesh Hajj Information Islamic Foundation Bangladesh Waqf Administration
Ministry of Shipping	Chittagong Port Authority Bangladesh Shipping Corporation Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation Bangladesh Land Port Authority Department of Shipping Mongla Port Authority Marine Academy, Chittagong
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
Ministry of Planning Planning Division Statistics and Informatics Division Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division	Planning Commission Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Support to ICT Task Force Program Project Central Procurement Technical Unit (CPTU)
Ministry of Environment and Forest	Bangladesh Forest Department Department of Environment (DOE) Bangladesh Forest Research Institute
Ministry of Defence	Bangladesh Navy Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organization(SPARRSO) Military Institute of Science & Technology (MIST) Survey of Bangladesh Defence Services Command & Staff College Director General Service National Defence College (NDC)
Ministry of Labour and Employment	Department of Labour

Ministry of Textiles and Jute	Department of Textiles Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation Bangladesh Sericulture Research and Training Institute Bangladesh Sericulture Board Department of Jute
Ministry of Housing and Public Works	Public Works Department (PWD) Rajdhani Unnayan kartipakkha (Rajuk) National Housing Authority Chittagong Development Authority Nagor Unnayan Kartipakkha Housing and Building Research Institute Khulna Development Authority
Ministry of Commerce	The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh (ICAB) Bangladesh Tea Board Sadharan Bima Corporation Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms Bangladesh insurance academy The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) Bangladesh
Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Power Division Energy and Mineral Resources Division	The Energy and Mineral Resources Division (EMRD) Power Cell Rural Electrification Board Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO) Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Rural Power Company Limited Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution Company Limited (TGTDCCL) Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla) Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (DESA)

Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	
Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism	Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (National Tourism Organization) Biman Bangladesh Airlines Dhaka Sheraton Hotel
Ministry of Land	Adarsha Gram Project
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA)	Department of Women Affairs National Women Association Bangladesh Shisho (children) Academy
Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock	Directorate of Fisheries Directorate of Livestock Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute Marine Fisheries Academy
Ministry of Youth & Sports	Youth Development Directorate of Sports National Sports Council BKSP
Ministry of Communications Bridges Division Roads Division	Roads and Highways Department Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority Bangladesh Road Transport Authority Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation Dhaka Transport Co-ordination Board
Ministry of Education	Directorate of Secondary & Higher Education Directorate of Technical Education National Curriculum & Textbook Board Education Board Bangladesh Bangladesh Technical Education Board Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board University Grants Commission Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS)

	<p>National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) Directorate of Inspection and Audit Education Engineering Department University of Dhaka Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology</p>
Ministry of Industries	<p>Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC) Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) Bangladesh small and cottage industries corporation (BSCIC) Bangladesh Industrial and Technical Assistance Centre (BITAC) Bangladesh Institute of Management (BIM) Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute (BSTI) National Productivity Organization (NPO)</p>
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	<p>Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE)</p>
Ministry of Social Welfare	
Ministry of Water Resources	<p>Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre</p>
Ministry of Cultural Affairs	<p>Bangladesh National Museum Copyright Office Bangladesh Department of Archives & Libraries</p>
Ministry of Home Affairs	<p>Bangladesh Police Bangladesh Rifles Directorate of Ansar and VDP Bangladesh Coast Guard Department of Narcotics Control Directorate of Immigration and Passport Dhaka Metropolitan Police Rapid Action Battalion</p>

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) Directorate of Drug Administration (DDA) National Nutrition Program (NNP)
Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives Local Government Division Rural Development and Co-operatives Division	Local Government Engineering Department Dhaka City Corporation Chittagong Development Authority Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development Department of Cooperative Bangladesh Rural Development Board
Ministry of Liberation War Affairs	
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment	Bureau of Employment
Ministry of Railways	Directorate of Railway Railway Training Academy
Ministry of Science and Technology	Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission BCSIR NMST NIB BANSDOC BSMR Novo Theatre
Ministry of Information & Communication Technology	Bangladesh Computer Council Bangladesh National Scientific and Technical Documentation Centre (BANSDOC) National Museum of Science & Technology (NMST)

Appendix 7: The Millennium Development Goals at a Glance

Goals and Targets	Indicators for monitoring progress
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	1. Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) p/d 2. Poverty gap ratio 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
Target 2: achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people	4. growth rate of GDP per person employed 5. employment-to-population ratio 6. proportion of employed people living below \$1p/d 7. proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment
Target 3: halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	8. prevalence of underweight children younger than 5 years 9. proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	
Target 4: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	10. Net enrolment ratio in primary education 11. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 - grade 5 12. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women & man
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	
Target 5: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015	13. Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 14. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 15. Proportion of seats held by women in parliament
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	
Target 6: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	16. mortality rate in children younger than 5 years 17. Infant mortality rate 18. Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles

Goal 5: Improve maternal health	
Target 7: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	19. Maternal mortality ratio 20. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Target 8: achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health	21. contraceptive prevalence rate 22. adolescent birth rate 23. antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits) 24. unmet need for family planning
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	
Target 9: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	25. HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women 26. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate 27. proportion of population aged 15–24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS 28. ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10–14 years
Target 10: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it	29. proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs
Target 11: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	30. Incidence and death rates associated with malaria 31. proportion of children younger than 5 years sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets 32. proportion of children younger than 5 years with fever who are treated with appropriate antimalarial drugs 33. Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 34. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	
Target 12: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources	35. Proportion of land area covered by forest 36. CO2 emissions, total, per head and per \$1 GDP (PPP) 37. consumption of ozone-depleting substances 38. proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits 39. proportion of total water resources used
Target 13: reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss	40. proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected 41. proportion of species threatened with extinction
Target 14: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation	42. Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source 43. Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility
Target 15: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	44. proportion of urban population living in slums
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	
Target 16: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally)	45. Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national income 46. Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
Target 17: Address the special needs of the least developed countries (Includes: tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction)	47. Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied 48. ODA received in landlocked countries as proportion of their GNIs 49. ODA received in small island developing States as proportion of their GNIs
Target 18: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island	<u>Market access</u> 50. Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing

<p>developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)</p> <p>Target 19: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term</p>	<p>countries and LDCs, admitted free of duty</p> <p>51. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries</p> <p>52. Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as percentage of their GDP</p> <p>53. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</p> <p><u>Debt sustainability</u></p> <p>54. Total number of countries that have reached their HIPC decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)</p> <p>55. Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI initiatives</p> <p>56. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services</p>
<p>Target 20: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries</p>	<p>57. proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis</p>
<p>Target 21: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications</p>	<p>58. telephone lines per 100 population</p> <p>59. cellular subscribers per 100 population</p> <p>60. internet users per 100 population</p>

Source: United Nations, 2000; 2001; 2008; LIDC, 2010; Hulme and Scott, 2010.

Note: PPP=purchasing power parity. GDP=gross domestic product. CO2=carbon dioxide.
HIPC=heavily indebted poor countries. ODA=official development assistance.
OECD= Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.
DAC=Development Assistance Committee. MDRI=Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative.

Appendix 8: Biswanath and Gobindagonj Upazial at a Glance

Factor	Biswanath	Gobindagonj
National Assembly Constituency	No. 00, Sylhet-2 (Biswanath-Balagong)	No. 32, Gaibandha-4, (Gubindhagonj)
Division	Sylhet	Rangpur
District	Sylhet	Gaibandha
Upazila	Biswanath	Gubindhagonj
Establishment as Upazila	1983	1982
Establishment of Police Station as Thana	1922	1965
Area	214.5 sq km	460.42 Sq Km
No of Population	2,32,573	5,14, 696 (255639 M and 259057 F)
Density of Population	1091	1118
No of Voting Population	1,21,633	
No of Union	8	17
No of Village	436	373
No of Mouja	115	319
No of thana (Police Station)	01	01
Literacy rate	43.8%	73% (42.86% male and 32.47% female)
Educational Institutions Primary (151 and 312)	Government 100 Reg Non Govt 15 Community 11 KG 26	Government 153 Reg Non Govt 94 Community 06 KG 59
Secondary	Junior 1 High School 29	Junior 13 High School 70
Higher Secondary	College 1 School and College 2 Degree College 2	College 7 School & College 3 Degree College 5
Madrashah Education	Alia 15 Kawmi 13 Ibtadaee 3	Alia 62 Kawmi 03 Ibtadaee 12
Upazil Helath Complex	01 (31 beds)	01 (50 beds)
Union Health and Family Welfare Centre	04	10
Community Clinic	28	
Upazila Land Office	01	01
Union Land (Tahsil) Office	04	14
Misc Office	25	
Veterinary Hospital	01	01

Kitrim Projonon Centre	01	03
Upazila Post Office	01	01
Sub-Post Office	04	00
Branch Post Office	14	26
Telegraph Office	01	00
Telephone Exchange	01	01
Food Depositor	01	01
Rural Commn Infrastructure	398.36 km	1136 km
Bridge and Colbert	260	1375
Rail line	15km	
River ways	40 km	
Rail Station	02	01
Religious Worship Place	476	669
Rural Market	38	21
Bank/ Financial Institutions	27	19
Ashroyan Project	01	02
Adorsha Gram (Model Village)	01	04
Water Bodies	36	195
Sand Picking Place	02	00
Agricultural land	54208 acrs	37000 htrs
River	02	01
LGED Growth Centre	04	
Registered Fisheries Association	13	
Registered General Cooperatives	90	
No of NGO	07	50

Source: Field Research, September – November, 2012 and December, 2013

Appendix 9: Understudied Upazilas, and Primary Schools in Picture

Picture 1: Biswanath Upazial Paridaha Complex Building, Biswanath, Sylhet, Bangladesh



Picture 2: Gobindhagonj Upazila Parishad Complex Building, Gobindhagonj, Gaibandha, Bangladesh



Picture 3: Puran Gawn Primary School Building, Puran Gawn, Biswanth, Sylhet, Bangladesh



Picture 4: Kuti Bari Primary School, Gobindhagonj, Gaibandha, Bangladesh

