Query: Please provide literature on mechanisms designed to ensure and allow the participation of excluded groups in local governance.

Enquirer: DFID Nepal

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1. Overview

There are various methods of ensuring and allowing the participation of excluded groups in local governance. They fall under two broad categories: 1.) promoting the representation of excluded groups in local government, including in leadership positions and 2.) promoting the participation of excluded groups in local meetings to discuss planning, budgeting and development projects. Within these categories, a range of formal and informal mechanisms and strategies have been attempted in various countries. This helpdesk research report focuses on examples from India, Uganda, Indonesia and Bangladesh.

Representation of Excluded Groups in Local Government

The representation of excluded groups can be promoted through these formal mechanisms:

Party list quota system: political parties are bound to ensure that a percentage of their candidates are from minority or disadvantaged groups. This mechanism has rarely been used.

Reserved seats for appointed representatives: a quota for appointed members of minorities or socially disadvantaged groups. This mechanism is used in several countries (e.g. Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Philippines). It has been criticised, however, for being ineffective in increasing the influence of excluded groups. This is because those appointed often end up being a 'mouthpiece' for those who selected them.

Reserved seats for elected representatives: used as the basis for quotas in local government elections. This mechanism has also been adopted in several countries (e.g. India, Timor-Leste, Nepal, Pakistan and Uganda). India provides the most pronounced example of formal inclusion of excluded groups in local government. The Constitution guarantees reserved seats at all levels of local government for women (one-third) and for “scheduled castes” and “scheduled tribes” (based on their proportion of the total population). It also guarantees to women one-third of the leadership (chief) positions in the village councils. State governments have adopted legislation to enforce these provisions, with some states having made up to a 50% reservation for women. All
members of the voting public vote for candidates for these reserved seats. Experts stressed that this is preferable to having segmented voting (i.e. having only women voting for women candidates) as this can be divisive. Combined voting can give those elected more confidence that they have a popular mandate. Secret balloting was also stressed as crucial by one expert in order to allow women voters in Uganda, for example, to vote differently from their spouse without repercussion.

Separate institutions: in which only members of a certain excluded group are allowed to run for office and to vote. The Philippines, for example, has a separate Youth Council.

Much of the literature and experts contacted stressed that while these mechanisms have been beneficial in increasing the representation of women in office, many obstacles remain that prevent them from either performing well in office; or from being recognised when they do perform well. In Uganda, for example, a legislative quota was successful in ensuring a greater proportion of women elected to all levels of local government. However, many of those elected entered office unprepared – without proper knowledge and skills – and were unable to govern effectively. As such, it is important that formal constitutional and legislative mechanisms be accompanied with capacity building and training workshops for women and other excluded groups. In addition, training should focus not only on understanding planning and budgeting and local government processes; but also on confidence building and public speaking.

Further, while representation of women has been effective in breaking taboos and increasing the acceptance of women in the public sphere, there are still persistent perceptions of women as weaker leaders, leading to disapproval regardless of outcomes. This could explain why women in India, for example, have been less likely to be re-elected once their seat is no longer reserved despite having delivered good outcomes.

**Participation of Excluded Groups in Local Planning and Budgeting Meetings**

There have also been efforts to increase the participation of all citizens in local governance, with particular attention to excluded groups.

India has constitutional and legislative measures that address participation in village assemblies. There is a requirement that one-third of the participants are women in order for there to be quorum.

The Kacematan Development Programme, in Indonesia, focuses specifically on enhancing the capacity of local governance and community participation, especially the participation of women and the poor. Activities throughout the project cycle, from planning to implementation to monitoring all require the participation of women (often a minimum of 40%). In addition, it is required that Village Facilitators comprise one man and one women. There are also separate planning meetings for women; and one proposal from each village must come from a women’s group. Separate planning streams were also used in the case of Afghanistan, along with separate earmarked funds for women. However, both men and women decided on which women’s proposals should receive funding.

While these mechanisms have increased the participation of excluded groups, much of the literature stresses that the participation of women and social disadvantaged groups is still weak. This is often because they lack information about meetings or are not aware that they are invited. The literature recommends individually addressing people in invitations and making public announcements in areas that members of excluded groups frequent. In addition, for those who do attend, research has shown that their participation is often passive (usually listening). This has been attributed to a lack of information about the development projects; lack of understanding of planning and budgeting; and/or lack of confidence in speaking out. Similar to the recommendations made for representation of excluded groups in local government, there need to be capacity building and training workshops to allow excluded groups to properly participate in local governance meetings. In addition, the literature notes that the chair or facilitator selected
must be able to encourage the presence and the active participation of excluded groups. In Bangladesh, for example, it is mandated that women chair one-third of development committee meetings. In addition, the presence of women as chiefs in India has encouraged greater attendance of women at village assembly meetings.

2. Key Documents

*General*

http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=1993

This paper discusses the impact of democratic decentralisation on poverty reduction. It argues that the unwillingness of many governments to devolve adequate powers and resources to local bodies has limited their potential to deliver development outcomes. It also stresses the importance of women’s participation in local bodies, as their involvement tends to result in improved service delivery – in particular health services. The paper discusses the mechanisms that have been adopted to improve the representation of women on elected local bodies, and the impact of such representation:

“Two mechanisms tend to be used – appointment and election reservations – and there is a big difference between them. In some systems, after elections are held at which men usually win all of the seats, the chairman of the local council and/or low-level bureaucrats appoint a number of women to the council. This is an extremely unreliable method of giving women voice – because those who are appointed owe their positions to the person(s) who selected them. They therefore feel unable to speak their minds honestly, and remain subservient to the wishes of those who chose them. In most cases, a certain proportion of seats on local councils is reserved for women – usually by permitting only women candidates to stand for some seats, with all adults in those constituencies voting for those candidates. This is a more reliable means of giving women representation since elected women feel that they have a popular mandate. For the most part, however, this method had not done much to strengthen influence of women. Studies of specific systems consistently show that most elected women operate as proxies for their male relatives who makes the real decisions for them. In many cases, there are powerful prejudices against women taking any independent action – some are not even permitted to go to the local council office unaccompanied, and those who do are regarded as scandalously undisciplined. There is also evidence that in some places, women councillors who try to play their assigned roles in local politics face threats and violence from reactionaries […]

The news is not all bad, however. Even where women have little or no influence, their positions on local councils enable them to play roles in the public sphere for the first time. This breaks down taboos, and allows them to acquire confidence, knowledge about governance and public affairs, some political skills, and connections to people of influence. These imply long-term promise. Nor do all women representatives remain powerless. There are numerous examples of individual women becoming surprisingly assertive, and gaining some influence to do things for their constituents or for women in general – although such cases are still exceptions to the patriarchal norm. […]

We also see that when people recognise that newly created elected councils have significant power, more formidable women often come forward for election after councils complete their first terms, and then behave more assertively and effectively once they are elected. Such ‘formidable’ women often come from prosperous, high status groups – so that their influence does not necessarily benefit poorer people. But it does break down barriers to women’s influence in local governance” (p. 11-12).
This guide on designing inclusive and accountable local governance institutions includes a chapter on ‘Representation of Women, Youth, Minorities and the Most Disadvantaged’ (see Chapter 4, pp. 37-56). The chapter discusses the various mechanisms that can be incorporated in local electoral systems to ensure the representation of excluded groups. These include:

- **Party list quota system**: political parties are legally bound to ensure that a given percentage of their candidates are representative of minority or disadvantaged groups (e.g. Republic of Korea and Namibia);
- **Reserved seats for elected representatives**: used as the basis for quotas in local government elections (e.g. India, Timor-Leste, Nepal and Pakistan);
- **Reserved seats for appointed representatives**: a quota for appointed members of minorities or socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Philippines);
- **Separate institutions**: the Philippines has moved beyond merely reserving seats for the young and has established a separate local government body (the Youth Council), in which only the young (older than 15 and younger than 20) are allowed to stand for election and to vote.

The chapter stresses that while these affirmative action procedures in local electoral systems contribute greatly to ensuring representation of excluded groups, they are not sufficient. More attention and efforts are necessary to ensure representation at high levels – and to translate representation into influence and political voice.

**India**

India provides the most advanced example, with a constitutional guarantee of no less than one-third of all seats and chairs on all local government councils in all states reserved for women. As a result, the report notes that over one million women are serving as local government councillors in India. There are reservations as well for “scheduled castes” and “scheduled tribes”, in line with their population as a proportion of the total population. There is also a requirement that a proportion of senior positions be reserved for women and minority groups, although its implementation is questionable and differs across state.

In Pakistan, directly elected village or neighbourhood councils include one seat reserved for a women and one seat reserved for peasants and workings. Directly elected union councils include four seats reserved from Muslim women, six seats (of which two are for women) reserved for workers and peasants, and one seat for minority communities. For the indirectly elected councils, women must represent 33% of all members and peasants and workers 5%.

In the Philippines, the 1991 Local Government Code states there must be three sectoral representatives in local councils at all tiers i.e. one woman, one agricultural or industrial worker and one representative for the urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, or disabled persons. In addition, the Code provides for youth councils.
This study analyses the impact of decentralisation on the ability of socially excluded groups to participate in local governance institutions in three Indian states: Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. It outlines the decentralisation framework in India: the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution of India, which became law in April 1993, mandated each state to constitute Local Self-Government Institutions (called Panchayati Raj Institutions, or Panchayats, in rural areas) at the village, intermediate and district levels.

“The amendments also mark a strong shift from representative to participatory democracy. Of particular importance is the introduction of the Gram Sabha or village assembly, defined by the 73rd Amendment as a body of community of persons registered in the electoral rolls within a village or group of villages. The Gram Sabha was mandated to approve all plans and programmes for social and economic development, audit the Panchayat accounts, and to select beneficiaries for all types of programmes […] The participatory character of the amendments can be also found in their effort to assure the participation in decision-making processes of those citizens usually excluded for social, economic or gender reasons. The amendments recognise social disadvantage and mandate that seats shall be reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, in proportion to their share in the population, at all levels of the Panchayat as well as for the offices of chairperson of these institutions. The Amendments also recognise the disadvantaged position of women, providing for them a similar treatment as for Scheduled Castes and Tribes” (p. 10).

The study finds that in Kerala, socially disadvantaged groups and the poor are represented more than other groups at the Panchayat level. In Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh, socially disadvantaged groups are as represented as other groups, whereas the poor are largely under-represented. In all three states, women are under-represented. The study argues that the greater involvement of socially disadvantaged groups and the poor in Kerala (in attending meetings and assemblies (Gram Sabha); in signing petitions; and in contacting elected representatives at all levels etc.) can be attributed to the higher level of political mobilisation and awareness in that state. Women’s membership in political parties is higher in Kerala, where self-help groups meet regularly and discuss issues of local governance. This is absent in self-help groups in the other states.

The study recommends that in order to increase participation of socially excluded groups, it is necessary to increase awareness through literacy and newspaper reading campaigns; and to model self-help groups based on democratic structures that provide a forum for discussion of local governance issues. In addition, political parties must reach out to disadvantaged groups and the poor and provide space for them to participate as members and functionaries.


This study explores the impact of reservations for women in the Panchayat system in India on the performance of policy makers and on voters’ perceptions of this performance. The Panchayat is a system of village level (Gram Panchayat), block level (Panchayat Samiti), and district level (Zilla Parishad) councils, responsible for the administration of local public goods. The study explains that since the mid-1990s, one-third of the seats in all Panchayat councils, as well as one-third of the Pradhan (chief) positions are reserved for women: in these councils, only women could be elected as chief (Prahdan). Seats and Pradhan positions are also reserved for the two
disadvantaged minorities in India: “scheduled castes” and “scheduled tribes”, through mandated representation proportional to each minority’s population in each district.

The reservation system for women is carried out randomly: “States were instructed to ensure the random assignment of reservation for women Pradhan across GPs. In West Bengal, for example, all GPs in a district are ranked in consecutive order according to their legislative serial number (an administrative number pre-dating this reform). They are then split in three separate lists, according to whether or not the Pradhan seat had been reserved for disadvantages minorities (these reservations were also chosen randomly, following a similar method). Using these three lists, every third GP starting with the first on the list is reserved for a woman Pradhan for the first election” (p.7).

The study finds that overall, villages in which leadership is reserved for women have more public goods and that the quality of these goods is at least as high as in non-reserved villages. In addition, villagers are less likely to pay bribes in these villages. However, residents of the villages headed by women are less satisfied with the state of public goods, which the study argues may explain why women are rarely re-elected once their seats are no longer reserved. The study suggests that the reason for dissatisfaction may be that villagers have a pre-determined conception of women as weaker leaders; or they may focus on the fact that some of the women are less educated and less experienced than their male counterparts and form their opinions on these characteristics as opposed to actual performance and outcomes.


This paper explores the impact of women as policy makers in the Panchayat system in India and finds that women are more likely to be involved in local governance in villages with a reserved Pradhan. It finds that in West Bengal, for example, women are more likely to participate in the Gram Samsad (village assembly) if the Pradhan (chief) is a woman. In addition, women in villages with a reserved Pradhan are twice as likely to become involved in making requests or registering complaints to the village level chief. The paper also finds that women elected as leaders under the reservation policy invest more in public goods that are more closely related to women’s concerns.


This paper seeks to evaluate the Panchayat system, based on its first six years of operation. It notes that the participation of women in Panchayat councils has improved due to reservation; however, efforts to improve the performance of women require greater attention. The paper finds that women who are members of self-help groups feel more empowered to take up leadership of Panchayat. The paper notes that in general women are poorly informed about Panchayat meetings and about how Panchayat functions. In addition, women found that the training that they do receive does not address their particular needs, such as lack of confidence and stage fright. Civil society initiatives have sprung up to fill this void.

The paper also finds that participation in meetings of the Gram Sabha (a constitutionally mandated body for the entire community to participate in self-governance) is low and that this can be attributed to strong caste, class and gender divides in villages. These divides prevent information from being conveyed about the meetings. The poor, marginalised groups and women are often unaware of their right to attend Gram Sabha meetings. Despite a requirement that one-third of the quorum comprise women, this condition was found to be flouted in almost every location. In addition, it finds that even if they attend meetings, they often feel uncomfortable
voicing their opinions, particularly if they differ from other community members – as they are often economically dependent on these other members. The paper also notes that if they do speak out and their views are not respected, they feel demotivated to continue to attend meetings. The paper finds that women who are part of self-help groups are more likely to raise issues at meetings of the Gram Sabha.


This review evaluates progress in the implementation of Part IX of the Indian Constitution, which prescribes reservations to ensure the participation of women, “scheduled castes” and “scheduled tribes” in Panchayats. It focuses on progress relating to women and finds that they have been establishing their positions as leaders in all of the States. In addition, they have encouraged other women to participate in local governance, evident in higher attendance of women in Gram Sabha meetings (village level meetings) held by women than those held by men. Further, women are attending training programmes and acquiring skills in order to participate in governance effectively.

The review advocates for more efforts to promote capacity building of women members and leaders of Panchayats. It notes that NGOs have a vital role to play in providing training and should receive financial assistance to run such programmes. It also recommends that there should be separate training programmes for women, as some rural women may be hesitant to attend programmes with men. The review also advises that Gram Panchayat (village level council) meetings should be attended only by those elected and by no one else (i.e. husband, brother, father or any other male relative) in order to ensure that women have their say.

Uganda

http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=913

This paper evaluates the impact of women’s participation on local government in Uganda. The Ugandan government introduced legislation in the mid-1990s to ensure women’s representation: the 1995 Constitution and 1997 Local Government Act provided that one-third of local council members must be women, and minimum numbers are required for many local commissions and committees. Combined with decentralisation that shifted decision-making closer to the village level, women were given opportunities to influence local governance and development.

The paper finds that the presence of women in local government has helped to change attitudes about women’s roles and increased acceptance of their participation in leadership roles and in politics. However, it also finds that women have not significantly influenced local council planning or budgeting. This, the paper argues, is due to insufficient efforts to prepare women for their role in politics, to help them build confidence to express their opinions, and to train them in issues of planning, budgeting and accounting. The paper recommends that proper education and training must be provided for women in order for them to properly participate in and to influence local government.

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This paper discusses the local government systems in Uganda and Kenya. If finds that while Kenya has made little progress in improving citizen participation in local government, the system
in Uganda has fared better: “The local council system in Uganda was designed to create opportunities for participatory decision-making at all levels. It has been quite successful in this. There are multiple opportunities for citizens, including the poor, to participate in public meetings and elections, from the village level up to the district. Gender and minority interests are protected (in principle at least) through reserved seats for women, youth and disabled at each level. There is a system of annual budget conferences at each level, giving citizens some opportunity to have a voice in the choice of priorities for the coming year” (p. 312). In addition, the substantial increase in resources transferred to local government and the flexibility provided in expenditure choices has enabled local councils to deliver improved services and fund new investments.

The system, however, does have weaknesses. The paper notes that the level of participation is less than is suggested by the legislation. Further, the reservation of seats for women, youth and disabled does not seem to have had much impact on outcomes. This is due partly to the limited skills and effectiveness of those occupying the seats. NGOs are leading efforts to develop the skills of these representatives to improve their effectiveness in office and the overall effectiveness of the local government system.

Indonesia

The following information about Indonesia’s comprehensive community-driven development programme, the Kecamatan Development Programme (KDP) is taken from the World Bank website. Kecamatan are ‘sub-districts’ in Indonesia.

http://www.worldbank.org/id/kdp

“The Kecamatan Development Programme (KDP) is a national Government of Indonesia programme, implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Community Development Office aimed at alleviating poverty, strengthening local government and community institutions, and improving local governance. KDP began in 1998 at a time of tremendous political upheaval and financial crisis. Currently, KDP is in its third phase, and is expected to run until 2009.

The programme is funded through government budget allocations, donor grants, and loans from the World Bank. It provides block grants of approximately Rp. 500 million to 1.5 billion (approximately US$50,000 to US$150,000) to sub-districts (kecamatan) depending upon population size. Villagers engage in a participatory planning and decision-making process to allocate those resources for their self-defined development needs and priorities. KDP focuses on Indonesia’s poorest rural communities.

In August 2006 the Government of Indonesia (GOI) launched the National Programme for Community Empowerment or Programme Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (PNPM), a nationwide community development programme aimed at eliminating poverty. PNPM will provide a single framework for all community-driven development programmes in Indonesia, and will gradually consolidate scattered and often overlapping programmes in different sectors. It will create a unified design for programme delivery, better national targeting of the poorest, the direct transfer of funds to villages, and increased allocations for block grants.

KDP together with its urban sister, the Urban Poverty Project (UPP), are the foundation for the national programme incorporating years of successful experience with the community driven development approach. Linked to these projects are an increasing number of sectoral programmes that provide specialized inputs to improve the delivery of services to the poor. Local governments will also be expected to integrate education, health, and agricultural service provision into the PNPM programme.

Key Goals:

- Poverty alleviation through increasing rural incomes.
- Strengthening local government and community institutions.
Improving good governance

Key Principles
- **Participation/Inclusion**: Community participation is emphasised, especially among the poor and women. Participation should be broad-based, through local decision-making by all villagers.
- **Transparency**: KDP emphasizes transparency and information-sharing throughout the project cycle. Decision-making and financial management should be open and shared with the community.
- **Open Menu**: Villagers can propose any activity, except for ones on a negative list.
- **Competition for Funds**: There should be open, healthy competition between villages for KDP funds.
- **Decentralised**: Decision-making and management occurs at the local level.
- **Simple**: No complex rules, just simple strategies and methods.

Voss, J., 2008, 'Impact Evaluation of the Second Phase of the Kecamatan Development Programme in Indonesia' World Bank Indonesia


This report seeks to determine the impact of community-driven development approaches on traditional measures of household welfare and access to services, based on the second phase of the Kecamatan Development Programme (KDP2). The report outlines how the participation of women is specifically addressed in the programme. During the planning phase, for example, villagers elect village facilitators (one man and one woman) to assist with the socialisation and planning processes. The facilitators then hold group meetings, which include a separate women’s meeting, to identify the needs and priorities of the village. One of the proposals selected from each village must come from women’s groups. Further, there is a specific microfinance component that funds women-only credit groups.

In its analysis of impact, the report finds that KDP2 is most effective at benefitting poor households; their participation in the programme resulted in improved economic welfare, particularly consumption gains for their households. The report finds, however, that disadvantaged groups (other than the poor), such as female-headed households and households where the head is lacking primary education, are less likely to benefit from the programme. This is despite the mechanisms incorporated to enhance women’s participation. The report attributes this finding to the continued difficulties the programme has in reaching various pockets of highly vulnerable groups: “These are marginalised groups who generally do not attend project meetings, are not invited to meetings, or for whom the costs in time and lost income of meeting attendance is high. In addition, the practice of majority voting within the village sometimes has the effect of discouraging smaller, often outlying groups from participating, or if these groups are far from the village centre, they may not necessarily benefit from a project centred in more populated parts of the village” (p. 13)

The report notes that the programme has sought to address its weakness in reach: “First, recognising that female heads of households represent a particularly vulnerable group, a separate program for female heads of households (PEKKA) was started in 2001 to address issues of economic welfare, access to financial resources, social and political participation, and leadership development. The program has been working in eight provinces covering some 8,000 members, and is looking towards expanding their coverage in the next several years. Second, PNPM-RURAL will be launching a special study in 2008 on highly vulnerable and marginalised groups. Using qualitative ethnographic research techniques, the study will examine whether such groups participate in project activities, are active-decision-makers in the project framework, and
benefit from project investments, and the factors that contribute to failures or successes involving these groups. Project locations will be chosen across geographically diverse areas selecting sites from Sumatra, Java and eastern Indonesia. In these places, the study will also examine how ethnic minority groups are involved in PNPM-RURAL planning” (pp. 19-20)


This report seeks to determine the impact of community-driven development approaches on traditional measures of household welfare and access to services, based on the PNPM-Rural programme. This programme has the same goals, objectives and project mechanisms as described above under KDP and KDP2. Similar to the findings under the KDP2 programme, the report finds that disadvantaged groups (households with female heads and heads with lower levels of educational attainment) exhibit higher poverty rates and face stronger challenges in accessing education in comparison with poor households in general. This is, again, despite mechanisms designed to incorporate such disadvantaged groups in local governance. These outcomes could be explained by report findings that disadvantaged groups are less aware of meetings, attend at lower rates, and are less likely to access information. In addition, for those who do participate, the quality of participation in considered generally low: for poor and disadvantaged households, the rate of passive participation (engaging only in listening at meetings) was 75 percent. Poor attendance and poor participation could be due, the report notes, to a lack of accessing information about the use of village development projects or local government development projects. The report recommends that strategies need to be developed to ensure higher levels of inclusion of disadvantaged groups in project activities. In addition, it argues that greater access to information is necessary to improve the quality of participation.


This is a practical guide based on a compilation of stories from villagers and community facilitators/consultants on how to involve women in KDP. Women are expected to take an active role in all KDP activities: preparing proposals, selecting the activities to be funded, participating in implementation and monitoring of processes — while also benefiting from the project outcomes: “As proponent, women propose activities that help address and fulfil their priority needs. As decision makers, they attend KDP meetings and they are able to put forward their opinions and have an impact on the decision-making process. As implementing agent, women can be the labour involved in the Project Implementation Team or the Financial Management Unit, based on their desires and abilities. As monitors, women can be involved in the evaluation of work, actively request financial accountability reports, as well as take firm action in the field when required. As maintenance agent, they help maintain the facilities and infrastructure built, or become members of the maintenance team. Finally, as beneficiaries women can obtain the capital required for business ventures, or make use of the new infrastructure built using KDP resources” (p. 4). Table 1 (p. 6) details the specific terms and conditions for women’s representation in all stages of activities. Many entail a minimum of 40 percent women participants.

The guide provides positive examples of women playing these various roles and advice on how to promote their participation in each of these capacities. For example, to ensure that women attend meetings, the guide stresses that it is important to specifically invite the women by name, as opposed to sending an invitation to the head of the household (which will be deemed to be the male only); and to make announcements at venues which women frequent, such as at mosques, or over the radio. In addition, meeting times need to take into consideration women’s routine activities. The guide also provides advice on encouraging women to express their views and needs once at meetings, for example seating women in the front rows and having the village
facilitator actively involve women in discussions. The guide stresses that village facilitators, whether they are men or women, must be able to motivate women’s participation throughout the project cycle.

The guide also provides recommendations on the selection of women leading the socialisation process, which is important in educating people about KDP and motivating them to get involved. It notes that: “During the socialisation process in the kecamatan (UDKP 1), KDP mandated the presence of 2 women out of the five village representatives. However, what often occurred was that the Village Head (Kades) simply appointed the two women representatives all by himself without consulting the villagers. These women, who may not have the ability to transmit KDP information, rarely passed on KDP information to women’s groups in the village. To overcome this problem, it should clearly be stated in the letter of invitation to the village that women’s representatives attending the socialisation meeting must meet the following criteria:

- Possess the capability to disseminate KDP information to all levels of the community, particularly the women’s groups;
- Have close relations with women in the village; and,
- Be chosen by the village forum” (p. 12).

**Bangladesh**

Rehman, A., 2005, ‘Effective Participation: Community Engagements in Participatory Budgeting in Bangladesh’

This paper looks at the involvement of local citizens in planning and budgeting in Bangladesh, including the involvement of marginalised groups. Two projects in particular specifically incorporated participation by such groups. The Sirajganj Project involved participatory planning and budgeting at the Union Parishad (UP) (local government) level of Sirajganj district. It attempts to promote the participation of women in several ways:

- Participation of women and poor people (particularly the hardcore poor) is mandated in the identification and prioritisation of development schemes.
- Women’s participation in decision-making is also ensured in the project implementation strategy.
- Females elected to the Union Parishad chair one–third of the Ward Development Committee meetings.
- At least 30 percent of the development schemes and corresponding funds are allocated for women.
- The use of process-based mechanisms, such as the separate coloured cards to show women’s needs; special planning groups for women and screening for women’s interests during final selection.

The Hunger Project also sought to be inclusive and held open budget sessions, inviting all people by public announcement. The level of participation in these sessions was high, and included the poor, women and elderly people. The concerns that these groups raised were then incorporated into the proposed budget. The poor and other marginalised groups were also included in monitoring the implementation of the scheme.

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Websites visited

Dege Consult, Google, Google Scholar, GSDRC, IDS, Local Government India, OECD, Overseas Development Institute, Poverty Action Lab, United Cities and Local Government, UNCDF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, USAID, World Bank

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