Patgram - A local government initiative for 100% sanitation

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AFTER THE DEVASTATING flood of 1998 about 25 people including children of the Patgram Upazila (Lalmonirhat District) died because of the outbreak of diarrhea. It was identified that the poor sanitation is one of the major contributing factors for this high mortality. This incidence of high mortality due to diarrhea became a concern of the local administration. Md. Shariful Alam, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) shared his concern to local elites, Chairmen & members of the Union Parishads, teachers of different educational institutions, Imams, political leaders, NGO representatives, and people of all section of the Patgram Upazila and wanted to initiate a movement for 100% sanitation coverage in Patgram Upazila.

**Goal and objectives**

**Goal**
To reduce the high prevalence of diarrhea among the 184,295 population of Patgram Upazila by bringing about 100% sanitation practices among all HHs of the Patgram Upazila by June 2000.

**Objectives**
- Increase sanitation coverage from 11.48% in 1998 to 100% by June 2000.
- Build capacity of the local organization for sustainable and appropriate sanitary latrine installation and maintenance.
- Empower Union Parishad members regarding resource mobilization.
- Create community awareness and involve community people for building partnership for development works.

**Strategies**

**Motivation and awareness generation**
Intensive motivational and awareness generation activities are taking place in Patgram Upazila. As a result, most of the people in Patgram Upazila motivated and generate savings to arrange their own latrines by themselves.

**Participatory planning, implementation and evaluation**
The Union Parishad (UP) members and NGO workers conducted the baseline survey to understand the existing condition of the sanitation in the Patgram Upazila. According to the baseling survey the UP members set their target for the 100% sanitation coverage in their respective Unions. UP chairman and members are very actively involved in the monitoring and implementation of the pilot project activities.

**Convergence of resources**
Savings have been mobilized from all different sources to arrange sanitary latrines to households, which are without sanitary latrines, identified by the baseling survey. Each household, which is without a sanitary latrine, has to contribute from own resources. The contribution money is being collected from their different programmes, for instance, food for education, vulnerable group development (VGD), BRDB, NGOs and from UP revolving funds. To increase the coverage of the sanitary latrines new village sanitation centres have been set up in un-served areas with the help of DPHE and Union Parishad.

**Effecutive coordination and follow-up**
This programme is being implemented through effective coordination of the key stakeholders. In this regard, Mr Shariful Alam (UNO of Patgram Upazila), Mr Nurul Islam, Unicef Project Coordinator and Mr Rashid of DPHE play a key role.

**Adaptaion of the process approach**
The very essence of this programme is to continuously evolve innovative approaches by the key actors to achieve the desired objectives.

**Multiple channel dissemination strategy**
Officials from different departments (Health and Family Welfare Department, Bangladesh Rural Development Board,
Demographic Surveillance System etc.) imams, school and college teachers, deed writer, Youth Development Group Members etc., are being mobilized and they worked as the change agents to motivate the different sections of the people for this programme.

No/minimum subsidy
Each individual household arranges their own latrine by their own means to make the programme sustainable.

Major pilot project activities
Baseline survey
A baseline survey had been conducted by the Union Parishad members in all the seven Unions of Patgram Upazila. The UNO and Unicef Project Coordinator developed two different colours of survey forms. The concise baseline survey results are given in Table 1.

Local level capacity building
Briefing and planning workshops with different key change agents (UP members, officials of Health and Family Planning, local elites, youth clubs, Anser, Village Development Party (VDP), Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), Demographic Surveillance Systems (DSS), agriculture field extortionist, NGOs, Ward members etc.,) for motivational activities had been organized at the early stage of the project implementation.

Awareness generation and motivational activities
Several activities are undertaken to generate awareness regarding the use of sanitary latrines, which are as follows:
Organization of awareness and motivational session at the Upazila, Union, Ward, Community and school level.

Transformation of message on use of sanitary latrine at the community level.

Motivation of the VGD cardholders, guardians and students under food for education and stipend regarding the use of sanitary latrines and motivate them to generate savings for the installation of sanitary latrines.

Motivation of all the staff of Govt. and autonomous bodies to use sanitary latrines.

Teachers of the educational institutions motivate their respective students to use sanitary latrines.

All the 396 imams of the Patgram Upazila motivate their respective people regarding the use of sanitary latrines.

7 Union Parishad Chairmen and members very actively took part to make the community people aware about the use of sanitary latrines.

NGOs (mainly BRAC) of the Patgram Upazila also ensure the use of sanitary latrines among their beneficiaries in the project areas.

Students of all high schools, college and teachers formed student brigade and visited each household in the Patgram Upazila to motivate the community for using sanitary latrines.

**Generation of Savings**

As of January 2000, Tk. 3054,470.00 savings were generated from different on-going programme (Secondary & Primary schools, VGD cardholders, BRDB, BRAC, UP revolving funds etc.,). It may be mentioned that UNICEF has only provided about Tk. 600,000.00 to support different training programme on hygiene awareness programme, support village sanitation centers (for sign board and caretakers salary) and provide technical assistance to UNO regarding the programme development. Besides these, modules on hygiene education, and communication materials are provided to this programme from WES section of UNICEF.

**Production and supply of sanitary latrines**

There were only two sanitary latrine production centers in Patgram Upazila before the project intervention, which were managed by DPHE. To bring latrines close to the people 15 additional sanitary latrine production centers have been established to fulfill the demand of 27,386 sets of sanitary latrines in the Patgram Upazila. DPHE agreed to
support these sanitary latrine production centers by deploying technicians, train masons and supplying moulds for the latrines.

**Project management**
To manage 100% sanitation coverage programme a 4-tier committee has been formed under the leadership of UNO as outlined in Figure 1.

**Think tank**
For overall management and strategic decision making, to the pilot project, a 7-members “Think Tank” has been formed under the Chairmanship of the UNO.

**Monitoring and evaluation**

**Monitoring and evaluation committee**
For proper implementation of the project activities, a 10-member Monitoring & Evaluation Committee is being formed chaired by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

**Union level monitoring officers**
At the Upazila level, 8 officers are being deployed to each of the Unions to monitor the progress of the activities

**The monitoring process**

- **a)** To review the progress of the work, the UNO organized monthly review meetings with the UP chairmen and union monitoring officers.
- **b)** Union Monitoring officers organize fort-nightly meetings to review the progress of the work in each Union. Each Union Parishad Chairman reviews the production of the sanitary latrine in each Ward and check the register book regarding the sell and production of latrines. S/he has to report the progress regularly to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer. Sub Assistant Engineer of DPHE and Sanitation Monitors have to report the UPC separately.
- **c)** Union Monitoring Officers should visit Village Sanitation Centers, at least three days a week and report to the UNO.
- **d)** UNO, UNICEF Project Coordinator, DPHE officials will visit the project area time to time to observe the activities.
- **e)** After every 3 months, a review meeting is being held with all the UP members in the Patgram Upazila.

**The evaluation system**
- A monitoring survey of KAP on the personal hygiene practices (hand-washing practices) will be conducted during July-December 2000.
- A mid-term survey will be conducted in 2001 to find out the status of hygiene practices.
- A booster intervention will be provided in 2001-2002 to make the practice sustained.

**Achievements so far**
Motivational and sanitary latrine production activities in all the seven Unions of Patgram Upazila going on as planned. In Dohogram Union (the most remotely located Union of Patgram Upazila) and Jagatber Union 100% sanitation coverage has been achieved already. And it is expected that by June 2000, all the 7 Unions under Patgram Upazila will achieve their target.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upazila Nirbahi Officer</th>
<th>Chairman</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPC, UNICEF, Rangpur</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Upazila Project Implementation Officer</td>
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<td>SAE – PHE</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman, Union Parishad</td>
<td>Member</td>
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Next steps

Ensure proper use and maintenance of sanitary latrines
Because of their life-long habit for open defecation. It has been already reported that some of the families yet to start use of sanitary latrines (although they already installed latrines), UNO, monitoring officers and DPHE officials are now trying to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the sanitary latrines by their frequent visits in the areas.

Baby latrines for 3-5 years children
Survey in Bangladesh shows that only about 10 percent of children below 5 years use sanitary latrines. One of the majors reasons for that is, these sanitary latrines are not child friendly. UNICEF together with the mesons and DPHE Executive Engineer a model for child friendly latrine for this age group has been developed. DPHE will start the production of these baby latrines in their production centers on a pilot basis.

Hygiene awareness programme
At present, all the efforts have been directed to achieve the 100% sanitation coverage in the Patgram Upazila, but very little efforts was directed regarding the behavioral development issues. After achieving 100% sanitation coverage in the Patgram Upazila, special emphasis should be given to proper hand washing practices.

Environmental cleanliness drives
Although the people of Patgram Upazila started to use the sanitary latrines but they are not aware about the overall environmental cleanliness of the surrounding areas. As a result people, especially children are still susceptible for getting diarrhea, parasitic infestation and other skin diseases. To make the total Patgram Upazila environmentally sound and sanitary, especial emphasis should be given to environmental cleanliness of the total Patgram Upazila.

Reaching the hard-core poor
To reach the remaining 5% of the hard-to-reach poor, UNO and UPC-UNICEF have taken some very innovative approaches.

Access of safe water
There is very limited number of tubewells in Patgram Upazila. Most of the people rely on kuccha ring well and pond for their drinking and other purposes. This can be one of the major contributing factors for the high incidence of diarrhea in this area. Therefore, safe source of water facilities should be arranged in this area to achieve the desired impact of the pilot project.

Conclusion
The success of Patgram experience brought attention of the civil administration of Rajshahi Division. Mr. Khan Shahabuddin the divisional Commissioner showed keen
interest to replicate this model to other districts in the Rajshahi Division. In this regard, a dissemination workshop was conducted on May 21-23 where all the Deputy Commissioners, sixteen nominated Union Nirbahi Officers, Department of Public Health & Engineering (DPHE)’s territorial Executive Engineers, UNICEF concerned officials of the Rajshahi Division were present and a broad based workplan has been developed at the workshop. Now this model is being taken up for each two unions of 16 districts in Rajshahi Division.

AFROZA AHMED, Project Officer, WES Section, UNICEF, Bangladesh.