

BANGLADESH : THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF DEPOPULATED RURAL AREAS IN BANGLADESH

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This paper has prepared for EROPA Local Government Center, Local Autonomy College, Tokyo, Japan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nature of Rural Development and Rural Population

Economy of Bangladesh is primarily agrarian here agriculture contributes about 50 percent to the GDP; yet social and economic conditions for the vast majority of the rural people are appalling. A vast section of the rural people are unemployed and under employed; more than 50 percent are functionally landless and 76 percent of the rural households fall below the required minimum calorie intake. In this object poverty population growth continues to be high and literacy rate almost impalpable. Some areas in rural Bangladesh specially hill areas, coastal areas, river side areas and a few uncultivated or non irrigated areas the trend of population is declining. Low productivity, distribution of the most important national asset, i.e., land and social power structure accentuated the problem of poverty by high in equality of income distribution and make the task of rural development complex and challenging. Only bold policies and appropriate strategies for investment programmes can face up to this challenge.

1.2 An Overview of Rural Development, Rural People and Land

Though in 60s an integrated rural development programme was launched on the basis of Comilla model, * it was no more than a project among many in the agriculture sector and lacked focus at the national level. After the liberation, in the First Five Year Plan (FFYP) (1973-78) rural development was given a distinct place in the overall development of the economy with a view to creating a sound

*Comilla model included the creation of a system for co-ordinating the activities of various government department in a local development center—the Thana (now upazila) Training and Development Center (TTDC) ; a village co-operative system for small farmers linked at the Thana level in a Central Co-operative Association (TCCA) , usually two tier co-operative system; the Rural Works Program (RWP) with decentralized responsibility for identification and management of the Thana level; and the Thana Irrigation Program (TIP) —using Thana as the unit for the programing and implenting of irrigation investments, management of water distribution.

institutional base for the farming population, particularly the small farmers and the landless in the development process. The plan visualized a need for structuring rural institutions to meet the problem or organization of rural people, utilization of resources and development of local level planning system. So, initiating institutional development, the FFYP envisaged to broad base the cooperative institutions for protection of the poor groups through proportional group representation in management. Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDPs) two-tier cooperative framework was to encompass these groups. The Plan also envisaged to make the local government bodies responsible for effective planning, implementation, coordination and mass participation at the lowest level for development and maintenance work. Two other important areas of rural development were (a) the development of rural physical infrastructure like roads, bridges, culverts, drainage and irrigation canals/channels, embankments, sluice gates, hats and bazars, Thana Training and Development Center(TTDC) complex, etc. under Rural Works Programme (RWP) which in turn also generated employment opportunities and (b) land reform for which the Plan proposed a number of measures (i) to lower the ceiling on land holding and (ii) to secure the right of share croppers through compulsory registration of tenancies.

In the wake of the 1974 flood and famine a Food for Works Programme was initiated in a humble way, but gained in momentum and increased in size thereafter. By the end of the decade it reached the size of 45 million of wheat tons against 12 million tons in 1975/76. More importantly, rural development acquired a new dimension in concept in the second half of 1970s and found its expression in a development approach encompassing in addition to production other facts of social life like health and education. Thus, Food for Works Programme, two-tier IRDP system and area development came to constitute the basis for poverty alleviation programme, though many other efforts were made for involvement of people in development activities. But the basic condition for a fundamental change in the rural economy was still missing. Local Government structure remained non-representative of people until the end of 1983/84. Even the three programmes suffered from their inherent limitations. Except creating short term employment opportunities for the poor. Food for Work Programme benefited more or less permanently the owners of rural wealth contributing to inequity. IRDP expanded but its contribution to the development of organizations of the small farmers and landless poor remained restricted. The area development projects suffered from institutional and management deficiencies leading to slow project implementation. When the formulation and implementation of the development programmes remained centralised, the functions of TTDC as an institution for local planning and coordination deteriorated due to leadership crisis, conflict among the agencies and absence of strong local government. Lastly, land system continued to inhibit the

distribution of development benefit in favour of the rural poor; rather it deteriorated further. In 1975/76 the proportion of house holds with intake of less than the recommended calorie level increased from 53 percent in 1962/63 to 59 percent in 1975/76 and 76 percent in 1981/82. In 1981-82 though grain harvest declined due to drought, more food under flexiblrationing was also distributed, there was thus undoubtedly deterioration of nutrition status of the rural households. For lack of land reform, envisaged in the First Plan, land distribution deteriorated against the sharecroppers and the small farmers. In 1960, sharecroppers accounted for 18.2 percent of land; in 1977 their share of land declined from 18.2% in 1960 to 16.8 percent. The proportion of farmers below 1.5 acres increased from 33 percent in 1960 to 48.7 percent in 1982. It is estimated that about two-thirds of rural households are functionally land less having no land or land less than 1.5 acres to cultivate.

1.3 Rural development through local government

In addition to rural development programmes of the national govenment, the local government institution, like Upazila (sub-district) and Union Parishads¹ will have their own development programmes. Their development activities will mainly centre around development of minor agriculture and irrigation, small and cottage industries, rural works programmes, hats and bazars, supply of drinking water and low cost sanitation units, educational institutions, local health and family planning program, promotion of sports and social welfare activities, and other miscellaneous activities. An amount of Tk. 1,250 crore has been kept as a block provision as development assistance to Upazilas during the Third five year plan (TFYP) for implementing the above programmes.

2. POPULATION

2.1 Population size and growth

Bangladesh, which was 10th largest country in 1960, is now the 8th largest-country in the world, with population of almost 105.0 million as of 1988 it is still growing rapidly adding more than 10 thousand new babies each day. After 1951 did the population grow faster, showing a 1.9 percent annual growth rates for the period 1951-1961 increasing 2.4 percent between 1961 and 1981.

1. Union Parishad is the lowest tier of the local government and Upazile Parishad is the next higher tier of local government and focal point of administration in reent decentralized system.

2.2 Past and Present situation of Population

2.2.1 Population in Past

From 1872–1921, the population of whole Bangladesh grew at an average annual rate 0.76 percent². In the decade ending in 1881, some areas causes cyclone, and storm originating from Bay of Bangal in 1876 and subsequent Influnja, Cholera epidemic caused great loss of life in some rural areas in Noakhali, Chittagong, Bakerganj District. Causes of natural disasters behaviour and some epidemic disease a good number people from costal area(Those who live near Bay of Bangal) and affected area by epidemic disease left from those area. Between 1921 and 1931 appears a slight increase. During 1931–1951 nature had interfered with the growth of population in more ways than one, resulting in a slight decrease in the total population at the end of the decade. First, in the Second world war, with the fall of Burma in 1942 and Assam in 1943, hostilities came to the very borders of East Bangal and people were evacuated from many rural areas and towns. Secondly, the devastation famine of 1943 and epidemics of cholera and small pox took a huge toll of lives, thirdly, the con comitant increase in the price of food—stuffs, consumer goods effected the nutritional standards of the population and delayed marriages, which resulted in fewer births. Fourthly, large communal movements of the population also ocured during this decade as a result of the sub continent in 1947³. Thus, the population declined from 41,997,297 in 1941 to 41,932,329 in 1951. An average annual increase of 1.96 percent during the decade, 1951–1961, December 1971, Bangladesh has become an independent country. Between 1961–1974 it was an traditional period of Bangladesh. Total nation was suffered number of catastrophes. The cyclone and flood in November 1970, war of Independence in 1971, famine ocured in 1974. Despite these major catastrophes, the population was remarkably high and resulted average annual growth rate of 2.64 percent.

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- 2 . The rate of growth of population of India as whole for 1871–1921 was 0.36 percent per annual. The higher rate recorded in Bangladesh may reflect census errors or more rapid natural increase; net migration into the region seems to have been negligible.
 - 3 . According to kingsley Devis, in 1947–1948, approximately 1,150,000 non muslim left East Bengal for the Union of India, Later, in 1949 the main trouble centred in east Bengal with the result that the Bengal refusees in India were record in June 1950 at about 3.5 million.

2.2.2 Population at Present

Table 1 presents numerical distribution of the population during 1901–1981 by region. The percentage of distribution of the population by different regions is shown in table 2. It can be seen that the relative distribution of the population remained virtually unchanged through the years except for very slight displacements. At present Bangladesh has a large population with highest density in the third world as well as the highest growth rate. Now natural growth of population is 2.4 percent. The working age population is increasing by about 1.5 million every year requiring additional job opportunities. 46 percent population is below 15 year age group seriously impedes the nations efforts at economic growth because of its increased claim on limited resources for consumptions.

2.2.3 Nature of depopulation and depopulated area in Bangladesh

From table 2 a proportional decline in the population were Rangpur, Jessore, Pabna, Bakerganj, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Faridpur and Sylhet region.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is a tribal area characterized by hills and forests. Therefore it is not conducive to settlement. Though Bangladesh is densely and over populated area but many areas and regions still has tendency of depopulation. People are leaving from those areas. In Bangladesh rural economic stragnation has been spatial as well as social. Partly because of the influence of the complex social structure and partly because of ignorance and lack of opportunities. Only 18.5 percent of rural population were literate at the time 1981 census. Both rural–rural and urban–urban turn over migrations have assumed significant proportions. So that populations occurs, most not worthy in big cities like, Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi where to many are in search of employment or better employment. It is also apparent that short range migrations are more infense than long term migrations, and while the former are rural–rural and later are rural–urban. There is a very positive relationship between level of economic development of a district and its intraregion migration. It was previously mentioned that immobility is particularly prevehent densely peopled rural areas of the genetic plain and delta and the costal plains as well as sparsely peopled hill areas. There are large internal movement at areas fevoured by irrigation and Industry. According to miss sen gupta⁴ it can be

4 . In case of India miss sen gupta calculated regional imbalance of population pressure by use of the formulla $I = (1 - P) / A$ where I is index of the population pressure per sq. k.m. of rurakl atra, P1 "is the district wise derived rural population capable of being supported by the Utilized Land resources by assuming a constant income per person" Pin the actual rural population for each district, A is the actual rural area is sq. k.m.

Table -1 Numerical distribution of the population by Region 1901-1981.

Division and district	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1974	1981
Bangladesh	28,927,786	31,525,056	33,254,096	35,604,170	41,997,297	41,932,329	50,840,235	71,479,071	87,052,000
Dinaipur	1,125,597	1,167,706	1,219,613	1,234,224	1,335,588	1,354,432	1,709,917	2,570,572	3,198,325
Rangpur	2,202,018	2,434,009	2,554,945	2,646,285	2,923,879	2,916,476	3,796,043	5,446,916	6,490,102
Bogra	884,079	1,016,782	1,082,750	1,121,954	1,260,463	1,278,185	1,574,105	2,231,003	2,718,406
Rajshahi	1,902,317	2,000,161	2,027,591	1,993,280	2,198,081	2,205,057	2,810,964	4,268,417	5,262,521
Pabna	1,417,839	1,425,124	1,385,321	1,437,998	1,696,149	1,584,303	1,959,060	2,814,645	3,418,458
Kushtia	885,079	841,860	782,992	807,725	929,543	884,157	1,166,262	1,883,635	2,272,912
Jessore	1,618,630	1,568,790	1,557,463	1,522,858	1,662,646	1,638,387	2,190,151	3,326,778	4,015,913
Khulna	1,267,720	1,379,818	1,471,860	1,629,430	1,944,418	2,075,506	2,448,720	3,557,460	4,353,185
Bakerganj	2,484,878	2,612,806	2,843,914	3,194,455	3,810,974	3,642,185	4,261,767	3,928,414	4,667,673
Patuakhali	—	—	—	—	—	—	111,726	1,498,987	1,840,109
Mymensingh	3,922,247	4,530,881	4,842,467	5,135,264	6,029,533	5,784,745	5,570,366	5,507,572	6,543,243
Dhaka	2,617,340	2,929,389	3,171,524	3,449,293	4,223,532	4,072,781	5,095,745	7,611,807	10,048,991
Faridpur	1,809,542	1,956,444	2,058,783	2,192,015	2,682,701	2,774,345	3,178,945	4,059,511	4,768,222
Tangail	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,486,588	2,077,924	2,443,539
Jamalpur	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,448,540	2,059,253	2,444,869
Sylhet	2,030,912	2,240,838	2,297,720	2,466,410	2,831,900	3,059,367	3,489,589	4,759,281	5,650,063
Comilla	2,138,664	2,454,744	2,695,702	3,056,300	3,860,139	3,792,200	4,388,906	5,819,176	6,879,883
Noakhali	1,027,785	1,183,789	1,347,902	1,568,368	2,039,217	2,071,144	2,383,145	3,234,061	3,813,147
Chittagong	1,468,377	1,628,085	1,740,306	1,936,389	2,331,481	2,511,785	2,982,931	4,315,460	5,476,167
Chittagong Hill Tracts	124,762	153,830	173,243	212,922	247,053	287,274	385,079	508,199	746,026

Source : M. Abdur Rahim, An Appraisal of Censuses Population of East Pakistan from 1901 to 1951. Research Monograph No. 2. (Dhaka, Institute of Statistical Research and Training, University of Dhaka, 1969); Ministry of Planning, 1974 Bangladesh Population Census Report, and Population Census Report, 1981 Dhaka, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Table -2 Percentage distribution of the population by region 1901-1981.

Division and district	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1974	1981
Bangladesh	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Dinaipur	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.7
Rangpur	7.6	7.7	7.7	7.4	7.0	7.0	7.5	7.6	7.5
Bogra	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1
Rajshahi	6.6	6.3	6.1	5.6	5.2	5.3	5.5	6.0	6.0
Pabna	4.9	4.5	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9
Kushtia	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.6
Jessore	5.6	5.0	4.7	4.3	3.9	3.9	4.3	4.8	4.6
Khulna	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.6	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.0
Bakerganj	8.6	8.3	8.5	9.0	9.1	8.7	8.4	5.5	5.4
Patuakhali	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.1	2.1
Mymensingh	13.6	14.4	14.6	14.4	14.4	13.8	13.8	7.7	7.5
Dhaka	9.0	9.3	9.5	9.7	10.0	9.7	10.0	10.6	11.5
Faridpur	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.3	5.7	5.5
Tangail	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.9	2.8
Jamalpur	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.9	2.8
Sylhet	7.0	7.1	6.9	5.9	6.7	7.3	6.8	6.7	6.5
Comilla	7.4	7.8	8.1	8.6	9.2	9.0	8.6	8.1	7.9
Noakhali	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.4	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.4
Chittagong	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.4	5.6	6.0	5.9	6.0	6.3
Chittagong Hill Tracts	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.9

Source : Calculated from table 1.

reveals that (i) the areas of very high density are not always over populated (ii) areas with good irrigation facilities and conditions of commercial agriculture are often under populated (iii) areas of low density (less than 50 per sq. km. are invariably over populated (iv) population pressure is very high in non irrigated rice growing areas (v) area causes disaster, at present less attractive in Agricultural production and other socio economic activities. There are a lot of depopulation. Population may also be divided into three types⁵ (i) dynamic (ii) prospective (iii) problem regions. Dynamic regions support advanced industrial areas and mainly urban population, prospective regions have large resource but deficient technology and some socio-economic obstacles to development. Problem regions show little promise, limited resources, lack of transport facilities, or disrupted communication and other factors. Most of the depopulated area covers problem regions. In Bangladesh the relative decline in the population in certain areas is the reduction of the percentage of Hindu population owing to the political changes that occurred for example, in Bangladesh in 1951, 22 percent of the population were Hindus. In 1981 declined to 12.1 percent. Areas in 1951 that exhibited a large percentage of Hindu population were Faridpur(28.9%), Dinajpur(35.1%), Jessore (31.3%) and Sylhet(31.5%)⁶.

Physiographically the country can be divided into six identifiable regions:

- (i) Piedmont alluvial plains in the North-Eastern part and the Barind and Madhupur tracts of old alluvium. The Piedmont alluvial plain includes the districts of Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogra and Western part of Pabna. The Madhupur tract includes Northern Dhaka, Western Mymensingh and Tangail which are also an old alluvium deposit. This is a basin and dome like formation with laterite soil.
- (ii) Central valley flat. This area lies to the East of the area of old alluvium and South of the region and is intersected by a network of rivers. It is regularly flooded every year and it includes the districts of Dhaka, Comilla, Noakhali, Faridpur and parts of Tangail, Pabna and Kushtia.
- (iii) The South-West Moribund region. The South-Western part of the country forms into a moribund delta and the rivers flowing through this area are either dead or dying. It includes districts of Khulna, Jessore and most part of Kushtia district.
- (iv) In the North-Eastern part of the country the terrain is different and it consists of low depressions commonly known as "Haor" the central part of which forms a saucer shaped basin through which rivers pass by sluggishly. This region is flanked by hills on the North and the East side.

5 . CLARKE I John, Population geography and the developing countries.

6 . Census of Pakistan 1951.
Census of Bangladesh 1981.

- (v) Hilly Region. The hilly region consists of the Eastern part of the Chittagong district, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bandarban and North Easter peripheris of Sylhet and Jamalpur districts. There are very little land available in the area for human settlements and cultivation.
- (vi) Coastal areas are the islands within the districts of Patuakhali, Barisal, Noakhali and Chittagong. A number of major rivers flow through these area and land is generally fertile but often affected by intrusion of saline water.

Out of these 6 regions only a few area dominate as depopulated area. Each of 6 region has very little trands of depopulaton. Among these, hilly region is largely depopulated area.

If we make a list of depopulated areas in Bangladesh we might consider the total number of population, total number households, density of population and declining trend of population of that particuler area in previous census (1974) and latest census (1981). In this context we didnt go far we only consider last two census report of 1974 and 1981 (Table 3).

Table 3 No. of household, total population and density of depopulated are in 1974 and 1981.

Name of the area	1 9 7 4			1 9 8 1		
	No. of HH	No. of popula- tion	Density per sq. km	No. of HH	No. of popula- tion	Density per sq. km
Bandarban	6,584	34,150	99	5,558	28,729	84
Ruma	5,699	30,715	98	3,328	17,980	84
Chandraghona	10,460	47,693	49	10,043	45,790	46
Khagrachari	9,402	53,922	278	7,522	47,592	266
Ramgarh	14,483	72,519	-	9,169	48,043	-
Barkal	5,268	26,740	65	3,106	18,541	62
Chandpur	71,768	387,784	1,841	60,348	336,539	1,820
4 Union of Sandwip	5,828	46,768	753	5,245	43,927	875
3 Union of Matlab	8,795	50,029	1,062	8,091	46,027	998
2 Union of Nalitabari	11,910	61,785	1,352	11,314	58,695	1,335

7. Bandarban, Ruma, Chandraghona, Khagrachari, Ramgarh and Barkal upazilas are under hill region, Chandpur, and union of upadi (south) upedi (north) Eklashpur of Matlab upazila under river side region. Dirgapur, coastal or offshore island region.

Beside these areas, people from many other areas (villages near coastal region, river side of Brahmaputra, Padma, Meghna, etc.) migrated in nearest villages or nearest town. (Figure of population of these areas were not available). Identified above depopulated areas are divided in 3 major areas (i) Hill and forests areas which covers Chittagong Hill Tracts(CHT)region(ii)Coastal and river side areas which cover Chandpur, Matlab, Sandwip region,(iii) Drought and flood region which covers Nalitabari of Jamalpur, region some areas in Far idpur, Serajgonj region.

2.2.4 Causes of depopulation

The distribution of Bangladesh population can be best explained through two frames of reference or frame works (i) environmental (ii) historical. If one is interested in an ideal distribution of population, one would have to pay attention only to environmental factors, but the human population of earth is not ideally

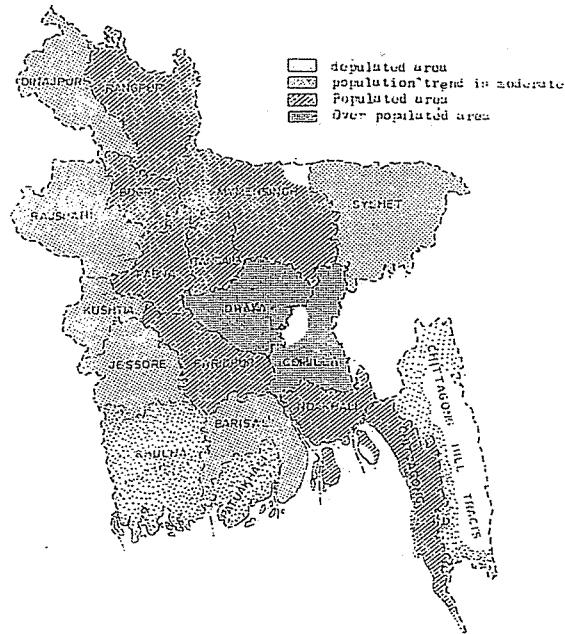


Fig. 1 Population by region : Bangladesh 1981.
(Locationg depopulated area)

located and actual distribution of population is as much affected by historical as by environmental factors.

The environmental factors affecting population distribution at given point in time are (i) climate (ii) location of water, soil, energy, and mineral resources (iii) transport relationships.

In recent years due to deforestation programme in CHT the climate has become some difficulties for human habitation. Tropical environment causes a higher incidence at infectious disease. It also came in coastal and river side region.

People need very large quantities of water at cheap cost, since an ample supply of water is necessary not only direct use of drinking water and for cleanliness, but also for agriculture and manufacturing human population is dense mostly in areas where the rainfall is adequate. This factor is most common lack of CHT and coastal and river side area. These resources like soil, energy, mineral resources are not available much quantity in CHT, coastal belt and river side area. CHT coastal belt and river side area have poor transport relationship also. All these factors cause people to leave these areas. The population movement has always been rural to metropolitan areas, as the cities exerted an economic pull on younger segments of the population. Some times the pull was augmented by a push from the rural sector, such as in due erosion and afraid of further erosion in future people of Chandpur, Sawndip allow to transferred their. Habitant from those particular areas towards urban centers to the suburbs. As early as 1971, some social scientist predicted that national trend toward decentralization of manufacturing would soon result in a pull to less developed rural areas⁸ this factor is seen in remote areas.

If we summarize the causes and reasons of depopulation the major factors comes up:

- I . Environmental factor
- II . Less developed area
- III . Natural disaster, like erosion, draught, flood, cyclone etc.
- IV . Location by nature
- V . Remote and rough communication
- VI . Decentralization and urbanization policy
- VII . Lack of fertility of agricultural land
- VIII . Socio—economic and political changing.

By examining the trends of population changing i.e. depopulation it becomes new definition of social problem.

8 . Kirschenbaum, A. Pattern of migration from metropokitan to non—metropolitan areas. Rural sociology 1971 36 (3), 3+5—325.

3 . DEVELOPMENT APPROACH OF DEPOPULATED RURAL AREA THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

3.1 Development approach

Development in depopulated rural areas or less development areas conceived narrowly as the socio —economic development of the people living in those areas can be promoted through different administrative and institutional frame works as their combinations⁹. At one extreme is the facilities which through the operation of the forces of demand and supply in the factor and commodity markets ensure higher production, employment, income, savings and investment at successive stages. Institutional frame work has been assigned a limited role for development in depopulated rural areas because of the well known 'vicious circle of poverty' and due to imperfect nature of the facilities prevail. Government intervention for the development of social and physical infrastructures has thus made extensive use of the administrative mechinaries unavoidable. It also seen that the role of public sector with various type has been combined at the some time when local level organizations make frame works for development. Both accross a fluctuating rends depending on the interrelationships between technical, economic, social and most important political changes. The macro and sectoral plants and the policy directive of the government determine these interrelationships and in furn pave the way for changes the institutional frame work.

3.2 Role of Local government in development of depopulated and less developed areas

The pivotal role of local government institution is such particular area and the powers developed on the peoples representatives give scope of participation to the local people in the development process. Thus conceptually a number of frame works for development in depopulated rural areas and less developed area can be formulated. These are : (i) traditional (ii) development (iii) participatory development.

9 . This conception is narrow because it leaves out of the consideration the linkages between area development and macro level development and the impact of sustained particuler area development in the rest of the economy. In other words the defination does deal with the process but only with the end of development and that too partly.

3.2.1 The traditional frame work

Under the traditional frame work of development in depopulated rural areas government role is paramount. The approach is sectoral i.e. each department has its own development program which its own hierarchic organizational pattern. In so far, the sectoral program of the department has rural or under development area or poverty area component, and this may not always be significant, the department has field office and staff located at the lowest tier of administration which open at independent of other departments without co—ordination the department may use the local government institutions (union parishad or upazila parishad) or local community based¹⁰ organization (e.g. co —operation) but the later do not take part in the decision and planning process at the level of the government departments but merely carry out decisions and implement programmes as handed down to them along with resources. The local government organizations is a autonomous with specified functions and financial powers but they are seldom encouraged to become viable the government functionaries because of the past tradition of treating them as instruments of implementations. Similer is the case of community based organizations like earth work, co—operatives, rural industries that function as part of the government programme rather than as autonomous self propelled movement. Moreover, the sectoral departmental approach tends to treat these local government organizations as falling within the jurisdiction of particular departments and such may not be duly used by all the departments operating in the depopulated rural areas. On the other hand, each department under the traditional frame work may set up its own rural organization committee to reach the depopulated areas by passing existing ones. The traditional frame work of development of depopulated rural areas is thus based on top—down planning, eighty percent centralised decision making, resource allocation and limited use of local organizations. This results is unrealistic planning, misallocation of resources and proliferation of government functionaries, Prepetuation of patron—client relation.

3.2.2 The developmental frame work

The developmental frame work emphasis the multisectoral approach with inter —departmental co—ordination and integration of their activities for optimum use of resources. It also provides for greater involvement of local government institutions and community based organization but as under the traditional frame work the role of these organizations in planning and decision making is minimal. Here is also role of central government functionary (e.g.) is paramount and planning is still top—down. Resource allocation is not so much base on the felt needs of the local

10. In tribal area (CHT) there is a provision of headmanship who is appointed by the government (Distric Administration) form tribal community.

people as it on the needs perceived by government departments. The local government institutions and community based organization are used to greater extent but mostly as implementers of decisions and programmes. Depopulated areas situated in different regions have multi sector development programmes. But these development programmes are normal development activity. But for CHT, coastal areas harbor area, have different development activity.

The basic promise of this framework is that development of particular area (like depopulated area, less developed area etc.) is considered as a distinct activity and a goal and not merely is residue of the overall development activities, based on this recognition, provisions of local organizations for official implementations of the multi-sectoral programmes. There is a greater encouragement for the local organization to mobilize resource as allocation of public funds may be related to this capacity.

3.2.3 The participatory development

The participatory development framework involves multi –sectoral approach to develop such particular rural area i.e. depopulated or less developed area within an administrative set-up formally decentralised with delegation of powers to the government departments and devolution of powers to the local government institutions under this framework this decision making power on planning and development activities as well peoples representatives who manage the affairs of the local government body with the assistance of government functionaries.

3.3 Role of sharing with local government and national government

With the present level of expertise and experience in depopulated rural areas project planning and implementation the Upazila Parishads are judged capable not only in implementing development schemes of local nature, but also are capable of managing the components of national projects like the rural works programme, food for works programme, local fisheries local markets, promotion of agricultural production etc. Upazila Parishads will be the final authority for planning, designing and executing such programmes and projects. Infact, Rural Works Programme has already been transferred to the Upazila Parishads. Similarly, Food for Works Programme within the quantum of what allocated to them by the Relief and Rehabilitation Division will be the responsibility of the Upazila Parishads. The score some of the examples which show that the development functions so long performed by the national government in these areas now stand transferred to the Upazila Parishads to undertake development activities in these fields. It is precisely with this end in view that the system of providing development assistance through bloc grant had been introduced so that the Upazila Parishads could undertake development projects and programmes in the aforementioned field.

3.4 Financial resource

In the annual development programme the national government has provided for allocation of a block fund on a regular basis to the Upazila Parishads as development assistance grant for implementing their development programmes under the guidance and supervision of the representatives of the local people. The grant provided by the national government, the Upazila Parishads own revenue surplus and moneys available from other sources such as; local contribution, for financing the development programme will constitute the Upazila development fund (ADP). In brief, the sources of Upazila Parishad Development Fund will be as follows:

- (i) development assistance fund provided by the national government through the ADP;
- (ii) revenue surplus of the Upazila Parishads;
- (iii) local contributions;
- (iv) fund available from other sources for undertaking development works (other than the fund available for implementing the divisible components of the projects undertaken at the national level).

Development assistance fund provided by the national government through the ADP will be allocated among the Upazila Parishads by the Local Government Division on the basis of the following criteria:

- (i) Population40%
- (ii) Area20%
- (iii) Extent of backwardness20%
- (iv) Performance20%

4 . IMPLEMENTING METHODS OF DEVELOPMENT OF DEPOPULATED AREA (case of — depopulated area in hill region)

4.1 Operational Strategy

The tribal unrest and insurgency is the exploitative social and economic relationships and level of under development of the indigenous people. And also total neglecting of the less developed area like hill region, coastal area and haor area government was officially floated 3 types of development agencies such as:

- i . Chittagong Hill Tracts development board (CHTB)
- ii . Offshore island development board (OIDB)
- iii . Haor development board (HDB).

In fact the creation of these 3 agencies the most important official objective was ensuring socio—economic development of area particularly people of those lives in less developed area. In this respect each agency has separate identity. Though

there is mostly bureaucratic in composition but in respect of planning, implementation, monitoring and supervising local government institutions has much role. So the agency has much reflection in the organizational body as local government institutions.

In this context we will only focus in our paper about 'CHTDB's implenting strategy. The operation and planning aspects of the CHTDB, we will discuss functions, Organization, character of the schemes, planning process, nature of boards program, and its impact.

4.1.1 Statutory Functions

According to the enabling legislation, the basic purpose of the Board is "accelerating development" of the area. The functions, as enumerated in the legislation" are listed below :

- i . to prepare projects and schemes for the development of Chittagong Hill Tracts;
- ii . to approve projects and schemes involving not more than ten lakh (one million) take each and to submit other projects and schemes to the government for approval;
- iii . to execute approved projects and schemes;
- iv . to supervise the execution of approved projects and schemes;
- v . to advance funds, on such terms and conditions as it may determine, for the execution of development schemes sponsored by various development agencies;
- vi . to grant loans, on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed, to any person for setting up or development of any small —scale or cottage industry or projects;
- vii . to carry out such actions as may be necessary or convenient in connection with, or incidental or conducive to, the performance of aforesaid functions.

From the above statutory provisions in regard to its functions it is clearly evident that it is only the small—scale schemes that can be approved and undertaken on their own—involving an amount not exceeding taka 1 million which is equivalent to us £25,000 only. Beyond this any scheme involving more than 1 m taka have to be submitted to the Cabinet Division in the Central Secretariat.

4.1.2 Organization

The Board has an autonomous organizational structure. The Board consists of one Chairman, one Vice—Chairman and 4 members—3 of whom are full timers and 1 who is a part—time member. At least once in every two months, the Board

11. Ordinance No. LXII of 1976, Government of Bangladesh.

meets and decides policies and programmes. The Commissioner of the administrative division of Chittagong, of which CHT is a component part, is the ex-officio Chairman of the board. The Deputy Commissioner of the district of CHT who is administratively subordinate to the Divisional Commissioner, is the ex-officio vice-Chairman of the board. The 3 full-time members have always been permanent civil servants and obviously junior in both rank and status to both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman. The Part-time member is the section Chief of the Agriculture Section of the Planning Commission of the Government of Bangladesh. He is also partly a civil servant by terms of his service and a professional economist by training and background. There is provision for a Consultative Committee composed of all the members of the Board, 22 tribal representatives and 35 representatives of local state institutions and prominent persons.

4.1.3 Character of the Schemes

With this appreciation of the background of the board, let us now analyse the performance of the board on the basis of data so far available. In doing this, let us first point out that the schemes so far undertaken by the board not only small in scale and cost but also multifarious in character. In short, a small amount of money has been allocated for many tiny projects.

This has arisen from the statutory constraint on project undertaking the limit imposed on the authority and the financial ceiling imposed on its operation. Thus irrespective of the nature of the works, most of the schemes have been compressed into or accommodated within the 1 m. taka limit.

From its inception of November 1978, the CHTDB initiated grant for as many as 300 small schemes involving an amount of 100 m. taka. That brings the cost per scheme on average to 33m. taka which is equivalent to £8,333 per scheme. Similarly, during the same period, it advanced 114 loans involving a total of 2m. taka to private individuals for development of cottage industries in the area¹². The loan so granted to every individual party thus comes to Tk. 17,543 on average—equivalent to us £438.

From the analysis of the 1981–82 Annual Development Programme (that being the 2nd year of the Second Five Year investment is visible (13). 9 out of the total number of 71 schemes of the year involved an expenditure exceeding 1 m. taka. Altogether, these 9 schemes constitute 12% of all the schemes in number and only 22% of the total allocation of 113 million taka.

12. Asian Development Bank, Appraisal of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Project in Bangladesh, Manila: 1979, p.159

On the other hand, the multifarious nature of the schemes sector wise can be well appreciated from the following figures for 1977-78¹³.

Sector	No. of Projects	Description
Agriculture	42	Resettlement Minor Irrigation Livestock
Transport	38	Roads, bridges and landings,
Education, Sports and Culture	23	Student grants, building repairing, sports stadium etc.
Trade-Commerce and Social Welfare	43	Markers, community centres, drainage, Water supply,
Health	2	Electrification etc.
Total=148		

That the same trend of investment in too many sectors with too little money continued beyond 1977-78 can be appreciated from the pattern of allocation of the board during 1978-1980¹⁴.

Sector	Allocation in million Tk.	No. of Schemes undertaken
Industry	3.7	7
Communication and Transport	15.0	47
Education	4.7	26
Agriculture and Irrigation	33.0	129
Social Welfare	6.6	24
Building and Construction	10.0	2
Tribal Cultural Institute	7.0	1
Total	80.0	236

13. Asian Development Bank, (ADB) Appraisal of CHT Development Project in Bangladesh, Manila: 1979.

14. ADB, Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Project.

4.1.4 Planning Process

It is apparent from the analysis of the Board's programme that most of the sectors and schemes are not directly productive in nature. Out of a dozen sectors as categorised by the Board, only three i.e., "Joutha Khamar"(collective farm), cottage industry and fishery—livestock can rightly deserve to be qualified as productive ones. But the allocation for the latter two sectors are 0.05% and slightly more than 1% respectively as of 1981–82 ADP. As such, cottage industry and fishery—livestock can be considered as too insignificant areas of activities of the CHTDB. Where as "Joutha Khamar"(collective farm) has constituted the most important sector for the Board, involving about 60% of the total allocations over the period since its inception. In fact, from the consideration of development, particularly of the poor shifting cultivators who constitute the majority of the tribal population, the CHTDB stand for Jouth Khamar, constituting its main functional foundation. As such, an evaluation of this sector deserves special emphasis and this can throw sufficient light of the nature of development that has been undertaken so far by the Board in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

4.1.5 Impacts

Such activity the farms has again resulted in some other socio—economic consequences. Instead of freeing the tribals from exploitative economic and socio relationships, it has apparently led to strengthening those in a more pervasive and permanent manner.

The Board planned for production of perishable goods without planning for their marketing, preservation, storage or processing. Thus, whatever was being produced there was little marketing facilities for those. The tribals shown all types of trading or commercial activities.

Without development of transportation and communications—particularly with the big cities, a programme for development of horticulture alone may prove to be not only much less unprofitable, at least at the producers level. But may also prove at times to be counter—productive. Counter—productive in the sense that in the absence of fair price and in the event of large—scale damage of these perishable goods due to lack of marketability, the producers lose all incentives and get frustrated. In some years, thousands of pineapples, in particular are thrown to the ditches or rivers when they start rotting and jackfruits are used as fodder due to lack of marketing. Production thus suffers from uncertainty and as a result cannot register a steady growth.

The nature of horticultural production in the Joutha Khamars is basically subsistence. The producers, therefore, need and must ensure certain and steady income to survive. Their survival becomes vulnerable in the face of uncertainty of marketing of their produce. This vulnerability of the tribals' survival enhances the

bargaining power of the middlemen and traders even to the extent of establishing a strangulating grip over the producers. As a result, the tribal producers are led to a long-term or seasonal agreement with the buyers over the entire produce—in return for advance loan against an inviolable sale undertaking of the produce, and an assurance of regular purchase of those of course, at a much lower price, but on a continued and assured basis. The standing and future crop of the producers is mortgaged to the middlemen and traders. The produce of the Joutha Khamar and the profit accruing out of it fall in to the non tribal moneylending and trading class. In such situation, the tribal owner —producers become a type of commercial serfs as they produce more for the profit of the moneylending class than for their own benefit. Thus while the tribal producers subsist somehow, the non tribal trading class flourishes. The CHTDB's horticultural development has effectively substituted the former method of exploitation through moneylending by a new one of a more pervasive and permanent nature.

Not only that, the Board's top-sided planning or lack of planning led to failure in most of the difficult components (including rubber) of the Joutha Khamar programme which, as has been highlighted earlier, paved the way for still greater external intervention and exploitation through the release of hundreds of Bengalee private rubber and horticultural entrepreneurs in Chittagong Hill Tracts in addition to accelerating exploitation by moneylenders.

4.2 Planning Process of other depopulated areas

Population variables with socio-economic development is interdependent. Bangladesh has attempted to relate population (both over population and depopulation) and development issues as a part development planning specially in rural development at least at the sectoral level. However, the great complexities of treating as exogenous variable of conventional development planning into an endogenous variable has possibly limited for the development planning process of the depopulated rural areas. However, at the policy level, it is well recognized that there should be an imperment and social progress in depopulated rural areas. There is a political consensus on the development impact of depopulated areas. This has been reflected in the policy statements to be assimilated at the program level both institutionally as well as the point of implementation.

Other than hill region, like costal region, haor region, draught and flood region the planning process of development is quite different. Seperate agencies(costal regional development board, Haor regional development board) are working. Beside these, local government institutions like upazila parishad, union parishad have so far special grant or allocation¹⁵ through national government. These allocation is provided for less developed area and over populated or depopulated areas.

5 . CONCLUSION

It could thus said that the goal of development of depopulated rural area is to create the conditions for fruitful dialogue between a powerful but abstract entity. The state on humanly defined group the community within given location, the environment. The organization of effective working relationships between these three elements is what depopulated rural areas development projects are all about.

The depopulated area is not merely located. Apart from administrative and geographical boundaries. Other factors such as physical (climate, population, geography) Political (distribution of power, leadership), Socio cultural (regions belief and practice, civic organization) and economic (production income distribution) were taken when defining depopulated area. The combination of these and many other factors constitutes the environmental context of a particular area and provides it with its main Characteristics, a certain degree of homogeneity. That all courses to be recorded and analysed in detail during the planning process.

It reflects some complex and not easily reduced to managerial terms, it is a permanent state of evolution, due to internal change (ecological) or external pressure (political or technological). In case of depopulated area in Bangladesh sometimes it caused positive and some times it caused negative effect in development process. While this is not the place for a review of the functioning of the state at the central level of government, what is concern is the perception that communities have of the national government at their local level.

Hence, the targeting of activities on specific groups or specific area as it they were elements which could be isolated from the rest of society or rest of the area. As a result, there is insufficient exploitation of human resources and the distinction between beneficiaries and participants is not all that clear.

Another characteristic of depopulated rural area in Bangladesh is that, like the environment, are constantly evolving. Due to changes in political, economic or environmental circumstances, the distribution of wealth, prestige knowledge shift resulting in modification of social patterns. Larger scale phenomena such as

15. Guide lines for Upazila Parishad for utilization of the development assistance provided by the National government through the ADP, (revised in July, 1985) Ministry of Planning Commission.

urbanization, migration, natural climate (disaster flood, drought) causes of less developed, low rate of agricultural production changed the populations geographical concentration and hence the distribution of activities and power.

This fluidity of the human environment is an important element for consideration of up development strategy for depopulated rural areas, particularly in regard to contributions expected from the particular communities. Caution is needed to avoid the some what romantic view of communities as harmonious ethnic groups with strong feelings of solidarity, eager to participate enthusiastically in development activities. In reality the truth may be that the scarcer the resources, the more the competition commonality of interests and objectives does not necessarily exist, though it would hopefully be encouraged by the development of depopulated rural areas, particularly if they were to lead to more equitable distribution of services and resources. Consequently, to strive for more equity in the access to, and use of, local resources, should be one of the main thrusts of development of depopulated rural areas.

When the development strategy appeared it was not meant to be a new philosophy or theory of development, but rather a new way managing development activities at the intermediate and community level. This development thought may be more rational if it go through local government institutions.

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