INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND GLOBALISATION IN BANGLADESH: NGOs' CAPACITY FOR SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is the product of my own effort and has not been presented to any University in the same or different form to merit a PhD degree other than that for which I am now a candidate.

Signed……

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August 2009

Abstract

The thesis reflects on contemporary community development in Bangladesh within the context of competing streams of indigenous and global knowledge. It examines Bangladeshi non-government organisations (NGOs) and their capacities for social capital and community empowerment, with the view that a 'new knowledge approach' is needed to achieve 'sustainable community development'. The framework is informed by qualitative research, and a number of qualitative data collection methods were employed, which aided a triangulation of perspectives. The research focuses on two communities (one urban, the other rural) from two NGOs in Bangladesh: *Proshika* and Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB). Data was obtained from two indigenous occupations: blacksmiths and goldsmiths. It initially transpired that there were problems within these communities, where NGOs' capacities for social capital and community development were limited. It is suggested that a new approach to knowledge is needed, which considers community development as not simply economic development, but as a social sphere with its own way of thinking. This has several implications for the contributions of NGOs. This is in terms of the new knowledge being approached through the metaphor of the 'middle ground', which acts as a device to help conceptualise 'a field of action' between community life and policy processes. This provides a basis from which to take a critical view of concepts, such as social capital and community empowerment, in the context of globalisation. The thesis argues for the need to find a point of conjuncture between indigenous and global knowledge based development approaches in order to develop new theoretical coherence within development studies and community development theory.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONOMYS

ADAB	Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADC	Area Development Centre
AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AIKS	African indigenous knowledge system
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
ASA	Association for Social Advancement
BAG	Bangladesh Aid Group
BAL	Bangladesh Awami League
BARCIK	Bangladesh Resource Centre for Indigenous Knowledge
BARI	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
BAU	Bangladesh Agricultural University
BDF	Bangladesh Development Forum
BDS	Business development service
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BJP	Bangladesh Jatio Party
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BOND	British Overseas NGOs for Development
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CARE	Christian Action Research and Education
CBOs	Community based organisations
CD	Community development
CEA	Community empowerment approach
CEPR	Centre for Economic Policy Research
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracks
CNP	Community Nutrition Programme
DFID	Department for International Development
DLRC	Djanogly Learning Resources Centre
ERG	Economic Research Group
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FBOs	Faith based organisations
FGD	Focus group discussion
GDP	Gross domestic product
GFHR	Global Forum for Health Research
GK	Global knowledge
GPF	Global Policy Forum
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GOs	Government organisations
GPF	Global Policy Forum
GUP	Gono Unnayan Prochesta
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IDCOL	Infrastructure Development Company Limited
IFM	International Monetary Fund
IGPs	Income generation programmes
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
IK	Indigenous knowledge

IKS	Indigenous knowledge system
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTRAC	International NGOs Training and Research Centre
IPR	Intellectual property rights
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LCG	Local Consultations Group
LGD	Local Government Division
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LK	Local knowledge
LSE	London School of Economics
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIHVS	Maternal Health Voucher Scheme
MLP	Markets and Livelihoods Programme
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSW	Master of Social Work
NGDOs	Non-government development organisations
NGOAB	NGO Affairs Bureau
NGOs	Non-government organisations
NNGOs	Northern NGOs
NPM	New public management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAB	Practical Action Bangladesh
PALS	Participatory Approaches Learning Study
PCR	Patron-client relation
PESS	Proshika entrepreneurs savings scheme
PKSP	Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation
PMCA	Participatory market-chain analysis
PNGOs	Partner NGOs
PP	Participatory plan
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy paper
PSDT	Practical skill development training
RDA	Rural Development Academy
REOPA	Rural Employment Opportunities for Public Assets
RIS	Regional Innovation Strategies
RMS	Rapid market survey
SC	Social capital
SCA	Social capital approach
SDNP	Sustainable Development Networking Programme
SEED	Small Economic Enterprise Development
SK	Scientific knowledge
SKS	Scientific knowledge system
SLA	Sustainable livelihood approach
SLF	Sustainable livelihood framework
SNGOs	Southern NGOs
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
TBA	Traditional birth attendants
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
Tk	Taka
TKS	Traditional knowledge system
ToT	Training of trainers

UN	United Nations
TUP	Targeting ultra-poor
UCCER	UNESCO Centre for Comparative Education Research
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Organisation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UP	Union Parishad
US	United States
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
WRC	Wheat Research Centre

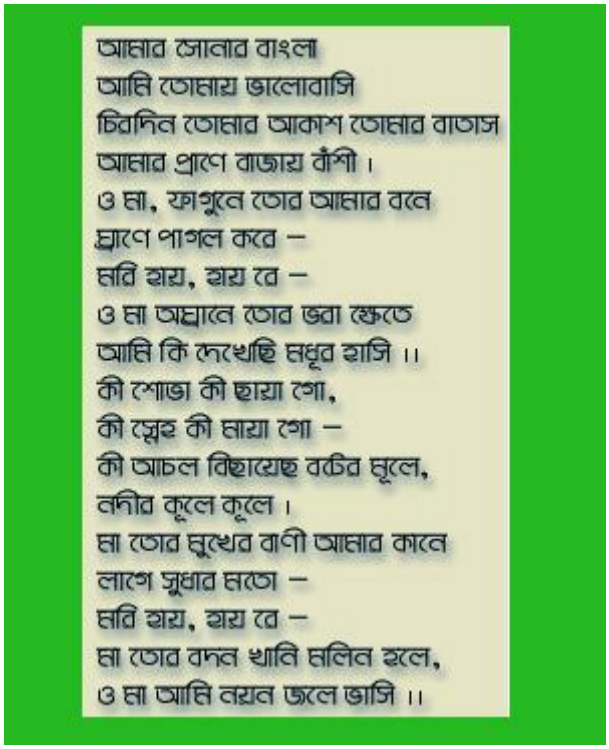
GLOSSARY OF INDIGENOUS WORDS

Words	***Meanings***
Apa	Sister (in Muslim community)
ASA	The name of a NGO in Bangladesh, ASA means 'hope'
Ayurveda	Herbal treatment
Bajuband	Armlet
Banglalink	A name of a private mobile company of Bangladesh
Banglapedia	The national Encyclopaedia of Bangladesh
Bar	Day
Bazar	Village market
Bhai	Brother (to mean equal and good relation)
Bilat ferot	A person comes from Britain
Chatabaj	Money collected from someone illegally
Chhuri	Knife
Chimta	Longs
Churi	Bangle
Da	Billhook
Dada	Brother (in Hindu community)
Didi	Sister (in Hindu community)
Dul	Earring
Gahana	Ornament
Gobeshok	Researcher
Grameen Bank	The name of a bank, it means the bank for the village poor
Hansuli	Ornament for the neck
Hapor	A tool of the blacksmith to prepare air
Har	Necklace
Hat	Village market
Hata	A big spoon like instrument
Jamati Islam	The name of an Islamic political party
Jarip	Survey
Jihad	Religious war
Kacha	Mud/raw
Kallan	Welfare
Kamar	Blacksmith
Kamar para	Village of blacksmiths
Kanpasha	Ear ornament
Karma	Action
Karmajibi	Worker
Karmakar	Blacksmith
Kisti	Instalment
Kodal	Spade
Kural	Axe
Mahajan	A village merchant, dealer, banker, money changer, and moneylender. In Bengal social and economic history, Mahajan is a person who have subordinate role in the process of productions, distribution, and selling of products
Mal	Anklet
Monga	The name of a social disaster in Bangladesh
Mouza	The lowest revenue collection unit in Bangladesh
Mullah	Religious leader
Nakchhabi	Small star-shaped ornament put on the nostril

Words	***Meanings***
Nath	Big nose ring
Nokshi Katha	A traditional handcrafted cloth used as a light duvet or blanket
Nolak	Nose-ring
Pourty	Market
Prek	Nails
Proshikkhan	Training
Prothom Alo	A popular national daily newspaper in Bangladesh
Pucca	Building/concrete
Sadar	Central
Sangstha	Organisation
Shabal	Pickaxe
Shakal shava	Morning meeting
Shamity	Association
Swanirvar	Independent
Shaptahik	Weekly
Sharnakar	Goldsmith
Shikkha	Education
Sinthipati	Ornament put the head in the parting of hear
Sona	Gold
Swarnakar	Goldsmith
Taka	Bangladeshi currency
Thana	Local administrative town in Bangladesh
Union Parishad	Local government office
Upazila	Local administrative town in Bangladesh, it was renamed as Upazila, when it was decentralised.
Uttorer lok	Person who is from West

Bangladesh Flag

The National Anthem of Bangladesh



My Bengal of gold, I love you
Forever your skies, your air set my heart in tune
as if it were a flute,
In Spring, Oh mother mine, the fragrance from
your mango-groves makes me wild with joy-
Ah, what a thrill!
In Autumn, Oh mother mine,
in the full-blossomed paddy fields,
I have seen spread all over - sweet smiles!
Ah, what a beauty, what shades, what an affection
and what a tenderness!
What a quilt have you spread at the feet of
banyan trees and along the banks of rivers!
Oh mother mine, words from your lips are like
Nectar to my ears!
Ah, what a thrill!
If sadness, Oh mother mine, casts a gloom on your face,
my eyes are filled with tears!

Original in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore Translated by Professor Syed Ali Ahsan

Chapter One
Research context and background

Introduction

This chapter provides a brief outline of the research context with a general description of the geographical and socio-economical characteristics of Bangladesh. The chapter also considers the socio-economic, political, and public policy contexts and clarifies the role of the non-government organisations (NGOs) and their relationships with state and donors. The chapter also includes a statement of the research problem, the research objectives, research questions and the importance of the research.

Research and country context: Bangladesh

The thesis uses four basic concepts: indigenous knowledge (IK), globalisation, social capital, and community development. The two important development approaches the thesis uses are: 'social capital' (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001) and 'community empowerment' (Laverack, 2006). It is argued that NGOs' interventions in developing countries such as Bangladesh, are now focused on social capital formation and community empowerment. Currently, the majority of the NGOs in Bangladesh work to create opportunities and resources, such as education, skills, social networks, and employment. Some NGOs also aim directly at community empowerment; their ultimate objective is to secure community development. The NGOs use many interventions and the most important is *knowledge*. Knowledge, both IK and global/scientific knowledge (GK/SK), is now considered an important aspect of development intervention for NGOs. The thesis considers an appropriate paradigm to review such knowledge approaches, where NGOs' interventions can work towards sustainable community development in Bangladesh.

The research finds that the NGOs are working with both indigenous and global knowledge approaches, each with comparative advantages and disadvantages. In response, the research hypothesises that this challenges the NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment due to globalisation. With this in mind, the study selected two programmes from two leading NGOs in Bangladesh: the Markets and Livelihoods Programme (MLP) of Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and the Small Economic Enterprise Development (SEED) programme of *Proshika*. The study further selected two

groups of people, blacksmiths (MLP) and goldsmiths (SEED), from two communities served by those NGOs.

Bangladesh achieved its independence in 1971, but has deep rooted traditions and cultural practices (UNESCO, 2001:45). Bangladesh took the inspiration for an independent state from the historic language movement of 21st February 1952, which remains a milestone and a red letter day for the people of Bangladesh, who had fought long and hard to achieve democracy. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has been a parliamentary democracy since 1991. As a developing country, Bangladesh is progressing gradually, though many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not yet achieved, partially due to its high population growth rate (World Bank, 2005). As the Malthusian theory (Malthus, 1798) suggests, the country is struggling with the contest between population control and depleting resources. Largely, due to the limitations of the Government initiatives, the NGO is increasingly becoming a necessary sector for community development in Bangladesh (Devine, 2003:228). In light of this, the context of the research has three aspects: the NGOs' use of IK and GK for social capital and community empowerment; the challenges that arise; and the options for community development.

The IK in Bangladesh is an integral, valuable resource based on deep rooted traditions. Craft persons, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, have acquired various skills, developed through the wisdom and experience of successive generations (UNESCO, 2001:1). The thesis enquired into how such knowledge, culture, skills, and practices may be woven into community development, most of them being established through a process of trial and error, which underpin their ontological and epistemological basis rather than through scientific research. However, I argue that they do have some scientific principles behind them, though such principles may appear somewhat obscure or even immersed in knowledge bases which are not at present fully recognised as scientific approaches. However, I believe that the practitioners and other beneficiaries of this indigenous and traditional knowledge and these technologies are not fully aware of the scientific principles behind them, due to illiteracy, ignorance and lack of social education. The research forms part of this important process through a qualitative investigation of both traditional and globalised knowledge. Through selecting specific examples, assessments have made, identifying the existing modes of scientific principles within them.

Etymologically, the word Bangladesh is derived from the cognate 'Vanga', which was first mentioned in the Hindu scripture *Aitareya Aranyaka* (composed between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D). Another school of thought defines the term 'Vanga' as deriving from *Bodo* (aborigines of Assam) words 'Bang' and 'la', which connote 'wide plains'.

Picture-1: *World Map*

Source: Google (2009)

Bangladesh is located in south Asia, between 20°34' and 26°38' north latitude and between 88°01' and 92°41' east longitude. The country is bordered on the east, west and north by India except for a small strip of boundary with Myanmar on the southeast. The Bay of Bengal lies on the south and the Himalayas are close to its border in the northwest. The total area is 148,393 sq. kilometres (56000 sq. miles), with a population of 130 million (79 per cent of whom live in the countryside), crisscrossed by numerous rivers including the *Padma, Meghna, Jamuna* and *Brahmaputra,* and their innumerable distributaries and tributaries. The country's capital and largest city is Dhaka (population 14.76 million). The commercial capital

Picture- 2: *Bangladesh Map*

Source: United Nations (2004a)

and largest sea port is Chittagong (3.27 million) and other major cities are Khulna (1.17 million) and Rajshahi (0.70 million) (GoB, 2001). Total Divisions are six, Districts 64, *Upazilas* 490, Unions 4451, villages 60,000, households 19,979,932, and City Corporations six. There are eleven government universities, sixty five private universities, fourteen government medical colleges, five private medical colleges, four engineering colleges, 1,268 colleges, twenty polytechnic institutes, 11,846 secondary schools, and 95,367 primary schools

Socio-economic and political conditions in Bangladesh and the origin and role of its NGOs

The development context of Bangladesh is related to the country's overall socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. Bangladesh got its independence from Pakistan in 1971 with a socialist ideology to free the mass of people from hunger and exploitation, and equal the distribution of power and resources. Bangladesh was ruled by a number of political parties: a parliamentary democracy (1971-75, 1991-95), a one-party socialist rule (*BAKSAL*, 1975), multiparty political party (1975-81), military government (1981-90). The ruling parties were the *Bangladesh Awami League* (BAL)[1], Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), and *Bangladesh Jatio Party* (BJP). However, Bangladesh has been ruled by the military governments for a long period of time. On 11th January 2007, following widespread violence, a caretaker government was appointed to administer the next general election. The country had suffered from extensive corruption, disorder and political violence. The new caretaker government made it a priority to root out corruption from all levels of government. To this end, many notable politicians and officials, along with large numbers of lesser officials and party members, were arrested on corruption charges. The caretaker government held a fair and free election on 29th December 2008. BAL Sheikh Hasina won the elections with a landslide victory and took the oath of Prime Minister on 6th January 2009.

The country's development is stated clearly in the state's constitution and Bangladesh is committed to implement its constitutional procedures. Article 16 states: "The state shall adopt effective measures to bring about a radical transformation in the rural areas through the promotion of an agricultural revolution, the provision of rural electrification, the development of cottage and other industries, and the improvement of education, communications and public health in those areas so as progressively to remove the disparity in the standards of living between the urban and the rural areas." By inference we get a directive

[1] Bangladesh Awami League (BAL), also translated as the Bangladesh Peoples' League, is the mainstream secular political party in Bangladesh and was the political catalyst for Bengali discontent and rebellion in 1971. The League, with co-founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as its leader from 1953 was an opposition party in Pakistan and had a moderately socialist ideology. The party's candidates won a majority in the 1970 elections, but the central government in West Pakistan banned the League after war between East and West Pakistan erupted in early 1971. When Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) won its independence in late 1971, the party was the nation's dominant political force. The party is now headed by Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of the late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In 1981 and again in 1991 it was defeated in a popular election by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP). The League, however, went on to win the 1996 parliamentary elections (Columbia Encyclopedia, 2003).

to address the disparity in the standards of living. Again, Article 19 (2) states: "The state shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality between men and women and to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens, and of opportunities in order to attain a uniform level of economic development throughout the republic" (GoB, 2008b:18). But practically the country failed to implement these constitutional procedures. The state policy of socialism was hardly taken seriously and was formally deleted from the country's constitution during the Ershad regime. The operation of the nationalised industries, previously abandoned by their Pakistani owners, was driven by the objective of enriching a few politically favoured private individuals. The initial process of private sector development, as pursued during the regime of General Ziaur Rahman, turned out to be an early version of what is now called 'crony capitalism'. By and large, Bangladesh did not see any significant reversal of reforms, even as governments changed, because both the large parties (BAL and BNP) were broadly committed to carrying out the same economic reform agenda (Mahmud *et al.,* 2008:17).

It is important to emphasise that the economy of Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable economies in the world, characterised by an extremely high population density, a low resource base, high incidence of natural disasters, and persistent socio-political instability, especially during the initial years of the state. Moreover, the country inherited a war-ravaged economy after the Independence War. With such extremely adverse initial circumstances, the implications for economic growth were considered extremely unfavourable for Bangladesh (Sen *et al.,* 2004:1). In effect, with extremely bleak development prospects, the predominant theme that persisted during the initial years was one of negative images. Sen *et al.,* (2004:1) argue that Bangladesh was considered a model of extremities and odds of human existence, an example of a hopeless future, a case of constant fear of some hidden disasters in the making, and a permanent cause of liberal conscience and global welfarism. They add that the country was regarded as a 'landscape of disaster' and a 'catalogue of woes'. Such pessimistic appraisals defined a development discourse that conditioned the mind-set of the domestic policy makers as well as the external donors for the subsequent two decades. The 'agrarian pessimists' highlighted the importance of traditional production relations constraining the future developments of productive forces. Similarly, 'persistent authoritarianism' was considered as the ultimate political fate of Bangladesh (Sen *et al*., 2004:1).

Mahmud *et al.,* (2008:17) argue that one important development in Bangladeshi politics is that business interests have gradually gained influence over politics. It was seen that the country's first parliament had few members whose principal occupation was business (politicians traditionally coming from the profession of law), but within the latest, ninth parliament (formed in January 2009), 160 MPs (Members of Parliament) out of 300 are businessmen. However, the present parliament is dominated by businessmen. This transformation in politics has had an important impact on the policy-making process. By reviewing twelve papers written by the development experts in Bangladesh, Ahluwalia & Mahmud (undated:4) show that Bangladesh is passing through an important phase of transition, and this transition is taking place on both the fronts of economic and social development. Economic reform is stalled in many instances by political infighting and corruption at all levels of government. Progress has also been blocked by opposition from the bureaucracy, public sector unions, and other vested interest groups.

Bangladesh already had five long term (five years) plans, two medium (two years), two PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) (2005-2008 and 2008-2011) plans and thirty seven annual (yearly) development plans. The 'poverty' issue has been identified as one of the most important problems in the country. A number of programmes and projects such as agriculture, rural development, primary and mass education, health and family welfare, women and children affairs, and labour and employment are considered for poverty alleviation. The social sectors of the government include the poverty-related projects such as agriculture, education, youth and sports, mass communication, cultural affairs, and public administration (Farid, 2007). It was seen that social development and poverty alleviation projects work as supportive efforts to achieve the planning goals in Bangladesh. The social safety net programme of the present budget (2008-09) is of unique character and very extensive in nature. Probably for the first time in Bangladesh, a budget addresses the problem of the poor and of the rural areas meticulously. This budget implements the projects such as the vulnerable group development (VGD) Programme, rural employment opportunities for public assets (REOPA), maternal health voucher scheme (MIHVS) and community nutrition programme (CNP), *char* livelihood program and hill tracts village centered programme. The budget supports self employment by providing funds to PKSP (*Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation*), NGO Foundation, and Social Development Foundation to be channeled through different NGOs as micro-credit (Bangladesh Budget, 2008-09).

It was found that the Government in Bangladesh has taken the human factor as the instrument as well as the ultimate objective of development. Since it is being gradually recognised that people must be the focus of development for poverty to be alleviated on a sustainable basis, productive capacity of the poor must be raised. The last Five Year Plan in 1997-2002 stated that the best way to do so is to raise the quality of human capital (GoB, 1998). Therefore, human resources development has been accepted by the Government of Bangladesh as the most powerful and effective strategy for poverty alleviation. The liability of a large population in this most densely populated country can be transformed into a most valuable asset through human resources development (Farid, 2007). It is seen that the policies aim at promoting a development process that ensures equitable access to benefits, particularly for the poor and the disadvantaged groups, including women and children and their empowerment. The target of all public policies is to create built-in mechanisms for equitable growth. Efforts are now increasingly directed toward combining resources with social mobilisation, local capacity building, environmental sustainability, gender equality and with participation in and ownership of development activities. Such actions include both targeted interventions that focus on the needs, interests and rights of the poor and disadvantaged groups as well as structural reforms and administrative reorganisation for good governance to create an enabling environment for their economic, social and political empowerment.

The poverty issue in rural areas is more vulnerable and fragile than in the urban areas. In rural areas poverty refers to forms of economic, social and psychological deprivation, occurring among people lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources for the minimum required level of living. It is widely recognised that a multi-dimensional, problem-solving mechanism is needed to face this challenge. The Planning Commission of Bangladesh recognises that, despite some progress in poverty alleviation and social sector development in Bangladesh, much remains to be done (GoB, 1998). The *Rural Development and Cooperatives Division* of the Government is responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of rural development programmes. The Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB), the Department of Cooperatives, and the Academies fur Rural Development at Comilla and Bogra play important roles for rural development. Major functions of the rural development agencies include employment and income generation, provision of credit and institutional support to rural target groups, vulnerable group

development, formation of rural cooperatives, provision of health care, sanitation, safe drinking water, education, etc.

A number of international organisations, such as the ADB (2008), DFID (2009), World Bank (2008), together with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB, 2007) state that the country is progressing day by day, many businesses are doing well, and decades of steady economic growth have helped a lot of people get out of poverty. Many international NGOs, such as DFID, CARE Bangladesh, ADB, UNESCO, etc. are working with the Government sector to stimulate more investment so that it brings economic opportunities for millions of poor people, including the extreme poor. To review the overall development in Bangladesh, the World Bank (2008 in Mahmud *et al*., 2008) states that Bangladesh has, in recent decades, achieved reasonably rapid economic growth and significant progress in social development indicators such as sustained macroeconomic stability, improved health and education, gender parity in primary and secondary education, and a steady decline in poverty levels. But still the country needs to concentrate to achieve the goals of the MDGs, and Bangladesh is committed to achieving these by 2015. The goals are included in the country's first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), *Unlocking the Potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction,* and were addressed by the reports of the twelve thematic groups that helped prepare the strategy paper. Both the Medium-term Budgetary Framework and the Annual Development Programme have also been tuned to the MDGs. In this regard, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB, 2007: xiv) states that with eight years remaining for these goals to be fulfilled, this mid-term review will help guide government policies. Sen *et al*., (2004: 2) argue that in recent years, Bangladesh has graduated into the league of 'medium human development', according to the global ranking of the UNDP.

Ahluwalia & Mahmud (undated:4) propose that, for higher GDP growth, investments in both public and private sectors will need to be accelerated. The prevailing political and economic stability has greatly encouraged investment in the private sector. The trend of foreign direct investment is encouraging. The government is also committed to a market economy and has been pursuing policies for supporting and encouraging private investment, and eliminating unproductive expenditures in the public sector. A number of measures have been taken to strengthen the planning system and intensify reforms in the financial sector. The government believes that wastage of resources is a far greater obstacle to development than inadequacy of resources.

It is agreed that the overall development in Bangladesh is slow, and a number of explanations are offered for this slow progress. I think the major impediments are: the desperate initial conditions after gaining independence, lack of resources, natural disasters, widespread corruption, and a record of systemic governance failure. Mahmud (2008) argues that the development strategy and the associated economic environment in Bangladesh since the early 1970s have undergone successive shifts and refinements, often linked with change in the ruling political regime. He adds that it was out of pragmatism that the shift in policy away from socialism to private sector development was initiated within a few years of gaining independence. Now Bangladesh faces the enormous challenge of achieving accelerated economic growth and alleviating the massive poverty that afflicts forty to fifty per cent. Ahluwalia & Mahmud (undated:1) argue that the strategies for meeting this challenge have included a shift away from state bureaucratic controls and industrial autarky towards economic liberalisation and integration with the global economy on the one hand, and building human capital and empowering the poor on the other. Policies of substantial budgetary allocations for health and education (admittedly within a small total resource base) were also combined with institutional innovations and public-private partnership to venture to develop a human capital base from the very poor initial conditions. The market-oriented liberalising policy reforms were initiated around the mid-1980s with the support of the IMF and the World Bank, and have been followed through since then in various phases. Although aid conditionality did have an important leveraging role, the sequencing, design, and implementation of these reforms had much to do with the political incentives in relation to the economic rationale of such policies. It is generally agreed that economic reforms in Bangladesh have not been matched by progress in building the institutions of political and economic governance (Mahmud *et al.,* 2008:14).

Despite the history of democratic processes, Bangladesh has its share of the acute syndromes of a fractured polity, bad governance, convulsive society, a dual economy, and a political leadership with irreconcilable beliefs, symbols and prejudices. Corruption and poor governance are impeding Bangladesh's efforts to reduce its massive poverty by reducing economic growth and lowering the achievement of social objectives. I think that these destroy citizens' faith in their government; they also discourage the foreign and domestic investment, which Bangladesh needs so badly, and they undermine the ability of Bangladesh's development partners to sustain their support for the country. The UNDP (2006: 1-2) reports that governance in Bangladesh is on the brink, in large part due to

pervasive corruption and élite capture of the state. Corruption and inefficiency at the highest political levels have, in effect, served to almost destroy the legitimacy of democratic rule. Politics is ubiquitous, and political competition has degenerated into a 'politics of money', and a 'politics of confrontation', as political stakes have heightened over winning or losing control of state power and its patronage system. Economic growth is essential to reduce poverty, but corruption slows economic growth. However, the country is seen by many as mired in a 'crisis of governance' and experiencing 'degraded and deadlocked democracy'. I think that fifteen years of multi-party rule has not resulted in the consolidation of electoral democracy. The political system has become dysfunctional, institutions have become unresponsive and a systemic lack of respect for and enforcement of the rule of law is generally observed. It is seen that democratically elected governments have fallen far short of delivering on their promises to promote economic prosperity, social justice and attend to the peoples' welfare.

Poverty alleviation in Bangladesh takes place, but there are major differences between the eastern and western parts of the country. Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet Divisions, all in the eastern part of the country, have had the most significant reductions in poverty; in contrast to Barisal, Khulna and Rajshahi Divisions, in the western part of the country. Regional differences were quite sharp in 2005 – the poverty headcount ranged from a low of 32 per cent in Dhaka and 34 per cent in Chittagong and Sylhet to over 50 per cent in Barisal and Rajshahi. In fact, Dhaka and Chittagong, with just over half the country's population, contributed as much as 79 per cent of the aggregate reduction in poverty headcount between 2000 and 2005 (GoB, 2008a:18).

Within these socio-economic and political paradigms, the NGO sector became an inevitable agent for accelerating its socio-economic conditions. The literature shows a number of reasons why the NGO sector flourishes in Bangladesh. The root of the NGOs in Bangladesh is from the colonial period, when private charities and philanthropic groups were formed to establish or maintain schools, hospitals, and orphanages (ADB, 1999:1). While NGOs existed in the former East Pakistan, the impetus for the birth of the development NGOs in Bangladesh came in the wake of the terrible cyclone of 1970 and the War of Independence in 1971 (ADB, 1999:1). Initially, NGOs were raised at relief and reconstruction. On the other hand, Jackson & Islam (2005:47-48) claim that the reason was the shortage of government funds, with Bangladesh increasingly dependent on international donors. The expansion and legitimation of NGOs as

influential partners in socio-economic development began largely in the 1980s. According to some sources, the proliferation of NGOs in Bangladesh emerged as one of the mainstream development interventions to address poverty alleviation and female empowerment only since 1990 (Newaz, 2003:v). There are three important factors that encourage NGOs' expansion in development activities, these are: NGOs' success stories, the aid agencies use of NGOs for development activities, and the NGOs increased funding sources from both the government and foreign donors (Haque, 2002:414; GoB, 1998; Rahman, 2000). ADB (1999:2) reports that the need for NGOs started when inefficiencies in delivery of goods and services led the Government, with support from its development partners, to take measures to break monopolies and allow the market mechanism to operate. The vacuum created by the failure of either the Government or the market to deliver services was filled by NGOs. Now community development (CD) and NGOs' activities are synonymous in Bangladesh.

In its broadest sense, the term NGO refers to organisations (i) not based in government and (ii) not created to earn profit (ADB, 1998). On the basis of size, the NGOs can be classified as big, medium, and small. From a purposive point of view, NGOs can be single-purpose-based or multiple-purpose-based (Haque, 2002:415). On the other hand, on the basis of source of funding, working coverage and status, NGOs can be classified into three: international, national and local NGOs.

There are contradictory opinions regarding how many NGOs are working in Bangladesh. According to the NGOAB and ADAB, by late 2004 there were 1,882 NGOs registered with the NGOAB, with around 1,100-1,200 receiving foreign funds (World Bank, 2006). The NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB, 2009) lists 2,418 NGOs, but the increase of NGOs in Bangladesh is an issue of concern. The World Bank (2006:11) sates that there are 2,000 NGOs working in Bangladesh, and the Bank identifies BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee), ASA (Association for Social Advancement), Grameen Bank, and *Proshika* as big NGOs, which accounted for 85 per cent of all donors funding to NGOs. They employ ten thousand employees and handle multi-million dollar budgets. These big NGOs have also provided models for the programmes and organisational structures and practices to others. Fruttero & Gauri (2005) say that by 2000, more than 90 per cent of rural communities had some NGO presence. Around 13 million, mainly poor women, are now reached through micro-finance programmes, some 80 per cent of primary enrolment is provided by NGO schools, and there are nationwide

health and sanitation programmes, where NGOs are involved. The World Bank (2006:3) shows one key factor in the rapid growth of the sector has undoubtedly been the availability of foreign aid: grants to NGOs averaged $160 million annually in the first half of the nineties, and has grown to about $238 million annually since then.

Development through NGOs has been a landmark in developing countries such as Bangladesh; their contributions have been defined in many ways, such as 'democratisation of development' (Clark, 1991), 'sources of development alternatives' (Drabek, 1987), 'vehicle for popular participation' (Farrington & Bebbington, 1993), 'advocates for the poor', and 'cost effective and efficient' (Mercer, 1999:247; Nel *et al.*, 2001:5; Bebbington, 2004:937). Newaz (2003:53-54) describes these as innovative approaches as conscientisation, holistic, and minimalist. The 'conscientising' approach suggests the poor are systematically disorganised by the economic, social, and political relationships. It holds that the only long-term solution to the problems of poverty is to assist the poor in challenging the relationships with increasing awareness, and help them become organised so that they can use solidarity as a means of escaping their exploitations- social, economic and political. The 'holistic' approach should be focused on non-formal education, social and political awareness building, and political mobilisation to confront patriarchal power structure, particularly for women, to address the gender subordination. On the other hand, the 'minimalist' approach supports providing credit with minimal training or other supplementary support services to generate income (Ahmad, 2006:46; Newas, 2003).

Most NGOs in Bangladesh provide a strikingly homogenous set of services, with credit dominating. The World Bank (2006:iii) reports a survey of three hundred NGO branches in 2003 and shows that, while the total range of NGO interventions is wide, the typical NGO branch provides between three to four services. Around 90 per cent of all NGO branch offices provide credit services, followed by health (56%), sanitation (52%) and education (45%). Islam *et al.*, (2005:21) conducted a study of NGOs which provide non-formal education and found that most had included income generation vocational training as a major content area (100%), followed by fisheries, poultry, apiculture, agriculture, animal husbandry, general education, and the practice of literacy skills, health and nutrition, social development (gender equity, co-operative, decision making, and leadership), and cottage industry. But the sector is dominated by some élite NGOs, such as the Grameen Bank, BRAC, ASA and *Proshika.* The impact of micro-

credit is an increasing income, aiding female empowerment, children's schooling and the health status of the rural poor whilst reducing household vulnerability. These social gains are also associated with the complementary social mobilisation, training and awareness-raising activities that typically go hand in hand.

Several NGOs have established commercial enterprises, whose profit stream is earmarked to support their development programmes. This 'endowment model' is designed to reduce dependence on donors and other outside funding sources, and is an innovative solution also used by foundations and charities elsewhere. A further innovation is the NGOs' role as 'social venture capitalists', developing 'frontier' markets with commercial ventures, such as *Grameen* Phone and *Arong* of BRAC. The World Bank (2006:vii–viii) indicates that the profitability of NGO enterprises varies, and larger NGOs tend to have the edge. The current market share of most NGO businesses is small, with some notable exceptions. Overall, NGO businesses that are separately incorporated from the parent NGOs' social programmes perform better, because separation allows for greater specialisation, more strategic business planning, and improved governance.

The NGOs' relationships with the Government and donors have been viewed in three ways: legitimacy, financing, and monitoring and supervision. The World Bank (2006:viii) states that the legal framework relating to NGOs is obsolete, with an over-abundance of laws and official agencies with limited capacity. The NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) is widely recognised as the primary regulator of development NGOs and administering the laws relating to foreign donations in Bangladesh. There are twelve laws for registering and regulating NGOs, but most NGOs register under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961, administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare (Wold Bank, 2006; Ahmad, 2006:41). Staffing at NGOAB has barely changed since 1990, even though the number of NGOs the agency is supposed to oversee has tripled. As a result, delays are common, financial reports are not scrutinised adequately, and basic data relating to foreign-funded NGOs are not maintained systematically. The micro-credit apex body, *Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation* (PKSF), introduced some standardised financial management practices for microfinance programmes, but accounting and auditing practices are also influenced by donor financial reporting requirements. Such requirements are highly variable and typically focus on the donor-financed project rather than on the whole institution (World Bank, 2006:viii).

Due to its historical dependency on external aid, Bangladesh has one of the strongest local presences of donors, both globally and within South Asia. This large presence has created the need for mechanisms that can help to coordinate the activities of the various donors and the Government of Bangladesh. One such mechanism was the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF), which functioned as the apex body for dialogue and aided coordination at the international level until 2005, when it was replaced by the first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Implementation Forum. Both the BDF and its successor are comprised of members from the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), as well as international and local representatives of donor agencies (Mathisen, 2006). The BDF existed under the name of the Bangladesh Aid Group (BAG), also commonly referred to as the Aid Consortium until 1999, when it was renamed the BDF. In the mid-seventies, the World Bank took the initiative to establish the informal Local Consultations Group (LCG) to meet the demand for local aid coordination and donor-GoB dialogue on development issues and priority reforms in Bangladesh. Since its beginnings, the LCG has gone through an evolutionary process, which has considerably enhanced its scope and significance, and it currently functions as the forum for local aid coordination and policy dialogue between the Government and donors in Bangladesh. Mathisen (2006) argues that the LCG sub-group on Governance functions to promote an active dialogue on good governance in Bangladesh, and to strengthen coordination and co-operation both vis-à-vis the Government and with the donor.

NGOs and donors increasingly face the twin challenges of demonstrating effectiveness in their work and accountability in their relationships with various stakeholders. Donors, on the one hand, are particularly concerned about accountability of NGOs in the efficient and effective delivery of services. NGOs, on the other hand, are often concerned that accountability to donors can overshadow and overwhelm their accountability to communities and to their own missions (Ebrahim, 2004:4). There are a number of ways in which donors provide direct financing to NGOs in Bangladesh- the most common is funding for specific projects. Where financing needs are large, donor funds may be pooled and a donor-liaison function introduced to coordinate support and reduce transaction costs for the NGO. In some instances, donors have financed the whole range of NGO activities, and in a few of these cases, the institution develops into a different legal entity by the end of the funding period. In recent years, the recognition that partnerships with smaller NGOs carry high transaction costs has

increased reliance on wholesale vehicles, in which an agency manages a pool of money for which smaller NGOs compete (World Bank, 2006:vi).

On the other hand, the financing of NGOs through the government budget improves the comprehensiveness of the fiscal framework and the quality of public policy choices. However, the manner by which this service delivery partnership is managed matters a lot, as government-NGO contracting has not escaped the governance problems associated with public procurement in general. These include absence of transparency, bribes associated with contract awards, delays and rent seeking, and emergence of fake, fly-by-night NGOs. The World Bank (2006: vi-vii) states that the successful contracting practices of PKSF, as well as the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) - both agencies with substantial professional capacity and autonomy - should be mainstreamed throughout government. These practices include strict eligibility criteria, transparent guidelines for NGO selection, and monitoring mechanisms to assess performance. The Bank also adds that the successful contracting of NGOs typically also includes competitive bidding with transparent, time-bound application and approval processes. The newly established NGO Foundation should adopt and adhere to such best practices.

It is argued that the main role of government is in modernising the legal and regulatory framework, and ensuring effective oversight of NGO activities. It is important that all parts of government recognise NGOs as allies in development, and accept constructive criticism as supportive of a democratic polity. Government should withdraw where NGOs have the clear edge in the delivery of certain services. As the process of decentralisation evolves, local governments can play a more active role in delivering services in partnership with NGOs. Government ought to strengthen monitoring and contracting procedures to improve the effectiveness of aid that is channelled to NGOs. The Government-NGO Coordination Council should be revived to provide a forum for regular government-NGO discussions. Donors should continue to support NGO activities in Bangladesh, both to improve pro-poor service delivery and to promote a broad-based civil society, while ensuring that they do not undermine the accountability of NGOs to Bangladeshi stakeholders.

The NGOs' development interventions became popular and effective for community development in Bangladesh for various reasons. Their close links with the community, their quick response to new circumstances, ownership and participation, basic needs, human rights, gender equality, the environment, and

sustainable development have assigned greater power of NGOs' activities (Haque, 2002:412). The World Bank (2005:i) states that Bangladesh has nearly achieved the MDG's goals relating to elimination of gender disparity in schooling opportunities. Dreze (2004) says that Bangladesh is doing better on most social indicators, such as lower infant and maternal mortality rates, higher child immunisation rates, better access to 'improved' water sources and sanitation, and higher primary enrolment rates than India. Kahler (2000:10), through some case studies of NGOs' intervention in developing countries, argues that NGOs' flexibility in programming has allowed for significant innovation. Developing localised, tailor-made responses to technical development problems has forced NGOs to innovate.

Perceptions of NGOs' contributions toward development are mixed. Some believe that NGOs are flexible, innovative, and efficient vehicles for the delivery of basic services and for poverty alleviation. The NGOs can reach poor communities and remote areas at lower cost than governments. They can identify genuine local needs, promote participation and transfer appropriate technologies as the 'magic bullets' of development (Gauri & Fruttero, 2003). On the other hand, today NGOs are involved in all stages of political processes within the UN, influencing decision-making and policy implementation from the inside (Martens, 2006:691). Others have argued that most NGOs are started and controlled by charismatic individuals, who necessarily limit participatory decision-making (Wood, 1997), and effectiveness remains weak (Edwards & Hulme, 1995). One of the significant problems that NGOs are facing at present is partnership problems with different groups, including GOs versus NGOs and NGOs and funding agencies. For example, regarding GO-NGO partnership, the NGOs view is that the Governments often attempt to maintain control over the development process initiated by the NGOs, and that their operations are under constant threat (Riley, 2002:88). Recently, the World Bank (2006:5-8) commented on the public image of the NGOs perceived illegitimate shift into for-profit activity, low service quality and limited development impact. But the Bank agrees that the Bangladeshi NGOs are building good networks with accountability and trust relationships among service users, politicians or policy makers, and service providers. In South Asia, for instance, the *Grameen Bank* has built a worldwide reputation for its work and now offers development advice and consulting services to a number of other countries (Gauri & Fruttero, 2003). It claims that its credit programmes for poor rural women in Bangladesh attain repayment rates consistently over 90 per cent (Khandker *et al.,* 1998), and that they are entirely self-financed.

NGOs' micro-credit programmes have been robustly criticised. Haque (2002:429) argues that large NGOs in Bangladesh are turning into rent-seeking institutions because they charge among the highest interest rates (20-30 per cent) on loans given to the poor. These are now aggressively pursuing profit-making business enterprise in major economic sectors. As a result, the original mission of NGOs such as *Proshika*, *Grameen* Bank, and BRAC to eradicate poverty has become marginalised (Wood, 1997:91). But Newaz (2003:v), Mayoux (1999) and Micro-credit Summit (1997) state that micro-credit to the poor, with a view to achieving equitable and sustainable gains, is the key element for economic and social development in the twenty-first century. Islam & Mia (2007a:89) find that most of the NGOs have programmes for socio-economic development but a very few of them have innovative elements, for example, in non-formal education linked income generation programme (IGP) for poverty alleviation. Buckland (1998:238) argues that a common criticism is that they are small-scale, and consequently do not seriously affect widespread poverty. Hedrick-Wong *et al.*, (2001:145) examine the impact of micro-credit on poverty alleviation initiatives of *Proshika,* and found two problems, such as poor knowledge about the use of micro-credit and NGOs' imperfect enforcement to utilise this credit. Newaz (2003:65) argues that NGOs are accountable to the donor, not to the people, and this upward accountability has skewed NGO activities towards a donor-driven agenda for development, rather than towards indigenous priorities. As a result, Bangladesh is still a 'test case for development' (Zingel, 2000), and its bargaining power runs through development aid. Westergaard & Hossain (2005:65) claim that misuse of loans and its overlapping are very common in micro-credit programmes. Because of their 'donor dependency', their accountability for human services is very loose. They say that recent studies have, however, documented that many women give their loans to their husbands, which causes a big confusion about female empowerment through micro-credit programmes.

My conclusion is threefold: First, the overall development in Bangladesh is managed by the NGOs and their overall development is mixed. But NGOs' development trend is still slow and emphasis is given to the economic issues (i.e. increase of per capita income, employment, and micro-credit) rather than to socio-cultural development (i.e. quality of education, self-reliance, community awareness, peoples' participation in development activities, population control, improvement of nutrition status, and human rights). Moreover, NGOs' contributions have been calculated on the basis of quantitative measurement, but

their quality of services in terms of social development has been either ignored or taken second place. For example, the rate of child enrolment in school, the numbers of people under micro-credit schemes, or the number of people who are taking service from the particular NGO, have come to the front of their success. But the quality of education, peoples' socio-cultural improvement, self-reliance or sustainability issues have been ignored. Secondly, NGOs' development activities are more donor dependent (i.e. financing, policy issues, and development strategies). And thirdly, NGOs' relationships with the Government and donors are not reasonably good. Major problems are related with regulation, financing, monitoring and supervision, and NGOs' freedom for working. As a result, NGOs fail to bring satisfactory progress in social development in Bangladesh.

The research problem

As a relatively newly established independent country, Bangladesh is still struggling with a huge population, low per capita income, mass poverty, political unrest, unemployment and underemployment, illiteracy, child labour, malnutrition, corruption, and related social problems. Natural disasters occur frequently, with floods massively affecting the poor economy every year, delaying its progress. As development agents, many NGOs (both national, local and international) are working to solve these problems. As stated earlier in this chapter, due to shortages of government funds, Bangladesh is increasingly dependent on international donors. Various research studies report that there are disparities regarding the NGOs' contribution for community development. Some of their main weaknesses are low levels of people's participation, less concentration of local resources, and lack of resource mobilisation on the one hand, and donor dependency on the other. As a result, 'intellectual aid' (a gift of useful knowledge, which is very different matter from material aid) (Schumacher, 1973:164-165) is becoming more important for Bangladesh. In this regard, Burns (1989:1) emphasises the small business and entrepreneurship. Bornstein (2004:9) argues that social entrepreneurs are demonstrating new approaches to many social ills and new models to create wealth, promote social well-being, and restore the environment in the globalised world.

Bangladesh was colonised historically by different nations between 1757 and 1947 by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British. I argue that the colonialist or early missionary mentality in Bangladesh is still very much alive.

There is still a widely held view that anything associated with culture[2] and hereditary values is pagan, and thus backward, as reflected by the vast number of urban people who feel hesitant, if not somewhat embarrassed, to associate themselves with their own cultural background. It is time to encourage a more informed recognition of this deeply rooted mentality as the product of a particular time and of specific policies in human history, and to acknowledge the limitations it imposes on development as well as its devastating effects on the natural environment. I argue that many socio-economic problems of Bangladesh are related to culture and attitude. The majority of urban youth still pledge to the 'American dream' and, on a minor scale, to the 'urban dream'. The growing trend towards urbanisation is encouraging thousands to discard their IK, in the belief that new knowledge and new opportunities are to be found in town. Yet the realities of mass unemployment, the high costs of urban life and of further education, and the growing pandemic diseases (such as HIV/AIDS) testify that this is not the case. Many end up homeless, jobless and penniless, with neither the traditional skills that sustained their ancestors, nor the specialised and expensive skills required for employment in a modern town. The inevitable result is poverty.

Existing literature shows that there are debates about which kind of knowledge approach favours the progress of developing countries such as Bangladesh. Some turn to IK, some GK, while others believe in the integration of the two. Each has been practised to varying levels and degrees and Bangladesh already gains from some of these experiences. But the result is not satisfactory (see Barr & Dixon, 1998; Howell, 2003; GFHR, 2004). In facing up to the challenges of globalisation, there is a great demand for a shift from the traditional paradigm to the new paradigm. In this connection, the development literature in Bangladesh needs to investigate a new knowledge paradigm, which considers the global and local realities. This paradigm would look for maximum benefits, but minimise the disadvantages for community development through NGOs' interventions.

[2] Culture generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Cultures can be "understood as systems of symbols and meanings that even their creators contest, that lack fixed boundaries, that are constantly in flux, and that interact and compete with one another" (Findley & Rothney, 2006:14). Culture can be defined as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population which are passed down from generation to generation. It has been called 'the way of life' for an entire society (Williams, 1983). As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, norms of behavior such as law and morality, and systems of belief as well as the art (Goodall, 1986).

The objectives of the study

The thesis attempts to address the following objectives:
The main research objective is to investigate NGOs' capacity for social capital and community development in the context of competing indigenous knowledge (IK) and global knowledge (GK) approaches.

Further objectives are:

- To evaluate the various IK and GK knowledge used by the NGOs
- To know the NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment
- To identify the main limitations of NGOs in the context of competing IK and GK
- To investigate and formulate an appropriate knowledge paradigm for community development.

The research questions

The main research objective seeks to question and evaluate the capacities of Bangladeshi NGOs for social capital and community empowerment in the context of competing IK and GK approaches.
In order to fulfil the research objectives, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

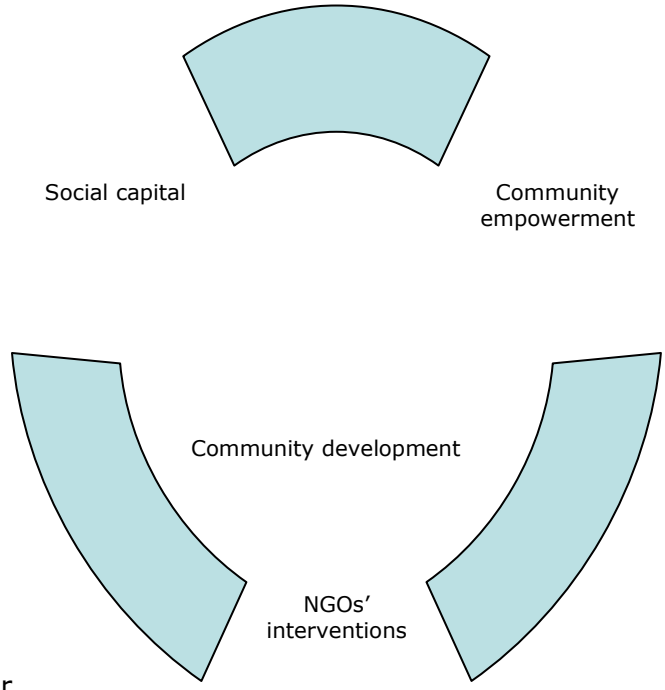
- How do the NGOs use local and global knowledge?
- What are the capacities of NGOs for social capital and community empowerment?
- What are the prime challenges and limitations of NGOs in the context of competing IK and GK approaches?
- What is the appropriate knowledge approach for NGOs to achieve community development in Bangladesh?

The theoretical paradigms and research methodology

The thesis is based on two community development approaches: social capital and community empowerment. The study argues that community development should be considered according to a 'three way relationship', using the concepts of social capital, community empowerment, and NGOs' interventions (Figure-1).

The social capital approach is based on four important components i.e. collective action (relationship with individuals, groups, neighbours, communities and agencies), social trust, mutual benefits, and sharing values and norms (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001). The community empowerment approach is based on the nine 'domains' given by Glenn Laverack (2006): improving participation, developing local leadership, increasing problem assessment capacities, enhancing the ability to 'ask why', building empowering organisational structures, improving resource mobilisation, strengthening links to other organisations and people, creating an equitable relationship with outside agents, and increasing control over programme management.

Figure-1: *A model of the three-way relationship of community development*



Source: Author

The study is based on qualitative research conducted in two communities (blacksmiths and goldsmiths) in Bangladesh. It uses a number of qualitative data collection methods, such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA), in-depth case study, participant observation, focus group discussion (FGD), questionnaire, and documentation review, and then considers a triangulation of data to validate its information. The descriptions of methodologies and case studies of two communities have been put in two separate chapters (Chapters Three and Four).

The significance of the study

Indigenous knowledge (IK) for development is an emerging issue in social sciences, including development studies. In recent years this has been considered a significant research topic in higher education. Thaman (2003) argues that the incorporation of the indigenous perspectives in higher education is an imperative because: (a) various vibrant indigenous cultures have their own views of the world which deserve recognition and acknowledgement, (b) the academic institutions should recognise the ownership and control of IK by indigenous people rather than by the academy, and (c) the academic centres (in the context of specific studies) needed indigenous cultural knowledge to validate and legitimise their work.

A vast amount of literature has been published on the context of knowledge and development. As a result, the knowledge-based development

paradigms have divided into a number of groups. This process causes tension among development actors such as NGOs. Despite some significant advantages of global knowledge (GK), IK is still considered an important knowledge approach for development in countries such as Bangladesh, where a significant portion of the population and their occupations are based on IK. Guhathakurta (2004:115-122) discusses past and future options of the development paradigms in Bangladesh and argues that the development options have shifted through a number of paradigms. These are: from self-reliant autarchic goal to integration with the world economy; from public sector to privatisation; from poverty reduction to efficiency; governance, gender and human rights; and modernisation and growth versus indigenous perspective. The overall socio-economic texture of the society in Bangladesh remains traditional (Maloney, 1991:69). According to his view, Bangladesh needs to emphasise an indigenous approach for development. This approach has become an important development topic given the failure of top-down, externally-driven development interventions. Seeland (2000) calls it an invention of a post-modern development approach. The great value is that it can be a key element of the social capital of the poor, and constitutes their main asset in their efforts to gain control of their own lives (Gorjestani, 2000). But this issue, however, becomes more complex in some developing countries, where the socio-economic and cultural situations are comparatively poor, diverse and heterogeneous.

Currently, there is a big debate about how development organisations such as NGOs will introduce development interventions, which consider a meeting between IK and GK. These reflect tensions that occur between the global and the local, between the universal and the individual, between tradition and modernity (and now post-modernity), between long-term and short-term considerations, and between the need for competition and concern for genuine quality of opportunity (Delors, 1996:15 in Morgan & Tuijnman, 2000:56). Delors states:

> Culture is steadily being globalised, but as yet only partially. We cannot ignore the promises of globalisation nor its risks, not the least of which is the risk of forgetting the unique character of individual human beings; it is for them to choose their own future and achieve their full potential within the carefully tended wealth of their traditions and their own cultures which, unless we are careful, can be endangered by contemporary developments (Delors, 1996:15 in Morgan & Tuijnman, 2000:56).

The most urgent needs in Bangladesh are about reshaping educational systems to foster knowledge and love of local ecological and cultural diversity (GPF, 2005). The integration and development of the local language is essential for more equitable and effective means of communication, and cooperation across

the differences (Hill, 2000). The key challenge here lies in the creation of 'a concept of knowledge to which a concept of experience corresponds'. Benjamin (1989:9-10) and Lewis *et al*., (2008:3) suggest a form of representation, which would capture the subjective dimension (universal dimension) of social reality, whilst simultaneously allowing an objective knowledge (true in certain times, places or people) of the world.

The important thing is how to save and hold up the worth of human diversity in the face of the powerful negative potential that globalisation exerts (Hill, 2000). Cheng (2003) argues that the relationship between local knowledge (LK) and globalisation in education is dynamic and interactive. Localised globalisation (globalisation based on the local socio-cultural, economical and political situation) in education can allow for better utilisation of values for local developments, if local creativity and adaptation can be induced in the process of operational change and cultural change. Cheng agrees that this integration is a big challenge for national and international NGOs for community development. Cheng further adds, from a perspective of long-term local and global developments, the integration of both localisation and globalisation would be a preferable choice. So, it is a contemporary question to the NGO providers, policy makers and development workers whether to investigate a new policy framework (which might be called a 'new knowledge paradigm'), where NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment can function to achieve sustainable community development and self-reliance. This new paradigm would focus on 'people' rather than 'interventions', and identifies the 'client' not the 'policy', as an important step in addressing the social, economic and political needs of the people (Bhatt, 1997:371).

Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two provides the literature review and theoretical framework- it discusses the main four concepts used in the research: globalisation, indigenous knowledge, social capital, and community development. The chapter reviews literature derived from a wide rage of sources in the global context and then looks at the literature on Bangladesh specifically. The second section of this chapter describes two community development approaches: social capital and community empowerment and then considers a new knowledge paradigm, the role of NGOs in community development.

Chapter Three describes the methodology and methods used in the research. The first section gives a brief review of the qualitative research

paradigm, data collection methods, techniques, and the importance of triangulation. The second section considers the research sample, data collection processes, ethical issues, reliability and validity, and limitations of the study.

Chapter Four gives a description of the case studies of two communities (blacksmith and goldsmith) with the two NGOs' (PAB and *Proshika*) profiles. The chapter also considers the nature and content of NGOs interventions with a description of evidence on what the recipients perceive and what impact they have.

Chapter Five presents the research findings and analysis based on the field data. The chapter provides a thematic analysis of the NGOs' capacities for social capital and community empowerment. At the beginning, it provides the main findings and analysis. First, it defines NGOs' capacities for social capital; secondly, NGOs' capacity for community empowerment; and finally, points out the threats and limitations. The analysis has drawn upon the IK-GK debate throughout the chapter with an account of the advantages and disadvantages faced by these NGOs. Within this context, the chapter outlines a framework for a new knowledge paradigm with the three-way relationships with the concepts of NGOs, social capital and community empowerment.

Chapter Six discusses the NGOs and community development. This chapter justifies the main arguments of the thesis and provides some insights into the NGOs' role for community development- it shows the main indicators within the capacities of NGOs for social capital and community empowerment for achieving community development in Bangladesh.

Chapter Seven provides conclusions. The chapter highlights the main contradictions that the NGOs find in working with competing indigenous and global knowledge approaches. The chapter summarises the major findings and shows how these are important for policy implications regarding community development in Bangladesh. The chapter also briefly discusses the key risks and limitations of the research. Finally, it suggests some areas which should be considered for further research.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the main parameters of the research, which seeks to acquire qualitative information for successful policy implementation for community development in Bangladesh. The study attempts to integrate various relevant debates in the socio-economic, political, and cultural development paradigms. It was found that the NGOs have abrasive relationships with state and

donors on the one hand, and global versus local development debates on the other. The thesis investigates how the development challenges might be solved through consulting both knowledge approaches, so that the NGOs can achieve participatory oriented development interventions according to the choices of the rural mass of people in Bangladesh.

Chapter Two

The literature review: Conceptual and theoretical framework

Introduction

This chapter considers four basic concepts: globalisation, indigenous knowledge, social capital and community development. By reviewing a wide range of literature and documents, this chapter highlights and explains each of these concepts and attempts to establish a significant link with a new definition of community development under NGOs' interventions. The theoretical perspective of the thesis, using social capital and community empowerment, looks at NGOs' capacities in the paradigms of indigenous and global knowledge approaches. The main purpose of this literature review is to find out the gaps, i.e., what are the general explanations of these concepts and which are effective for Bangladesh?

Globalisation: Contradictions and prospects for development

The concept 'globalisation' is a dynamic and deliberated word; it means many things to many people. However, globalisation is at the centre of a starkly polarised debate over the major policy issues in the world today (CEPR, 2002). Attempts to define globalisation usually seem clumsy (CEPR, 2002), partial, and complex (Sen, 2002:1). Sen argues that it is still not altogether a well-defined concept. A multitude of global interactions are put under the broad heading of globalisation, but it varies from the expansion of intellectual and cultural influences across borders to the enlargement of economic and business relations throughout the world (United Nations, 2004b). Different authors often concentrate on very dissimilar aspects of this phenomenon.

Meanings and aspects

Globalisation offers many possible meanings, which depend on ideology, context, perspective and location. It is a hotly disputed and contested issue (Carnoy, 1999:18; ILO, 2004:24). Harcourt (undated:7-8) notes that some global-advocates, such as Ohmae (1990, 1995), write enthusiastically about the 'borderless world' and 'the end of the nation state'. Some social scientists prefer a broad, rather unfocused definition, such as the "movement of people, information, symbols, capital and commodities in global and transactional spaces" (Kearney, 1995).

Most economists understand the concept as free trade, and see the modern form of globalisation as part of this process. For instance, Eslake (2000:2), says "…globalisation is…simply the logical extension of the tendency towards specialisation and trade that has been going on almost since mankind first walked on the surface of the earth". Others, like Friedman (1998), regard globalisation as being not just about trade, but about the triumph of market forces, technologies, and democratic forces throughout the world. Gunter & Hoeven (2004:v) state that it means gradual integration of economies and societies, driven by new technologies, new economic relationships, and the national and international policies of a wide range of actors, including governments, international organisations, business, labour, and civil society.

From the sociological and cultural point of view, Ludden (1997:2), says the term globalisation refers to human networks of influential interaction which are measured and explained by many factors, including migration, trade, empire, technology, and the spread of languages and disparate cultural elements. Mittelman (2000) argues that globalisation means an historical transformation in: the economy, of livelihoods and modes of existence; in politics, a loss in the degree of control exercised locally…and in culture, a devaluation of a collectivity's achievements…Globalisation is emerging as a political response to the expansion of market power…[It] is a domain of knowledge. On the other hand, Sen (2002) sees globalisation often as global Westernisation. Ottone (1996:231) says that globalisation is commonly referred to either as 'the knowledge society', 'the information society', 'the communication society', or more generally, 'the post-industrial society'. According to the Free World Academy (2005:1), globalisation is the integration of democracy, legal reforms, capital, technology, and information across national borders, in a way that is creating a single global market and a global village**.**

Globalisation is not easily understood for its multidimensional nature, asymmetric impact, and complexity (Mozumder, 2007:1). It has been characterised by many components and elements which are not easily measured. Ludden (1997:3) argues that it cannot be understood simply as the result of one dominant force. He adds that the technologies that lower transportation and communications costs do facilitate globalisation, which we can measure as a process by physical movements from place to place, but the globalisation project is neither explained nor mandated by technology. He again says, within moral theories, scientific paradigms, religious passion, cultural mythology, and

legitimate authorities, people are moving across the old boundaries to the new world. Concretely then, the *globe* in globalisation is a type of human territory, a space that is marked with human aspirations, meanings, and power. It is a domain of human control and social order, like any other kind of territory.

Globalisation enhances global markets, technologies, ideas and cohesions. It reduces space and time, and fades borders. It opens the door to opportunities (United Nations, 1999). On the other hand, it increases human insecurity as the spread of global crime, disease and financial volatility outpaces action to tackle them (UNDP, 1999). However, it describes not just an increase in the flow of goods, services, images, ideas and people, but a change in the way of production, distribution, consumption, and other defined and undertaken activities (Woods, 2000:1).

From the political point of view, Ramsaran & Price (2003:15) state that the processes of globalisation can be seen within state and global institutions. They add that emergent international élite drive these processes. But these are constrained by conflicts with national élites and by struggles with non-élite actors throughout the global political economy. Therefore, globalisation is not an inevitable process; rather it is negotiated and contested. As with all social conflicts, however, these struggles are not between equals. The enormous efforts against these global processes are often led by national élites, whose domestic positions of power are threatened by global capitalism[3] (Ramsaran & Price, 2003:15).

The literature published by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), highlights globalisation as a process of money transformation. For example, Harcourt (undated: 18) argues that there are mainly four dimensions in which globalisation appears to human society: trade, investment, organisational change, and 'new economy' technology. Dependency and Marxist approaches have emphasised the inequalities as inherent in the global expansion of capitalism. Bello *et al.,* (1998) argue that the capitalism of Southeast Asia and the nature of globalisation are flawed. They add that increasing liberalisation results is unhappiness for the majority, while enriching a minority and benefiting

[3] Global capitalism is understood by the term 'capitalism' as a world-wide system of production for profit, but the more restricted sense of present world financial arrangements which allow the more or less free movement of capital throughout the world (World Socialist Movement, 2006)..

business in rich countries. Gunter & Hoeven (2004:8-12) review over 1,200 articles and books on the social impacts of globalisation and find that all factors may have brought some economies and some societies closer together, but they may have also marginalised many countries and individuals. The second aspect of the globalisation process concerns the increasing homogenisation of policies and institutions across the world, i.e. trade and capital market liberalisation; the reduction of the welfare state; international agreements on intellectual property rights; and the standardisation of policies and behaviours that have promoted globalisation

To sum up, the globalisation process has four main dimensions: economic globalisation, formation of world opinion, democratisation (transition to a more democratic political regime), and political globalisation. Change in one of these dimensions (such as economic globalisation) elicits changes among the other dimensions.

Globalisation: Challenges & prospects

Globalisation is a multifaceted and interconnected process involving economic, cultural, political and social change that is reaching the most remote communities (Buckland, 2004:126). For a developing country like Bangladesh, globalisation arouses passionate debate (Hewison, 1999:1). For example:

- globalisation is debated as a worrying image of isolation and seclusion (Sen, 2003),
- the problem towards democracy, equality and equity, increased poverty, declining development assistance funds, increased competition among international NGOs (Beausang, 2002),
- the promotion of corporate capitalism (Ohmae, 1990),
- a product of Western desire to subject and exploit the developing world (Mahathir, 1999; Hewison, 1999),
- a peculiar force; diffusion of ideas, practices and technologies; western imperialism; de-localisation in social and economic exchange,
- 'marginalisation of the practices and beliefs' (Delors, 1996 in Morgan, 2005).

Leen (2003:3) argues that globalisation is neither novel nor new; it is a real danger of cultural homogenisation as the result of contemporary 'western' driven models. Current global processes have been shaped by the neo-liberal ideology. It accents the rights and control of the individual by advancing the role of the market place into the economic, political and social sphere (Buckland, 2004:127). Deacon (2000:vii) argues that globalisation is undermining equitable public social provision.

On the other hand, many authors argue that globalisation is a new and effective means for development. Sen (2003), for example, argues that globalisation has provided appropriate local steps. In the purest sense, it is not a threat to local cultures **-** imperialism is. It is seen that developments linked with globalisation have opened up boundless possibilities and new opportunities for human progress, and enhanced the quality of life for many people in the developing countries. Local knowledge is not useful to solve many problems, such as the flood problem in Bangladesh.

Some authors have mixed opinions about globalisation. For example, Morgan (2005) argues that the rapid process of globalisation has clearly destroyed and damaged many indigenous and belief systems in recent centuries, though he argued that this is simply an inevitable process of historical change. As Karl Marx says, human beings make their own history, but not always as they intend and not in circumstances of their own choosing (Layder, 1987). Globalisation provides access to resources to use the political strategies of cooperation, negotiation and contestation, through which rural groups challenge their poverty (Webster, 2004: iii). Recently, the argument has been raised that due to globalisation the development organisations (like NGOs) are facing varieties of challenges in this new millennium. For example, Buckland (2004:128, 139) argues that the NGOs (mainly big NGOs) have been encouraged to directly confront policy level constraints to development, and move out of programme implementation. These changes have been significantly influenced by official aid agencies and northern NGOs (NNGOs), and complex implications for indigenous NGOs and local communities. He adds that many people, including local poor people in Bangladesh, have benefited by the scaling-up of reform-oriented development organisations. But this strategy has not overcome other powerful local, national and global constraints to development that have led to persistent poverty, gender bias and economic change that has not benefited the poor.

However, we understand that globalisation is a dynamic as well as a complex concept. We see that there is much academic discussion about whether globalisation is a real phenomenon or only a myth. The term is widespread; it is seen that the characteristics of globalisation have already been seen at other moments in history. Also, many note that those features include international trade and multinational corporations, which are not as deeply established as they may appear. Mozumder (2007:1) argues that the term 'globalisation' evokes different feelings to different people. Some look at globalisation as 'the panacea',-

the elixir that eradicates all poverty, removes disparity, and enables the global citizens to enjoy a decent lifestyle - the lure of globalisation. Others view globalisation as 'the evil' that further enslaves them to the rich.

Operational definition

In Bangladesh, globalisation is also a buzz word and it is widely used. In the research, globalisation is considered to be a process which encourages: free exchange of thoughts, ideas, cultures and languages; transformation of cultures (tradition to modern) and human skills (traditional to western/modern); migration and greater mobility (rural to urban and abroad); division of labour; forces for change that are deeply rooted in human nature; change of occupations (cultivation to business/office works); dynamic and mechanistic life (rather than slow and natural/pastoral life); and liberalisation for market, and employment.

Indigenous knowledge: Diverse meanings and aspects in development

'Indigenous knowledge' (IK) is an important term in contemporary development studies. Since there are increasing international concerns about the negative impacts of globalisation, IK has been considered a key aspect in sustainable development. It calls for the insertion of local voices and priorities, and promises empowerment through ownership of the process. However, there has been little critical examination of the ways in which IK has been included in the development process (Briggs & Sharp, 2004:661). IK has been used since the dawn of civilisation, but it was first formally recognised as invaluable to sustainable development at the Rio Conference[4]: 'Our Common Future' in 1987. Since then, many institutions have shown increasing interest in it and numerous international conferences have taken place concerned exclusively with IK (Ahmed 1994:3; Warren *et al*., 1993).

Meanings and aspects

Indigenous knowledge (IK), also known as 'local' or 'traditional' or 'rural peoples' knowledge', is not easily or simply defined (Rouse, 1999:1). It is a diverse concept. In anthropology, it refers to the original inhabitants of a specific geographical area, a land which may have been occupied subsequently by

[4] Of equal concern to many world citizens is the uncertain status of the indigenous knowledge that reflects many generations of experience and problem-solving by thousands of ethnic groups across the globe. Very little of this knowledge has been recorded, yet it represents an immensely valuable data base that provides humankind with insights on how numerous communities have interacted with their changing environment including its floral and faunal resources (Warren, 1996:81).

Table-1: *Diverse terms of IK*

Term, synonyms	Meaning, salient aspect, implicit significance, antonym
Indigenous knowledge (internationally the most widespread term)	culturally integrated knowledge; knowledge of small, marginal/non-western groups
Endogenous knowledge	of internal origin, as opposed to exogenous or external knowledge
Native knowledge/expertise	implies knowledge of a natural character, closeness to nature
Local knowledge	Knowledge rooted in local or regional culture and ecology
Sustained knowledge	sustainable within the natural and cultural environment
Traditional knowledge	Handed down, old, oral (implying static, low level of change)
Autochthonous knowledge	Of internal origin, culturally integrated
People's knowledge	broadly disseminated knowledge; knowledge as potential for political resistance, as opposed to elite knowledge
Folk knowledge, folk science, folk competence	traditional, rural (in industrial societies)
Little tradition	tends to denote oral knowledge, as opposed to great tradition
Community knowledge	related to small social units
Cultural knowledge, cognition (in the restricted sense)	culturally integrated and practice-oriented
Ethnic knowledge	related to an ethnic "we"-group (ethnicity)
Culturally specified knowledge	specificity, singularity, particularity
Ethnoscience (used here to denote local knowledge; previously used to denote the field of research)	scientific (systematic) character; examples are: ethnobotany, ethnosociology, ethnomedicine, ethnopharmacology, ethnoepidemiology
(cultural) knowledge system (superseded "ethnoscience)	systematic character, generating rules (if x then y) and structures
(cultural) belief system, (cultural) meaning system	mean the same as "knowledge system", but imply a less scientific character
Everyday knowledge, practical knowledge, mundane cognition, vernacular, common sense, generalist	informal, practical, applied, as opposed to academic, specialist, expert knowledge or as opposed to ritual knowledge
Science of the concrete	based on that which actually exists/is visible
Experimental knowledge	As opposed to theoretical knowledge, speculation
Experimental knowledge	Trial-and-error, as opposed to controlled experiment
Farmers' knowledge	knowledge relating to the farm as an economic unit
Peasant knowledge	As opposed to elite knowledge; implies experiences of dependency

Source: Antweiler (1996:5)

migrants or colonists (Morgan, 2005). In the 1960s to the late 1970s, the word then took on a more explicitly populist flavour of 'grass-roots politics' and 'folk cultures' in the sense of 'indigenous' as opposed to state of *high* culture[5]

[5] 'High' refers to those aspects of culture which are most highly valued and esteemed by a given society's political, social, economic, and intellectual Elite. Opera, yachting, and Tom Stoppard are associated with high culture in the U.S. Generally, the most powerful members of a society are the ones who have the most influence over cultural meaning systems, and therefore the more powerful classes tend to enjoy the privilege of defining "high culture" (Carlisle, 2006).

(Scoones & Thompson, 1994). In view of the marginalisation process, IK today means 'non-western' or 'anti-western' knowledge'. Knowledge is much more than a collection of facts; it relates to the whole system of concepts, beliefs and perceptions that people hold about the world around them. IK includes the way people observe and measure what is around them, how they set about solving problems, and how they validate new information. A common definition of knowledge is that it consists of justified belief. Knowledge is the awareness and understanding of facts, truths or information gained in the form of experience or learning (IK Conference, 2005:1).

Recently, the term has been used in different disciplines, such as sustainable development, environmental studies, agriculture, rural development, aqua-culture, animal husbandry, social sciences, health science, cultural studies, language and linguistics, and many other branches of social sciences. At present, IK has been developed as an indigenous knowledge system (IKS). IKS means the combination of knowledge systems encompassing technology, social, economic, philosophical learning/educational, legal and governance systems.

IK has been labelled differently in different regions and countries. Antweiler (1996:5) makes a list (compiled from the literature of the 1960s to 1995) of its diverse terms (and its branches) and their various connotations (Table-1). Because of its diversity, the concept is regarded as a 'bandwagon' or 'buzzword'[6] (Sejersen, 1998). I argue that though there are a lot of substitute words to mean IK, each has the same kind of core meaning. The meaning or definition differs in relation to the particular case and aspect (Boven & Morohashi, 2002). Moreover, the definition of IK is rapidly changing in contemporary societies, subject to the forces of globalisation (Sillitoe, 2005:146). This trend makes it difficult to agree on a legally and scientifically accepted definition (Correa, 2001:4).

There are many working definitions (see Appendix-1) of IK, which provide different perspectives. Many authors and institutions i.e. Grenier, Johnson, Nakashima & Roue, the World Bank, the United Nations (UN), Falvier *et al*.,

[6] A buzzword (also known as a fashion word or vogue word) is an idiom, often a neologism, commonly used in managerial, technical, administrative, and sometimes political environments. Buzzwords appear ubiquitously but their actual meanings often remain unclear. Buzzwords are typically intended to create the impression of knowledge for a wide audience. They tend to be non-controversial and universal Buzzwords differ from jargon in that they have the function of impressing or of obscuring meaning, while jargon (ideally) has a well-defined technical meaning, if only to specialists. Some examples of other buzzwords are: diversity, empowerment, breakthrough, next generation, paradigm, sustainability, etc. (Public Rambling, 2008).

Langgill, and Warren describe IK as a system or body of knowledge, which evolves from a variety of sources within a social process. For example, Johnson (1992) states that IK can be defined as 'a body of knowledge' built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature. Such knowledge evolves in the local environment, so that it is specifically adapted to the requirements of local people and conditions. It is also creative and experimental, constantly incorporating outside influences and inside innovations to meet new conditions. It is usually a mistake to think of IK as 'old-fashioned', 'backwards', 'static' or 'unchanging'. On the other hand, some authors, such as Dutfield, Brooke, Boven & Morohashi, and IIRR describe the concept with some components in a specific framework. Others, for example Hoppers, state that IK is based on some specific group of people (called traditional/indigenous or aboriginal people). I think that the first two views are more accepted than the last one. I believe that IK has already been proved as a body of knowledge given its enormous literature and widespread application. The third view explains the concept narrowly, but I think it is also important to understand how the concept evolves. My argument is that no definition is complete, but taken together they explain what IK means. I agree with Cheng (2003:6), who argues that IK is the knowledge that has been tested as valid in a local context, and accumulated by the local community or people. The usefulness and validity of IK varies according to time and social context.

IK covers numerous components and aspects, which make it wide and complex. It includes: agriculture and horticulture, astronomy, forestry, human health, traditional medicines and healing, knowledge of animals, fish and ecological systems, sustainable use of natural resources and the environment, traditional classification systems for living, learning systems and oral traditions, spirituality, symbols, traditional arts and culture, designs, symbols, scientific and ecological methods, crafts, music, dance, songs, stories, foods, medicines and wellness (or disease-prevention), and products (Brascoupe & Mann, 2001:3; Hoppers, 2004:3). Such knowledge systems are cumulative, representing generations of experiences, careful observations, and trial and error experiments. IK does not exist in a vacuum; it belongs to a community, and access to this knowledge is gained through contact with that community (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999). No one person, authority or social group is the single repository for this knowledge, or can claim to know the entire body of knowledge. It is more widely shared locally than specialised scientific knowledge (Sillitoe, 2002). With this view Dr. Erica-Irene Daes, Chair-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Indigenous

Populations, explained in a 1994 report that IK is a complete knowledge system with its own concepts of epistemology, philosophy, and scientific and logical validity (Kooy & Vizina, 2006:6).

IK is locally based and recorded, for example, in the memories of the living and transmitted orally (Burgess, 1999). But it is dynamic and is 'developed to very specific biological, ecological, climatic and socio-economic conditions' (Ahmed, 1994:12). It is a mixture of knowledge created endogenously and acquired from outside, but then absorbed and integrated within the society by 'trial and error'. The broad set of IK includes information of a functional and of an aesthetic character. The processes and products can be used in agriculture or industry, as well as intangibles of cultural value. IK is not static; it evolves and generates new information as a result of improvements or adaptation to changing circumstances. The context and forms of expression of IK varies significantly (Correa, 2001:4). Correa adds that some IK is codified, that is, formalised in some way (i.e. textile designs, *ayurveda* traditional medicine). A great part of IK, however, is non-codified or tacit, such as 'folk', 'tribal' or 'indigenous' medicine, which is based on traditional beliefs, norms and practices accumulated through centuries of experiences of trial and error. It is holistic, qualitative, and it is a cultural property rooted in a social context (Johnson, 1992). It is non-formal, dynamic and adaptive (Boven & Morohashi, 2002:12). It is traditional, which is 'a fluid and transferring agent with no real end' when applied to knowledge. Negotiation is a central concept.

Global versus indigenous knowledge: A widening debate

There is an intense debate about global/scientific versus indigenous/traditional knowledge. It is important that attitudes to IK amongst those in the Western and developing worlds alike 'run the entire gamut from pride in traditional methods, and rejection of new knowledge to admiration for new ideas and embarrassment about older practices' (Rouse, 1999:3). Western societies have not, in general, recognised any significant value in traditional knowledge, nor have any obligations associated with its use (Correa, 2001:3). It is observed that there has been a temptation to over-exaggerate the value of IK amongst its patrons. It is important to recognise its very real shortcomings, as well as strengths, compared with Western science. An important question is: what is the attitude of Western societies to their own local or traditional knowledge? Equally, however, some persist in giving IK less than its due (Agrawal, 1995:424). Scientists with a modern education are influenced by

Western culture; they follow urban lifestyles that distance them, either consciously or subconsciously, from the heritage, culture and traditions of rural people. Chambers (1980:2) argues that IK systems are 'associated with low prestige rural life', and 'even those who are its bearers may believe it to be inferior'. In recent years, the status and legitimacy of IK has improved. It is extensively acknowledged and positioned as an important part of sustainable development (Rouse, 1999). For example, Kothari (2007) argues that it has stronger critical insights and practices to offer to a sustainable community than modern science.

Appleton *et al*., (2001) argue that IK can be termed as science, because it is generated and transformed through a systematic process of observation, experimentation, and adaptation. They again argue that IK systems differ fundamentally from those based on modern science and technology in that they are managed by the users of the knowledge, and they are holistic. Although, both 'bodies of knowledge' (traditional and modern) are structured by systems of classification, sets of empirical observation about local environments, and systems of self-management (Johnson, 1992). In general, a knowledge system differs according to local peoples' capacity to deal with local problems, and to the degree in which it is accessible to them in the social context charged with resource management and production (Appleton *et al*., 2001). Lieber (1994) puts forward a different opinion in this regard. Western knowledge may be considered as indigenous because of its common sense, which is essentially culturally particular (Purcell, 1998:5).

Kroma (1995:2) argues that despite its proven usefulness, IK is threatened in the developing countries by inadequate, inaccurate and inappropriate conceptions of knowledge, and the propagation of these conceptions in educational practice. In this connection, Briggs (2005:9) states that Western science and IK are represented as two different and competing knowledge systems. These systems are characterised by a binary divide, a divide arguably evolving out of the epistemological foundations of the two knowledge systems (Mohan & Stokke, 2000). Although a number of observers have suggested that this divide may indeed be false, or at least not as marked as might be supposed (see, for example, Bebbington, 1993; Briggs *et al*., 1999; Chambers, 1979), the binary notion still persists. Western science is seen to be open, systematic and objective, dependent very much on being a detached centre of rationality and intelligence, whereas IK is seen to be closed, parochial, un-

intellectual, primitive and emotional (Agrawal, 1995; Ellen & Harris, 2000; Herbert, 2000; Howes, 1979; Howes & Chambers, 1979; Mitchell, 1995; Warren, 1991). Consequently, whereas Western knowledge systems are part of the whole notion of modernity, IK is part of a residual, traditional and backward way of life in low and middle-income countries. Ellen & Harris (2000) and Briggs (2005:9) further argue that the term 'indigenous' almost invites an oppositional 'us and them' scenario between the two knowledge systems.

Table-2: *Common differences between indigenous and scientific knowledge*

Area of comparison	**Indigenous knowledge (IK)**	**Scientific knowledge (SK)**
Relationship	Subordinate	Dominant
Dominant mode of thinking	Intuitive	Analytical
	Holistic	Reductionist
	Mind & matter considered together	Mind reduced to matter
Communication	Oral, storytelling, singing, dance	Literate
	Subjective	Objective
Instruction	Learned through observation or hand in experience	Got taught and learned in a situation usually separated from the applied context
Effectiveness	Slow	Fast
	Inconclusive	Conclusive
Data creation	Based on personal observation, trial and error, and synthesis of facts	Based on experimentation and systematic, deliberate accumulation of facts
	Data generated by resource users	Data generated by specialised cadre of researchers
Data type	Qualitative	Quantitative
	Historical (long time-series one locality)	Statistical (short time-series over a large area)
Explanation	Spiritual	Hypothesis, laws
	Moral	Mechanistic
		Value free
Classification	Ecological	Generic and hierarchical

Source: Wolfe *et al.,* (1992) and Berkes (1993)

Table-3: *Comparisons between indigenous and scientific knowledge styles*

Indigenous Knowledge	***Scientific Knowledge***
Lengthy acquisition	Rapid acquisition
Long-term wisdom	Short-term prediction
Powerful prediction in local areas	Powerful predictability in natural principles
Weak in predictive principles in distant areas	Weak in local areas of knowledge
Models based on cycles	Linear modelling as first approximation
Explanations based on examples, anecdotes, parables	Explanations bases on hypothesis, theories, laws
Classification: a mix of ecological and use in hierarchical differentiation includes everything natural and supernatural	Classification: based on phylogenic relationships hierarchical differentiation excludes the supernatural

Source: prepared by author

The main difference between a scientific knowledge system (SKS) and a traditional knowledge system (TKS) is their format (Rahman, 2000:2). The SKS is essentially in *explicit* format - can be articulated using formal language, including grammatical statements, mathematical expressions, specifications, manuals, and so forth. The format of IKS is mostly *tacit* – hard to articulate through formal language. This knowledge is embedded in the experiences of indigenous or local people and involves intangible factors, including their beliefs, perspectives, and value systems. Agrawal (1995:1) states that a dichotomy between IKS and SKS may be made on: *substantive grounds,* because of differences in the subject matter and characteristics of traditional and scientific knowledge, and methodological and epistemological grounds. It is because these forms of knowledge employ different methods to investigate *reality* and *contextual ground,* and traditional knowledge is more deeply rooted in its environment (Chambers, 1980:2; Warren, 1990:1). The Tables-2 and 3 show some common differences and comparisons between indigenous and scientific knowledge.

It is interesting how IK and science have evolved in the form of magic. Tylor (in Tambiah, 1990:45) says that magical arts are occult sciences, which were encountered in the civilised European societies. Tylor asserted that magic was based on a general human intellectual propensity, namely the principle of 'association of ideas'. Malinowski (in Tambiah, 1990:67) differs from Tylor's opinion; he says that science was 'profane' activity, while magic grouped with religion belonged to the 'sacred' domain. But he agrees that magic is a practical activity which serves two functions: one psychological and another sociological. He adds: when technology finishes then magic starts.

Knowledge systems are dynamic; people adapt to change their environment, and absorb and assimilate ideas from a variety of sources (Warburton & Martin, 1999:3). It is true that rural societies are not totally isolated from 'Western' or any other types of knowledge systems. Within each society there are multiple sources of innovation. It may be possible to recognise knowledge systems which can be considered 'traditional', i.e. a discrete stock of knowledge generated at some (unspecified) time in the past. However, in most rural areas the use of the term 'traditional' knowledge to differentiate from 'modern' knowledge is deceptive, as it tends to imply a static, unchanging system (Warburton & Martin, 1999:3). My view is that the difference between IK and SK is a complex issue, though there are some clear-cut differences.

The above discussion makes clear the position of IK and SK. My argument is that local and scientific knowledge are neither completely different, nor entirely the same. The distinction depends on how one defines the scientific method and its object(s) (Purcell, 1998:3). My observation is the same as Dutfield (2001), who argues that some IK is, at least to some degree, scientific, even if the form of expression may seem highly unscientific to most of us. For example, an indigenous person and a scientist may both know that quinine bark extract can cure malaria, but they are likely to describe what they know in very different ways that may be mutually unintelligible (even when communicated in the same language). One basic difference between the two ways of knowing is that the sciences look for information, which is convertible to any spatial or social situation (*immutable mobiles*), i.e. which is not context-bound. As a result, scientists know to a large extent about little sections of reality. On the contrary, local knowledge systems seek situation-bound, i.e. context-bound information (*mutable immobile)* (Dutfield, 2001).

Various opinions and arguments about the concept of IK show that different authors use different terms/idioms to define IK, but they have all addressed the same broad issues. I think that we should use IK as a currency in contemporary development debates. The debate of the relationship between IK and SK is arguable in the context of present literature. I conclude that the distinction between IK and SK is indeed defensible. What is made of the obvious differences between the concepts depends on one's view of development. But the severe distinction in the current development literature is wrong, if not blatantly deceptive with regard to the relationship between the two, even where it argues for a reversal of the relationship between them. It is not particularly helpful to distinguish IK from science. We are not talking about two distantly connected knowledge traditions divorced by a cultural-epistemological gulf, but rather a trend towards a global culture and history that is now modifying the distinctions between them (IK Monitor, 1998:1).

Operational definition

In the light of the various definitions, I offer an operational definition that I have used in my own research: IK refers to the body of knowledge which develops from the close contact with nature (such as environment, land, weather, and natural disaster) and living resources (such as people, their occupations, economy, local administration, power structure, social stratification, language, local culture, religion, values, taboos, and human skills). It is rooted in the

traditional practices through trial and error and adapted with local culture, practice, values and norms, and it is commonly shared and transmitted from one generation to another. Here IK includes all related concepts, such as local knowledge, traditional knowledge, native knowledge, community knowledge, and farmers' knowledge which stay alive in oral as well as written form.

Social capital: An emerging concept for development

'Social capital' has become one of the most striking concepts in social sciences over the last decade. This is particularly true of work in community development. It has been treated as a key feature of phenomena, which includes so many aspects that cannot be described within limited space and time (DeFilippis, 2001:1; Portes 1998). Many definitions are now attached to the concept, which lead to justifiable confusion about what constitutes 'social capital' (National Statistics (2001:6). Morgan (2008:35) argues that the concept social capital is still relatively vague and under developed as a concept of policy value. It is described as a *muddy* (Evans, 1996; Woolcock, 1998), *elusive* (Kilpatric *et al*., 2001), *robust* (Paldam, 2000:3) and *divergent* (Fedderke *et al.,* 1999:709) concept. It has been called social energy, community spirit, social bonds, civic virtue, community networks, social ozone, extended friendships, community life, social resources, informal and formal networks, good neighbourliness and social glue (National Statistics, 2005). I would say that it is hard to encapsulate in a single sentence because of its elements, nature, theoretical development, and measurement are continuously widening over time.

Social capital is a relatively new concept (Bayat, 2005:2), though the term was first used by Lyda J. Hanifan, a state supervisor of a rural school in West Virginia, in 1916 to explain the importance of community development for successful schools (Olate, 2003:9). It was then used in 1950 by a team of Canadian urban sociologists (Seely *et al.*, 1956), in 1960 by an urban scholar Jane Jacobs, and in 1970 by an economist Glenn Loury (Olate, 2003:9). The concept was developed in the 1980s and 1990s by Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988, 1990) and Robert Putnam (1993, 1995, 2000). Portes (1998:2) argues that this concept dates back to Durkheim's work, which emphases Marx's distinction between an atomised class-in-itself and a mobilised and effective class-for-itself. After the 1990's, this concept became one of the principal topics to social researchers. Baum (2000) states, before 1981, the number of journal articles listing social capital as a key word totalled 20, between 1991 and 1995

this has risen to 109, and between 1996 and March 1999 the total was 1,003. I guess the number would now be several thousand.

Meanings and aspects for development

In 1985, Pierre Bourdieu was the first sociologist to use this term in community development as a neo-Marxist model (DeFlippis 2001; Kilpatrick *et al.,* 2001). Bourdieu (1986:248-249) says that the sources of social capital combined the actual and potential resources, concurrent to tenure of a strong network of more or less institutionalised relationships or reciprocal relationships (i.e. membership). His explanation was concurrently both economic and a set of power relations that comprised a variety of dominions and social interactions generally thought of as non-economic (DeFilippis, 2001).

The American social scientist James Coleman (Coleman, 1988) brought social capital into the mainstream. He argues:

> "Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors…within the structure" (Coleman, 1988:S95-S120).

Robert Putnam's redefinition of social capital adds new dimensions. Putnam, who may be the most important author on the subject, defines-

> "Social capital is features of social life-networks, norms, and trust-that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives". The norms and reciprocal networks that make collective action possible are themselves contingent on an existing foundation of social trust and solidarity (Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000, 2001).

The most important characteristics of his definition are: i) social capital is twisted by individuals or groups of people in regions, communities, cities, countries, or continents; ii) it becomes mainly a normatively good thing and is given credit for (a) promoting good, democratic government and (b) generating and sustaining economic growth and development; iii) it can be simultaneously a 'private good' and a 'public good'; iv) it refers to the norms and networks of civil society that lubricate cooperative action among both citizens and their institutions; v) network of trust and voluntary associations are 'win-win' sets of relationships in which everyone involved benefits; and vi) it was based on scientific investigation (DeFlippis, 2001:784-786).

Kilpatrick *et al.*, (2001:4) intend to categorise all of the major definitions of social capital into two main groups that can be called 'collective benefit' and 'individual benefit'. They say that the definitions by Putnam and Narayan are collective benefit groups and Coleman and Bourdieu's are individual benefit

groups. Like DeFilippis (2001:783), I think there are two key components of Bourdieu's work, which have been lost in current discussions of social capital. First, he almost envisages capital and power as synonymous, and he differentiates between the social networks that an individual is embedded in, and out of which social capital precipitates (or emerges), and the outcomes of those social relationships. And secondly, social networks should not simply be associated with the products of those social relationships that might be intense, but are nevertheless unable to generate resources because of lack of access (DeFilippis, 2001:783-784).

Coleman stated different sets of actions, outcomes, and relationships as social capital. Social capital for him is inherently functional, and it is whatever allows people or institutions to act. DeFilippis (2001) argues that this definition is normatively and morally neutral. That is neither desirable nor undesirable; it simply allows actions to take place by providing the needed resources. Putnam's definitions are also criticised for their lack of potential utility for community development (DeFilippis, 2001), as limited support comes from either theories of political economy or the empirical realities; it is quantitative (i.e. more or less) not qualitative (better or worse) change. But I argue Putnam's explanation is wide and based on empirical evidence, where he explains how and where this concept develops at individual and group level in the community.

Based on existing literature, Mateju & Vitaskova (2006:493) sum-up two significantly different approaches to the conceptualisation of social capital. The most dominant stream defines social capital primarily as an attribute of societies, as an inherent characteristic of social environment based on the high degree of interpersonal and institutional trust facilitating people's cooperation. The other stream defines social capital in terms of mutually beneficial exchanges based on social connections and informal networks allowing individuals to achieve their own particular goals. The former approach prevails in 'Western' countries, while the latter prevails in the study of social change in post-communist societies, where social capital drawing from interpersonal trust seems to be rather low.

The use of the concept 'social capital' is very wide, and it is widening across the disciplines over time; it refers to norms, 'neighbourliness', and networks that enable people to act collectively (Narayan & Woolcock, 2000). It includes institutions, relationships, attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2001:4). It is called the relationships among actors (individuals,

groups, and/or organisations), which create a capacity to act for mutual benefits or a common purpose (Spellerberg, 2001:9). However, the core elements of social capital are interaction, trust, cooperative ventures, agreements, norms and reputations, emotive behaviour, networks, sanctions and long-term relationships, the local commons, dispositions, belief, economic performance, conformism and contagion, and culture.

Social capital is now considered as one of the most important assets of society. It is an accumulation of social, psychological, cultural, cognitive, institutional, and related assets that increase the amount or probability of mutually beneficial cooperative behaviour. It can be formed as: structural (roles, rules, precedents, procedures, and networks) and cognitive/normative (arising from mental process and resulting ideas, culture and ideology, norms, values, attitudes, and beliefs that contribute to cooperative behaviour and mutually beneficial collective action) (Uphoff, 1999:215). Putnam (1998) makes a further distinction amongst these dimensions, highlighting a difference between *informal* and *formal networks*. Informal networks include the relationships that people have with their families, partners, friends and neighbours; whereas formal networks include relationships at work, within community groups and churches, and with formal bodies, such as businesses and governments. Woolcock (2001) specifically classifies three types of social capital: bonds, bridges and linkage. Bonding social capital refers to relations among family members, close friends and neighbours. Bridging social capital refers to more distant friends, associates and colleagues, in general people who share similar demographic characteristics. If bridging social capital refers to the horizontal dimension, linking social capital refers to the vertical dimension. Linking social capital is defined as the capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community. Carroll (2001: xii) classifies social capital into six domains: family and kinship connections, community networks, cross-sectoral linkages, institutional policy framework, socio-political (state-civil society) relations, and social norms and values.

In general, capital can be categorised into six headings, such as human, social, financial, cultural, physical, and natural/environmental. The function of each is to create wealth and human well-being. Human capital includes knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals, which facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. It also includes motivation, moral behaviour and attitudes (Cote, 2001:2; OECD, 1998). In this

regard, Putnam (2000:19) notes that human capital refers to individuals, whereas social capital refers to connections among individuals and the social networks, and the norms of reciprocity that arise from them. It arises from family, schools, local communities, firms and national or sub-national administrative units and other institutions. On the other hand, Bourdieu (1986:7) argues that social capital is never completely independent, like physical and human capital, because of its homogeneity and multiple effects. Coleman (1988) suggests that, like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, but it can be depleted if it is not renewed. In addition, Putnam (2000:7) also suggests that the more people work together the more social capital is produced, and the less people work together the more community stocks of social capital are depleted. Schuller (2000:2) argues that cultural capital is more academic. It refers to the credentials and cultural assets embodied in individuals and their families. It has been used in two constructing directions: the reproduction of social hierarchy, as elite families endow their children with the cultural capital, which enables them to succeed in maintaining their élite position. It is also used to explain how to manage and use education to move from non- élite positions into élite positions.

There is a big debate whether social capital can produce benefit and productivity like physical and human capital. In this perspective, Grootaert & Bastelaer (2001:8) argue that the key attribute of capital is that it is an accumulated stock from which a stream of benefits flows. Here social capital is an asset, which characterises actual capital, and it is more than just a set of social organisations or social values. They again state that the social capital studies and the empirical literature elsewhere document that social capital can directly enhance output, and lead to higher productivity of other resources, such as human and physical capital. I believe that the scope of social capital and cultural capital are broad, and cover a lot of components that do not fall under the conventional categories of physical and human capital.

There are a large number of opinions whether social capital is a measurable concept. For example, Grootaert & Bastelaer (2001:9) argue that social capital is difficult, if not impossible, to measure directly like human capital. For empirical purposes, the use of proxy indicators is necessary. They show an example that years of education and years of work experience have a long tradition as proxies for human capital, and have proven their value in numerous empirical studies. They also argue that social capital indicators differ both geographically and sectorally. For example, measures of membership in

Table-4: *Measurement of social capital*

Authors and year	Indicators of measurement
Coleman, 1988	Children's educational attainment included personal, family and community dimensions.
Robinson,1997	Family relationships, as these relations are the basis of all other relationships
Onyx & Bullen, 2000	Attitude, trust, participation in the local community, reciprocity, personal empowerment, diversity/openness, relation within the workplace, attitude to government, and demographic information.
Grotaert, 1998	Horizontal associations (i.e., local institutions, kin homogeneity, trust, community organisations, etc.) Civil and political society (i.e. civil liberty, political rights, democracy, corruption, etc.) Social integration (i.e. social mobility, divorce rate, unemployment, etc.), and Legal and governance aspects (i.e. bureaucracy, court system, etc.)
Cox, 1998	Unobtrusive measures, measures of attention and wider interest in the society, sociability and engagement, attitude measures-how people express their feelings, expectations, and the multidimensional picture.
Narayan & Cassidy, 2001	Structure Vs norms, sources Vs outcomes, form Vs function (formal and informal groups, networks, etc.), and narrow Vs broad (social institutions)
Krishna & Shrader, 1999	Structural (membership and involvement of organisations, network mutual support, collective actions, and conflict resolution) Cognitive (solidarity, trust, reciprocity and cooperation)
Putnam, 2000	A wide range of services (housing, day care, family health clinics), their responsiveness and involvement to public, private, voluntary, civic, and cultural services (such as postal, telephone, club, sports, etc.) and social trust.
Green *et al*., 2000	Neighbourhood, network geography, reciprocal help and trust, trust (system and personal), civic engagement and efficiency, health, life style, economy.
Cote & Healy, 2001	Coverage of key dimensions (networks, values and norms) and should be balanced between the attitudinal/subjective and the behavioural (such as cultural context for measure behaviour and attitude)
National Statistics, 2005	Participation, social engagement, commitment Control, self efficiency Perception of community level structures or characteristics Social interaction, social networks, social support and Trust, reciprocity, social cohesion
Spellerberg, 2001	Behaviour (giving to strangers, participation in voluntary organisations, participation in voluntary organisations, participation in informal networks, wider interest in the society, community participation, and compliance with rules and norms) Attitude and belief (beliefs about self, attitude towards others, trust and reciprocity, attitude to government and others, social institutions, values and norms, and outlook for and confidence in the future) Population groups (demographic, family, cultural, employment, and communication), and Organisations (number, type, size of "membership", structure, capital and networks, and mode of operation).
Krishna, 2003	Membership in labour-sharing groups, dealing with crop disease, dealing with natural disaster, trust, solidarity, and reciprocity.
Stimson *et al.*, 2003	Qualitative assessment (awareness of community events; perceptions of the community; community activities; and perception of what residents want/do not want in their community, A structural survey approach (informal structures, formal structures, informal norms, formal norms).

Source: prepared by the author from different sources

associations were found to be a relevant indicator in Indonesia, Kenya, and countries of the Andean region, but not in India and Russia, where informal networks are more important (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2001:9).

At present, a wide range of literature has been published on measurement of social capital where different authors use different indicators. A brief description of international attempts is shown in the Table-4. However, it is seen that most of the authors use a number of aspects for this measurement. But a number of elements, such as network, trust, membership, relationships/association, social integration, attitude, social support, and social norms/values are very common. I argue that the authors use different scientific methods and statistical tools (i.e. correlation, regression), but most did not state the limitations of their studies, as I believe that there were some limitations. One significant limitation is the question of the reliability and validity of the indicators, such as the data collection instruments and methods (Paldam, 2000:17; Ostrom & Ahn, 2003:xxxiii), and generalisation of this measurement (Portes & Landolt, 1996). Each of those measures has merits in the specific context in which it was used. Due to the strong *contextual* nature of social capital, it is unlikely that it will ever be possible to identify a few 'good' indicators that can be used everywhere as universal indicators for such measurement.

The above discussion shows that social capital has received increased attention in the literature and has been studied at multiple levels, including the individual (Burt, 1992), organisational (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), and societal (Putnam, 1993; Dasgupta & Serageldin, 1999). At the individual level, social capital has been defined as the resources embedded in one's relationships with others (Burt, 1992). At the organisational level, it has been defined as the value to an organisation in terms of the relationships formed by its members for the purpose of engaging in collective action (Freel, 2000; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Social capital is an attribute of individuals and their relationships that enhances their ability to solve collective action problems (Ostrom & Ahn, 2003: xiv). The role of social capital has also been examined on a more macro-level in terms of its impact on the well-being of regions or societies (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman 1990; Putnam, 1993). We see that the concept has been robustly criticised both for its original assumptions and theoretical foundation, as well as for the acceleration of its uptake and practice. I argue much of this criticism is made on the basis of ideological position, limited theoretical review and restricted empirical examination.

Operational definition

In the light of the above definitions, I offer a working definition of social capital that I have used in my research: Social capital is a community resource

which arises in society with the components of social trust, reciprocity, and social values. It is a community tie and social fabric, which is used to facilitate networks and relationships between people and their organisations which enable them to act together to solve their problems. In this context, local culture and traditions, traditional skills and practices, socialisation process, institutions including agencies and its supports (from family, school, clubs, human kind, charity, voluntary organisations and NGOs), social relations (with natives, neighbours, and micro-credit bank), festivals and religion occasions, and local leadership are considered as social capital.

Community development: A comprehensive approach

The term 'community development' (CD) has been used to a great extent in the social sciences. In general, it is used as a process/method for social development. Recently, the term is being used as a new, powerful tool in the war on poverty in the developing countries. The concept of CD had its origin during the post World War II period. It came to international attention in 1948, when the Cambridge Conference on African Administration, organised by the British Colonial Office, used the term 'community development' for 'mass education' (Abedin, 2000:1). In the late 1940s and the 1950s, the British Colonial Office, US International Cooperation Administration, and the United Nations Organisation (UNO) encouraged the underdeveloped countries to take an interest in the CD approach. As a result, it gradually appeared as a universal phenomenon in the developing countries. The UNO defined CD as 'the process by which the efforts of the people themselves' were combined with 'those of the governmental authorities' in order to 'improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities', to integrate 'these communities into the life of the nation' and to 'enable them to contribute fully to national progress' (Abedin, 2000:1). It is especially effective in combating the powerlessness of disenfranchised people.

Meanings and aspects

A common definition of 'community development' (CD) is not simple to attain, nor is it universally agreed upon (Wise, 1998:1) because of its wideness and complexity (Kelly & Caputo, 2005:234). It means different things to different people in different places, and has expanded considerably in the past few years. The field of CD grew, in large part, out of the industrialisation model of the mid-1900s. Reviewing the contemporary literature, some paramount substitutes for the word 'development', in this context are: *advancement; betterment; capacity building; empowerment; enhancement;* and *nurturing*. Brennan (2004) argues

that there is an inconsistency in the definition, usage, and general understanding of what CD represents. To some extent, it is synonymous with economic development and is characterised by efforts to recruit industry and services. For example, business development, infrastructure improvements, and city planning all often fall under the description of CD.

Holdcroft (1978:48) and Malki (2006:51-52) consider CD from a wider perspective. They define it as a process, method, programme, institution, and/or movement. As a long-term process, it enables people to take collective action to achieve their common goals; as a participatory method it leads to improved resource allocation and sustainable outcomes, to increase the negotiation power of poor people, and mobilises greater local resources to be reinvested locally; as a programme it gives communities a sense of responsibility, authority and control over the development decision-making process, the set-up of the development agenda and thus in the process of resource allocation; as institution it represents the interest of the community members and is devoted to the improvement of the material well-being of rural peoples.

CD is the planned evolution of all aspects of community well-being (economic, social, environmental, and cultural). It is a process whereby community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems. It is considered as a 'grassroots' process by which communities: become more responsible; organise and plan together; develop healthy options; empower themselves; reduce ignorance, poverty and suffering; create employment and economic opportunities; and achieve social, economic, cultural and environmental goals (Frank & Smith, 1999:6).

If we review the definitions of community development, we see that different authors emphasise different areas in the paradigm of CD. I argue that none of them is complete, and it is not possible to generate such a definition by a group of words which would be universally accepted. CD is called a development process, which attempts to coordinate/integrate the community spirit (i.e. trust, human relations, leadership, local resources, and local organisations). CD creates spaces for increasing group decision making, and common understanding for achieving common purpose/interest (social and economic well-being). The basic and common elements of CD are: social contact, shared values, communication, self-regulation, member involvement, shared physical environment, and sense of belonging. From the objective point of view, CD is- a process; an approach; a way for solving local problems by local awareness/confidence/trust, a way for

institutional and human relations/interaction and coordination, community control and community spirit. The ownership, community assets, self-sustaining organisations, relationships, community resources, self-reliance and confidence, and expectations of community members are important elements of CD.

Cook (2005:2) states some characteristics and principles of CD, which are almost the same as those above.

- CD focuses on a unit called 'community'; conscious attempts to induce non-reversible structural change,
- It uses paid professional workers,
- It is initiated by groups, agencies or institutions, external to the community unit,
- It emphasises public participation,
- It increases dependence on participatory democracy as the model for community (public) decision making, and
- It is used as a holistic approach.

Frank & Smith (1999:6) argue that effective CD should be: a long-term endeavour, well planned, inclusive and equitable, holistic and integrated into the bigger picture, initiated and supported by community members, of benefit to the community, and grounded in experience that leads to best practice. CD is a set of principles which attempt to achieve felt-needs, extensive citizen involvement, consensus and local decision making. The key purpose is to bring about social change and justice collectively by working with communities. The most important outcome of CD is to improve the quality of life. Effective CD helps to improve mutual benefit and reciprocal responsibility among community members. It improves connections between social, cultural, environmental and economic matters; the diversity of interests within a community; and its relationship to building capacity (Frank & Smith, 1999:6). CD helps to build community capacity to address issues and to take advantage of opportunities, to find common ground and to balance competing interests. CD is seen as a purposive activity by people to strengthen a 'community field' (Summers, 1986:355-356). To consider the above discussion, we find two broader headings of the CD process: community empowerment and quality of life.

Community empowerment:

- Process: community empowerment, positive action, community organisation and volunteer support, and participation and involvement.
- Outcomes: a learning community, a fair and just community, an active and organised community, and an influential community.

Quality of life:

- Process: community economic development, social and service development, community environment action, community arts and cultural development, and governance and development.
- Outcomes: a shared wealth, a caring community, a safe and healthy community, a creative community, and a citizen's community.

I think that the ultimate goal of CD is that of changing power structures to eliminate the obstructions that prevent people from participating in the areas that influence their lives. The common objectives are: social justice, participation, equality, learning, cooperation, challenging discrimination and oppressive practices, developing practice and policy, encouraging networking and connection between communities and organisations, ensuring access and choice, influencing policy and programmes, prioritising the issues of concerns, promoting social change, reversing inequality and the imbalance of power relationships, and supporting community led collective action. These changes happen through some strategies, though there are no specific or universal strategies in CD. Debate surrounds whether it is based on planned change or revolution. There are different opinions in this regard. For example, Christenson & Robinson (1980:7) argue that development as planned change is putting a particular ideological orientation into action to restructure the social, normative and economic order for desired ends. They say that rural CD is derived from a vision of society, which stresses the utilisation of knowledge, particularly science and technology, to solve problems. This notion is that, by applying systematic and appropriate knowledge, social systems can be changed deliberately for the betterment of all. Some authors (such as Phifer *et al.*, 1980) argue that CD comes from the laissez-faire doctrine of social Darwinism, through the reform-oriented tradition of intellectual liberalism.

Summers (1986) states that there are three strategies/theories for rural CD: such as authoritative intervention, client-centred intervention, and radical reform. Authoritative intervention strategy is an agent (usually external to the community) which initiates a change in the belief that the project will improve the community, and that it is in line with the self-interest of the community. It uses the physical sciences rather than cultural, social, political, economic, or demographic perspectives, which introduces 'new and improved' technologies. This is mostly true where the core problem is biological or physical. Client-centred intervention is a populist-based ideology (Canovan, 1981) which emphasises political equality and popular sovereignty as the means by which citizens control their own lives. In this view, the key function is to pledge every citizen's right to freedom of expression. Radical reform is mainly based on Marxist or neo-Marxist analysis. The primary argument of radical reform is that it is only achieved through major reformation of the structure of the economic and social systems (Summers, 1986).

Operational definition

I have used the concept of 'community development' in my research as follows: Community development is a method, strategy, model and programme that governs socio-economic and cultural improvement through NGOs; voluntary, local organisations; and local initiatives. Its goals are to improve: network relations (such as involvement in bank for micro-credit); local skills and practices through quality education (both formal and non-formal); human well-being through social services; and to increase per capita income, poverty alleviation, women empowerment, local decision making, and eradication of corruption, population control, and increase employment facilities.

The theoretical perspective

The research considers mainly two theories: social capital and community empowerment. This section highlights these two theories briefly, in connection with NGOs' interventions for community development; it also shows how these two theories emerge as a new definition of community development.

Social capital, NGOs, and the development debate

I stated earlier in this chapter that the term 'social capital' has been the subject of great interest and debate in the development literature. As a result, it has been elaborated so widely that it is very difficult to explain its theoretical context briefly. Evans (1996) suggests the importance of a more regionalised social capital to overcome locally confined solidarities in order to increase representative bargaining power and access to information. There is a general agreement that it is something that exists between individuals and organisations. This 'something' emerges from connections between entities and is further developed through trust, mutual understanding and mutual actions, based on shared norms and values (Kay, 2005:162). In a study of thirteen development programmes in Asia and Africa, Brown & Ashman (1996) found that higher levels of social capital in terms of the number and quality of grassroots organisations, and the degree of inter-sectoral links between public and non-governmental actors, resulted in more effective programme design, implementation, and significant long-term change. They concluded that the creation and strengthening of social capital is essential to building inter-sectoral collaboration in order to mobilise local resources and direct energies towards future problem solving.

Newton (2001:206) states that voluntary associations are alleged to create the cross-cutting ties and social networks that bind society together. They create social bonds between like-minded people and bridges between different

social groups, wherever there is an overlap. Abom (2004:352) argues that NGOs can play a role in encouraging social capital between the community and the state by standing with grassroots community groups by helping to broker a 'place at the table'. In the process, opportunities are provided for collective action that may allow people to exercise their own power.

Abom (2004:352) states that some scholars argue that social capital is not inherently linked to noble ends, such as democracy, equitable economic development, and inclusion that Putnam and others have attributed to it. Rather it has seen that nepotism, exclusivity, and divisions among families and communities may result from strong forms of social capital. NGOs seem to impinge on social capital both positively and negatively, depending on their intervention approaches. For example, as observed, some NGOs limit or obstruct social capital formation by providing direct services. Abom (2004:352) argues that this strategy, implemented mainly by Northern-led and Northern-funded NGOs, aims to reduce the immediate suffering of the 'poor', and meet their short-term visible needs in the hope that the 'poor' may get themselves back on their feet to 'escape poverty'. Such NGOs glimpse their role as the 'doer', placing low expectations of participation and commitment on beneficiaries.

It is agreed that this approach does provide for the human and physical relief and development of many 'poor' people. But many argue that this non-participatory approach minimises the wider social capital-building processes, primarily by contributing to people's mentality of dependence on others, perpetuating top-down values, and acting as a barrier to more fundamental structural change (Rahman, 1995). Moser's (1996) investigation of urban squatter communities finds that communities served by top-down delivery systems, including NGO welfare programmes, had less developed community-based organisations. Buckland's (1998:239) case study of some prominent NGOs in Bangladesh highlights how advances made by highly technical income-generation projects came at the expense of community self-reliance, and the 'ability to communicate and promote organisation among the rural poor'. On the other hand, Dowla (2006:119) finds that the micro-credit of the *Grameen Bank* in Bangladesh had created and cultivated a substantial level of social capital by creating trust, norms and networks.

In view of this discussion, the research draws upon four elements of this social capital approach: collective actions, social trust, sharing norms and values, and coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits. It shows the capacities of

NGOs' interventions within these elements. Their limitations have also been discussed with these capacities.

Community empowerment versus community development

The concept of 'empowerment' is a buzzword. Empowerment is a process whereby individuals struggle to reduce personal powerlessness and dependency by having increased control over their lives (Lord & Hutchison 1997; Rappaport, 1987). It is highly advocated by prominent development actors and mainly NGOs (Bodja, 2006:vi). Labonte (1996) states it as an important outcome of community development. As a broad concept, it represents more than a simple increase in income level or access to material resources (Islam & Mia, 2007a:15). Empowerment enables people to organise and influence change on the basis of their access to knowledge, to political processes and to financial, social and natural resources (Bodja, 2006:11-12). The concept has been defined in the literature in two ways: individual empowerment and community empowerment (Arai, 1995), but there is no universally accepted definition. It means different things to different people, and it varies across countries and cultures. It provides rebalancing of the structure of power within a community by addressing: control of resources, control of decisions, control of information, and physical domination (INTRAC 2005). It helps to expand the assets and capabilities of the poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives. The basic elements of empowerment are rights, resources and support to information, inclusion/ participation, accountability, and local organisational capacity (Narayan, 2002).

Now the discourse of 'community empowerment' has become the common denominator of action for development agencies in a global world (Tembo, 2004:1025). The concept was used in development in the 1990s to replace community participation (Rifkin, 2003:169). Rifkin (2003) uses the CHOICE (C=capacity-building, H=human rights, O=Organisational sustainability, I=Institutional accountability, C=contribution, and E=enabling environment) theory, provided by the Nobel laureate Amartya Sen (1999). He shows how health equity can be achieved through community empowerment. The emergence of empowerment as a development topic is associated with the overall shift to alternative development as policies that derived from mainstream development. Empowerment as an 'alternative development approach' is now approaching, which allows social aspects of development and local communities to enhance participation through using local resources. Laverack (2006) reviews a number of

authors' 'domains' approaches of community empowerment (Table-5) and then he develops nine components of these domains.

The thesis considers these nine domains, such as improving participation; developing local leadership; increasing problem assessment capacities; critical awareness of people's needs; building of organisational structures; improving resource mobilisation; strengthening links to other organisations and people; creating an equitable relationship with outside agents; and increasing control over programme management. These domains influence and allow individuals and groups to become better organised and mobilise themselves toward community change. Laverack states that there is considerable similarity between the domains. He adds, however, that there is no consensus on which particular combination is the most effective for community empowerment. Instead, the domains provide a guide to community development practitioners in their planning, application and evaluation of community empowerment in a programme context.

Table-5: *The domains of community participation, community competence and community capacity*

Community participation Rifkin et al., (1988)	*Community competence Eng & Parker (1994)*	*Community capacity Goodman et al., (1998)*	*Community capacity Bopp et al., (1999)*
Leadership organisation	Participation and machinery for facilitating participant interaction and decision-making	Participation	Participation
Resource mobilisation	Social support	Leadership Sense of community, an understanding of community history and community values Resources	Leadership Sense of community
Needs assessment	Self-aware and clarity of situational definitions Management of relations with wider society	Critical reflection Social and inter-organisational networks	Resources, knowledge and skills Ongoing learning Shared vision
Management (programme)	Conflict containment Articulateness Commitment	Skills Community power	Communication

Source: Laverack (2006:4)

Laverack says, although these domains have been used by practitioners for many years, their purposeful integration in a programme context is a more recent idea. The role of the practitioner in using an empowerment approach has

been conventionally concerned with facilitating the movement of people along a continuum (Labonte, 1990). These domains give a more precise way of developing strategies for progression along the empowerment continuum. Laverack argues that this domain approach is very flexible and can lead to individuals and groups developing empowerment strategies to better identify their problems and solution through collective action.

NGOs have certain characteristics and advantages, which allow using those empowerment elements successfully compared to state implementing agencies. Wuyts *et al.*, (1992:134) and Cerenea (1988:18) ague that the empowerment approaches can work successfully with the NGOs' advantages, such as acceptance and relation with marginalised groups, organising participation, quick and flexible response, and cost-effectiveness. Even with such features, there are a number of arguments that suggest that NGOs perform differently to the above assumptions. Bodja (2006:20) argues that NGOs are accused of hijacking genuinely needed development aid by well-established élites. These élites are also seen as new structures to perpetuate existing systems of neo-patrimonialism in poor communities. NGOs, mainly international ones, have expanded their structure that they have lost their efficiency in terms of delivering cheaper and quicker service. Moreover, these NGOs are often blamed on the grounds of misunderstanding local conditions and hiring amateurs with less skill (Wuyts *et al*, 1992:134; Chabal & Daloz, 1999:22-24; Bodja, 2006:20), which interrupt the target of community empowerment.

NGOs, social capital, and community empowerment: A new definition of community development

Over the last three decades, research on underdevelopment has been dominated by three major schools of thought, namely: growth model or stage theory, modernisation theories, and dependency model or world system perspective. These 'borrowed concepts' (Masreque & Khan, 2000:3) and 'conventional development theories' and practices characteristically have come from outside. In such schemes, knowledge of, and links with the recipients are virtually minimal. These not only imply ineffective 'transmission of development', but also indicate little recognition of the process of internal generation. VanSant (2003:1) describes that there are three ways by which the NGOs deliver their activities. First, relief and welfare- involves primarily the delivery of inputs, such as humanitarian assistance. Secondly, small-scale local development- involves service delivery and building of some local capacities for self-help. And thirdly,

sustainable development systems- involve grassroots mobilisation and policy advocacy.

I suggested earlier in this chapter that at present, community development (CD) is not just a method or process, rather than a 'paradigm' or 'model' for sustainable development. Due to globalisation, the concept of community development regarding the role of NGOs needs to consider some important indicators. The former Secretary General of the UN, Kofi Annan (2001 in VanSant, 2003:3) says, "Today's real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated." We might add that development is often the ticket across these borders. Networking as a part of social capital is an aspect of globalisation, and is a major strategic device for NGOs. Networks contribute to adaptability and problem-solving strategies. Networks can more swiftly discover and adapt new techniques. Networking, as John Clark (in VanSant, 2003:3) notes, does not mean working only with like-minded groups; it means building partnerships to tackle issues that would be impossible without particular strategic alliances. In this connection, some new concepts, such as community empowerment, social network, social capital, self-reliance, and sustainable development have become important components and objectives of community development. It is because of this that the change of NGOs' role, from relief to development (Davis, 2006:4), and from development to sustainable development, is now getting more attention. This approach is now overemphasised with a growing recognition of the role of non-government development organisations (NGDOs). In the context of globalisation, NGOs need to focus on expanding space for poor people (about eighty per cent of developing countries) to engage with emerging forms of states and markets for their livelihood advantages. This implies creating space, where the poor can effectively negotiate the global discourses and frameworks of development from their particular experiences and images of reality (based on local knowledge) (Tembo, 2004:1203).

Within this discussion, the thesis argues that the NGOs' interventions are now needed to reshape from the conventional approach. In this connection, the research finds three important development indicators which help to reshape the content of CD, where a new definition is emergent. These are:

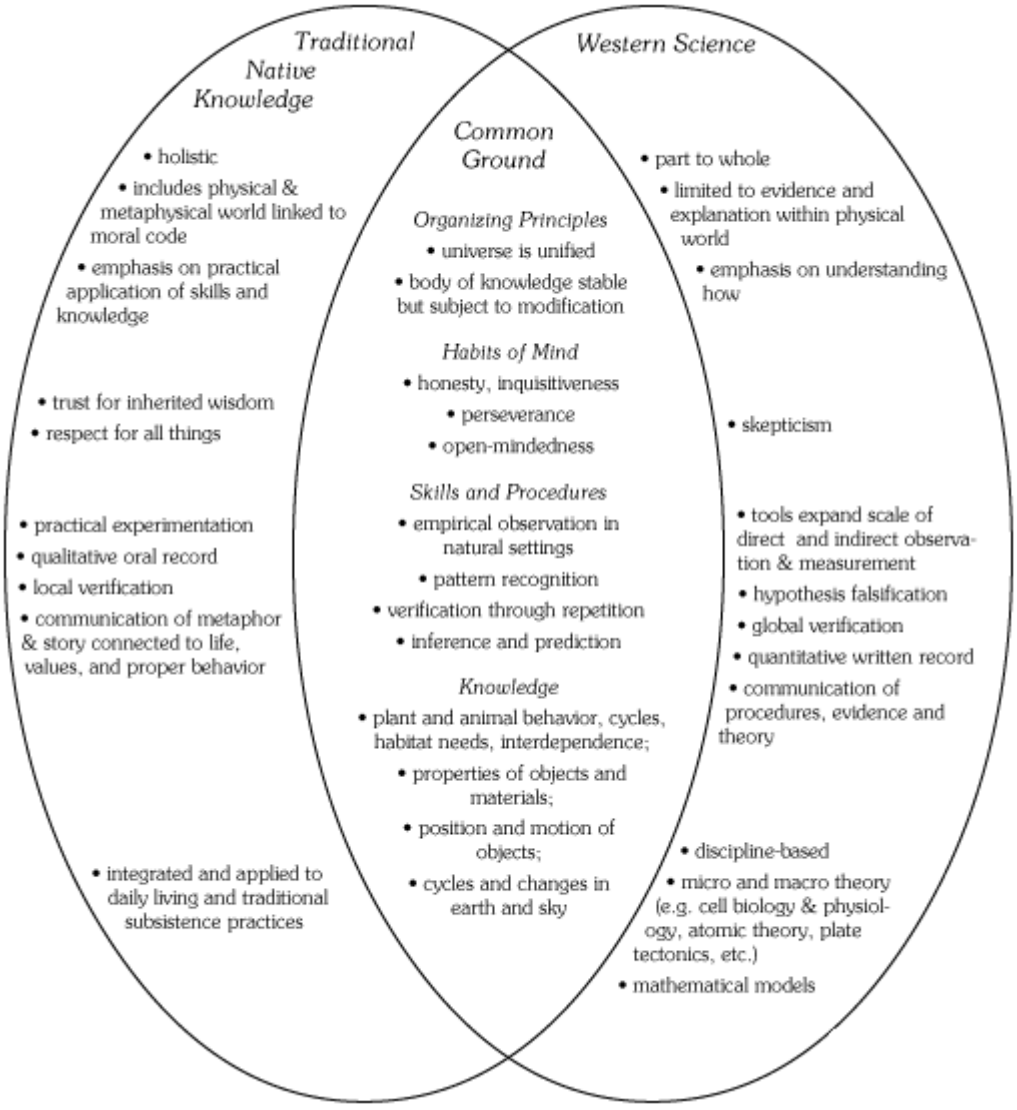
- The great involvement of NGOs in development sectors in community level as a part of globalisation,
- The emerging of social capital with huge prospectus, and
- NGOs' community empowerment movement towards sustainable development and self-reliance.

Within livelihood assets and institutional processes, 'knowledge' (including information) is the key indicator, which helps to achieve community empowerment. It is accepted that knowledge, in all its forms, is a means to the attainment of economic self-determination and self-reliance. Every aspect of human activity, in terms of the use of knowledge, is becoming a vital component of socio-economic and political interaction (Gakuru, undated). This system evolves through human interactions, as well as with nature. The NGOs are the key actors which provide knowledge as their development interventions to the community people. Here the main interaction happens between community people and development agencies (NGOs) (Tembo, 2004:1027). The NGOs' role for developing countries, such as Bangladesh is more important, when a significant number of populations are out of this knowledge system. The most important thing is that knowledge can be considered as powerful when it can solve the practical problems of the community. Simply, *this knowledge is called social capital, which can be invested directly for community well-being*. It is accepted that the ultimate purpose of this knowledge, which is disseminated as interventions by NGOs for developing countries like Bangladesh, is to generate social capital and community empowerment for social development. Which knowledge approach should be used, either local or global or an integrated approach, is important for such a development. However, this is a debateable agenda, and globalisation makes this complex, where the NGOs' role becomes challenging.

Many research papers have been published on NGOs' role in sustainable community development, where NGOs' capacity for social capital with IK's role has been criticised meticulously, due to globalisation. Mathias (1995) claims that NGOs still appear to make little use of IK, though it is considered a valuable resource for social development. Roue (2003:536) even finds that the fundamentalism of some NGOs does more harm than good to indigenous populations. Tembo (2004:1027) calls it 'an actor-oriented development approach', which has failed to create a proper negotiation between global knowledge and local experience. Donor dependency is one of the ubiquitous criticisms of NGOs' activities, which is considered a big threat for indigenous initiatives (Devine, 1996:8-9; Korten, 1990). Reij *et al*., (1996) and Briggs (2005:6) argue that much effort is expended on designing and disseminating 'solutions', but too little time is spent on understanding the problem. Sillitoe (2000a:3) argues that the confusion between scientific and indigenous knowledge

in Bangladesh occurs in NGO level, because of misunderstanding the IK agenda and the attitude of scientists. In keeping with these views, we have seen that there are three different strategies where the NGOs use knowledge approaches, such as 'patent', 'transfer', and 'mixing'. Each of these three strategies has been practised in Bangladesh, but the positive community change has still not been achieved. The third one gave some comparatively positive outcomes in many countries, but still there are few examples of where it has done so successfully (GFHR, 2004:2). Let us have a look some examples:

Figure-2: *Qualities associated with traditional knowledge and Western science*

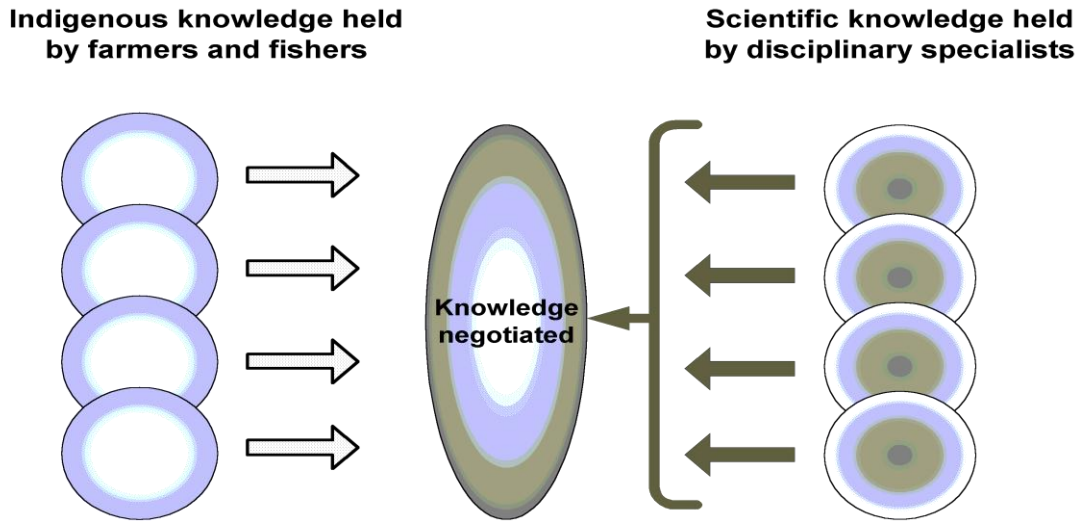


Source: Stephens (2000:11)

Stephens (2000:11) provides a figure (Figure-2), where he shows how a new knowledge paradigm can be developed through integration of IK and GK. My argument is that it is ideally possible, but the application of this new knowledge would be difficult to achieve its desired success. For example, Barr & Dixon

(1998) show how the farmers' and fishers' local knowledge failed to integrate with the scientific knowledge into natural resources in Bangladesh. They argue that there were considerable intellectual difficulties and practical problems with this integration (Figure-3). But there are some examples where this integration gave positive outcome. For example, Howell (2003:8) shows that this combination can offer a more appropriate, reliable and comprehensive early warning indicators of cyclones for vulnerable rural people in Bangladesh.

Figure-3: **Integrating IK and Natural Resources Research**



Source: Barr & Dixon (1998)

Very few research-based documents are available in Bangladesh. Khan *et al.*, (2000:16) argue that the research and documentation of IK are still at an embryonic stage in Bangladesh. They provide a list of IK related literature, but most of them are in forestry, agriculture, flood and irrigation, livestock, health, and management. None of those are methodological or purely general development issues. However, some progress was found and some countries achieved some success, but these initiatives have been criticised. Moreover, the distribution of resources, power relations, sustainability of development, stand of culture, and public health status are questionable.

Let us consider the literature, which considers how a new knowledge framework is possible, what the constraints are, and how we can overcome them. For example, regarding rural development through agriculture, Briggs & Sharp (2004:665-66) show that this new approach should be matched without any challenges of its content, structure or value-system of this view with modern science. One of the probable gaps is scientific language, which might be

inadequate for describing the complex and changing experiences of farmers and other actors in rural development (Pretty, 1994:38). Briggs *et al.,* (2007:247) examine the implications of the local environment knowledge in two Bedouin communities in Egypt, and find that the traditional IK based environmental knowledge cannot work successfully. Instead, they recommended considering it with economic and socio-cultural realities for sustainable development strategies. Tembo (2004:1025-1031) identifies these as 'ideological', 'language' and 'image conflict'. As a result, 'knowledge', other than those derived from formal science, are still observed doubtfully by many in the development community. It is feasible to be incorporated into development practices where indigenous technical solutions are straightforward and uncontroversial. But I argue that this attempt may not be possible for developing countries such as Bangladesh, where socio-cultural variations are enormous. In this connection, Craig *et al.,* (2000:332) claim that lack of scaling out-local capacity-building and empowerment policies for 'scaling-up' to the larger regional or national level could fail. Because of the lack of local roots, the large-scale plans can be consent from above, but 'participation' cannot be imposed from above. It develops differently at different paces, depending upon local context.

The research argues that an ideal policy framework should be developed using both knowledge systems with consideration of local context, local resources and capital, local peoples' capacity, local institutional capacity, and local people's needs. It should be developed through authentic people's participation, the community's ownership and within an environment where a joint/partnership initiative can run as a learning process. It is a new form of knowledge approach which is the principal thrust of the research investigation. The research argues that it is neither possible by patent, nor transfer – neither possible by mixing or integrating. I think that mixing is a way in which emphasis is given on the basis of immediate needs and requirements, and with sharing positive sides of both. It offers neither sustainability, nor self-reliance.

Within the community development paradigm, the concepts 'social capital' and 'community empowerment' have been considered in recent times. The research looks at how a new community development definition evolves with a three way relationship within these two concepts with NGOs' interventions. A number of authors, such as Mohan & Stokke (2000), Harris & Paolo (1997), Newton (2001), DeFilippis (2001), Putnam (1995), Putzel (1997), Bebbington (1997), Uphoff (1999), Narayan & Pritchett (1999), Fox (1997), Dhesi (2000), Chopra (2001),

and Kay (2005) argue for the inclusion and importance of social capital in community development. On the other hand, Laverack (2001, 2005, 2006), Kamata (2000), Rahman (2006), Lyons *et al.,* (2001), Malki (2006), VanSant (2003), Jones & Laverack (2003), Kilby (2006), Mukharjje (2001), Taiwo (2004), Waring (2004), World Bank (2002), Aminuzzam *et al*., (2003), Barnes *et al*., (1997), Brinkerhoff (2006), and Eklund (1999) show the application of community empowerment in community development.

Social capital has become an important analytical concept and policy tool within development (Bebbington, 1997). From an analytical perspective, several researchers have tested whether social capital does underpin successful economic development and/or poverty alleviation programmes. Kay (2005) agrees with the importance of social capital for community development and considers it as 'social energy'. He states some of the results to emerge from a three-year research project (CONSCISE Project) in Western Europe. Kay looked at the contribution of social capital, and found that social capital made a great contribution toward community development. He found it as 'glue' (binds a community) and 'grease' (enables things to happen smoothly), which enhanced community mobilisation, capacity building, planning, partnership, community renewal, place management, social entrepreneurship and sustainability (Kelly & Caputo, 2005:234-235; Ingamells, 2006). In this way, social capital has been linked to collective norms, values and relationships reflecting the involvement of human individuals in 'a common life based on family and community'. Here community development is generally defined as a social learning process, which serves to empower individuals and to involve them as citizens in collective activities aimed at socio-economic development (McClenagham, 2000). Mohan & Stokke (2000:247) argue that community development based on local and social capital approach has moved away from holistic theorisation towards more localised, empirical and inductive approaches. A more liberal and populist approach to local empowerment centres on such an open-ended interpretation of participation described as a 'paradigm shift'.

As a non-threatening language of trust, networks, reciprocity and associations, social capital binds communities together and ensures both political and economic progress (Mohan & Stokke, 2000:255; Putzel, 1997). Chopra (2001) finds social capital as the density of formal and informal institutions, which link other kinds of inputs into development, and brings them centre-stage. Importantly, these analysts perceive social capital as a vital local endowment

leading to local development. At the level of macro-policy, the World Bank sees social capital underpinning a wide range of developmental initiatives (Fox, 1997). The broad objective of social capital is to secure an asset based community, which is a relatively new approach for participatory development (O'Leary, undated:2). This process helps to join up environmental, economic, social, demographic, technological, political and other issues by empowering communities. In this regard, social capital becomes an important analytical concept and policy tool within development (Bebbington, 1997; Narayan & Prichett, 1999; Brown & Ashman, 1996). It is a vehicle which strengthens the bond with social networks. And the NGOs' role in this context is crucial. The research argues that NGOs can bridge the gap between the government and the community, organise poor people, take collective action, fight for peoples' rights, and represent the interests of the community members, facilitate the supply of inputs into the management process, mediate between people and the wider political party, networking, information-dissemination and policy reform. For increasing social networks and community participation, the NGOs should respect the community's indigenous contribution as manifested in their knowledge, skills and potential (Botes & Rensburg, 2000:53).

Empowerment is also considered an important outcome of community development (Labonte, 1996; Barnes *et al.,* 1997). Kamata (2000) argues that the failure *top-down* and *blue-print* development model, 'participatory development' has been a frequently-discussed topic for the new model of 'people-centred' development. The concepts of empowerment and IK have been introduced into the context of the developing world and are becoming widespread. Decentralisation (Brinkerhoff *et al.,* 2006:1), citizen participation (Eklund, 1999), downward accountability (Kilby, 2006:951), and capacity enhancement need assessment (McNeil & Kuehnast, 2004; McNeil & Woolcock, 2004; Taiwo, 2004) under community empowerment are now considered important aspects for community development. Stubbs (2006:1) shows in his case study in Croatia that alongside concepts of globalisation and neo-liberalisation, a third process, that of NGOisation, needs to be addressed for successful community development. Rifkin (2003) presents the progression of the concept of participation to the present term of empowerment, and the links among empowerment, equity, and health outcomes. I stated earlier in this section that recently, Laverack (2006) provides two case study examples of how community empowerment can be better conceptualised, planned and applied

within a programme context by using a 'domains' approach in community development practices.

Conclusion

The above discussion considered different aspects of the principal concepts, such as IK, globalisation, social capital, and community development and theoretical paradigms with the role of NGOs for community development. Despite many contradictions and criticisms, it is clear that indigenous and global knowledge systems have been considered as powerful tools for community development. There are many aspects of the approaches of social capital and community empowerment, where NGOs can play a significant role for sustainable community development in Bangladesh. I argue that there are still many opportunities for the indigenous NGOs in Bangladesh, where the application of these approaches can be justified, and these should be researched. This is also a concern that many NGOs still cannot reach the local poor people properly. On the other hand, globalisation brings many prospects as well as tensions, which may reconsider the process with NGOs' interventions. It appears that a qualitative investigation would be useful to formulate appropriate local level planning for reaching local people and their development. However, I do re-emphasise three important aspects from the above discussion. First, the NGOs' role towards social capital and community development is significant. Secondly, globalisation creates a number of opportunities for community development, which we should consider according to the local conditions rather than applying straightforward, otherwise this approach may destroy many IK based resources. And thirdly, it is a crucial policy issue that NGOs' development activities should follow an appropriate policy as an effective contribution toward community development.

Chapter Three
Research methodology & methods

Introduction

Academic research about indigenous knowledge (IK) with its potential for community development is recent and progressive. The present stand of IK has evolved and developed through the use of qualitative perspectives. As a relatively new field, IK is still considering many possible approaches (Sillitoe, 2005:1). A continuous spectrum of approaches and tools is used for this investigation. This chapter discusses the methodological approaches used in the research. Initially, the chapter explains why the qualitative approach is important for such an investigation. A brief discussion of recent literature, which relates to the research, is also presented here. It also clarifies the relevance of triangulation for the instruments used and finally, the precise research design is explained.

Qualitative approaches: Methods and techniques

There is a wide range of opinions about the application and use of qualitative approaches in social research. The research argues that a qualitative approach is an appropriate option for this kind of investigation, which was influenced also by the ethnographic approach, considering different interacting social and cultural factors, such as people's attitudes, norms, values and practices in their day to day life.

The data base provides descriptions of the details of social life or cultural phenomena in a small number of cases (Hall, 2006:1). This kind of qualitative research takes the form of diverse relationships and conversations. Even when it includes apparently impersonal methods, such as surveys, it treats them as part of an ongoing conversation or relationship with a place and with people (Tacchi *et al.*, 2003:10). The methodological approaches seek to explore and provide both information and have a profound preoccupation with empirical realities (Masreque & Khan, 2000:3). Quantitative methods would not be useful to collect such data, considering the concepts and objectives that I set out for my research, which looks into 'NGOs' capacity for social capital and community development with the paradigm of indigenous and global knowledge in Bangladesh'. It needs to justify many interlinking social components, including human behaviour and cultural issues. Qualitative research therefore would be more useful for this kind of

investigation to visualise various interlinking issues. The research then used the 'triangulation approach' to improve reliability and validity of field-data.

The researcher's role is vital in qualitative research. Before starting data collection, I considered three components suggested by Lincoln & Guba (1985): attitude to the naturalist paradigm, level of skill appropriate for a human instrument, and to prepare a research design. It is called the 'theoretical sensitivity' of the researcher (Strause & Corbin, 1990). Theoretical sensitivity refers to a personal quality of the researcher; it indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meanings of data. For my research, I took an active role in interacting with the participants of my study (Muchinsky, 2003). This produced verbal summaries of research findings with no statistical summaries or analysis (Shaughnessy *et al.*, 2003). I applied this method in a natural setting, where I tensed the socially constructed nature of reality. It helped to create an intimate relationship between me and what I studied, and the situational constraint that shaped this inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:8). It also helped me to confine and comprehend individual definitions, descriptions, and meanings of events (Burns, 2000:388). Analysis of behaviour in my research involves discussion of how people experience and feel events in their lives (Beins, 2004), individually and with the NGOs' activities. This kind of sense gives me a good means of generating hypotheses and theories of what happens in organisational settings (Spector, 2005). This approach is less structured and there was an attempt to not manipulate the conditions of the research. It investigates behaviour as it occurs naturally in non-contrived situations.

The qualitative approach using IK generates good understandings and tolerates the more efficient use of such knowledge and information. Rich research consists of a range of grounded and relevant facts, observations, understandings, perceptions, and interpretations (Tacchi *et al.*, 2003:9). In most of the cases, 'participant observation' was considered as the principal data collection method, rather than gaining information through a face to face interview. This means that I participated in and carefully observed as much as possible of local daily life (i.e. ceremonies, rituals, customs, values, behaviour, movement, association with local institutions, even meal preparation and consumption). I considered this to be a 'holistic approach' in a multi-method procedure to identify the patterns of relationships, interactions of the whole social settings, and I tried to understand the meanings of local knowledge.

During my own fieldwork, I found my working relations with local producers reflected to some extent the nature of the debate, IK and GK as the local producers found me as *gobeshok* (researcher), *uttorer lok* (town person), university teacher and *bilat ferot* (Londoner), where my 'nativeness' became somewhat blurred, and my relationships with informants were constantly negotiated (Ahmed, 2004:204). In effect, I struggled with the domain of 'power-relation', though I gave a good understanding of my personal identity, my research objectives, and the use of my research. As a participant observer, using qualitative data collection methods, I recorded detailed field notes and conducted interviews based on open-ended questions, and gathered data from social settings.

As I said, there are a number of techniques in qualitative research where I could build-up an effective link and interaction through triangulation to observe day to day life of the community people. In this way, I became very familiar with the community, people, their language, culture, power structure, and religious beliefs for my research (Sillitoe *et al.,* 2005:24-25). The Participatory Approaches Learning Study (PALS) of DFID states:

> In participatory development interventions, the planning phase in a project is essential for establishing links and building trust with stakeholders, learning about the conditions, circumstances and priorities of those at the primary level, identifying possible projects and development goals, objectives and strategies that are appropriate, realistic and sustainable within the particular culture and institutional environment. This suggests an intensive period of consultation, listening and discussion, and sensitive research to establish a social, gender, risk and stakeholder analysis, participatory needs assessment (INTRACT, 1999; Sillitoe, 2005:28).

Selection of NGOs and communities

In most cases, the field work setting in qualitative research is often complex and difficult to access. This goes for diffuse political and organisational settings as well as open conflict-ridden ones. During the writing up of my literature review and research methodology in February 2006, I selected two NGOs from Bangladesh for my research. For this selection process, I considered the connection between NGOs' activities and my research objectives. Some other factors, such as my previous experience of work with the NGOs, their interest and their cooperation, etc. were also considered in this selection process. The two NGOs were: the Bangladesh Resource Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK) and the other, Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB). I initially talked with both of the NGOs during my family visit to Bangladesh in April 2006.

During the first month of my fieldwork, BARCIK declined its co-operation. It turned out to be unsuitable to work on a daily basis. First, they had funding problems and most of their field projects were not regular. The second problem was the nature of the service which it was providing for the community people. I had several meetings with the Executive Director and senior staff members of BARCIK to compare my research goal and their objectives, but I found them incompatible. Moreover, it had no field level interventions that I could consider for my fieldwork. Then I contacted *Proshik*a, which is known as a very reputable indigenous NGO in Bangladesh. The objectives and activities of *Proshika* were more relevant to what I needed for my study. My previous working experience with *Proshika* also encouraged me to select this NGO. Eventually, I worked with the following two NGOs:

- ✓ *Proshika*: A Centre for Human Development, and
- ✓ Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB).

Two communities[7] from two NGOs were selected for my field work. One community was urban (Mirpur (1) Market for *Proshika*) and another rural (*Mostofapur Bazar* (market) for PAB), and I worked with the goldsmiths and blacksmiths of those communities respectively. The other stakeholders were NGO staff members and community leaders. There are a number of reasons to select these two smiths' communities for my case studies. It is found that both of these communities are declining in Bangladesh due to globalisation. The debate between indigenous and global knowledge is an issue in these two communities, which was one of the important concerns of the research. Another reason to consider these two particular communities was that I had visited both of the communities twice before, namely for my consulting research in 2001 and 2002. I knew people were interested in my research and I knew I would be able to find people with whom to work.

There are several competent indigenous NGOs in Bangladesh, which are reputed world wide for improving community well-being and development. *Proshika* and PAB are two of them. The main objectives of these two NGOs are to improve peoples' existing (traditional) skills through providing a number of

[7] The word 'community' is an umbrella term that is defined and applied in a myriad of ways (Fraser, 2005:286). The community is considered here as 'business community'. It is a locality group in which there is a consciousness of unity, face-to-face relationships, and repeated social interactions among its members, who share common beliefs and orientations of business that unite the members of the collectives and guide their conduct to create an entity greater than the sum of its individual members. The market community combines the business sense of unity and organisational experience with the process of group formation, thus effectively serving as an incubator of development. In essence, a business community is a locality group that shares the villagers' business, economic and social sense of integration, acquaintanceship, and interaction.

interventions, such as training, social education, and micro-credit. I have looked at two core projects of the NGOs such as the Markets and Livelihoods Programme (MLP) (of PAB) and the Small Economic Enterprise Development (SEED) Programme (of *Proshika*), which were closer to my research investigation (further details of these two NGOs and communities are presented in Chapter Four). The community of *Mostofapur Bazar* is approximately 260 miles from my Dhaka residence, but the community Mirpur (1) Market is just two miles. I have had previous close connections with the second community over the last twenty years, since I started my Bachelor course at the University of Dhaka in 1987. During the first month, I took part in different internal training courses and staff meetings for getting proper orientations and services of the organisations they provide.

The research questions, data collections methods and use of triangulations

The research questions and stakeholders

The study uses twelve sets of research questions (for questionnaire and guidelines format, see Table-6, for detail see Appendix-2). It collected data from forty two respondents (community people, local leaders and NGO staff members) of two NGOs and two communities. It uses a number of qualitative data collection methods: two sets of questionnaires (head office, area office/ field office staff members and two communities, total four respondents) for participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participant observation; one set of questionnaire for NGO staff members (head office and area office, total twenty respondents); three sets of in-depth case study questionnaires for NGO staff members (head and area office), community leaders and community people (total sixteen respondents); four sets of focus group discussion (FGD) guidelines for NGO staff members (head and area office), community leaders and community people (total eight group of respondents); and two documentation guidelines from head and area office (total four respondents).

Before starting the actual field work, primary and preliminary data (demographic and socio-economic conditions) were collected through a pilot survey. Moreover, necessary information was collected from the local government offices and administration (i.e. *Union Parishad* (UP), district office, *Thana* office (local government administrative office at municipal area), settlement office, local and district library, local old people, local poet and cultural activists. Consultations and discussions as feedback with the above people and institutions

were continued as was required. Some information was updated from head office via e-mail and telephone during the thesis writing-up period.

Table-6: *Research questions and respondents*

Methods	Total sets (12)	For whom	Total number of respondents (42)
PRA and participant observation	Two	Agency settings Community settings	Four (Two agency plus two community)
Questionnaire	One	NGO staff members	Total twenty (five from head office and five from area office from each NGO)
In-depth case study	Three	NGO staff members (Head & Area office) Community leaders Community people	Total sixteen (two from head office and two from area office staffs, two from community leaders, and two from community people from each NGO
FGD	Four	NGO staff members from head office NGO staff members from area office Community leaders Community people	Total eight (one from head office and one from area office staffs, one from community leaders, and one from community people from each NGO
Documentation	Two	Head office Area office	Total four (one head and one area office from each NGO)

Source: Author

Data collection methods: Use of triangulations

The sets of data collection methods considered suitable for qualitative enquiry in IK, depended on the context, objective, location, time and social perspective including cultural setting of the particular community. As I stated earlier in this chapter, the data collection procedure was considered as a triangulation approach, using a number of qualitative data collection methods. One of the principal reasons to use triangulation is to avoid the limitations of a single method. It also helps to increase the reliability and validity of data. This sub-chapter looks at how I practically used different qualitative data collections methods.

A number of authors suggest that PRA and participant observation are suitable for IK research. For example, Grenier (1998) designs a research framework approach for IK research (see Table-7) and shows how different methods work. Langill (1999:21) states that there are a number of tools used by IK researchers to enable local people to share their knowledge in a meaningful manner. Guijt & Cornwall (1995) argue that PRA has proved to be a powerful and often beneficial strategy for participatory development. They add that its widespread use in diverse contexts signals the extent of its appeal, and some of the results have been impressive.

The formulation of the PRA method was used by Robert Chambers in 1983 in the field of community development. At present, the PRA has been extremely popular among international NGOs and certain governments operating in developing countries over the past decade (Cornwall *et al.,* 2001). The cultural and spiritual values of the research are linked directly with environmental values and economic needs, as part of a community-driven decision-making process. This method is therefore useful in the development paradigm based on the Western epistemology. The value system is, however, still embedded in the development discourse and follows 'the prescriptions laid down for them (underdeveloped countries) by those already 'developed' (Escobar, 1992:411). PRA is called a collective (between external agents or intellectuals and popular groups) data collection method which establishes links with the critical reconstruction of local and regional histories, the restoration and use of popular cultures (including people's feelings, imaginations, and artistic capabilities), and novel means of diffusing knowledge. Using PRA helped me in some settings, to:

- empower marginalised communities and groups
- local conditions
- seek and enable the expression and integration of local social diversity
- pursue community-based processes for development
- identify local priorities for research and initiate participatory research in local knowledge
- encourage organisational changes including community based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs assist with policy review.

PRA was helpful to learn about the communities, outsiders and inter-learning and inter-sharing of experiences. As an outsider, I found how other outsiders i.e. facilitators (as NGO workers) and district administrators interact with each other in relation to their livelihood options. PRA gave me a chance to be involved with different groups in the community. For instance, I talked with the local and district level entrepreneurs, who had business networks with blacksmiths and goldsmiths. The main disadvantage of using PRA was balancing power relations, as I found many of the stakeholders perceived me to be a high official or service provider which influenced their responses.

However, the PRA allowed me to 'visualise' everything from a wider and more open perspective. The most common techniques that I used were various *social mapping* exercises, whereby locals related aspects of their lives through *spatial representations*. While becoming popular over the past few years, PRA and the underlying approach to development that it embodies, has a number of problems relating to both its ontology and epistemology. Brown (1994) argues that there is a tendency to romanticise and essentialise the poor and the social systems by

which they operate. The 'poor' are set against an unspecified élite, whose only defining feature is their 'non-poorness', with the former group operating through affective ties of kinship, ethnic group, etc. and the latter utilising the 'modern' methods of state and other formal organisational channels.

Table 7: *A research framework approach for IK research*

From the IPR debate	The community and the participants are advised of the benefits and drawbacks of the research activity Informed consent is obtained from the community and from each individual The community controls how, and by whom the information is used
From IUCN	People and the environment are recognised as a "whole" The process begins by asking good questions Each action to reflection and learning The approach is people centred
From a social science research	Interviews are carefully designed to minimise errors Great care is taken with the forward and back translation of terms and concepts
From gender research	Women and men are trained as community researchers Women are consulted on the design of the research process (the who, when, and how of conducting interviews) The knowledge of women and men is collected Date and disaggregated by gender and often by age Women's confidential information is reported back to women not men
From PRA	Villagers (rich and poor, literate and non-literate, young and old, women and men) participate in the research design, data analysis, and follow-up decisions Researchers are facilitators and learners; they bring correct behaviour and attitude to the research process The research is interactive and participatory, supporting the independence and the dignity of participants; it uses local languages, indigenous categories, and multiple, creative techniques (with a balance of group and individual techniques) Data are visually shared; the information is created and owned by villagers; the knowledge stays in the village
From IK research	Multiple, culturally appropriate methods that encourage broad participation (on the part of the participants and the researcher) are used Researchers bring an appropriate attitude and an awareness of their own scientific bias The 3Rs (respect, reciprocity, relationships) are maintained

Source: Grenier (1998)

In PRA methods, there is an opportunity to use participant observation as a process of triangulation. The participant observation method has its roots in anthropology and as a methodology is attributed to Frank Hamilton Cushing in the nineteenth century. This method came in the academic discussion through a number of authors such as Bronislaw Malinowski (Social Anthropology, 1929), Edward Evans-Pritchard (Social Anthropology: Past and Present, 1950; Social Anthropology, 1961 & Anthropology and History, 1961), and Margaret Mead (New Lives for Old, 1956) in the first half of the twentieth century (Jarvie, 1964:176-182). Participant observation then gradually emerged as the principal approach to

qualitative research. This method is a powerful tool to accumulate cultural and social facts, and social interaction about the society. This method helped me to gain a close and intimate familiarity with both communities. As a participant observer, I discussed with all of the stakeholders according to my research objectives and gathered information. I followed their location, daily routines, and occupational activities.

Participant observation covers a variety of stances to the field context. As an 'onlooker' (or 'development tourist'), I observed and measured stakeholders' beliefs and behaviour entirely according to my own ontological standards and criteria of causality (Sillitoe *et al*., 2005:93). I interacted with the field and observed the verbal and non-verbal behaviour, such as cultural patterns, norms, values, customs, life pattern, habits, and so on. I used a range of methods and techniques, such as informal interviews, direct observation, and participation in the life of the groups, collective discussions, and analyses of the personal documents produced within the group, self-analysis, and life-histories in my notebook and tape recorder. It is true that I experienced a number of difficulties; for example a large amount of data took a long time to edit, and some data demonstrated were unnecessary for my research.

The in-depth interview, one of the important methods in qualitative research, was also used for this study. Generally, an interview is described as the 'favoured digging tool' of the social sciences (Kvale, 1996). This method helped me to find out the central themes in the life of the two communities, which covered both facts and meaning. This method was helpful to search for the story behind the data that I collected through participant experiences. This was suitable for both groups and individuals. I used this method quite informally (in market places, working place, and open space or in the local clubs) or more formally (during community workshops and meetings, or pre-arranged household visits). Before conducting the actual interviews, I followed the possible approaches to the interview method provided by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR, 1996) which are as follows:

- Ask for permission in advance
- Compile a list of topics
- Decide on a method to identify a sample of respondents
- If random sampling is used, prepare the list of respondents
- Make appointments with identified respondents
- Before interview, explain the objectives
- Allow the interview to flow
- Stick to the agreed time
- Validate written notes.

I prepared the interviewee(s) psychologically as such interactions were used to explore or probe in detail the hidden attitudes, and feelings of respondents that I observed as participant observer in PRA. In conducting oral interviews, I used audio tapes with the permission of the respondents in order to facilitate record keeping. It encouraged preparing an interview guide ahead of time to assist me to cover all relevant topics. However, I had significant freedom to encourage the interviewees to elaborate or explain answers provided. I was quietly aware that the stakeholders of both communities might not think of me as a stranger, but as a friend. I made clear to them how the information was going to be used and how they would benefit from the whole of this exercise. It is important to know beforehand what to ask and how to ask it. As necessary, I followed unstructured interview methods, used open-ended questionnaires and the whole interview processes were, in general, informal.

I followed the rules of in-depth case studies given by Sillitoe *et al.,* (2005:106-107), which are as follows:

- Questions should be unambiguous
- The phrasing of questions should be appropriate
- Respondents need to know enough about the topic
- The questionnaire should be well-planned, not to be repetitive
- Questions should be kept short
- Scales should be clear and unambiguous
- Questions should be self-administered
- Always provide alternatives for responses where appropriate
- The pre-testing of any survey instrument is vital.

I used a set questionnaire to collect data from the senior staff members of the NGOs. It was important to get their organised opinions on some sensitive issues, such as policy, planning and programming, the funding issue and its implications, and NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment. I also incorporated the focused group discussion (FGD) method, where I was unable to get some important, but debatable issues from PRA, questionnaire, participant observation or in-depth case study. These included NGOs' donor dependency, budget and use of funding, participatory planning process, functions of management, and NGOs' relations with community leaders and civil society. This was an in-depth field method which brought together a small homogeneous group (usually six to twelve persons) to discuss topics on a study agenda. This was a tool for studying ideas in a group context. Here the belief was that 'the whole was greater than the sum of its parts' (Sillitoe *et al*., 2005:177).

Discussions that took place were led by me as moderator and with my research assistant. He helped me to take some important notes on the motion

and contents of discussion, and ran tape recordings of talks as well. The purpose of FGD was to obtain in-depth information on concepts, perceptions and ideas of a group. It was more than a question-answer interaction. I stimulated participants to reveal underlying opinions, attitudes, and reasons for their behaviour. This was conducted in a relaxed atmosphere (usually at the local club or the rooms which the local entrepreneurs use as their business association), where they were able to express themselves without any personal inhibitions. Participants usually shared a common characteristic, such as age or socio-economic status that defines them as a member of a target sub-group. This encouraged a group to speak more freely about the subject without fear of being judged by others. Discussions lasted approximately one and a half hours. Transcription and translation works were done after finishing fieldwork but conclusions were not recorded during any of the discussions. The main problem of this method was that the community was not homogeneous, and the context was not neutral, and sometimes different stakeholders within this group were not able to express their views freely in an open forum (Sillitoe *et al*., 2005:177).

Table-8: *List of literature and documents used in the research*

Types of documents	**Specific sources**
Office documents	Proshika: SEED head and area office Practical Action Bangladesh: Market & livelihoods head and area office District office (LGED, land, statistics)
Journals articles	Relevant as much as I can
Published books	Relevant as much as I can
Dissertations	Relevant as much as I can
Discussion/working papers	Relevant as much as I can
Online resources	Relevant as much as I can
Unpublished papers	Relevant as much as I can
Organisations' websites	International: the World Bank, The World Bank Most Programme, World Bank Africa Region, UNESCO, ADB, DFID, IIRR, UNDP, ADB, etc.
Library documents	University of Nottingham (Hollaward, DLRC, George Green), London School of Economics, University of Dhaka (Central), Public Library (Bangladesh), Proshika and PAB head office
Conference papers	All relevant as much as I can
Personal documents	Some stakeholders

Source: Author

Documentation survey was another method used for my research. The purpose of this method was twofold: one was to develop the conceptual and theoretical framework of the thesis, and second was to compare and support the findings. A wide range of documentation and sources were used for the study, which is put in Table-8. The sources, such as contemporary and historical literature, letters, agendas, memoranda, written reports of events, minutes of meetings, administrative documents, proposals, newspaper, clippings, and others

appearing in the main media, were important sources for this IK research. The usefulness of documents in qualitative research lies in the fact that they were helpful to corroborate and strengthen the evidence from other sources (Burn, 2000:467; Yin, 1994:81).

Data collection process: Connecting from documentation to field data

Data collection procedures in the research included a wide range of issues, which included initial contact with the NGOs, community leaders and community people; to send formal letters; continuous involvement during data collection period; and finally feedback (August 2006 to March 2007, and updated until June 2008). Initial contacts with head offices and area offices took nearly two months. This covered discussions with NGO staff members, community people, local administration and local leaders. Major data were gained through observation (PRA, participant observation, in-depth case interview, and FGD), rather than asking questions (questionnaire). The whole process of data collection was interrelated with a number of activities, such as purposeful observation, maintaining proper field notes, editing of field notes, and daily sitting for discussion of the consequences of field data.

Data collected through questionnaires were documented by the respective respondents in written form. Data through FGD were documented by tape recorder, and notes were taken by note taker accordingly. Then FGD data were compared through editing on a daily basis. Shortage of any information was checked and verified. I remained in contact with respondents in case of any confusion or I found any gap in the information. I met the NGO staff members on a weekly basis and, when required, I shared my views with them over telephone and face to face talks.

The overall research and data collection procedures were as follows:

Planning data collection research ⟹ Gaining field access & conducting research ⟹ Organising coding & analysing data ⟹ Planning & action

Data collection planning

Preparations were always made in advance, prior to undertaking data collection. These included mental and physical preparation and initial contact with head and local office of the NGOs (by telephone or face to face contact). I made a

list of the materials and things that were used in data collection, such as clock, pen and pencil, papers, notebook, tape recorder, camera, data collection instruments, etc.

Gaining field access and conducting research

In qualitative research, field access was a vital and sensitive issue. Many of my expectations of conducting field visits went in vain because of such access issues; though I was fully aware about the ethical issue (ethical issues are described later of this chapter). According to my schedule, I applied the above mentioned methods, but remembered to use more alternative ones. This in general strengthened the validity of my findings as part of creating a triangulation of perspectives.

It was important to ensure that all data were thoroughly documented. In-depth interviews were conducted, supplemented by participant observations, which were all written up immediately. I recorded, documented and transcribed all of the evidence and information gained from the research on a daily basis. This process took one to two hours every research day, which I read through and organised regularly. The research developed over a period of eight months (Table-9) and the body of research material became an imperative asset to my project, outlining a detailed history and picture of the project and the community.

Organising, coding and analysis of data

Conducting qualitative research requires high levels of research severity. I tried to become highly disciplined and organised both in the way in which I carried out the collection of data, and the ways in which I managed. I was constantly tracking whether my data were collected systematically according to date, time, and place. The data were therefore organised and explored in terms of particular codes. These codes were particularly used for preliminary data collection on socio-economic and cultural conditions, mapping of environmental settings and institutions. This allowed for looking at the material in terms of significant themes or ideas.

Analysis was a continuous part of the research process, which was tracked constantly throughout rather than left until the end when all the data were gathered. I spent some time each day reading and thinking through my material in order to see what significant issues were emerging. This was in order to develop ideas and interpretations that I could pursue through further research and to explore ideas across all the different kinds of material I was gathering. In

pursuit of this, I followed these guidelines for data analysis, provided by Hall (2006:13):

- Read through (all kind of field notes and documents)
- Mark the data and take notes (on any patterns, connections, similarities or contrastive)
- Looking for 'local categories of meaning'
- Find alternative explanations
- Try triangulating among the various forms of data
- Consider 'respondent validation'.

Table-9: *Data collection timetable*

Data collection	Aug 06	Sep. 06	Oct 06	Nov 06	Dec 06	Jan 07	Feb 07	March 07
Contact with head office and collect agency level information (also use documentation method)	✓	✓						
Area office and community visit (also use documentation method) for initial contact, community mapping, and observe community setting	✓	✓						
Participant observation with PRA with NGO (head and local) and local community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Send questionnaires to the respondents			✓					
Two FGD sessions with two NGO head offices				✓	✓			
Two FGD sessions with community level NGO				✓	✓			
Two FGD with community leaders					✓	✓		
In-depth Interview (total eight) with community leaders and community people						✓	✓	
Feedback to community and NGOs								✓
Editing and self-assessment								✓

Source: Author

Planning and action

At the end of the field work, I drew out some pertinent findings and recommendations for my project. I identified some areas where there needed to be further investigation. In terms of qualitative research and my project development this was part of the continual cycle:

- What I have found out and how I might apply this to my project's development; and,
- How to deepen my understanding about the issues I have explored, and what other issues I need to explore?

Data analysis techniques: Reliability and validity issues

Data were analysed based on *thematic approach*. The word 'thematic' refers to 'constituting, or relating to a theme or themes'. Using a thematic

approach in qualitative research offers opportunities to expand the already established horizons of knowledge. What is learned may reveal something that has been unknown, or it may correct or expand what is already known. It is a way to simultaneously deepen and enrich the heights/depths of personal and collective knowledge, and to expand forward/backward comprehension. As personal learning deepens so at the same time collective knowledge about human nature grows and expands. By revealing both personal and structural aspects of experience, a harmony is achieved, transcending the opposition and bridging the gap between personal and collective knowledge (Kidd, 1992:1).

All sorts of data were carefully managed and the ethical issues were taken into account, which required extensive preparation. Eisenhardt (1989) points out the importance of field notes as a means of accomplishing the overlap of data analysis with data collection, which was a striking feature of my own research. Field notes involved both observation and analysis, preferably separated from one another, which was prepared for making field notes by designing a practical log. This kind of formatting was one of the aspects that Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest doing in terms of data management, next to cross-referral, indexing, abstracting and pagination. I followed their list of what to store, retrieve from and retain, including: raw material (such as field notes, tapes and site documents); partially processed data; coded data; memos or other analytic material; and an index of all the material.

I also considered some literature, for instance Yin (1989), who provides some guidelines about the quality of case study research. He argues that any given design can be judged according to the following four tests: construct validity; internal validity (for explanatory or causal studies only, and not for descriptive or exploratory studies); external validity; and reliability. I have observed how Miles & Huberman (1994:277) deal with the subject of research quality in their section on standards for the quality of conclusions, distinguishing the following groups of standards: objectivity/confirmability; reliability/dependability/auditability; internal validity/credibility/authenticity; external validity/transferability/fittingness; and utilisation/application/action orientation.

In qualitative research, the validity and reliability of data depend on the use of triangulation. Triangulation is a good strategy in qualitative research, which generates more valid and reliable data. I stated earlier in this chapter that I had the opportunity to use alternative data collection methods, where I asked

the same set of questions through a number of data collection methods from the same stakeholder(s). For instance, I asked the NGO staff members how they were considering their local contexts, and whether they were using 'Market Map' (developed through global contexts) during both FGD sessions and one to one in-depth case study. After editing the data, I found that there were some significant variations of their opinions. Following this, I cross referenced their opinions during feed back after finishing my field sessions. Within this process, there was a good opportunity to verify and validate my data in different ways of this triangulation process.

Ethical issues & matters of confidentiality

Qualitative research involves a wide range of ethical issues. The contents, participants, and social issues (as explained early in this chapter), which such research investigates, raise a number of ethical issues that I was aware of before beginning my field work. It is noted here that I submitted these ethical issues and my proposed solutions to the School of Education, University of Nottingham for consideration, and which I discussed with my Supervisor before going on my field work. This was approved in July 2006 by the Ethical Research Committee of the School. In accordance with this ethical guideline, I gave a clear understanding to my stakeholders about issues, such as the focus of my research, the research objectives and purposes, their participation, the time schedule of research, data collection methods and techniques, privacy and confidentiality of data, and the benefits of the research. I was also aware of the ethical guidelines of ESRC and BERA. But I followed the ethical guidelines provided by Miles & Huberman (1994) and Tacchi *et al.*, (2003).

Miles & Huberman elaborately explain and discuss the ethical guidelines for qualitative research. They identify the worthiness of the project (i.e., is my contemplated study worth doing?); competence boundaries; informed consent; benefits, costs and reciprocity; harm and risk; honesty and trust; privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; interventions and advocacy; research integrity and quality; ownership of data and conclusions; use and misuse of results; and conflicts, dilemmas and trade-offs. In their summary, they state that dealing with ethical issues "effectively involves heightened awareness, negotiation, and making trade-offs among ethical dilemmas, rather than the application of rules" (for details please see Miles & Huberman, 1994). Their advice is to anticipate: advance thinking during the early stages of research design … anticipating

challenges ahead can help avoid problems later. On the other hand, Tacchi *et al.*, (2003) suggest the following:

Explain myself: Before doing an in-depth interview or group discussion, I explained to my respondents briefly but clearly about the context and objectives of my research, research contents, importance of research, and possible implications. This was usually impossible in everyday participant observation and even in meetings, but I explained to the people whenever asked about my role and I asked them if they had any questions.

Respecting confidences: I needed to assure all interviewees that what they said would be kept confidential and non-attributable, if they so desired. I honoured that assurance by not using people's real names when communicating my material (e.g. in published reports). I never revealed to interviewees what other people told me in ways that might identify those people; and I kept recordings, transcriptions and field notes safely.

Treating people sensitively: In my research there were occurrences which elicited strong emotions and confidences, and formed close relationships. These were treated sensitively, and it was my responsibility to respect the research relationships I developed. In both interviews and participant observation I was careful not to become intrusive or disruptive.

Exploring sensitive issues: I prepared ways to explore sensitive issues in my research. Respecting people's opinions and viewpoints was important in this enterprise, even if I strongly disagreed with them. I was conscious first to understand people's perspectives and beliefs about such things before I could consider whether and how my project might challenge them.

Never put people at risk or endanger their well-being: Reporting on what people said and considering the real consequences for them (and for the project). I had to think carefully about the possible implications for them as no research was more important than considering people's lives or livelihoods.

Challenges, risks and limitations

I put forward four quotations, one from Greiner (1998) and three from the ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, which partly cover the challenges, risks and limitations that I faced throughout my fieldwork period.

- "…while there is now a widely accepted understanding that participation as a respondent in research carries with it an emotional component and a consequent need for the researcher to be sensitive and aware of ethical implications, there is little corresponding awareness of the emotional impact on the researcher" (Greiner, 1998).
- "Qualitative researchers may experience a range of risks. Some of these risks relate to the physical well-being of researchers and correspondent to

conventional health and safety considerations in employment of all kinds. It is not difficult to think of situations in which researchers may be at risk of violence or other physical danger" (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from in Nicholson, undated).

- "Researchers may become emotionally threatened, where, for example, the data being collected are distressing or the settings emotionally taxing. These different types of risk reflect the objectives of the research, the settings in which it is conducted and the characteristics of participants in the research, both 'subjects' and 'researchers' " (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from in Nicholson, undated).
- "Researcher risks are a matter of urgent interest to a range of parties, not just researchers, but also research supervisors, research funders, insurers, ethicists, occupational health and safety personnel and other: Good practice for researchers and supervisors and extended to university ethics committees and research grants boards" (ESRC Commissioned Inquiry, quoted from in Nicholson, undated).

The ESRC Commissioned Inquiry states mainly three kind of risks: physical, emotional, and risks a matter of urgent interest to a range of parties. On the other hand, Greiner (1998) says both emotional and ethical sensitiveness. I think that most researchers in qualitative studies had to face more or less of these risks during their fieldwork. One of the most challenging aspects was to follow and implement the ethical guidelines I followed, provided by, for example, Miles & Huberman (1994) or Tacchi *et al.*, (2003). I found these Western ethical guidelines were difficult to implement in the Bangladesh context, where I found some cross-cultural limitations. These limitations became unbreakable difficulties, when those attached with the local people's poor socio-economic, cultural and political conditions.

One key example of this was that it was difficult to give a well-justified understanding about the purpose and objective of my academic research, as the local people used to think that such kind of research (which they call *jarip* (survey), usually done by NGOs) meant that the NGOs would provide them some immediate services. But, they were frustrated when they knew that the research was not involved with such kind of initiative. This limitation had an effect on other ethical issues, such as benefits, costs and reciprocity; honesty and trust; privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; and research integrity and quality. Moreover, these ethical guidelines could not satisfy some local issues, such as religion, local leadership, cultural habits, norms and values. For example, at times the relations with NGO staff members and community leaders were so difficult that the community leaders openly commented against the NGO staff members, which raised questions of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; and the honesty and trust of the research. These challenges were particularly difficult to overcome.

There are some other risks, for example physical risk, to my personal safety. During my first visit at *Mostofapur Bazar* for PAB, I was noticed by some local leaders (so called political leaders). Some local individuals feared that I had some inquiry on political issues. In this instance, my assistant and I were subject to physical harassment despite our attempts to explain the research purposes. Unfortunately, many of the NGO staff members are politically involved in Bangladesh and such levels of risk arise when introducing oneself as a researcher doing research on NGOs' activities. Emotional threats from different interest groups were very common throughout my fieldwork. For example, NGO staff members were not as hospitable as I had anticipated and was in itself an unforeseen challenge in the research process. This situation was at its worst in an area office; they did not appreciate the relevance of any kind of research that might contribute toward their policy procedures. I guessed their interest and motives might be different, relating to commercial motives or that they simply did not want to be challenged at all. My interest and the staff members' interests therefore did not always go hand in hand.

Another reality was the gap between the expectations of researchers and NGOs. For example, I could not see policy documents for four months during my fieldwork; I could not even view the whole documents at my house. I was told that they were very secret and only for office usage, or 'not permitted to take it out'. After much correspondence, they agreed to allow me to photocopy some documents after five months of my fieldwork. Many of the field staff members especially in PAB were not cooperative in arranging the FGD sessions to share their experience about blacksmithing. They changed my FGD and in-depth case study schedules several times to say that their staff members were absent from the office.

During FGD sessions, some of the principal staff members were absent, and they were not happy to discuss with me in those sessions. I found some of them were less focused through their reluctance and in some cases continued their work duties, which made matters very difficult. In addition, I got the return of my questionnaires from some of the principal staff members only after four months, while many were returned just three days before I left my field. A number of respondents left many questions blank, which implied perhaps a lack of seriousness. This was the picture of the NGOs which were not interested to coordinate and collaborate with me as researcher. I have contemplated upon two assumptions from the above. The first is that the staff members were not

interested in such kind of research, because they wanted to remain as they were without being challenged to change. Secondly, they were doing something which they felt was professionally unsavoury and therefore did not want to disclose this.

As indicated, one of the limitations of the research was in building an effective rapport with the NGO staff members and community people. This position offered a sense of both distance and closeness by affording me a certain depth of understanding and empathy with participants. Azaola (2006) found three principal challenges in his PhD fieldwork, which included gaining participants' permission and trust, engaging them with his project, and building rapport with participants. I encountered similar experiences in my research as the area of study was comparatively new in Bangladesh. The contents and concepts used in my research were also new and the stakeholders had a hard time understanding the link between the concepts, theories and practices. Most of them, even the staff members, could not always comprehend what I wanted to convey when discussing concepts, such as indigenous knowledge, global knowledge, social capital, community empowerment, indigenisation/localisation, and knowledge transfer. There was difficulty in connecting these concepts with the NGOs' interventions and capacities. Initially, participants were at times somewhat unclear about my research purpose, and it took a considerable amount of time to gain their emotional supports, to build up proper rapport and trust.

Conclusion

The methodological challenges of my qualitative research were on one hand full of interesting challenges and enjoyment, whilst on the other hand full of risks and limitations. I was aware that, as there were no statistical tests of significance in the research approach, I had to overcome the disadvantages identified above. I was thoroughly challenged by discovering and interpreting the importance of what was observed, and by establishing a reasonable correlation between what was not observed and the conclusions drawn in the thesis. In the case of IK, investigating this issue was more complicated and sensitive. To do all of this effectively, I needed a concrete understanding of the research paradigm and of the use of qualitative observation and analysis techniques. There were some aspects about the community peoples' expectations regarding their development by NGOs, which gave them an opportunity to discuss and compare with the issues what NGOs were doing. These included: how the NGOs were working, what was their contribution for community development, what were the community peoples' expectations and what were NGOs' interventions, and what

were the outputs to fulfil their expectations and so on. I had a number of impressions throughout my investigation. For example, my feeling was that I saw far more variation across rural to urban and urban to rural in conceptualisation of the principal concepts used in my research, such as indigenous knowledge and global knowledge and community development within the concepts of social capital and community empowerment. This also applied to some senior NGO providers. I was also struck, in discussions with the staff members of *Proshika*, that they were confused about the application of indigenous and global knowledge in their development practices.

Chapter Four
NGOs and case studies of two communities

Introduction

This chapter provides an account of the selected cases for the research i.e. two NGOs: Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and *Proshika*, and two smiths' communities: *Mostafapur Bazar* blacksmith and *Mirpur (1)* Market goldsmith communities. The chapter gives a description of the NGOs' profiles, and the geographical locations and socio-economic characteristics of the two communities. Finally, it considers the particular interventions implemented by these two NGOs in the communities and their impact. It is noted here that this is not reliable information on these two particular communities in Bangladesh. However, the description given is based on the pilot survey, participant observation, and the information collected through discussion with the local people, cultural activists, and local institutions. Some aspects of this chapter are based on the later field study, and some on the NGOs' files. Further information is included from two particular references, such as the *Banglapedia* (the national encyclopaedia of Bangladesh) and the Local Government Division (LGD) of Bangladesh. The section on the impact of NGOs' interventions is based on internal surveys, as the NGO staff members said that, hitherto, there was no research based evidence by external researchers.

NGOs profile

Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB)

Practical Action (formerly Intermediate Technology Development Group) was established by E. F. Schumacher, the author of the book *Small is Beautiful* (1973). It started working in Bangladesh in the early 1980s in response to requests from a number of prominent national NGOs. It evolved over time to meet the challenges of poverty, inequality and vulnerability. Deeply committed to helping the poor, it uses appropriate technology as a means to improve poor peoples' livelihoods and has been flexible and responsive to local conditions and needs. In 1990, a Bangladesh country office was formally established with its head office in Dhaka. From 1997, PAB began implementing large scale programmes in the technology areas of food production, agro-processing, small enterprise development and light engineering (PAB, 2007d). The vision of the organisation is 'a world free of poverty and injustice in which technology is used

Picture-3: *Working area map of PAB*

Source: PAB (2009)

to the benefit of all'. The mission aims 'to eradicate poverty in developing countries by developing and using technology, and by demonstrating results, sharing knowledge and influencing others'. The core principles are: people first, working in partnership, a concern for future generations and respect of diversity. PAB targets and objectives are: to provide appropriate technology; sensible growth and modernisation; local self-reliance, knowledge and skills; an affordable

scale of economies, and preservation of the environment. It is aimed at men and women equally; and works with a broad range of targets groups (PAB, 2006d).

The country programme is organised according to three thematic aims, namely: reducing vulnerability, markets and livelihoods, and infrastructure services. The Markets and Livelihoods Programme (MLP) addresses the poverty issues in rural areas. MLP finds livelihoods are strongly influenced by various factors, such as inadequate access to knowledge and information, unaffordable appropriate technologies and skills, physical and commercial isolation from markets, uneven competition with imported products in the domestic markets, and price distortions. These are due to national and international trade policies and decline in productivity as a result of environmental degradation and inequitable land distribution. The aim of MLP is to address the thematic priorities: i) strengthening the viability of smallholder farming, ii) empowering women's non-farm enterprises to benefit from markets, upgrading technologies for rural entrepreneurs, and iii) improved (institutional and policy) frameworks for developing small producers' skill and knowledge.

The MLP implements the projects: i) sustainable livelihoods through capacity building and enterprise development; ii) skills and equipment support for modernisation and promotion of pottery production; and iii) ToT and skills training for sustainable livelihoods options for people of Faridpur district, Bangladesh. The country programme is managed from the Dhaka office, led by the Country Director. The head office is in Dhaka. It has three field offices in Faridpur, Gaibandha and Jamalpur districts and three field centres in Barisal, Dinajpur and Gazipur districts (Picture-3). The Dhaka office maintains liaison with the government, donors, consultants, experts, media, field offices and other relevant individuals and institutions.

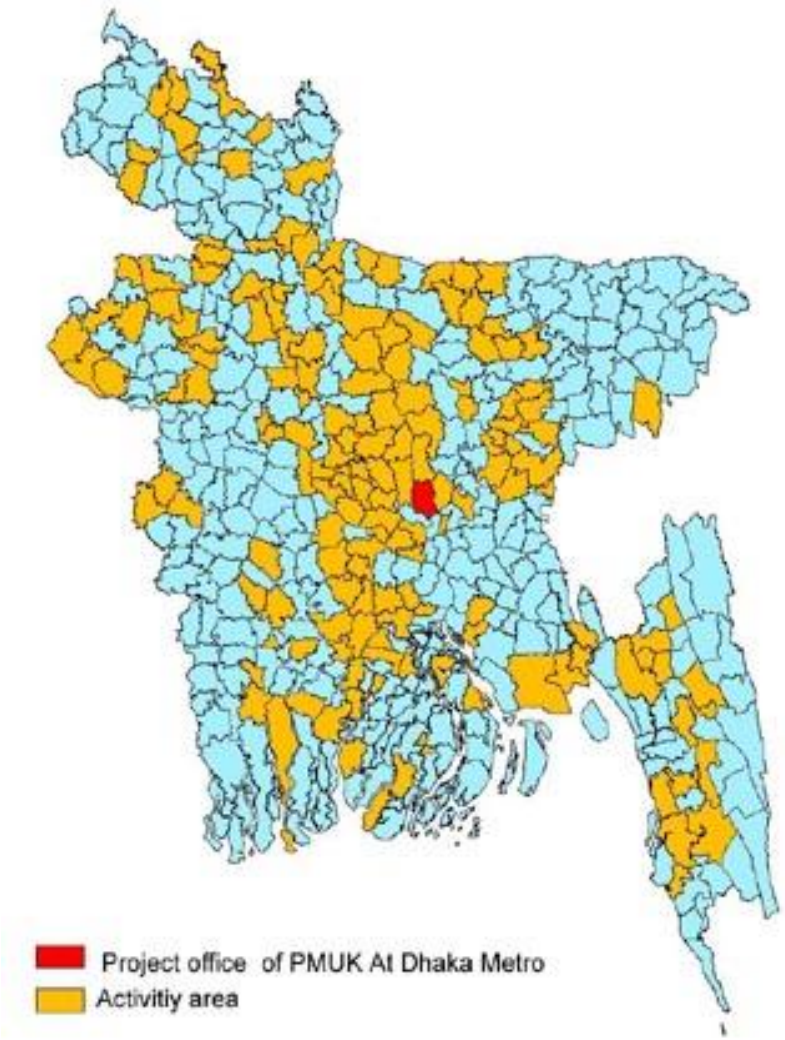
Proshika: A Centre for Human Development

Proshika is one of the largest NGOs of Bangladesh, which started out in a few villages of Dhaka and Comilla districts in 1975, although the organisation formally took its first step in 1976. The name '*Proshika*' is an acronym of three Bengali words, which stand for 'pro' means *proshikkhan* (training), 'shi' means *shikkha* (education), and 'ka' means *karma* (action). The central ethos of *Proshika* is human development and empowerment of the poor, who gradually stand tall to achieve freedom from poverty by themselves. Empowerment means that the poor are united and organised, become aware of the real causes of their impoverishment, develop leadership among themselves, mobilise their material

resources, increase income and employment, develop capacities to cope with natural disasters, become functionally literate, take better care of their health, become engaged in environmental protection and regeneration, get elected in local government bodies and community institutions, and have better access to public and common property resources. *Proshika* envisions a society, which is economically productive and equitable, socially just, environmentally sound, and genuinely democratic. The working areas of *Proshika* cover the most part of Bangladesh (Picture-4). It was working in 59 districts (out of 68), 239 *Upazilas*, 1907 unions (rural) and 328 wards, 24,139 villages and 2,108 slums in July 2007 and total members were 2,802,129 till July 2007 (*Proshika*, 2008).

The mission of *Proshika* is to conduct an extensive, intensive, and participatory process of sustainable development through empowerment of the poor. The objectives are: i) structural poverty alleviation; ii) environmental protection and regeneration; iii) improvement in women's status; iv) increasing people's participation in public institutions; and v) increasing people's capacity to gain and exercise democratic and human rights (*Proshika*, 2004). These objectives are achieved through a broad range of programmes in organisation building, education and training, leading to income and employment generation, health education, health infrastructure building, as well as environmental protection and regeneration. The main activities of *Proshika* are: people's organisation building, human development training, practical skill development training, universal education, urban poor development, development policy analysis and advocacy, employment and income generation, small economic enterprise development, organic agriculture, livestock development, fisheries development, social forestry, irrigation and tilling technology service, sericulture development, housing, health infrastructure building, health education, development support communication, people's culture, disaster management and preparedness, policies for risk and vulnerability management, integrated multi-sectoral women's development, computer in development, assistance to other organisations, research and demonstration project, and legal aid services (*Proshika*, 2006:i-xi)

Picture-4: *Working area map of Proshika*



Source: ERG Bangladesh (2008)

Proshika started the Small Economic Enterprise Development (SEED) programme in 1995. SEED is one of the most innovative development approaches of *Proshika*. The programme aims at developing small-scale entrepreneurs among its group members who, according to the *Proshika* group development policy, have reached the poverty-free stages. The programme, along with financial assistance, provides technological assistance, relevant training, business counselling, and marketing extension support to the entrepreneurs for successful implementation of their projects. The programme expanded its activities to six major cities of the country: Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong, Narayangonj, Mymensingh and Bogra, and was implemented in 115 ADCs (area development centres) all over Bangladesh until July 2007, operated by the *Proshika* SEED Trust (SEED, 2006). In these areas, 2,653 projects were disbursed among the non-*Proshika* small-scale entrepreneurs over the last five years Phase-VI. The success

of entrepreneurs translated directly into increased employment opportunities for the poor. In 2006-07, Tk. 96.11 million (£8.5 million) was disbursed to support the projects of 1,632 small entrepreneurs, creating 6,141 fulltime and 6,007 casual jobs. The entrepreneurs were also provided with relevant training, business counselling and marketing extension supports. The practical skill development training (PSDT) was organised on the basis of needs felt by different programmes of *Proshika*, especially for the group members who undertook different employment and income generating projects with *Proshika* credit assistance. The PSDT helped them acquire the necessary practical knowledge and experience to implement such projects.

Hitherto, SEED provided its support to the small garments factory, small garments business, automobile workshop, small engineering and workshop, motor, tailoring, small plastic producer, small transportation, small software, wooden furniture, small medicine business, computer service provider, goldsmiths, blacksmith, mini printing press, garment accessories producer, electric good producer, and daily necessary furniture producer by their one hundred and fifteen area development centres (ADCs) all over Bangladesh (SEED, 2006:2). From July 2006 – June 2007, a total of 121 GTC-based (grassroots training centre-based) and 437 village-based PSDT courses were held for 15,307 participants, of whom thirty six per cent were women. Besides, thirty eight workshops were held for 1,872 group members during the period. Moreover, 201 'farmers' field days were also organised for 8,947 farmers, of whom 3,818 were women. So far, a total of 1,746 group members and 3,648 entrepreneurs participated in different entrepreneurs' development and business plan preparation training courses. To date, training has also been provided to 347 staff members to enhance their capacity (*Proshika*, 2008). *Proshika* offered a total of 50,110 PSDT training courses to 1,128,849 participants since its inception. SEED (2006) states that it will provide training to the 7,924 entrepreneurs through 317 training sessions in 2008-09. The *Proshika* entrepreneurs savings scheme (PESS) is designed for improving savings tendency among the entrepreneurs and capital formation for future development (SEED, 2006).

Case studies of two smiths' communities

The blacksmiths of MSL (PAB) and the goldsmiths of SEED (*Proshika*) were the community level stakeholders for the research. The blacksmith (in Bengali *Karmakar*) and the goldsmith (in Bengali *Swarnakar*) (*swarna* means gold and *kar* means worker) are two indigenous occupations in Bangladesh, which are basically

controlled by the minority Hindu community. The blacksmiths work with 'black' metals, especially iron. The term 'smith' originates from the word 'smite', which means to hit. Thus, a blacksmith is a person who smites the black metals. The blacksmith manufacture *da* (billhook), *kodal* (spade), *kural* (axe), *shabal* (pickaxe), *bati* (fish cutting instrument), *perek* (nails), *chhuri* (knife), *chimta* (longs), and *hata* (a big, spoon-like instrument). Typically, in a rural market or in a village there is a *Kamar Para* (village of blacksmiths), where the iron 'Artisans' make their wares. Even now, there are blacksmiths in both villages and towns; their continued existence has a direct connection with the continuation of traditional agriculture, irrigation, and housing patterns (*Banglapedia*, 2006). On the other hand, a goldsmith is a metal worker, who specialises in working with precious metals, usually to make jewellery, valuable flatware, platters, goblets, decorative and serviceable utensils, as well as ceremonial or religious items (Jewellers Register, 2006). They produce innumerable silver or gold ornaments (*gahana*), such as *churi* (bangle), *bajuband* (armlet), *har* (necklace), *hansuli* (ornament for the neck), *sinthipati* (ornament put on the head in the parting of the hair), *dul* (earring), *kanpasha* (ear ornament), *nolak* (nose-ring), *nath* (big nose ring put on the nostril), *nakchhabi* (small star-shaped ornament put on the nostril), and *mal* (anklet).

Blacksmiths' community at Mostofapur Bazar

The blacksmiths' community at *Mostafapur Bazar* is located under *Mostafapur Union at Madaripur Sadar* (central) *Upazila* in Madaripur district. The local name of this *bazar* is *Mostafapur Hat* (village market), mentioned in the map provided by *Banglapedia* (2006). This *bazar* is north-west and approximately seven kilometers from *Madaripur* town, surrounded by *Pearpur* union on the east and *Kendua* on the west. The river *Kumar* runs through the south-east part of this *bazar* (see Picture-5). The main highway, Dhaka to Barisal, is just a quarter of a kilometre from this *bazar*.

Madaripur Sadar Upazila is in the Dhaka division and consists of nine wards and 33 *mouzas*. The area of the town is 34.81 sq km. According to the last Census in 2001, it had a population of 54,867; male 50.69%, female 49.31% in 2006. The density of population was 1,576 per sq km (LGD, 2004). The largest city of the district is *Madaripur* Town. *Madaripur Sadar Upazila* is an area of 1,144 sq km and is bounded by Faridpur and Munshiganj districts to the north, Barisal district to the south, Shariatpur district to the east, and Gopalganj to the west (Picture-5). Madaripur subdivision was established in 1854 under the district of

Bakerganj; it consists of 4 upazilas (*Madaripur Sadar, Kalkini, Rajoir and Shibchar*), 57 union parishads, 550 *mouzas*, 3 municipalities, 27 wards, 85 mahallas and 1,035 villages.

According to the statistics of the last Census 2001, the total population of Madaripur District was 1,137,008; male 50.29%, female 49.71%; Muslim 85.67%, Hindu 13.72%, and others 0.61%. The density of population was 1,576 per sq km. The average literacy rate was 32.6%; male 40%, female 24.9%. There were 17 colleges, 117 high schools, 437 government primary schools, 262 non-government primary schools, six kindergarten schools, one primary training institute, one vocational institute, and 60 *madrasas* (*Banglapedia*, 2006). On the other hand, according to the statistics of the last Census 2001, the total area of *Mostofapur* Union is seven sq km; wards nine, villages 22, and *Mouza* 16 (LGD, 2004). The total population was 23,230 (male 11,650 and female 11,580) in 2004. There were seven government primary schools and one union *parishad* health clinic and one non-government college, three secondary schools, and three *madrasas*.

According to the information collected by the pilot survey, agriculture was the foremost occupation of this union. A considerable number of people were also involved in commerce, and the greatest numbers were small businessmen. Others were rickshaw van drivers, day labourers, and blacksmiths. The overall socio-economic characteristics of this union are similar to those of the Madaripur district stated earlier. The *Mostafapur Bazar* is the centre of economic activities of this union. This *bazar* plays a significant role in the socio-economic, political and cultural activities, including the agriculture and commerce sectors of this union. It is a mixed market, including groceries, crops, tailoring, cloth, vegetables, blacksmiths, etc. In every week, a Wednesday is reserved for the 'market day', which is called the *'Shaptahik Hat Bar'* (weekly market day) by the local people. The domestic animals, such as live chickens, cows, goats, etc. are also sold on this day. The people from different villages come to this *bazar*, gather together and exchange their socio-economic and political opinions. There are three associations/ clubs in this *bazaar,* considered as the focal cultural and political centres of this union. Many local community leaders said that the people regarded this *bazar* as the centre of their social networks and relationships. The political discussion is a hot issue and the *Bangladesh Awami League* (BAL) is the most popular political party in this area.

Picture-5: *Map of Madaripur Sadar (central) Upazila*

Source: *Banglapedia* (2006)

This *bazar* is maintained by an authority, which bought it from the Government by auction for a particular period of time (usually one year). A *Bazar* Committee is formed by a President and a General Secretary with some executive members to conduct all kinds of activities. All of the shop owners are members of this committee, which has a number of roles such as to collect a tax, and to provide supports for the shopkeepers; and to arrange the social and cultural events, such as sports and recreation. There were approximately 120 small shops in this *bazar*. The physical infrastructure of this *bazar* is not good. Most of the shops were semi-*pucca* (partly buildings) and small in size. This *bazar* had the basic services, including drinking water, medical facilities (such as pharmacy and local doctors), sports centres (sports field), clubs, and prayer houses. The *Mostofapur* High School, the biggest and well-known secondary school in this union, is at the north-west side of this *bazar*. The road condition to and from this *bazar* is poor. There are some semi-concrete roads, but most of the roads are

kacha (mud). The people have to face enormous problems to come to the market during the rainy season. The people from *Rajour Upazila* and *Madaripur* town may come to the market by the local bus services, but most people had to use rickshaw van as the main transport. The *bazar* is connected with the main Dhaka-Barisal highway, and most of the shops are found on the both sides of this road.

Picture-6: *A blacksmith shop*

Source: *Banglapedia* (2006)

In Bangladesh, blacksmithing is one of the traditional trades. There are no reliable statistics on the number of blacksmiths living in Bangladesh. Haque & Islam (undated) claim that there are about 10,000 blacksmith enterprises in Bangladesh, which is a major source of non-farm employment. In general, the blacksmiths are a neglected and socially excluded group (Hassan, undated). Becoming a blacksmith is a family tradition in Bangladesh. The research explains this as most of the blacksmiths at *Mostafapur Bazar* came to this occupation through their family. Many said that they learned this trade from the previous generation. Some said that this was a 150 years old business. One blacksmith stated that it was their family business over three former generations, or nearly two hundred years old. All of the blacksmiths were Hindus and, as suggested, most came to this trade through family. It was seen that the social status of the blacksmiths was comparatively lower than other occupations. This was not because of their religion, rather some other factors, such as the nature of their

work, low income, low education, and lack of modern technology. Tamari (2005:151) argues that the blacksmiths have low status because they have the same occupation over generations.

The blacksmiths' shops were built-up at both sides of a sub-road, which was at the right-hand side of the main *bazar* road. All of the blacksmiths' shops were made out of wood and aluminium tins. The working facilities of those shops were not good. It was seen that they were using traditional technologies, mainly done by physical labour (Picture-6). The blacksmiths said that PAB improved their working skills, but they did not have modern technologies. There were a total of twelve shops, occupied by thirty two people. Some shops were comparatively bigger in terms of size and involvement of people. On average, three people were engaged in each shop. Their socio-economic conditions were comparatively poorer than the other shopkeepers in the *bazar*. The blacksmiths said that total earning was on average Tk. 350 daily per shop, though this amount of income varied from season to season. The good season in terms of income was at the beginning and at the end of winter, when the farmers needed more tools for agricultural activities. But, the blacksmiths produced the daily necessary tools all the year round. Sometimes, they produced more products in order to sell those to their neighbour *bazars*.

Many blacksmiths said that this kind of work was fully based on their physical labour. They used both of their hands and legs, and sometimes they had to use their mouths. They used to pull the *hapor* (preparing air) by their hand continuously in order to create fire from the coals. They used fire to hit the iron and a hammer to get the proper size and shape for making tools. They worked minimum fifteen hours (7.00 am to 10.00 pm) daily without any break. There were a number of physical and emotional risks around the whole process of their work, but they did not get a sufficient amount of money from their work. As a result, they could not maintain their families properly. Most of them said that they had to do other income-generating activities, such as agriculture, vegetable gardens, poultry, etc. to earn some extra money. Their other family members, such as their wife and children were also involved with these works. According to their opinions, they did not get any loan from any of the government banks. Some of them took loans from the NGOs at a higher interest rate. Their social conditions were seen to be worse than the other occupations in the union.

The blacksmiths live at the north-east part of the village name *Sayani*, nearly one kilometre from the *Mostofapur Bazar*. This part was called *kamar para*

(village of blacksmith). It was seen that the road condition was bad, as most of this road was *kacha* (mud), and they had to walk to come to their work place. In the dry season (summer), the people could use local rickshaw van, but the blacksmiths found this transport costly. It was seen that their living houses were poor, mostly made of soil, straw, wood and aluminium tins. This village seemed isolated and was neglected by the local administration, such as *Union Parishad* (UP) and *Madaripur Sadar Upazila*. Many local people said that this village was harmed by the political factor as most of the villagers are Hindus and the local UP Chairman (who was known as a leader of *Jamati Islam*, the main Islamic party) did not do any development work for this village. This village was also demoralised by the previous administration due to some local political crises.

There is one community primary school in this village, which had insufficient facilities, poor physical infrastructure, shortage of teachers and furniture. It was seen that the education rate among the blacksmiths was lower than the others of the village. The number of children and family members was higher among the blacksmiths, but they said that many of their children were now going to schools due to the raising of community awareness by the NGOs. The religious values were strong among them, but they share many social activities with the majority Muslims as they had good social contacts with them. They said that they regularly attended the festivals of the Muslim people, if they invited them. It was known through the discussions with the blacksmiths and their family members that they had basic knowledge about health and hygiene, as they were more conscious about these issues than earlier. The people used tube-wells and ponds for their bath and daily necessaries. It was seen that the village was surrounded by green crops' fields, and there were plenty of trees at both sides of the road. This plantation activity was developed by the NGO named *Proshika*.

The local leaders and community people found that the overall transformation of the blacksmith community was slow and not significant. They were agreed that there was some positive change after the involvement of the NGOs- PAB and GUP. The most significant change was the improvement of their working skills, as they were more dynamic than they were previously. All stakeholders said that the PAB was the first NGO which claimed to serve training and social interventions for the development of the blacksmith community. The other main NGO activities of the *Mostafapur Bazar* were BRAC, *Proshika*, *Grameen* Bank, CARE, and *Swanirvar* Bangladesh.

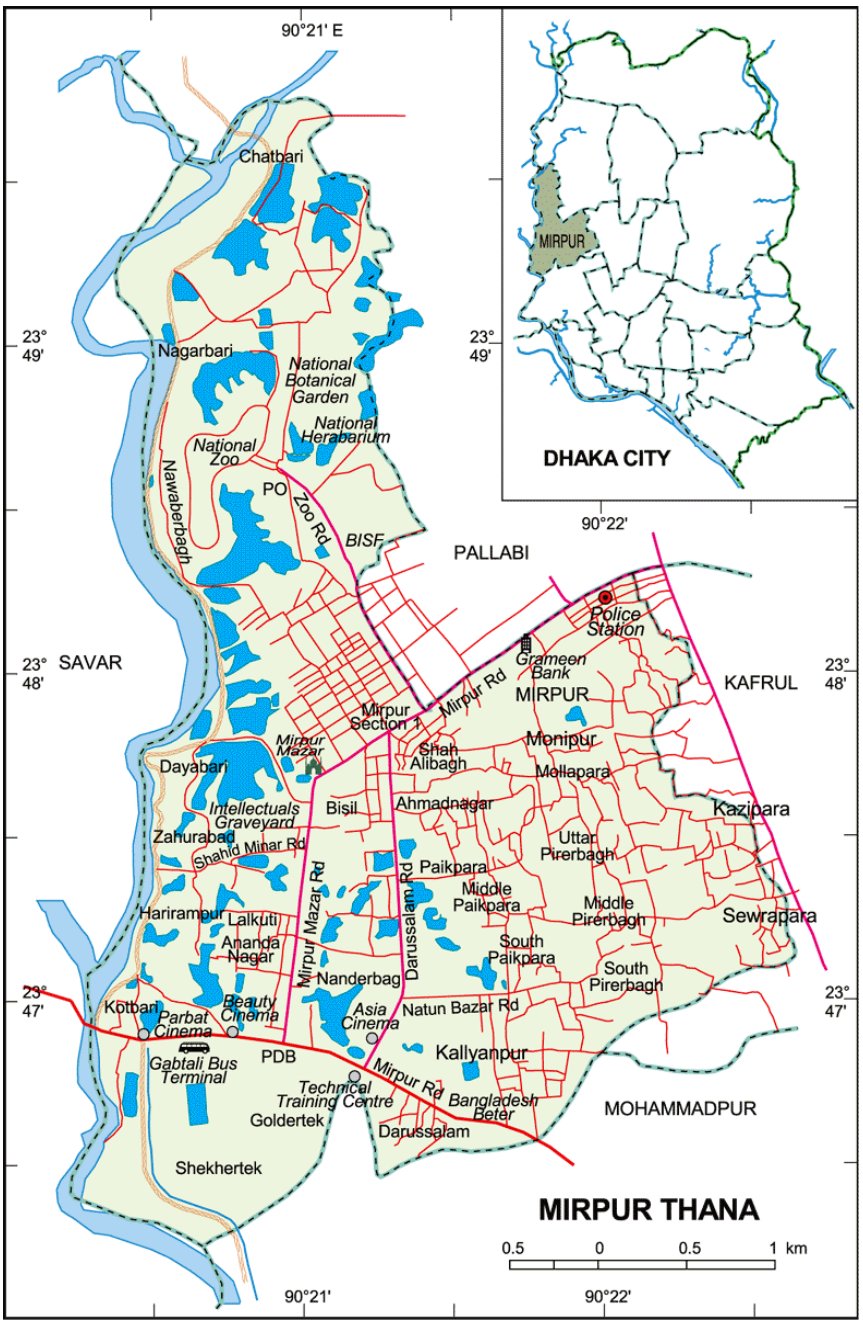
There were problems noted by the blacksmiths. Many blacksmiths informed that they felt isolated from the *bazar,* and they wanted to move to the north-west part of the *bazar* which they thought would be more convenient for their business. They gave their opinion to the *Bazar Committee*, but nothing happened because of the local leadership conflicts. The poor physical infrastructure of their shops was mentioned as one of their major problems, but they could not get any kind of support for this from PAB or the other NGOs. The blacksmith formed a committee named *Bhai Bhai Kamar Shamity* in 2005, with the assistance of PAB, but this committee did not function well, as there were some leadership problems. Many members of this committee argued that they could not participate in the activities arranged by the main *Bazar* Committee.

Goldsmiths community at Mirpur (1) Market

The Mirpur (1) Market is located at *Mirpur Thana* in Dhaka district. *Mirpur Thana* is in the north-west of the capital city, Dhaka, bounded by *Pallbi Thana* to the north, *Mohammadpur Thana* to the south, *Kafrul and Pallabi Thana* to the east and *Savar Upazila* to the west (Picture-7). The total area of *Mirpur Thana* is 53.58 sq km *(Banglapedia*, 2006). Many administrative and cultural establishments, including the National Zoo, the National Botanical Garden, and the National *Vagabond* Shelter Centre are located in this Thana area. The tomb of Hazrat Shah Ali Bagdadi (R), a sacred place and historical relic, is located at Mirpur. Besides, the head offices of the *Grameen* Bank, Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management, Dhaka Eye Hospital, National Heart Foundation, etc are located here.

Mirpur *Thana* was established in 1962. The Thana consists of one union *parishad*, eight wards, eleven *mouzas* and twenty villages. According to the statistics of the Census 2001, the total population was 555,758 (male 56.75% and female 43.25%); Muslim 98.42%, Hindu 1.07% and others 0.51% (*Banglapedia*, 2006). The average literacy rate was 59.4% (male 65.4% and female 52.2%). There are eight colleges, twenty high schools, six secondary schools, sixteen *madrasa*, three private medical colleges and hospitals, forty seven primary schools, and three vocational training institutes. The coverage of land is counted 100% as urbanised area.

Picture-7: *Map of Mirpur Thana*



Source*: Banglapedia* (2006)

The Mirpur (1) Market, one of the largest markets in Dhaka city, is positioned on both sides of the *Mirpur Road* and *Mazar Road*. This market has the *Mipur Bangla* College to the south, the *Gabtali Bus Terminal* to the south-west, the *Grameen Bank* head office to the north-east and the *Proshika* head office to the north-west. The size of the market is nearly one sq km. The communication systems to and from the market are good, as the market is well connected by major bus routes. Gabtali, the main and central bus terminal of Dhaka city, is one

km from this market and the central train station (Kamlapur) is approximately three kilometres. This market is popular and well-accessed by both the middle class and urban poor people. It is a mixed market with a variety of shops, including textile and garments, cloth, shoes, jewellery (gold), optics, medicine (pharmacy), cotton and sewing, grocery, banking, and health clinics. There are approximately 2,500 shops and business enterprises, and 150 business associations in this market. The density of the shops is very high, with all of the shops *pucca* (buildings), and most with four floors. Most of the shops are between the ground and second floor. The third and forth floors were used as factories and residences for workers. All shops had electricity and gas services, and some of the shops were air-conditioned. The market had basic health and hygiene services, but these services were not sufficient and the quality of service was not good. Particularly, the fire service was very poor. Toilet and sewerage systems were inadequate, and the cleaning system was not up to the mark, though as a municipal market these services should be available there.

According to the local people, this market is more than one hundred years old, though the massive expansion was started after 1980. Before 1980, the number of shops was very few. At the beginning, it was famous for the *shari market,* but gradually it developed as a mixed market. Recently, it became famous for jewellery and optics. The jewellery (goldsmith) shops are located at the north-west corner of the Mirpur (1) Market. It is at the south-west side of the Mirpur (1) - *Gabtali Road*, which is known as the *Mazar Road*. This part of the market is newer than the north-west (main) part of the market. The jewellery shops are in the middle of the market, known as the s*ona pourty* (Gold Market). There are altogether thirty two jewellery (goldsmith) shops and all of the shops are at the ground floor. The size of the shops is small, as it is seen in the picture (Picture-8). All shops have a holding number given by the Dhaka City Corporation, as these are the government tax payee shops. The shops are provided with the modern facilities. This business is comparatively more dynamic than other businesses. It needs a good amount of financial capital to run such as business. According to the goldsmiths, they did not get any loan from the government bank like the blacksmiths, but most of them took loans from a number of NGOs such as *Proshika*, *Grameen Bank*, ASA, BRAC, etc.

Picture 8: *A goldsmith shop*

Source: Bangladesh Information (2005)

According to the SEED (*Proshika*) file documents, there were three groups of people who became owners in this trade; nearly forty per cent came from outside and had some business experience. About thirty per cent got this trade from their former generation, and the remaining thirty per cent took this as their employment, as they were unemployed before. The SEED staff members said that the people, who received this trade from their former generation, were doing better than the other two groups of people. They said that trading experience, goodwill and practical skills were important considerations to succeed. Each shop is headed by an owner with two salesmen and two *karigors* (technicians/producers). In many cases, it was seen that the owner is working as salesman, and in some cases the *karigor* was the owner of the shop. Most of the

shops were rented monthly Tk. 10,000 to 12,000, excluding utility bills. Some of them had their own shops, but the numbers were very few.

Many of the owners said that this kind of trade was totally different from other trades. The good relation with the customers was one of the most important aspects of this business, as it was related to the customers' satisfaction. Social trust and honesty were also said by them to be key aspects of social capital for this business. Many owners said that most shops used to sell the same type and design of ornaments, but people used to trade with those shops who showed good behaviour, maintained good relations, and honesty with the customers. For these reasons, according to the SEED staff members, the third group of people could not do well in the trade.

Many goldsmiths identified it as a risky business, as it needed a large amount of capital to operate. There was the possibility to earn huge amounts of money on the one hand, but there was the risk of a great loss on the other. The monthly salary of the workers and salesmen was between Tk. 2,000 to Tk. 5,000 (£18 to £45), depending on their experience and contacts. The owners' monthly profit varied widely depending on the amount of investment and availability of goods. This work was also based on physical labour, though it was not hard like that of the blacksmiths. But they had to use their mouth to keep the fire going, and also they had to hammer the gold. There were not many physical risks in the enterprise, though they did have to use chemicals for identifying gold. But workers said that they had to allow for a number of threats, including possible discharge from the job, low and irregular wages, emotional threats from the owners, and no wages if absent during sick periods. The workers had no pension on their retirement. The owners said that the *chatabaji* (money collected from someone illegally) was a big physical and emotional threat in this market, as it happened before many times and the owners had to continue their business within this kind of threat.

NGOs' interventions for smiths' communities

Initially, this section clarifies the indigenous knowledge (IK) and global knowledge (GK) approaches used by the two NGOs, and then specifies the particular interventions and their impacts, which were provided to the blacksmith and goldsmith communities. It was seen that the use of IK and GK approaches of the NGOs was equal (fifty percent), though the trend to use the GK approach was increasing over time. The staff members of both NGOs said that they had to offer their interventions, such as GK approaches, on the basis of the producers'

indigenous knowledge. Then the NGOs tried to bring them to the global/scientific knowledge. To consider the overall activities of the NGOs, it was found that both NGOs were using the IK approach in mainly three areas: agricultural knowledge (traditional cultivation capacity, food production, food processing, and use of local fertilisers); non-agricultural knowledge (pottery, blacksmith, animal husbandry, textile skills, fishing, and local forestation); and social knowledge (local business knowledge, group formation, local management, leadership, good observation capacity, local technological knowledge, and local market knowledge). PAB and *Proshika* applied non-agricultural and social knowledge as prime IK approaches to the blacksmiths and goldsmiths respectively. As stated earlier in this chapter, the smith in both communities acquired these indigenous skills through observation and practise over several generations, largely from family members (father and elder brothers), friends, and neighbours, and some from their local institutions. Here IK was embedded in a dynamic system of life in which spirituality, kinship, local politics, and other factors were tied together and influenced one another (Langill, 1999:2).

Both NGOs also used a wide range of GK approaches, which were classified under four main headings: policy and planning, programmes and project based interventions, training, and management. At the policy level, they used a number of modern concepts, frameworks, development models, and theories (such as sustainable livelihood approach (SLA), sustainable livelihood framework (SLF), social capital approach (SCA), and community empowerment approach (CEA). PAB used the 'market channel network' approach to work with the local producers, where the global knowledge approach was integrated. This NGO incorporated modern and technological supports, including group formation, participatory plan, 'knowledge transfer' techniques, 'target-based' development strategies, advocacy, counselling and campaigning.

Both NGOs also used GK in their programmes and projects. For example, PAB had a number of projects, such as fashion and textile, agricultural development, pottery, blacksmith, energy, shelter, transport, water, food production, agro-processing, manufacturing and disaster mitigation, where a certain level of GK approach was used for increasing production and its quality. On the other hand, *Proshika* used a number of scientific approaches, such as: credit assistance, training, universal education, environmental protection, and health infrastructure building. Both NGOs had short and medium term projects management training facilities. *Proshika* had a big training centre in the

Manikganj district, and their head and local offices had a wide range of training facilities on: business planning, accounting, banking system, and leadership training. PAB provided project-based technological as well as entrepreneurship and business training. This NGO's intermediate and small industry based training is well-known world-wide. As a part of the management procedure, SEED used modern software to maintain their accounts including loan service and loan recovery and they recruited a range of experienced, skilled and qualified staff.

Both NGOs also had modern monitoring, supervision, and evaluation systems, as the staff members used the 'assessment framework' to assess their producers and staff members' performance. Both used a wide range of modern research and data collection methods, such as PRA, social surveys, and FGD to assess the community situation as well as to verify and justify their project impacts. They both also used modern communication systems i.e. internet, e-mail, land phone, mobile phone, and fax for their office management. They conferred with local and central offices by mobile and land phone and e-mail to the local producers.

PAB interventions for the blacksmiths

PAB is a well-known international organisation which provides intermediate technology support to the poor people in Bangladesh. Training; social education including information and knowledge sharing; community awareness, and monitoring and supervision are the principal interventions of PAB. It delivers these mainly through building partnerships with the government organisations and with the local NGOs. PAB also had some projects operated directly by their management. PAB emphasises the use of local resources as much as possible to provide training. In this way, PAB uses local trainers from the particular group and community through the cascade training[8] procedure.

PAB provided training and technology support in a number of areas: food production (fertiliser, pesticide, poultry, fisheries, etc.), agro-processing (food colour, preservatives, raw materials, process and packaging, etc.), small enterprises (screen-printing, food-processing, chalk-making, candle-making, nursery, etc.), and light engineering (fabrication, wielding, blacksmithing, foundry work, etc.). The Table-10 shows some examples of producer group status at Faridpur area.

[8] Cascade training means the training that the trainers provide to the trainees, informally and generally through their own working settings.

Table-10: *Producer group status at Faridpur*

Name of the groups	Total members	Name of trade	Partner NGO
Nobopalli Blacksmith Group, Kodombari, Rajoir, Madaripur	11	Blacksmiths	*Ashar Alo* & GUP
Bhai Bhai Kamar Shamity, Mostafapur, Rajoir, Mdaripur	32	Blacksmiths	GUP
Bornil Block Boutique Cluster Group, Alipur, Faridpur	20	Cloth-based dress	BFF
Nokshi Katha Cluster Group, Rajoir, Madaripur	65	Sewing	GUP
Tekerhat Farm Power Machinery Cluster Group, Rajoir, Madaripur	11	Farm power machinery	GUP
Honey Producer Group, Rajoir Madaripur	10	Honey producer	GUP

Source: PAB (2007c)

Blacksmithing is one of the traditional trades in Bangladesh. There is no evidence to show exactly when this trade started in the region. Indeed, it is difficult to say when it started in the world, although Grant-Jones (undated) claims that it probably began in what we call the 'Iron age'. However, it is assumed that this trade started with the dawn of civilisation. There were a number of reasons why PAB chose to work with the blacksmiths. According to the staff members, PAB found that there was room for improvement through technology and training that could improve the blacksmiths' output and increase their market potential. PAB always ensured that training sessions could produce practical tools through 'hands-on learning'. Haque & Islam (undated) argue that the learning process of blacksmiths takes place in various ways: learning by doing; learning by seeing; learning through informal exchange of ideas; and learning through training. The main areas of capacity building for blacksmiths were enhancing knowledge to select appropriate materials, treat metals, and finishing techniques. This 'icing on the cake' allowed the blacksmiths to compete, not only in their local market, but also to benefit from imported tools.

PAB started to work with the blacksmith group at *Mostofapur Bazar* in June 2004, through its partner NGO, named *Gono Unnayan Prochesta* (GUP)[9]. First,

[9] GUP (People's Development Efforts) is a local NGO which began its work in 1973. It focuses on community self-help within the context of the larger development effort in Bangladesh. It recognises that no individual lives in isolation from the rest of his or her community, hence the development of the individual is intimately bound up with that of the community. It also aims to enable people to identify problems and solutions for themselves, as well as consensus building to increase the individual persons' strength and decision making power, stimulate cooperative efforts to mobilise resources and capital in the community. It also promotes human rights assisting the development of disadvantaged groups and in introducing innovative people's development. The main programmes are agriculture and ecology, cooperative & credit, capacity building, fishery & livestock, women and children, water & sanitation, afforestation, and peace centre (GUP, 2006).

the NGO established basic information through the community survey and provided the training in October 2004. The Table-11 shows the training schedule and training contents, which were provided for the blacksmiths group. PAB arranged this two-day training programme on 30-31 October 2004 and was held at *Nabapalli, Kadambari, Faridpur*. The total participants were fourteen blacksmiths. This training was conducted under the Light Engineering Unit of PAB, Faridpur area and the local NGO- GUP implemented this programme as a partner organisation. The staff members of PAB said that economic and social issues, such as community awareness, health and hygiene, and information and knowledge sharing were also included within this training intervention. After training, PAB continued its supervision and monitoring supports. After accomplishment of their training, the trainees delivered it in turn to the rest of the blacksmiths through 'cascade training'.

Table-11: *Blacksmiths' training of PAB at Mostafapur Bazar community*

Date	Time	Contents of training	Trainer
30 October 2004	10.00 am - 10.30 am	Discuss about the purpose of training	Mahadeb Baroy
	10.30 am – 1.00 pm	-What is iron?	Mahadeb Baroy
	1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch break	
	2.00 pm – 5.00pm	Techniques and ways to know good iron	Mahadeb Baroy
31 October 2004	10.00 am - 10.30 am	Types of iron and techniques to know those	Mahadeb Baroy
	10.30 am – 1.00 pm	Methods to use those irons	Mahadeb Baroy
	1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch break	
	2.00 pm – 5.00pm	-Methods for hitting raw irons -Economical and social aspects of business	Mahadeb Baroy
Total trainees	Fourteen		

Source: PAB, Faridpur (2004)

The objectives of this training programme were to:

- improve the quality of blacksmiths' products by increasing skills,
- diversify the range of products made by the blacksmiths,
- facilitate access to markets by responding to tenders for tools, and
- improve social awareness about their lives and business.

PAB, Faridpur (2004) conducted an opinion survey in December 2004 about the impacts of this training. According to the finding of this report, initially the blacksmiths did not have good expectations about this training, but they revised their opinions after getting their training. The blacksmiths said that they improved their confidence in their skills and they were more efficient in knowing

about the types of irons they used. In traditional methods, they had to put more physical labour to hit and melt their iron ore. They said that after training, partially, they got rid of this kind of physical labour. The whole process suited them as trouble-free to hit and melt their iron ore. It saved them time and labour. They could avoid some other risks and difficulties, including improving safety and security. They also said that this kind of training should be arranged in the future. They also said that this training was helpful from the financial aspect, as they had to buy *kacha* (raw) iron per kilogram at Tk. 20 and *pucca* (workable) iron at Tk. 40. However, they could save Tk. 15 in each kilogram. Moreover, the *pucca* iron was not available all the year round in the market, and they could not make product during that time. The blacksmiths were also able to take extra orders and made some additional products for future sale. They found that the whole procedure was helpful to improve their skills, income, and job security.

After one year, the PAB, Faridpur (2005) conducted another survey about the impact of this training intervention and found significant changes in the blacksmiths' socio-economic conditions. The PAB, Faridpur (2005) noted the following impacts:

Social: The blacksmiths were working as one group, especially to produce large quantities of supplies. They improved their social dignity and status, more acceptances, and improved their social contacts.

Physical: The blacksmiths as a society lobbied the government and local agencies, and were trying to gain a piece of land on which to build their workshop. Some of them built better workshops and houses.

Human: The blacksmiths improved their confidence, trust and skills through knowledge generation. They were able to build relationships and contact with other institutions and NGOs.

Financial: All the blacksmiths raised their income by producing new goods and by improving the quality of their products.

The PAB, Faridpur (2007) conducted another impact survey from their monitoring cell after three years and found that the blacksmiths had expanded their businesses, and that their per-capita income increased on average from Tk. 5000 (£46) to Tk. 7000 (£64). They also improved the design, and quality of tools, and their individual capacity to overcome socio-economic and cultural barriers. The project assessments were as follows:

- The blacksmiths met and worked together, and agreed to support each other in technical training, management training, access to credit from

other NGOs, raw materials and shared equipment, including power generator.

- Most blacksmiths were able to produce varieties of key tools and equipments. Over sixty new tool kits were produced with the help from PAB.
- The blacksmiths learned to do participatory assessment and tool design; valuable skills for sustainable business.
- After training exercise, a large numbers of agricultural tools were manufactured and distributed to farmers.

This report also stated that the trained blacksmiths gained income that helped to purchase food and cloths, meet household needs, pay health and education expenses and improved their families' livelihoods.

Proshika interventions for the goldsmiths

The SEED of *Proshika* is a well-known programme in Bangladesh for improving enterprise development among the disadvantaged rural and urban people. The ultimate objective of this programme is to improve people's capacity, skills and use of their local resources toward poverty alleviation. SEED had a number of interventions, which include financial assistance (micro-enterprise loan), training, technological assistance, business counselling, marketing extension supports and social education to the entrepreneurs.

As stated earlier in this chapter, the training was the principal intervention of SEED. It had mainly five types of training interventions, such as producer development, business management, business development support (BDS), ToT (Training of trainers) techniques and legal documentation, and loan allocation for the producers and staff members. The Table-12 gives an outline of SEED's training contents. To review the whole range of training manuals, the research assessed that *Proshika* developed a number of scientific techniques and measurements that were helpful to provide and assess quality of training interventions. These included the methodologies to develop good trainers, strategies to deliver good public speaking, indicators to become good trainers, questionnaires of producers' personal characteristics, correction forms and details of producers' personal characteristics, producers' evaluation forms, indicators of training demands, principles of communication, learning strategies, techniques of memorising capacities, experienced-based learning-circle, visual aids of training, principles of group learning, and performance and negotiation sheets.

Table-12: *Training courses provided by SEED*

Name of training	Contents of training
Producer development and business management training (for staff members & producers)	-SEED and its activities (basic concepts, objectives and programmes of SEED activities; terms and conditions of loan of SEED) -Knowledge about enterprise (definition, objectives and importance of enterprise) -Producers and characteristics of producers -Analysis of different aspects of SWOT -Marketing (objectives & techniques of marketing; expansion and importance of marketing; different aspects of selling including relationships and communication of customers) -Business planning (objectives & importance, preparation of a good budget) -Accounting (objectives and techniques of accounting, discuss with some cases)
Business development support (BDS) training (for producers)	-Accounting (objectives, rules of accounting, examples of mini cases) -Pricing and profits of products (objectives, analysis of pricing techniques and profit) -Business plan (objectives, organisational structure, analysis of SWOT) -Idea about market (objectives, knowledge about marketing) -Identify of strategies (objectives and knowledge about business process)
ToT techniques and legal documentation training (Staff members & producers)	Speaking, adult education, personal qualifications of producers, principles of communication, principles learning, visual aids, market management, market information, accounting and math.
Training on loan allocation for producer development training (for staff members)	Selection of business enterprise, application of loan, project appraisal, loan allocation (temporary and continuous), agreement of loan, selection of witness, agreement letter/deed, demand process note, stamping of documentation, loan distribution, loan collection techniques, security of witness, loan rejection, loan management and monitoring and supervision.

Source: Different office files of SEED (2001-2007)

Proshika started to work with the goldsmith group at Mirpur (1) Market in January 2004 under the SEED programme. First, the NGO established basic information through a community survey, and then provided a number of interventions, such as loan support, training, community awareness, social scheme, and legal support. SEED provided the training intervention in April 2004. It also started a social scheme with the goldsmiths. This scheme covers insurance, loan facility with low interest, job facilities for the children of SEED members, etc.

Again SEED provided a two-day BDS training to the goldsmiths (Table-13), which covered different aspects of business, including basic accounting tools, profits of products, business plan including social enterprise and social aspects, market and profits, and business management. One of the important aspects of this training intervention was to provide knowledge about social enterprise and

social aspects of goldsmithing, including health hygiene, use of safe drinking water, wages and holidays, and working environment (Table-15). On the other hand, the staff members of SEED for blacksmith community received a four-day training described as producer development training (Table-14). This included a wide range of business areas, such as objectives of training, SEED elements and activities, characteristics of producers, strength, weakness, opportunity & threat (SWOT), loan procedures, business planning and financial analysis, and loan allocation.

Table-13: *Business development support (BDS) training for the goldsmiths of Proshika at Mirpur (1) Market*

Date	Time	Contents of training	Trainer
27 April 2004	9.00 am – 10.30 am	Discussion on the purpose of training	
	10.30 am – 12.30 pm	-Basic accounting tools	
	12.30 pm – 1.30 pm	Lunch break	
	1.30 pm – 3.30pm	Pricing and profits of products	
	3.30 pm – 4.00 pm	Tea break	
	4.00pm – 5.00 pm	Business plan (objectives, tools, & SWOT)	
28 April 2004	9.00 am – 10.30 am	Business plan (social enterprise and social aspects of business)	
	10.30 am – 12.30 pm	Idea about market	
	12.30 pm – 1.30 pm	Lunch break	
	1.30 pm – 3.30pm	Business management (objectives & strategies of processes)	
	3.30 pm – 4.00 pm	Tea break	
	4.00pm – 5.00 pm	Group discussion on whole session	
Total number of producers	17		

Source: SEED (2004)

SEED (2006) conducted an impact study in December 2005 (after one and a half years of the training) based on survey opinions. This survey included a number of the socio-economic conditions of the goldsmiths. The survey shows that the goldsmiths under SEED interventions increased their income, as they improved their skills in the areas of accounting, business management and business planning. The report stated that about 98 per cent of the goldsmiths followed the formal accounting tools/techniques; which had been below twenty percent before the training. The goldsmiths felt more confident and comfortable about using the business tools, which they had received from the training

courses. This finding was confirmed by the participant observation of the researcher. However, the goldsmiths claimed that very few of them got such training. Some of them stated that SEED was more interested in providing loan support rather than training. But most of the goldsmiths agreed that the overall impact of the training intervention was encouraging. The survey included some social indicators of this training (Table-15).

Table-14: *Producer development training (for staff members) at Proshika Head Office, Mirpur, Dhaka*

Time	26 May, 2003	27 May, 2003	28 May, 2003	29 May, 2003
8.30 am – 10.30 am		-Review of previous discussion -Terms & conditions of SEED loan	- Review of previous discussion -Business planning and financial analysis	-Review of previous discussion -Step by step loan allocation -Importance business planning and monitoring
10.30 am – 11.00am	Tea break			
11.00 am – 1.00 pm		-Four elements of SEED -Assistance of SEED producers -Personal characteristics of producers	-Business planning and financial analysis	-Analysis and evaluation of the outlines of training course -Ending
1.00 pm – 2.00 pm	Lunch break			
2.00 pm – 3.30 pm	-Launching programme -Exchange of identity and addresses -Rules of training and expectations -Course outlines -Project appraisal discussion	-What is SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity & threat) -Analysis of SWOT	-Business planning and financial analysis (group discussion)	
3.30 pm – 3.45 pm	Tea break			
3.45 pm – 5.00 pm		-Filling form for loan application -Verification of project appraisal	-Business planning and financial analysis	

Source: SEED (2004)

The Table-15 shows that SEED's interventions were successful in most of the social indicators, except improving working conditions. The goldsmiths agreed that SEED staff members provided advice about these social aspects through supervision and monitoring systems. The staff members of SEED said that the

social scheme was helpful to provide social security to the goldsmiths. But most of the goldsmiths claimed that they did not know about this scheme. On the other hand, the goldsmiths agreed that SEED's behaviour package was also helpful to achieve these successes. During discussion with the goldsmiths, it was seen that they were more confident about expanding their social networks with other shops and institutions. The workers preformed better than before specially their dealings with customers, which improved a lot.

Table-15: *Impacts of SEED's training and behaviour package*

Social indicators	Before training (%)	After training (%)
First aid kids available	>10	90
Safe drinking water supplied	50	95
Sanitary latrine used	40	80
Soap used after toilet	50	95
Used and improved child care facilities in the family	50	90
Maternity leave provided	50	90
Improved working environment	50	60
Increased of wages of the workers	50	90

Source: SEED (2006:6)

Conclusion

The description of the two case studies (two NGOs and two communities) shows that the geographical and socio-economic characteristics of the *Mostafapur Bazar* blacksmith community are comparatively worse than those of the goldsmith community. Considering the overall circumstances of both communities, it was found that there are significant differences between the two communities (one rural and one urban) in terms of geographical location, capital investment for trade, ownership patterns, division of labour within trades, nature of works, amount of earning, trade management, and the types and nature of interventions by the NGOs. The nature of the relationship between the owners and workers was a serious problem among the goldsmiths. In terms of the range of interventions, PAB provided only training intervention, including some social aspects, whereas *Proshika* provided a bigger package of interventions, which included loan supports, training interventions, social schemes, and community awareness programmes. This chapter has provided information about the impact of these interventions, but the data is based on the respective NGOs' internal surveys. However, the thesis regarded those as initial, transitory evidence, and emphasises the findings of the field study of the research. These are reported in the next two chapters (Chapters Five and Six) regarding NGOs' capacity for social capital and community development.

Chapter Five

NGOs' capacity for social capital and community empowerment in Bangladesh

Introduction

This chapter looks at the findings from the two NGOs: Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB) and *Proshika*. The evidence gathered is derived from the supports provided by these two NGOs to the two indigenous communities: blacksmiths and goldsmiths under two programmes: the Markets and Livelihoods Programme (MLP of PAB) and the Small Economic Enterprise Development (SEED of *Proshika*) programme respectively. This chapter discusses the NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital and community empowerment. The analysis has drawn upon the IK-GK debate throughout the chapter with an account of the advantages and disadvantages faced by these NGOs. Finally, the chapter comments on the limitations of the two theories: social capital and community empowerment and then suggests an appropriate knowledge paradigm, which is emerging with the concepts of NGOs, social capital, and community empowerment for sustainable community development in Bangladesh. The chapter develops the researcher's views on the relevance of existing literature.

NGOs' capacity for social capital

NGOs' capacity for social capital is a relatively new area in development studies. This approach is gaining increasing attention within the sustainable community development paradigm, where the NGOs' micro-credit versus macro-credit debate reaches its peak. The literature on social capital suggests that NGOs' capacities are not limited to providing financial help to poor people, but also to creating capital available in the community, so that a community can be empowered on the one hand, and the community people can use this capital for their development on the other. It was observed that local institutions were good sources of social capital. Putnam (1993, 1994) and Evans (1996) argue that the elements of social capital are features of social organisations, which facilitate, coordinate, and distribute mutual benefits for the community people. In their recent studies, Mondal, A. H. (2000), Huda *et al.,* (2005), Mannel & Chowdhury (2005), Kabeer (2003), and Purvez (2003, 2005) find that Bangladeshi NGOs are creating significant levels of social capital. Yet Mondal, A. H. (2000:459) finds in

his study that both governments and the NGOs' social capital formation in Bangladesh are little known. This chapter considers NGOs' capacities according to the four fundamental components of social capital, namely collective action (interaction between individuals, groups, neighbours, communities and agencies), social trust, coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits, and sharing norms and values.

The findings confirmed that there were a number of areas where both NGOs worked to create social capital. With the diverse information and opinions supplied by all groups of stakeholders (NGO staff members, community leaders, and local producers), the thesis presents the common and general working areas of both NGOs (Table-16). These included survey and PRA, group formation, family approach, information sharing, meeting & consultation, participatory plan, good staff behaviour, training, programme coordination, market chain, market map, link and work with local GOs-NGOs and community leaders, organisational reputation, jobs & income generation programmes (IGPs), cultural activities & social festivals, observation, communication, counselling and advocacy, monitoring and supervision. It is noted that the thesis highlights all of these areas, using some broader headings with some examples of NGOs' interventions, where these were frequently used. The thesis also acknowledges that it is very difficult to point out individually, which NGOs' intervention creates a particular component of social capital. It is found that one component is interrelated with others and therefore problematic to summarise.

Table-16: *NGOs' capacities for social capital: Working areas*

NGOs	Working areas for social capital
Both NGOs (common areas)	Survey and PRA, group formation, family approach, information sharing, meeting & consultation, participatory plan, good staff behaviour, training, programme coordination, market chain & market map, link and work with local GOs-NGOs and community leaders, organisational reputation, jobs & IGPs, cultural activities & social festivals, observation, communication, counselling and advocacy, monitoring and supervision.
MLP (PAB)	Exposure visit, relation matrix, and partnership.
SEED (*Proshika*)	Credit, savings, federation, legal aid, programme in natural disaster, social scheme, and human behaviour package.

Source: Author based on field data

Participatory planning: Create routes for social capital

The field data, literature review and NGOs' office documents confirmed that both NGOs constructed a certain level of social capital. Both NGOs followed the 'participatory planning' (PP) under the 'bottom-up approach', which is considered a scientific approach for social development. The advantages of this PP were that it was a process framed through consulting a number of groups,

including themselves, and validating diverse groups' opinions and needs. Along these lines, the blacksmiths and goldsmiths found ways to exchange their views or create social networks. These networks increased opportunities for these poor people to improve their ability to work together, providing a safety net for social survival through being part of a group (Purvez, 2005:95). It was more than just public participation, but rather a spectrum of processes, such as involvement, engagement, negotiation, pre-mediation and mediation. This route enabled these communities to plan activities by using their own traditional human and financial capital. This PP was a valuable tool for integration between local and other institutions, including programmes of NGOs. It established links between different levels of society and government administration, such as the community, *Union Parishad* (UP) and with the District. This kind of plan also improved peoples' motivation, learning and self-realisation, feelings of ownership, self-esteem and assessment capacities; these were helpful to identify problems and solutions (Lefevre *et al.*, 2001:6). It generated constructive collaboration among stakeholders, who might not be used to working together, who often came from different backgrounds and might have different values and interests.

The data found that the collaborative collective action was motivated not only by self-interest, but also through mutual trust, which strongly promoted participatory development, social capital and empowerment through horizontal alliances (Mondal, A. H. 2000:460-461). The NGOs' first linkage starts with community members, community leaders, and local institutions through community survey. The field staff members took opinions from community people and from other groups and institutions, such as Union *Parishad*, *Thana*, District, civil society, and local GOs-NGOs. The staff members said that both NGOs provided their support to a group rather than towards individuals, who had a business, business knowledge and experience, and cash-capital. This participatory plan gave opportunity to the staff members to explain the reasons and the impacts of participation to the programmes. At the end, most people viewed broader participation as positive, because this plan gave them a voice beyond the community leaders (Nitipaisalkul, 2004:231-232). The NGOs continued to share values and norms with blacksmiths and goldsmiths through their continuous supervision and monitoring services, though they had finished their particular project with them.

By using this participatory approach, both NGOs were successful in achieving socio-economic improvement, reducing programme costs, and ensuring

that needs were met. Moreover, the NGOs created social capital by forming new norms of trust and association, largely between themselves and the local producers. However, the networks and formations of trust were mediated by the agency practitioners, and therefore created new bonds of dependency. The research found that the blacksmiths and goldsmiths were not fully clear about the objectives and goals of this PP. They found this plan complex and doubtful. In this regard, Buckland (1998:237) argues that successful NGOs need to be both lauded for the successful extension of social capital, but also implored to work at further localising it. In addition, one of the problems was that the communities in Bangladesh are not homogeneous. There were huge gaps in terms of social roles, power-relations, and social positions between and within different groups of the communities, such as local leaders, general community people, civil society and local administration. This argument was true of both NGOs, as their approach demonstrated 'group capacity building' for collective action as the most difficult to accomplish, but was 'at the heart of the development process'. Group capacity was, 'the ability to act together, not once, but consistently' to 'get ahead collectively' (Carroll, 1992:95, 115). But both NGOs were rarely evaluated on their group capacity building, largely due to measurement difficulties. But the whole process of participatory plans created many rooms, where different elements of social capital were found.

Channel of communications: Sharing values, norms and mutual benefits

There were a number of working areas where both NGOs developed channels of communications based on IK and GK interventions, including interpersonal contact, business networks, consultations, face to face meetings, sharing values, visits, training, monitoring and supervision. In all cases, the NGOs established this communication as the way of horizontal relationships with local producers, community leaders, local institutions, and with their colleagues.

The NGOs introduced new knowledge and technologies via traditional and informal channels of communication through interpersonal contacts, including family, friends, and colleagues. The business networks began through such interpersonal contacts, which provided social support and self-confidence. A firm's trade network, concerning links between local producers and users of these goods and services, and its knowledge networks focused on the flow of information and exchange of knowledge (Malecki, 1998:8). Such kinds of business projects transpired through three types of networks, each serving a different function for

the entrepreneur: networks for service and assistance, i.e. to solve a specific problem; networks for information and structuring, especially for knowledge about whom to contact for a specific purpose; and networks for entrepreneurship and product development. But the research found that local entrepreneurs' networks and local traditional trust-based relationships were critical (Monsted, 1993), and it could not function as well as the NGO workers expected. In the absence of trust, communication was less frequent and full cooperation did not occur (Lyons & Bailey, 1993; Malecki, 1998:9).

In the office environment, both organisations followed a horizontal type of communication pattern, where everybody referred to each other as *bhai (*brother) *apa (*sister*)* among Muslims or *dada/didi*[10] among Hindus, as it was their office decorum. This norm was followed from the top to bottom. Both NGO staff members said that they had very good relations with their colleagues, and that they were helpful in exchanging information, knowledge, and experiences. Both NGOs had face-to-face consultation meetings, where the local producers shared their knowledge and experiences with each other and benefited from this group environment. The staff members generally found these group activities to be dynamic processes for sharing information, up-dating technologies and improving skills among the local producers. But the research found that the local producers had difficulty with this kind of formal communication system. Many of them could not understand the meaning and importance of such communication, due to their poor education, and they partially failed to share their norms and values. Though within a group, an individual had the chance to develop both human and social capital by observing and practising group rules, group principles, values and norms, leadership, and management skills. For instance, *Proshika* formed approximately 18,417 Group Federations[11] up to December 2007 all over Bangladesh (*Proshika*, 2008). These Federations brought people together in cooperation on mutually beneficial projects, thus enhancing communication, reducing objectification of others, and increasing interdependence and trust. As a part of the institutional involvement, both NGOs permitted the local producers to use them as referees, as many blacksmiths and goldsmiths got loans from NGOs, such as *Proshika*, ASA, and *Grameen Bank*.

[10] *Bhai/apa* and *dada/didi translates as brother and sister (with the former referring to a Muslim dialect of Bangla and the latter referring to a Hindu dialect of Bangla,)* who themselves think that they are equal to each other who hold the same power with their different responsibilities. In one sense it is a relation where 'power relations' are minimised.

[11] The Federation formed a group of people which is formed by *Proshika*. It created this Federation from a union/ward level to District levels. It has formed 18,244 group federations (14,899 village federations, 1,863 slum federations, 1,316 union federations, 136 upazila federations and 30 urban area federations) till June 2007 (*Proshika*, 2007).

The frequency of face-to-face interaction through monitoring and supervision and group meeting among local producers and staff members generated common social norms ('social glue') and created predictable behavioural patterns (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2004:28; Olate, 2003:19). This process gave a sense of 'belonging' to the organisation, establishing trust amongst them in helping to develop a stake in organisational goals. Significantly, the meetings demonstrated an enormous amount of 'social energy' (Mannell & Chowdhury, 2005:1). The decision-making, reporting and internal learning operated as closely intertwined processes within the organisation. The minutes of meetings, periodic activity reports and reports of visits across the organisation were maintained in written form. This practice created a constant flow of information throughout the organisation, both vertically, from centre to field and back to the centre, and horizontally, across sub-centres, area and divisional levels (Kabeer, 2003:10). In this way, social capital defined as people's ability to co-operate enhanced economic growth in society (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2004:31).

Both NGOs had different events for improving collegial relations. For example, the GUP, the partner NGO of PAB, held a meeting called *shakal shava* (morning meeting) before starting their actual office work, where they openly discussed their office matters. I found this a good practice. Accordingly, SEED had a weekly staff meeting, where they did the same. Their monthly area staff meeting at Head office was another event, where all area officers shared their observations, thinking, and experiences in terms of what they were able to do, what they couldn't do, and what they would aim to do in future. Then the head of the area officers passed this information to their area office colleagues.

It was observed that the relationships of shared values were not simply contractual, but based on a deeper collective commitment to social change. NGOs, donors and communities shared this vision for positive change through discussions on what constituted a 'successful' development intervention (Ebrahim, 2004:6). Both NGOs claimed that they had some environs, where they shared their agency values and norms with other agents. The *Human Resource Policy Manual* of PAB (PAB, 2005:15) denotes that *Proshika* has a human resource information system, which ensures that 'the right person is in the right job'. The meetings and workshops helped to share the concerns, ideas, learning processes and experiences within the two or groups of employees. These benefited staff members, not only by reducing the gaps, but also by improving and developing the employees' level of knowledge, teamwork, attitude, common objectives,

values, ownership, participation, and thereby ensuring appropriate conditions to achieve the organisational mission and goals.

Sharing IK with others, so to speak, meant that knowledge that was shared was respected. Sometimes this required a lot of care and attention (Whap, 2001:26). As Cajete (2000:20) points out, modes of indigenous experience are evident, not only through collective cultural expressions of art, stories, rituals and technology, but also through the more subtle and intimate expressions of individual acts of respect, care, words, and feelings that are continually extended. In this connection, it was found that the local producers', as well as the NGOs' practical knowledge, was highly valued, stored and connected, and used for other projects carefully. For example, the PAB staff members said that because of experience, PAB's local resource collection techniques, service delivery strategies, and management quality had improved. On the other hand, the local producers were more cooperative; they felt freer to share their experiences for their common benefit.

Both NGOs also encouraged effective partnerships with other local institutions, NGOs, GOs and donors to share their processes and values in searching for 'collective actions'. Both NGOs' partnership with donors was helpful in developing their practices, where both parties benefited from each other. With this connection in mind, Dave Brown (in Ebrahim, 2004:11) emphasises the *Mutual Accountability Model*[12]*,* to make partnerships with NGOs and donors, which is, perhaps, the most challenging to develop, but also the most suitable for creating 'partnerships' among organisations. It is helpful in establishing a joint commitment among actors to a shared vision and goals in bridging an understanding from multiple perspectives, in building a collective capacity for social and institutional learning. This partnership will be discussed in the next chapter.

PAB's 'exposure visit' was one of the more successful communication events, where the local blacksmiths met urban blacksmiths and businessmen. In this way, the local producers increased their social networks, business and human skills, got new knowledge and renovated their existing knowledge and skills. They knew the urban market, urban industry and urban shops, and got exposure to urban life and society. For example, a blacksmith got new knowledge and skills from other blacksmiths. It was an opportunity where local blacksmiths were able

[12] In which multiple actors seek to build shared values and goals as a basis for joint action and where there are compacts of mutual responsibility rather than formal contracts.

to meet the urban wholesalers and obtain orders. On the other hand, a wholesaler was able to find the local producers and bought products at comparatively cheaper prices. This channel created a new 'business route', where the blacksmith coordinated his traditional skills with global knowledge and demands, and this IK could be integrated smoothly with GK. In this way, they found 'a new way of life and culture'. The PAB thought that it had significant social impact for sharing understanding about the urban community and new knowledge, rather than just to build links with the urban community. This process helped to improve confidence, and sometimes their mobility encouraged them to migrate to the urban community.

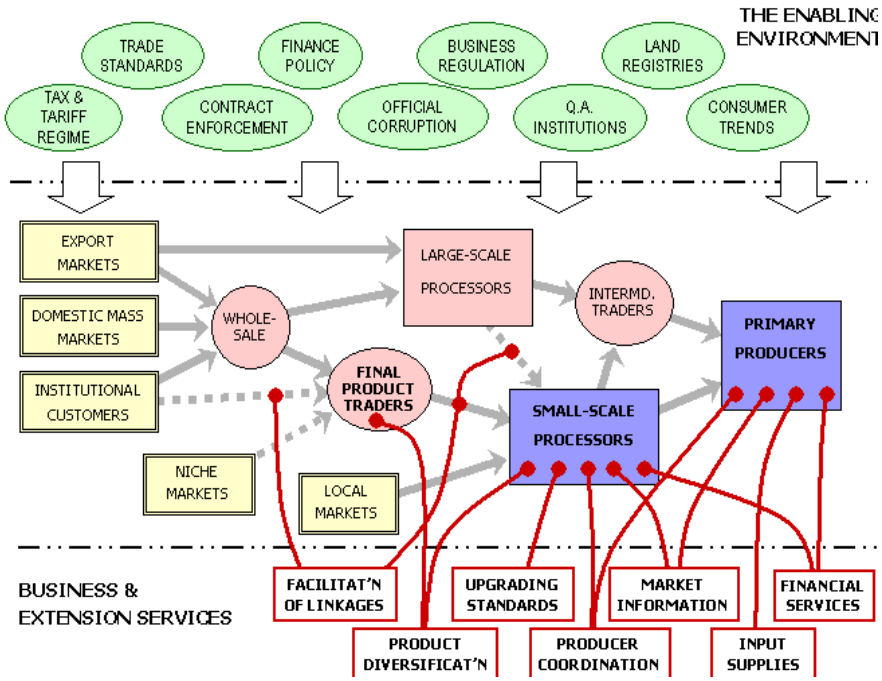
Both NGO staff members and local producers said that training interventions were helpful in creating human and social capital, such as improving skills, management, personal confidence, and overall social awareness. In general, training is an exposure changing programme for improving skills and working experience. It introduced a new thrust of knowledge and increased a certain level of self-confidence. It found that this exposure could spread among other colleagues through 'cascade training'. Poston (1994:xiv) conducted a study of 'The Blacksmith and the Farmer Rural Manufacturing in Sub-Saharan Africa', and found that training systems, sharing local knowledge and traditional apprenticeship systems were more appropriate and contributed to a community's capacity. It was helpful to build-up networks with the local producers in connection with community leaders, local governments, local NGOs and cooperatives, and local business communities.

Relation matrix, market channel, and market map: Examples of collective actions

Both NGOs used the 'market/business channel', which was considered an important social network. It enabled local producers to enter into a competitive market, where they benefited through collective actions. They built-up circles with different community people, community leaders, business partners, wholesalers, designers and suppliers. They had an opportunity to justify their existing skills. For example, when a blacksmith entered a market channel, then he needed to know where he got his raw materials (such as coal, iron, steel, and electricity). Then he needed to build-up relationships with customers, local markets, and suppliers, where they sold their products. Sometimes, as I stated above, they made contacts with the wholesalers, who bought their products and then sold these in the urban markets. This process was helpful to generate

opportunities for gaining social, human and financial capital. This is because, when a local producer travels the market map (Figure-4), s/he has to follow a number of channels at different levels, which helps to acquire such capital.

Figure-4 *The Market Map (a generic schematic)*



Source: Albu & Griffith (2005:4)

PAB (2006a:1) observed that markets matter to the poor. It was made increasingly clear that in tackling rural poverty, market-related issues, including access to information, institutions, linkages and trade rules were vital considerations. Failure to address these issues meant that the benefits of other developments threaten to by-pass the rural poor. In considering this, PAB adopted market chains for mapping the market. The market chains comprised of economic actors, who produced and transacted a particular product, as it moved from primary producer to consumer. They included smallholders and larger-scale producers, input supplies, traders, processors, transporters, wholesalers, and retailers (Albu & Griffith, 2005:7). The map included three components, such as market chain actors and their linkages, enabling business environment factors, and business and extension service providers. This was a key route, which different groups could travel and access new knowledge bases and experiences. The aim was to identify inefficiencies, inequalities and losses, which could be remedied. The producers could find the inequitable relationships between actors, and then help stakeholders realise mutual benefits by improving the system. The

second component helped to find the 'enabling environment' factors. This knowledge could help determine avenues and opportunities for realistic action objectives, lobbying and policy entrepreneurship.

The third component is the range of services that could potentially add input supplies, market information, financial services, transport services, quality assurance - monitoring and accreditation as well as technical expertise and business advice; veterinary services; support for product development and diversification. The mapping 'services' identify particular service needs and their locations within the market-chain in order to get an overall picture of the opportunities to improve market-chain efficiency or equity. This mapping was a 'precursor' to subsequently assessing the most appropriate mechanisms for delivery of services, in terms of outreach, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

The market map proved a very useful way to visually represent and concisely correspond with knowledge concerning specific market-chain actors, operations, contexts and needs to different stakeholders. The participatory market-chain analysis (PMCA) is a key approach in operating the Market Map framework - changing the conceptual framework into a practical tool, which facilitated efficiency, improved co-ordination, stimulated innovation and reinforced trust within the market-chain. This process of exchange worked on the basis of bonds and trust (Purvez, 2003:VI). Actual and perceived disparities of power within the market-chain could, however, get in the way of participatory analysis. In practice, the blacksmiths of the *Mostafapur Bazar* were not much aware of this market map, though they agreed that they understood that they were better organised regarding their trade than previously. The staff members stated that they could not organise them under this formal market map system, but they believed that the blacksmiths benefited from this market map in many ways. For instance, it facilitated the blacksmiths sharing of information, and reduced transaction costs. One solution was for facilitators to orientate weaker participants in advance, so that they understood their role in these events, and had realistic expectations of PMCA process outcomes. So, it proved that skills, knowledge, and organisational capability through the market chain helped to earn greater income, more reliably, and sell products and increase profit in existing and new markets.

Income generation programmes (IGPs) versus social trust

At present, income generation programme (IGP) is an important indicator for sustainable development with a view to making people more self-reliant and

their livelihoods more sustainable (Marais & Botes, 2007:379). One of the common and major interventions of Bangladeshi NGOs is to create IGPs (Islam *et al*., 2005:17). Bangladeshi NGOs have been successful in this area, which results in socio-economic improvement. Both NGOs generated a significant number of income activities. The success of these programmes (as I stated earlier) was related to the growth of social capital, in the form of new norms of trust and association, largely between the agency, practitioner and the participant (Buckland, 1998:237).

Trust is at the very heart of the problem of social order and is crucial to the conduct of everyday life (Cook, 2005:6). Large scale social exchange is not likely to occur without formal agreement unless firm social bonds, rooted in trust, have been established (Blau, 2002:348). Trust also brings all sorts of good things, from willingness to get involved in communities, to higher rates of economic growth by job creation (Putnam1993, 1995; Fukayama, 1995; Knack & Keefer, 1997). Due to the high unemployment rate in Bangladesh, the research found that these IGPs helped to create 'trust' among local producers and NGOs. Trust is considered here as 'the chicken soup' of social life (Aldea-Partanent, 2003:2-3). It was observed that a particular solution was tailored depending on local circumstances to build other types of trust. The NGO staff members said that people often trust them more than they did members of their own community; it indicated that families would tell an NGO worker about a problem before telling a friend or neighbour (Abom, 2004:350). When trust was built-up between actors or agents, it led to beneficial action through mutual co-operation (Purvez, 2005:95-96).

The NGOs provided income facilities both by recruitment in the organisations and IGPs in the communities. These had a wide range of impacts on financial, human, and social capital in the society. It found that *Proshika* had 7,138 staff in June 2007. It covered 24,181 villages, 2,109 slums, 1,919 unions (rural) and 328 wards (urban), 234 *Upazilas*, and 59 districts until December 2007. Total primary group members were 2,804,287; households 2,146,985; poverty free household 1,236,074; and beneficiaries 11,808,421. It created 10.51 million employment/self-employment facilities and it had 20.52 million human development training and 1.16 million practical skill development training participants (*Proshika*, 2008). On the other hand, the PAB's reducing vulnerability programme successfully trained 5,265 beneficiaries, MLP 155, and infrastructure

services programme 75 in 2006, and they claimed that they created a good number of income generation facilities in Bangladesh (PAB, 2006c).

Enterprise development enabled the poor beneficiaries to come out of poverty and settle on a sustainable basis. Chaudhury (2006:2) says that, on average, the beneficiaries of MSL (PAB) were able to more than double their income within three to four years after receiving training and other business related services from the project. A majority of the beneficiaries expanded their existing business/enterprises (70.8%), and more than a quarter of them started new businesses (26.0%). Through conducting a survey of thirty nine entrepreneurs in Dhaka City, SEED (2001, 2004, and 2006) reported that after receiving interventions from SEED, the local producers' monthly average income was nearly doubled, and socially they were in a good position.

NGOs' capacity for community empowerment

As stated earlier, the thesis considers the nine domains of community empowerment suggested by Laverack (2006). These are improving participation, developing local leadership, increasing problem assessment capacities, critical awareness of people's needs, building of organisational structures, improving resource mobilisation, strengthening links to other organisations and people, creating equitable relationships with outside agents, and increasing control over management. The thesis investigated NGOs' capacities for these components in the context of competing IK and GK approaches.

In many developing countries such as Bangladesh, NGOs and civil society actors need to give more consideration to mobilisation efforts. These efforts can promote both the short-term empowerment of the poor and the long-term consolidation of democratic institutions (Rahman, 2006:451). NGOs have created an arena of action and discourse, distinct from the public and the private sectors. The degree to which NGO activity can help animate civil society, strengthen the political rights of citizens, and ensure responsive government, depends on the degree to which NGO activity is linked to the broader polity. On the one hand, NGOs can also pursue what can be termed a 'social mobilisation' paradigm of development, tying their activities to the concepts of empowerment, collective action, and engagement with the broader political system. The research found a number of areas of NGOs' capacities for community empowerment, gathered opinions through different sources, including field data. The research also found some distinct capacities of both NGOs. These are presented in the Table-17.

Table-17: *NGOs' capacities for community empowerment: Working areas*

NGOs	Working areas for community empowerment
Both (common areas)	Community awareness, counselling & advocacy, training, participatory plan, meeting and consultation, information sharing, market chain, market map, seminars and workshops, involve with association, network with GOs-NGOs, monitoring & supervision, follow-up, research works, knowledge documentation, use of modern communication, donor friendly
MLP (PAB)	Exposure visit, partnership, formation of market opportunity groups, use of scientific tools (i.e. need assessment, market actors' behaviour assessment, learning log sheet and relationship matrix, etc.)
SEED (*Proshika*)	Federation, social scheme, credit, internal programme coordination, computer software, use of unused local resources, raising self-fund

Source: Author based on field data

Community participation versus community empowerment

Community participation in all its forms has become an increasingly important aspect of urban and rural policy in both North and South (Mitlin & Thomson, 1995; Lyons *et al.,* 2001:1233). Lyons *et al.,* (2001:1233) find participation has a significant effect on empowerment for sustainable development, which Friedmann (1996) calls 'socially sustainable conditions'. The discourse of participation and empowerment has become the common denominator of action for development agencies in a global world (Tembo, 2004:1025). The literature suggests the terms 'participation' and 'empowerment' are used interchangeably (Rifkin, 2003:170). Participation is now considered an important component for securing peoples' decision making and equitable opportunities. It must not be seen as a short-term or casual involvement of people. It is a 'social experience shared by individuals and groups, who live in economic and social relations to each other in a society' (Malki, 2006:54).

Participation is a pre-requisite to collective action (Mondal, A. H. 2000:463) and an integral element of economic improvement and social change efforts (Bowen, 2008:65). The community workers should work on assessing community feelings through their active participation and then transform these into constructive community action plans (Malki, 2006:52). The participatory plan of the NGOs was most useful where the local producers (blacksmiths and goldsmiths) improved their confidence, traditional attitude, experience and skills. It was helpful to justify and verify their thinking within institutional arrangements. Both NGOs believed that more participation on such kinds of institutional arrangement decreased individual fears, apprehensions, and limitations, on the one hand, and increased their 'social mobility' towards social empowerment, on the other.

The staff members of both NGOs said that they began this participation through their community survey, where they investigated all social networks and encouraged the active participation of local people. The staff members also said that this kind of participation transpired extensively through a 'market chain' (as stated earlier in this chapter), where all types of social networks were established through 'collective actions' to achieve greater community empowerment. It was perceived as 'genuine' or 'real participation', which took place at the moment the populace had a voice in defining or diagnosing its problems. As a consequence, development had a solid chance of meeting the real needs of the population (Goulet, 1989:175). It was such participation which was started, or at least sanctioned, by the interested 'non-élite' population, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths at the beginning of their decisions. It matured into a 'social force' exercising a critical mass of participating communities 'enabled to enter into spheres of decision or action' beyond their immediate problem-solving (Goulet, 1989:168; Hamyaran, 2006:54-55). In this sense, as stated earlier, participation was seen as a 'stable, continuous and dynamic process', rather than 'infrequent, occasional and broken' within some contexts and not others to keep it in compliance with the preferences of the powerful actors. It gave local producers, especially the 'hitherto excluded', the opportunity to manage their own affairs, influence public decisions, and participate in activities that affected their lives (Esman & Uphoff, 1984:15).

As I said earlier in this chapter, the MSL arranged the exposure visit, where a blacksmith had a chance to talk directly with other blacksmiths, brokers, wholesalers, and businessmen (both urban and rural), designers, and suppliers. Many blacksmiths said that their exposure visits and participation in different blacksmith enterprises in Dhaka improved their confidence and working attitude. They were more interested and felt more confident in exploring Dhaka further on those occasions. This gave them more freedom and democratic rights as it was formed by the people and for the people. It was also essential for the repositioning of political power in favour of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development (Burkey, 1993:5; Malki, 2006:55). But the staff members of PAB agreed that they were unsuccessful in some cases, as they could not bring out the local producers from the exploitation of local élites, such as wholesalers. But the research found that such participation was helpful to minimise the exercise of power. The participation inevitably became simply 'a concrete manifestation of a broader political process of democratisation' (Dudley, 1993:160). In Bangladesh, NGOs created many examples of working with poor

people, where such kinds of participation reached a practice of 'authentic development' accomplished by 'passive subjects'. This ultimately turned local producers into 'active subjects' that made their own dignity, social identity and social position into their livelihood struggle (consider the impact of NGOs' interventions discussed at the end of Chapter Four).

Use of scientific tools: Increase problem assessment capacities

Under the 'bottom-up' participatory development, the improvement of problem assessment capacities among poor people is now a crucial area for community empowerment. It is more important in developing countries such as Bangladesh, where a significant part of the population is illiterate and they are not fully conscious of the problems, and how to deal with them. But their opinions and decisions are important, regarding the sources and causes of problems, impacts and constructive solutions. The NGOs should have the capability to assess these in the local contexts.

The tools the NGOs were using were important to assess local people's attitudes, culture, norms and values, and political situation. Both NGOs used a number of scientific tools, such as community surveys, participatory market chain analysis, market assessments, participatory plan approach, rapid market surveys, PRA, training, technology fairs, and also monitoring and supervision as part of their assessment methods. The NGOs developed these scientific tools through the 'trial and error' process. These tools were particularly useful to new entrepreneurs to increase their assessment capacity. The 'rapid market survey' (RMS) was used to assess the present market situation. The local producers found this an easy and useful method, where they could record all necessary information. For example, the milk marketing (for milk processors) of MLP (PAB) included the information: the name of the milk processor and address, daily receiving amount, form of milk (i.e. solid content), processed items, source/purchasing point, suppliers, milk price (Tk/lit), payment, requirement, and possibilities of sale and extra requirement of milk. It was helpful to assess the total market situation, including current supply, price and extra requirement of quantities of milk.

PAB offered some other scientific tools to the local producers, such as learning log sheets, relationship matrixes, need assessment tools and the market actors' behaviour assessment tools. In this way, PAB could assess the most useful resources through identifying specific actions, contributed team success, and actions for better in future. The Table-18 shows an example of the 'Cold Milk Hot

Profits' project's learning log sheet of MLP in Dinajpur District. This sheet identified the suitable trainees and collection of fees.

Table-18: *Learning Log sheet of PAB: Assignment Paravet training fee collection*

Specific actions for well assignment	Actions contributed team success	Actions for better next time	Most useful resources and reasons
Identify professional demand Training demand creation Understand business interest Compare training cost & schedules with other organisations Registered form filled-up & training fee received	Minimised the expenditure of training Identified actual professional participant Maximised of training outputs	Open circulation of training Organising meeting	Human resources were most useful PNGOs & staffs of PAB motivated the paravets to pay fee
Learning: 1. The participants who had need the training only he/she would agree to pay the training fee. 2. Fee collection was a way to identify the effective participant.			

Source: PAB, 2006a, 2007a

Table-19: *Relation Matrix of PAB: Baseline, current & future picture on relationship between milk producer & milkman (milking and transport)*

Parameter	Baseline	Current	Future
Information sharing & communication	Regular communication occurred on milk purchasing purpose. No significant information, however, emerged on market prices and processor demands		The milkmen will disseminate the necessary information and will work with the producers in a group jointly
Quality control issues	-Lack of knowledge on quality milk production & hygiene of producers and milkmen The Milkmen could not ensure the quality due to the small amount of collection as a long time		Quality of milk will be produced and it will be evident if tested and producers will get better prices.
Price fixation & payment	Generally the milkmen fix the milk prices for lack of alternative market and in some cases the milkmen provide money in advance to the producer and as a result producers are bound to sell milk to the milkmen at a lower price		Producer groups will enable price fixing through bargaining
Faithfulness & dependability	They have no faithfulness & dependability on one another in case of payment and extra weight		Producers will get regular payment and they will not be deprived about the weight.

Source: PAB, 2006a, 2007b

The relation matrix (Table-19) was useful to assess the possible outcomes in favour of producer groups, where all possible related parameters/indicators were identified. This matrix was able to locate the current and future baselines on the basis of possible parameters. It shows how the milk producers and milkman relationship was developed in terms of information sharing, quality control, price settlement and improvement of trust. It was also helpful in improving social networks and social trust among the different groups of the community.

Proshika developed a number of scientific techniques and measurements (as stated in Chapter Four) for proper performance assessment of the local producers, staff members and trainers. These included the methodologies to develop good trainers, strategies for speaking, indicators of good trainers, questionnaires of producers' personal characteristics, producers' evaluation form and indicators of training demands, principles of communication, learning strategies, techniques of memorising capacities, experienced-based learning-circle, visual aids of training, and principles of group learning. SEED staff members followed the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) strategies and PRA (Jones & Laverack, 2003:7), which they used to provide statements about the 'needs' and 'problems' on the running projects (SEED Doc, 2001:1-13; SEED, 2007:1-17). In order to do this, they had to complete the weekly monitoring schedule form and submit the loan monitoring report. They also had to make a report on programme performance and problem identification to the Area Coordinator. SEED used to gather experiences from their other projects, such as micro credit.

Through considering the appropriateness and evaluating the impact of these tools, the research found that many of the local producers and staff members could not own those global knowledge based assessment tools. The main contradiction was that those tools were not developed through considering the local context; rather the NGOs used them directly, though the staff members claimed that under globalisation processes they got many tools from global knowledge. PAB used many tools, such as the market chain analysis, PRA, development frameworks (such as SLF from DFID), which were to some extent helpful to increase their problem assessment capacities. SEED had links with many donor agencies, such as DFID, ADB, World Bank, and IMF and some reputed research and educational institutions, such as the University of Bath, and the University of East Anglia.

Group work practice: Increase leadership exercise and quality

Leadership is an important determinant for organisational performance. The key elements of leadership are vision, innovation, decisiveness, and a strong people orientation (VanSant, 2003:9). It is one of the keys to realistic assessment of problems and opportunities, establishment of priorities, and the marshalling of internal and external resources to address these priorities. In effective institutions, leadership does not reside only at the top; elements of it are evident at various levels of the organisation. The leaders, their selection, their

training and skills, and the balance between their economic and traditional influence in the community are important considerations in this leadership pattern (Jones & Laverack, 2003:6).

Both NGOs observed that most of the communities in Bangladesh suffer from leadership-related problems. First, the NGO staff members developed leadership for two reasons: one was that they were working with group-based enterprises, where leaders had a vital role to maintain and sustain these group activities; and secondly, the NGO workers wanted to share their organisational values and norms with the leaders, who would be able to disseminate and share these values and practices with their group members. The staff members found that the reputable leaders are better than the appointed leaders. This kind of leadership can be compared with Gramsci's[13] 'organic' intellectuals, who are developed through their own social processes. The research found that these kinds of leaders were developed in a group through market channel and business plan, involved people with different existing associations and clubs, and made links with different social networks.

PAB developed local leadership through making partnerships and building forums, such as producer group forum, private service provider forum, and business development service provider forum. As a lead NGO, PAB provided financial, managerial, and technological supports to the partner NGOs. For instance, GUP worked with the blacksmith group at *Mostafapur Bazar* under this partnership. The PAB staff members claimed that at the local level, these sorts of forums played significant roles towards exchanging information and knowledge. PAB had twenty three types of producer groups with 455 members (Faridpur five including the '*Bhai Bhai Kamar Association'*, eight in Barisal, and ten in Dinajpur) with association of partner NGOs (PAB, 2007c:1-3). On the other hand, as stated earlier, by December 2007, *Proshika* had established 220 area development centres (ADCs), 149,776 peoples' organisations, and 18,417 group federations (*Proshika*, 2008), which were maintained with proper organisational rules and regulations, principles, and values. These were helpful for developing leadership and leadership qualities among the local producers. *Proshika* also formed business associations. These associations had a number of activities regarding local leadership. The staff members and the local community leaders confirmed that a good number of their leaders participated in the local administration

[13] Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was the leading Marxist theorist produced by Western Europe since Marx and Engels themselves. By 1917 Gramsci was an influential member of the Italian Socialist Party and in 1921 he became a leader of the new Italian Communist Party (Morgan, 1987:301).

elections, and many of them were elected as UP Chairmen, Ward Members and Ward Commissioners.

Both NGO staff members claimed that they had leadership training, which they served throughout their programmes. Significantly, it was a fact that the research did not find any kind of training manual on leadership training, nor did the community people agree with this opinion except business training. This finding was established by the office documents and observation methods. The staff members of GUP (partner NGO of PAB) stated that leaders can never be made through formal training, rather so it actually develops naturally in the society through practising and dealing with their group activities. Gramsci argues that the 'organic' intellectuals are genuinely popular, more conscious and much committed in a constant struggle to achieve both domination and hegemony (Morgan, 1987:303-304). Some staff members of both NGOs agreed that they had no specific leadership training or training manual, but they always included leadership concepts in their business training.

Although I am in agreement with such observations, I did, however, find a contradiction between the opinions that the stakeholders provided during focus group discussion (FGD) and case study sessions. The NGO staff members said "We have a wide range of leadership training", which was a false statement by these NGOs. The NGOs also needed to provide management training, which would be helpful for improving leadership as both groups of traders were involved in their business management. Both NGOs claimed that they provided business and management training to all of their service users. However, I found that only a very few of the local producers got such training practically.

More social networks and capital: Improve resource mobilisation

The ability of the community to mobilise resources, both from within (land, property, authority) and the ability to negotiate resources from beyond itself (training, finances, equipment), is an important factor towards capacity building (Jones & Laverack, 2003:7). One of the major functions of the NGOs was to improve resource[14] mobilisation. Network structure(s) can create enabling conditions for the mobilisation of social capital within communities and for people to feel empowered (Dale & Sparkes, 2008:143). As stated earlier in this chapter,

[14] This is something that can be used for support or help and is a human-centred concept. Resources refer to things, such as money, property, assets, wealth, capital or goods which have economic and social value. In order for something to be considered a resource therefore, it must be perceived to have value some attributed value.

social networks helped many of the local producers by providing work opportunities, financial support, justice and social security (Purvez, 2005:94).

Intense networks of interaction also probably widen the participants' sense of self, developing the 'I' into the 'we' or enhancing the participants' 'taste' for collective benefits (Putnam, 1995:3). Zain & Ng (2006:185-187) argue that network relationships elicit and inspire firms' initial internationalisation intention and internationalisation pace and pattern; influence firms' market-selection decision and entry-mode decision; access to additional relationships and established channels, and to local market knowledge. These help firms in lowering costs and minimising risk of internationalisation, and constrain firms' future scope and market opportunity. It was therefore seen that resource mobilisation was helpful to utilise many social, financial, natural, cultural, and human capitals.

I stated in Chapter Four that, as key actors, both indigenous NGOs were working to develop local resources through coordination of social networks and integration of knowledge systems. The NGO staff members believed that due to the shortage of financial (i.e. donations) and physical capital (i.e. technology, technological tools), they needed to acquire capital from the donors, but they were also working to mobilise local human, social, and natural capital. Both NGOs shared knowledge through a number of activities, such as exposure visits, training, and supervision and monitoring. It was seen that both NGOs used many local resources, such as local trainers (i.e. cascade training), local raw materials, etc.

Both NGOs had relations with other organisations as a part of their programme and experience sharing scheme. The NGO staff members confirmed that they encouraged and helped their beneficiaries to link with other organisations. They invited the local people, administration and institutions to their different events, such as training periods, and community survey. These NGOs shared their opinions through discussions, meetings and workshops. They had also training exchange programmes with many organisations, and encouraged local producers to attend the local fairs, where they involved the local administration and institutions. Through partnership programmes, PAB made excellent links with many local small NGOs, such as GUP.

It was seen from the PAB file documents that the MSL worked with a number of organisations as a part of this partnership scheme between April 2006

to March 2007. These organisations were: the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU), Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Wheat Research Centre (WRC), Rural Development Academy (RDA), Vocational Training Institute, *Palli Karma Shahyak Foundation* (PKSP), CARITAS Bangladesh, *Parbatya Boudha Mission Bangladesh*, and Art Institute of the University of Dhaka (PAB, 2006b). They also participated in the 'local market development forum', and shared experience with ICT based organisations. The SEED staff members claimed that they had good relations with many market and business level GOs and NGOs.

PAB (2006c:3) states that the MLP programme emphasised capacity building, partnership development and collaboration between GOs-NGOs. It found that this programme provided a significant number of credits, inputs and amount technical assistance, which were mobilised and channelled to the project beneficiaries. For example, a number of partner NGOs had started an enterprise development loan programme with MLP, where Tk. 21,787,500.00 (£213602) credited to small 1011 enterprises. Mondal, M. S. H. (2000:34) found that under the saving scheme of *Proshika*, the development workers encouraged their target people to save a small amount of money from their everyday income to face their crises and further investment for more income. It was observed that about half of their income or profit was used on human development or placed in savings. According to a SEED (2007) office data sheet, their total investment was Tk. 177,756,941 (£17,42710), net profit Tk. 66,71,440 (£65,406) and self-sufficiency was 162 from July 2006 to June 2007.

Social enterprise: NGOs' holistic approach

The concept of 'social enterprise' is a recent feature of NGOs' activities. The term social enterprise was first developed by Freer Spreckley in 1981. The social enterprises are businesses with social objectives (Cheung, 2006), whose surpluses are primarily reinvested to achieve social objectives or used in the community, rather than being driven to maximise profit for shareholders and owners (Powell & Sowerbutts, 2005 in Taskin *et al.,* 2006:362-363). It is a means for non-profit agencies to maximise their mission-related performance through the development of new ventures or by reorganising activities to improve operational efficiency (Gray *et al*., 2003:142). The first Bangladeshi Nobel Laureate (in Peace) Professor Mohammad Yunus introduced this concept with his NGO-*Grameen Bank*, which has now become a new dimension of social development in the NGO sector.

From the point of view of NGOs' activities, the term includes privately owned ventures that have a very strong blended financial and socially responsible return on investment. It looks into how locally available traditional resources can be a viable policy option for societal transformation. It also encourages improving a continuous engagement from local communities on the one hand, and secures sense of ownership to them on the other. It makes stronger community development capabilities, maximising social impacts and improving vision for organisational sustainability (Pariyar & Ward, 2005:21). I think that there are many reasons why Bangladeshi NGOs should follow this social enterprise approach for their projects, such as with blacksmiths and goldsmiths. The criticisms of the NGOs' micro-credit programmes, such as commercial attitude and poor people's exploitation furnished the issue as a hot development agenda. It is now proved that micro-credit is not a kind of programme to achieve a comprehensive development strategy for safe and sound sustainable human development, as it targets a particular area of development.

It was observed that it neither secured individual development, nor that of the community as whole. But social enterprise can be effective to achieve broader development, as it attempts to secure interactions with many social networks, on the one hand, and its impact is more holistic and comprehensive, on the other. This strategy empowers local people to generate their own capital in a sustainable manner. This approach can work significantly, where many local NGOs are facing a funding crisis and where NGO-state relationships are often fraught with tension. Representatives of state institutions may see NGOs as a threat, and are often intent on keeping a tight eye on their activities, especially those perceived as being potentially profitable (Phillips, 2005:1). This approach can be used as an alternative mode for empowering citizens. Cheung (2006) finds this an innovative NGOs approach (in meeting new needs), which creates huge job facilities, enhances integration into labour markets, become self-reliant, and increases the density of community network and cross-sector partnerships (Figure-5).

The positive side of NGOs' activities as social enterprise is that this works through an effective partnership. The above figure illustrates that it is one kind of joint venture, where the NGO is a partner that works with the Government and other business sectors. One of the merits of this partnership is to take social responsibility and accountability from multiple agents, as it does not work with one wing. The best value of this approach is that it shares all earning benefits

with the local producers, where they own this enterprise. It improves their dedication, sacrifice, care, and attention to the enterprise.

Figure-5: *NGOs' role as social enterprise*

Sources: Cheung (2006)

From this point of view, SEED's approach could be compared with this Figure (Figure-5). It was stated earlier in this chapter that SEED established a partnership with the business sectors, social enterprise agencies, and government. The goal of SEED was to promote sustainable income growth amongst the micro and small entrepreneurs, and create employment opportunities for the poor. Until June 2006, the SEED disbursed Tk. 725.86 millions (£6.60 million) among 5,640 entrepreneurs. Up to December 2006, a total of 13,441 entrepreneurs (40% female) were organised at 76 *Proshika* Area Development Centres (ADCs), and Tk. 742 million (£6.74 million) loans were disbursed among them. A total of 43,095 new jobs (54% full-time and 46% casual) were created (*Proshika,* 2008). Both formal and non-formal training was given to around two thousand entrepreneurs. Business counselling and technological and marketing extension supports were provided to them. It included some other supportive activities, including social scheme, relief and rehabilitation. This social scheme provided a number of facilities, such as scholarships, further loans, medical and job facilities for SEED members. This was more comprehensive, holistic, and accountable for a sustainable community. One

SEED staff member compared its social accountability with the bank sector in Bangladesh:

"Banks never go to the community; banks do not provide business plan, training, motivational and counselling supports to the community; they don't have social schemes; rather SEED goes to the community and it builds up social networks with different sectors."

As a socially responsible organisation, *Proshika* widened its experience and skills base by carrying out relief and rehabilitation activities during the floods of 1984, 1987, 1988, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2002, 2004 and 2005; the cyclones of 1985, 1991 and 1997; the tornadoes of 1989, 1996, 2005 and 2006; and the *monga*[15] of 2005. The floods of 1988 and 1998 and the cyclone of 1991 were colossal and imposed unprecedented damage. During the 1988 flood, *Proshika* carried out an extensive relief and rehabilitation programme at a cost of Tk. 71.90 million (£0.65 million). The relief and rehabilitation programme carried out during the 1998 flood was even more extensive, involving a cost of Tk. 192.30 million (£1.75 million) (*Proshika*, 2006, 2007, 2008). The activities conducted in response to these disasters were food and baby food distribution, running health camps, repairing tube wells and latrines, vaccinating cattle and poultry and providing fodder for them, loan disbursement, seed distribution etc. With such long and successful experience of carrying out disaster rehabilitation, *Proshika* played a significant role in mitigating the sufferings of the poor people affected by the 2007 cyclone, and restoring their livelihood opportunities (*Proshika*, 2008).

It was seen that both NGOs' enterprise schemes offered the prospect of a greater equity of economic power and a more sustainable society by combining market efficiency with social and environmental justice. These were social mission driven organisations, which dealt with goods or services for a social purpose. The necessity to deliver on financial, social and environmental performance targets was often referred to as having a 'triple bottom line'. Here the aim was to generate profit to further their social and environmental goals, which helped to consider NGOs as 'social firm' encompassing trusts, co-operatives, associations, and institutional belonging. These social objectives helped to tie together the power of local communities, and fabricated a wide range of goods and services. The benefits of social enterprise included: enhanced livelihoods and employability

[15] *Monga* is seasonal food insecurity in ecologically vulnerable and economically weak parts of north-western Bangladesh, primarily caused by an employment and income deficit before *aman (one kind of paddy)* is harvested. It mainly affects those rural poor, who have an undiversified income that is directly or indirectly based on agriculture (Zug, 2006:2).

for the marginalised groups of blacksmiths and goldsmiths; production of reasonable cost, good quality, socially useful and environmentally sustainable, mobilisation of public and private resources to advance social justice and economic opportunity (Jackson, 2005:2). Those brought a change towards a significant new dimension of non-profit performance.

Communication and knowledge sharing: Strengthen links with outside agents and improve critical awareness about needs

Empowerment has been seen as the transfer of control over decisions and resources to communities or organisations. It is also seen to lie in improving a community's negotiation with external agents. It does not work as a facilitator of rights in general, but as a realisation of rights to enable greater control over livelihood resources (Lyons *et al.,* 2001:1234). The research found that the NGOs used mainly four types of communications channels for improvement of critical awareness about the community needs. These were aid channel and knowledge transfer, partnerships and links with like minded GOs-NGOs, participatory plan, and media, including website connection. The following discussion shows how the communication channels interact with one another and improve community empowerment.

Both NGO staff members explained that, due to the shortage of financial capital and lack of government help, they had to depend on external agents, such as donors as an 'aid channel'. But they confirmed that this 'aid channel' was helpful to build-up their capacity, particularly the management skills, new technology and innovation, and development policy between the North and South. The NGO staff members said that the donors had diverse experience working with different countries and with different communities. These networks were frequently international in reach for the purpose of fostering social change (Bebbington, 2004:729-30). They were called 'transactional networks' (Radcliff, 2001), where both NGOs were embedded. However, the research found the NGOs faced two types of contradictions. One is 'how such transferred global knowledge was able to consider the local issues in Bangladesh?' The second is 'how the NGOs overcome the problem, as it is difficult to talk glibly of Northern and Southern NGOs as discrete entities (Mohan, 2002)?

The research found that the outcome was a notion of empowerment, which focused on the intellectual and social assets of communities or organisations. Though the NGOs stated that their relationships with outside agents including donors were horizontal, it was in fact practically vertical. Many

authors consider this as 'patron-client relations' (PCR)[16]. Because of power relations, the donors and NGOs' relationships were as 'providers-recipients' under certain terms and conditions. Through searching financial sources, it was found that this patron-client relationship was less in *Proshika* than PAB; this is because *Proshika* already increased a substantial amount of funding through their micro-credit and savings schemes. About seventy per cent of their fund now comes from its own budget. But, PAB's total fund comes from central office, and they have no micro-credit and saving schemes.

It is necessary for the NGO to have precise knowledge and understanding of local people and their problems. This approach challenged the conventional development approach in which development strategies were imposed from the top. Laverack (2006:4) argues that rather than using a formal education approach, the practitioners should help the people by working with them in small groups, analysing why some people are facing bad conditions and others not, why some people are living in poor conditions and others not, and what local, state and national actions might remedy their particular circumstances. This kind of notion helped them to increase their level of critical awareness. This was called 'critical thinking' or 'critical consciousness' (Jones & Laverack, 2003:7). One SEED staff member talked about their activities for the local producer:

"SEED uses some local languages and techniques to understand the local producers- Who are their debtors? Who are their creditors? How will the creditors get their investments back? Why they are giving them the loan, and what sorts of financial and social benefits will they get and how? How will they pay their loan and how will they improve their savings? SEED is giving a real picture of their calculation how they will sustain their business."

PAB has partnership programmes 'through shared responsibility to effect change, mobilise resources and exchange experiences' (Jones & Laverack, 2003:8) with local NGOs, such as GUP. The MSL programme worked with seventy rural NGOs and 200 private 'like minded' service providers together to ensure 12,646 rural producers' (i.e. smallholder farmers, non-farm enterprises and rural potters) access to skills, credit, information and technology, and market linkage until 2006. More than twenty government offices in project areas supported producers either by improving their own training curriculum or providing training, credit and other material support (Chaudhury, 2006:5). The NGO staff members

[16] PCR is a mutually obligatory arrangement between an individual who has authority, social status, wealth, or some other personal resource (the patron) and another person who benefits from his or her support or influence (the client) (Anthromorphemics, undated).

claimed that their collaboration with other NGOs, GOs, and producers was established successfully.

Both NGO staff members claimed that they followed the participatory planning approach through PRA, FGD, dialogue, campaign, and rally, and they shared knowledge with community people. The NGOs also knew how they would develop their work according to the needs of the producers. This plan included local culture and practice, peoples' choice, needs and demands, and norms and values. It was a 'learning process', where an organisation learned and found the suitable interventions. Both NGOs took the initiative to find out the real 'mentors' in the local community from whom the local producers learned about their products. The NGOs also had continuous interaction with producers through monitoring and supervision via mobile telephone. In an evaluation of the MSL project, it was found that the programme had been able to change the real life story of many rural producers by facilitating technology innovation (PAB, 2006b:3).

The technology innovation process started with market assessment of different products by exposure visit and skill-training on technology and process, so that the producers knew what they wanted and where they wanted to tour (PAB, 2006b:3). Chaudhury (2006:64) also found that the MSL programme of PAB for poverty alleviation through the adoption and implementation of the business development service (BDS) approach was successful. The staff members described this as 'knowledge flow', which was documented and shared with other local communities across the country. Partially aided by the globalisation process, PAB used many experiences and knowledge, which had been, for example, innovated in Kenya or Zimbabwe.

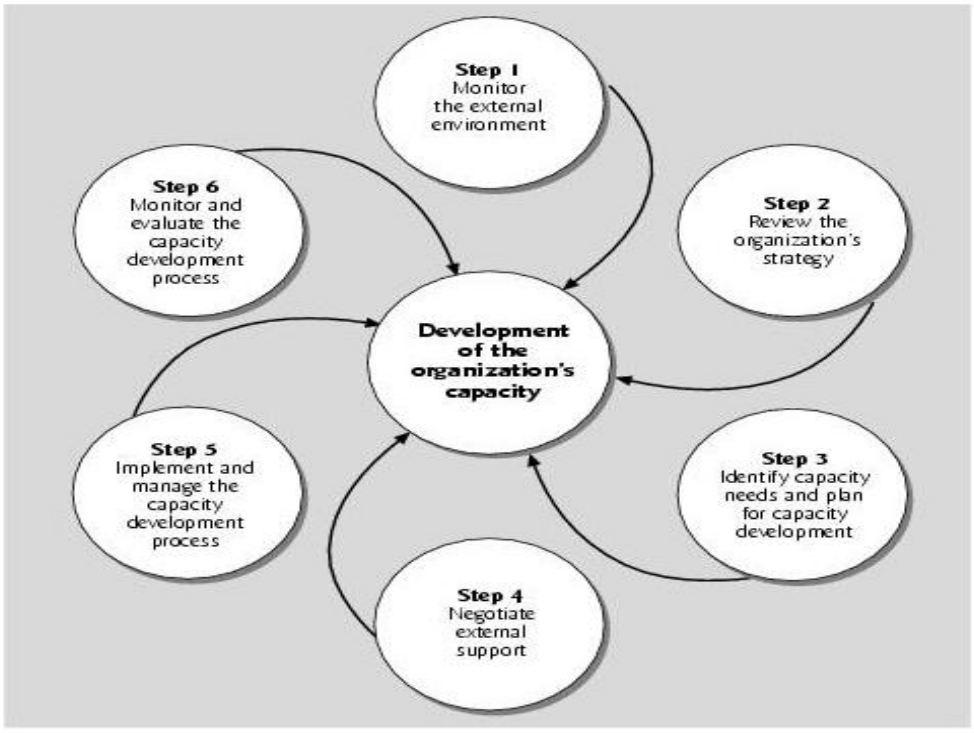
Both NGOs had individual websites, which were accessible and anybody could access those NGOs' activities. But, none of the NGOs showed any list of allied organisations/links there (Laverack, 2006:6). In an internal evaluation, PAB (2006c:7) stated that during the reporting period of May 2006, sixteen articles on different technologies of MSL programme were published in the most popular national daily newspaper the *Prothom Alo* with 100,000 readers. The national and regional centres of Bangladesh Radio broadcast ten programmes about small businesses. By assessing letters, phone calls and discussion, the radio authority decided that at least 20,000 rural listeners benefited from this broadcasting. The private and national TV media provided coverage on the rural technology exhibitions, product fairs and training activities in several occasions. On the other

hand, *Proshika* made over 245 audio, video and spots, and 819 participatory video produced on democracy, human rights, gender equality, good governance, and awareness about environmental protection.

Decentralised and autonomous management

At present, 'empowering organisational structures' in terms of management sufficiency, control over management, and 'ensured mutual support groups' (Laverack, 2006:6) are important elements of NGOs' work. Many authors state that, in an increasing global world, whether a local NGO is using financial resources from its own funds is an indication of its move towards 'self-reliance' and relieving donor dependency. From this point of view, the research found that both NGOs had donor dependency for their funding, though I stated earlier in this chapter that *Proshika* already created a substantial amount of its own funding.

Figure-6: *Steps in a holistic approach to capacity development*



Source: Horton *et al.,* (2003)

Both NGOs had independent advisory and management boards, and they were adequate to control through autonomous and decentralised management. The MLP of PAB was managed by the head office located at Dhaka, linked with their main office in the UK. The head office of SEED of *Proshika* was located in Dhaka. According to the opinions of area office staff members, they had full autonomy to work, and their central office did not impose any administrative

decisions on them. The allocation of funds was through the head office. The head office took all working decisions according to the needs and demands of the local communities. Both NGOs had more organic relationships at community level; they seemed the most appropriate service delivery partners and were invited more and more by multilateral organisations to implement these programmes. But the research suggests that their organisational structures did not fit the new large scale requirements; their accountability systems were not matching either and they might end up in difficult political situations with both governments and the populations they serve (Scheper, 2000:3).

In this regard, the thesis reviews the organisations' capacity development, followed a model provided by Horton *et al*., (2003). They show how an organisation can achieve its organisational capacity through a number of internal and external resources step by step (Figure-6). These include monitoring the external environment, reviewing the organisation's strategies, identifying capacity needs and plans, negotiating external supports, implementing and managing the capacity development processes, and monitoring and evaluating the process. Jones & Laverack (2003:6-7) say that an empowered organisational structure is able to establish co-ordination mechanisms in each village to allow the representation of different social groups and leaders from existing village institutions and organisations. It is envisaged that this would facilitate the project to develop more consequential relationships with people in the villages and facilitate the project to organise project resources more effectively. This would entail a wider range of people in decision-making exercises. In the light of this, the research confirmed that the NGOs were partially successful in improving the first two, but failed with the third. They both developed some sub-sectors.

The sub-sector of PAB, for example, had the 'cold milk for hot profits' project[17] (PAB, 2007a:1-3). From February to April in 2007, this sub-sector arranged sixteen group meetings with two partner NGOs in Dinajpur District, where the importance of vaccination for profitable cow rearing, the necessary care for pregnant and milking cows, and quality milk production experiences with group milk marketing issues, were shared among group members. This meeting

[17] This project was run from April 2006 - March 2008. The aims were to increase the income and diversify the livelihood options of small milk producers through improvements in the quality and quantity of milk production. It helped to improve the livelihoods by creating a sustainable community-based integrated marketing system. The beneficiaries were 304 small dairy farmers, plus the local paravets, goyalas (milk collectors) and milk processors in the Dinajpur district of Bangladesh. This project has also been successful in encouraging others outside the area to adopt the scheme (PAB, 2008).

was important for improving group functioning, but the question was about the improvement of decision making. The group did not have the autonomy to decide what sort of help was needed, but received the interventions as the MLP decided and provided. So, the research found that the 'patron-client' relationship still existed. On the other hand, SEED also had links with other mutual peer institutions, such as the Bangladesh Women Enterprise, ASA, and BRAC, and their attempts for community empowerment were comparatively successful. As Fatmi & Islam (2001:253) argue, *Proshika*'s model for social development and poverty alleviation emphasises total empowerment. *Proshika* therefore followed an approach of 'walking on two legs'.

NGOs' capacity: Threats and limitations

This section looks at the major limitations of NGOs' capacities for social capital and community empowerment approaches. A growing number of critical assessments suggest that the operational impact of NGOs in community development was less than claimed. NGOs may pursue a 'service delivery' paradigm, where the provision of services is strictly separated from engagement in the broader polity. In reference to this connection, NGOs become providers of goods to poor 'consumers', rather than 'facilitators' of collective action and empowerment (Rahman, 2006:452). This growing predominance of service delivery programmes among NGOs is problematic for the goals of empowerment and poverty alleviation (Rahman, 2006:455).

The research findings of the thesis identify a complex notion in highlighting these approaches individually rather than as combined; it was because the same kind of limitation was accountable to different elements of both approaches. The summary of these findings from both NGOs have been presented in Tables-20 and 21. It is envisaged that there were some common limitations, which were seen in both approaches. The NGOs individually found a number of distinct limitations. It was also observed that some limitations were aggravated because of NGOs' weaknesses (i.e. a monolithic approach and the exclusion of ordinary people, unhealthy empowerment and malpractices of power, and management problem). some limitations were related to the country's poor socio-economic and cultural conditions (i.e. lack of social trust, role local power structures, and negative role of religious leaders), and the rest were created by the Government and donor agencies (i.e. continuing debates between IK-GK, donor dependency, inaccessible market and lack of Government initiative, and challenges of knowledge transfer).

Table-20*: NGOs' capacities for social capital: Main limitations*

NGOs	Barriers for social capital
Both NGOs (common barriers)	This included illiteracy, social ignorance, financial crisis facing producers, close-mindedness to new ideas, marginality and isolation, class conflicts, leadership problems, power relations, business secrecy, 'knowledge poverty', financial and other capital shortages. Others included lack of social trust, non-cooperation of local leaders and GOs-NGOs, negative role of brokers, lack of control over the market, staff members' problems in terms of their lack of qualifications and dedication, exclusion of ultra-poor, reluctance to work with GK, multi-flow information, lack of unity & sharing attitude, donors role, NGOs' commercial attitude & short period of project, overlapping of projects, *chatabaji,* problems of partnership, macro-micro debate, natural disaster, management problem
MLP (PAB)	Demoralisation, problems of knowledge transfer
SEED (*Proshika*)	Political involvement, political pressure, non-cooperation

Source: Author based on field data

Tables-21: *NGOs' capacities for community empowerment: Main limitations*

NGOs	Barriers for community empowerment
Both (common barriers)	Lack of social education, social ignorance, traditional habits, peoples' financial crisis, lack of unity and mental limitation, reluctance to use GK bases, lack of knowledge ownership, role of brokers & other exploiting groups, non-cooperation of local leaders and GOs-NGOs. Others included lack of government plan initiatives, inaccessible local markets, shortage of financial and other capitals, lack of social trust, class conflicts, power-relations, *chadabaji*, lack of decentralised management, external intervenors & donor dependency, lack of knowledge update, unavailability of local resources, shortages of training resources, market competition
MLP (PAB)	Demoralisation, lack of communication, problem of knowledge transfer, project discontinuation
SEED (*Proshika*)	Lack of staff members' dedication, bad relations with the Government, inadequate educational background of staff members, low staff salary and staff turn-over, malfunctioning of associations, negative role of religious leaders

Source: Author based on field data

Local peoples' poor socio-economic conditions

It was seen that the rich people had better access than the poor in terms of loans, participation in saving programmes, or savings and credit associations (Johnson & Rogaly, 1997). Furthermore, even when financial services were extended, the poor might have difficulty taking advantage of them, due to feelings of powerlessness as a result of socio-economic inequalities. There were two sets of issues regarding sustainability. Other obstacles to sustainability were location or remoteness and social constraints, i.e. 'illiteracy and female seclusion' (Johnson & Rogaly, 1997:71). It found that those in remote areas had a lower survival and sustainability rate than those in urban areas (Vargas, 2001:18).

The research found that due to disadvantaged socio-economic conditions the gap regarding expectations between local producers and NGOs was high.

They did not get even a single local producer's participation in some of their workshops and meetings. One blacksmith expressed his opinion:

"We are labourers, we are illiterate, and so our opinions are valueless. We only know we need Tk.200.00 (£1.80) daily to live. We are all satisfied with those (NGOs) who will help us to get that."

Some PAB staff members said that many local producers, who were hand to mouth, asked what kind of financial help (such as loans) the NGOs would provide, when there was any dialogue with them. They found that many of them left the room rapidly when they knew that they would offer training facilities. This finding was confirmed by FGD sessions and informal discussions with the local producers. The NGO staff members observed that the local producers suffered from 'knowledge poverty'. The staff members stated that they could not take many scientific initiatives, due to local peoples' lack of awareness, conservative attitude, and social ignorance. One goldsmith stated:

"NGOs' loan is not a prestigious matter. It has been recognised that the people who take loans from Proshika are considered as poor."

As a result, the NGOs could not provide many development messages and advance knowledge. Most local producers could not follow the global knowledge based guidelines and training instructions. They were also slow in understanding and processing information (Kusumahadi, 2002:4). They were rigid and afraid to share their own local knowledge and experience, as they thought they might lose their customers and markets if they did so. One goldsmith stated:

"Design is the most valuable part of a goldsmith's work, but nobody wants to share this design as it is their personal and business advantage."

Local producers' financial vulnerability was one of the prime reasons to maintain robust links both within and outside the village (Cahn, 2004:108). Many local producers reported that they were afraid that they would be unable to face the challenges of global competition. The NGOs observed that none of the local producers could take the risks of GK because of high cost, safety and security. It is because of their financial inability, on the one hand, and lack of scientific knowledge, on the other. The goldsmiths felt such kinds of difficulty as they were expecting to introduce a new and scientific carat measuring system to be introduced to determine quality and price. One gold businessman said:

"Initially the businessman will lose money while adjusting to this new system. Many workers will lose their job. Jobs will be more challenging and competitive".

It is true that lack of social education had limited the space, where they were located. One SEED staff member said:

"The goldsmiths do not need to use high technologies as they are not educated to do so. Those take more cost and risks. They are not aware of the benefits of those and many do not feel comfortable accepting those as they find more competition there."

Both NGO staff members said that much of their innovative thinking was not being implemented because of such non-cooperation of the local producers. The staff members found this problem to be a 'vicious circle' and, at times, it took a long time to overcome this barrier.

NGOs' conventional role: Questions of accountability

The NGOs' conventional role towards local producers in terms of community development has been extensively debated. Bebbington (2005:937) notes that NGOs' interventions became biased toward the less poor. It was observed that the NGOs were concentrated in urban areas, where replication of their activities was frequent, but many of the bottom people were excluded from NGOs' target. NGOs' bureaucratic approach could not ensure a 'sustainable community'; rather they further marginalised many local people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. Significantly, the exclusion of many poor people in programme objectives is quite a common feature of NGOs' activities in Bangladesh. The realities of those, who were poor and marginalised, are often ignored or misread (Chambers, 2004:8). The notion of social exclusion focused on inadequate social participation, lack of social integration, and lack of power (Hunter, 2004:2).

Notably, micro-credit based NGOs such as *Proshika*, did not provide loan support to those goldsmiths, who were not guaranteed to re-pay such loans. In addition to this, the replication of a programme in a community had a strong negative effect on the flow of programmes of the same sector or run by the same NGO (Kusumahadi, 2002:4). As a result, many of the extreme poor remained beyond their services. Recent research has also criticised NGOs for lacking the capacity to involve the 'ultra-poor' (Rahman & Razzaque, 2000), and the poorest villages and neediest communities (Fruttero & Gauri, 2005:760). It was found that NGOs' rigid practices kept away such vulnerable communities (Johnson & Rogaly, 1997; Buckland, 2004:135 & 139). *Proshika*'s social and economic empowerment process usually side-lines the vulnerable population (Fatmi & Islam, 2001:253). One gold businessman said:

"SEED selects the people to give loan support who are able to return their loan safely. I cannot find any difference between the normal bank and NGO bank. Both are same. But I think they should provide loan support to them who actually need it."

PAB worked with people's existing employment rather than focusing support on new employment. Some NGO staff members, community leaders, and local producers raised questions about NGOs' short-term development approach. This approach failed to sufficiently mobilise indigenous social and political capital that would build, or re-build, community capacity and ensure sustainability of impact (Buckland, 1998:237).

The NGOs also observed that the indigenous people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths were suffering 'minority' and 'isolation' problems, and their trust of NGOs was marginal. The local producers thought that, due to the expansion of large and medium sized industries through globalisation, they might disappear in the near future. I stated earlier in this chapter that there was a clear lack of confidence in their reluctance to face this global competition, as their education and quality of production were not sufficient. They were also afraid of the future, as they were not getting any kind of GOs' and NGOs' supports, and national and international networks towards their working capital, and modern tools and technologies. It was found that national and international involving technology-based firms were much stronger than local ones (Hendry *et al.,* 2000).

The finding of the research is that, in the 'winners and losers' game of globalisation, more and more people were excluded from the benefits of this so-called progress of development. Only those who could sell their labour or services as a commodity in an increasingly globalised economic system could survive; the majority who could not were left out (Tagicakibau, 2004:8; FAO, 1999; CAFOD, 2002). Local languages, oral histories and cultural traditions were also threatened (Holmes & Crossley, 2004:197). Equity and redistribution were increasingly recognised as the 'missing link' (CAFOD, 2002). Devine (2003) found that the 'ultra' poor had been completely marginalised in the NGO budgets in Bangladesh. It was not simply a lack of available resources; it was also fundamentally an issue of unequal power relations in which the poor were permanently marginalised and vulnerable, dependent as they were on local élites (Wood, 2003).

The research reviewed the policy documents of both NGOs. These were well written, and the NGOs had high-flying goals and objectives, and set out

interesting programmes. The documents described how these would be achieved within the time framework. Notably, I gathered very good impressions from my meetings with the head office staff members in FGD sessions, who explained how they were helping the local producers. At this point, I would like to emphasise a couple of interesting arguments: the first is about their written 'policy', which was just 'a policy by which they caught the attention of the donors'. However, there was a big 'gap' between their written policy and real implementation at the field level. One *Proshika* staff member stated:

"There is a gap between policy and implementation because of financial dependency. Most of the NGOs are project oriented. When final funding comes it is too small for the purposes, then the NGOs change their target and the donors again shorten their funding allocation during final allocation. Then the NGOs again shorten their project target."

Many local producers and community leaders raised questions about the ultimate controversial objectives of NGOs. A number of local producers and community leaders argued that the NGOs were 'new money laundering' agencies. They stated that the NGOs were using donations to 'make money for themselves'. Many said that they were confused, whether or not the NGOs used more than ten per cent of their resources at the field level, but they had expensive furniture, high salaries, and high consultancy fees and so on. Edwards (1999:367) found the same finding, when he reviewed the cost-effectiveness of two NGOs in Bangladesh because of high overheads (a large number of staff and buildings). In this regard, Stubbs (2006:13) argues that the most active 'high-profile NGOs' are more concerned with personal gain rather than with the wider cause of poverty elimination. In addition, some NGO staff members' attitudes were negative about their own value. They could not believe that their help would contribute a great deal of benefit for the local producers. This opinion was given by a field worker of PAB. Local producers also claimed that the staff members came to them just to take their *kisti* (instalment) and they gave them nothing, which eventually benefited them.

The research found that the NGOs' development approach was 'monolithic'. The MLP of PAB just provided training and advocacy, and SEED of *Proshika* micro-enterprise loans, training, and advocacy. It has been argued that credit does not necessarily help the poor to accumulate assets, improve productivity, escape poverty and improve empowerment (Dawson, 1997; Cosgrove, 2002:62; Nawaz, 2004:170). It is true that microfinance programmes

and institutions are increasingly important in development strategies, but knowledge about their impact is partial and contested (Hulme, 2000) and promotes lively debate (Simanowitz, 2003:1). There were some other concerns within micro-finances, such as the distribution and usage. Nawaz (2004:170, 173, & 175) conducted a study in Comilla district in Bangladesh on the micro-finance clients of three NGOs: *Grameen Bank*, ASA and BRAC, and found that micro-credit did not reach two thirds of the households, and in particular did not reach to the bottom layer of extremely poor households. In addition to this, a significant amount of micro-credit was provided to non-poor and non-targeted households. Importantly, the research observed that micro-finance does not 'automatically' empower, just as with other interventions, such as formal education and political quotas that seek to bring about a radical structural transformation that true empowerment entails (Kabeer, 2005:4709). This approach can foster sustainable development if, and only if, it is integrated in a view of community development that links the social, economic and environmental dimensions (Vargas, 2001:11).

The accountability of NGOs, particularly their 'downward accountability'[18] to their beneficiaries, affected NGOs' effectiveness in the process of empowerment for the poor and marginalised people in developing countries (Kilby, 2006:951) such as Bangladesh. This debate is well travelled, and much less concern is given to the NGO's broad values and its effect. There was a considerable gap between 'the talk and the walk' (Keystone, 2006). This notion of accountability created practical knowledge gaps. While, in principle, donors generally assigned a high value to it, in practice the ways in which they managed their grants and investments did not support it. Here, some areas such as common planning tools, reporting formats and information systems did not capture the quality of accountability in relationships between NGOs and their constituents, nor did they actively enable learning and improvement (Keystone, 2006). It was seen in the research that micro-credit demanded 'a type and quality of relationship that actually limited poor people's room to manoeuvre'. Moreover, NGOs were replacing traditional informal credit sources (Davis, 2006:12-13).

[18] The question of downward accountability is sensitive to power issues and the word 'beneficiaries' is problematic in its own right. The term 'downward' reinforces the idea of power asymmetry. Mulgan (2003) and Kilby (2006:961) caution that the use of the term ''downward'' accountability can exaggerate the weakness of the beneficiary or client and so suppress the essential ingredient of authority inherent in the accountability relationship.

Informal discussions with the local producers, who were neither the members of SEED nor took a loan from any NGO, suggested that enterprises required larger amounts to be loaned, which the local NGOs found risky, and many of the local NGOs did not have the capacity to provide such enterprise development loans to the small enterprises. The government and private commercial banks also suffered from bureaucratic practices and required collateral, which the small entrepreneurs in most cases were unable to provide (Chaudhury, 2006:64). In reviewing the conditions of a SEED loan, it was seen that the SEED provided loans on specific terms and conditions, which the goldsmiths found hard, complex and unaffordable. They calculated that, including all, the interest rate became up to thirty eight per cent, which a producer had to pay from his first month of the instalment. It was also found from the list provided by SEED (2006) that the flat rate of other NGOs (such as BRAC 15%, and MIDAS 16%), and other government and private banks (*Janata* Bank 12.5%, *Agrani* Bank 14%, and Prime Bank Ltd 15%) was comparatively low.

The goldsmiths had serious problems formulating loan procedures; for example, to complete nine pages of an application form with information on personal, business, property, business appraisal, and profit. SEED required ten types of documents, such as the original property or tenant agreement, two copies of a passport size photograph, letter (with two witnesses) and one copy of a passport size photograph from guarantor, citizenship certificate or two pages photocopy of passport, bank certificate mentioning current account of the business, photocopy of last month's electricity bill, photocopy of last month's rent payment receipt, photocopy of trade licence and two revenue stamps of Tk. 4, four non-judicial stamps of Tk. 150 (£1.36) each (two by the name of shop, one by the name of producer and one guarantor). In many cases, the goldsmiths had difficulties to produce such kind of documents.

Social capital is meaningless without the support of other capitals

The research found that social capital is meaningless without the support of other capitals. Social capital alone cannot build the social economy and develop communities; it has to be used in conjunction with other forms of capital, such as financial, human, environmental and cultural capital (Kay, 2005:168). Recent literature has also shown that possessing physical and human capital is not in itself adequate to ensure project success (Nel *et al*., 2001:4). Even local knowledge alone was not enough anywhere, but perhaps particularly in rural areas (Malecki, 1998:4).

Table-22: *Social component and achievement of Proshika*

Social components	Achievement First nine month compared to Annual Work Plan (2002-2003)	Achievement compared to Phase VI targets (1999-2004)
Organisational building		
Area expansion	Low: 27%	High: 139% for village/slum expansion
Primary groups	Low: 40%	High: 86%
Federations	Very low: 6% to 28%	Medium: 66% to 74%
Training & popular theatre		
Human development	Low 25% to 40%	High: 53% to 144%
Practical skills	Low 13% to 37%	Very low to very high: 22% to 128%
Cultural programmes	Very low: 7% to 27%	High: 81% to 99%
Health		
Health training	Medium to very high: 54% to over 500%	High: 73% to over 300%
Health infrastructure	Very low to medium 13% to 51%	Low to high: 15% to 100%
Universal education		
NFP school & learners	New schools: 0%	High: 83%
Adult literacy centres & learners	New ALCs: 8%	Medium: 56% to 61%
Post literacy centres	New PLCs: 0%	Medium: 49% (first 4 years)

Source: Yildiz *et al.,* (2003: vi)

Both NGOs had limitations of resources as they could not provide additional support for local people, dependent upon their own assets, skills and enterprise. The research found that the local producers had little capital, very limited access to credit, very little power in the market and rarely received support from the formal institutions. *Proshika*'s social programme, a small part of the budget, was the 'glue' that held community groups and the whole programme together (Yildiz *et al.*, 2003: v-vi). But recently the cuts in the social programme of this NGO had been too deep. Compared to the first three years of Phase VI, the social programmes had declined by 90 per cent for the training and health infrastructure components, and by 40 per cent for universal education (Table-22).

I stated earlier in this chapter that the local producers were keen to participate in those projects, where their immediate financial benefits were obvious. The overall picture was that the local producers' satisfaction level was comparatively poor with the long-term social development interventions. Allegedly, the NGOs neither gave advice, nor helped to link with other institutions, nor were they cooperative in linking with other people, such as business leaders, money lenders, and local administrators. In addition, some local producers argued that they had problems when they said that they were the client of a particular NGO. This situation was worse for SEED producers as they felt that the NGOs should link with the Government bank, where they had no

access for loan facilities, though they were paying all kinds of taxes to the Government. The community leaders also added that the role of NGOs should be that of the 'negotiator'. They also believed that their low amount of micro-enterprise loan would not be very helpful for their overall development without providing other supports.

Social networks and empowerment (politically) as negative features for development

The theoretical notion of social network and empowerment is to produce positive outcomes for development. For example, Lin (2000:787) argues that the poorer social networks mean poor social capital and resources. Purvez (2005:94) found in his study that the economically poor people in Bangladesh had poor social networks. The research agrees with these findings and adds that, recently, social networks have been a negative feature in some cases in Bangladesh. This observation needs to be located within the country's distinct socio-cultural and political conditions. As Aldea-Partanen (2003:1) argues, depending on various causes, social networks might allow the generation of positive or negative social capital. This also depends on the level of power decentralisation in a political system within new institutional and social capital approaches (Svendsen & Svendsen, 2004:173, 175). It is still observed that in most developing nations, the power of NGOs has increased in recent years in relation to the state or government.

In the case of Bangladesh, the NGOs have become a formidable force, affecting the political and economic domains, especially the power and legitimacy of the government (Haque, 2002:411). Bendana (2006: iii) calls this the 'NGO-isaton' of movements and politics. In addition, there is a growing trend, in alliance with foreign donors, for the influence of NGOs to expand to the extent that they now compete with the government for scarce foreign assistance at the national level and for sharing political power at the local level (Sobhan, 2000; World Bank, 1996:42). To enter and be involved with the political networks as a result of empowerment of NGOs was not always helpful; rather these were used for self-interest, where the community people were affected seriously. Here empowerment was seen as 'any process by which people's control (collective or individual) over their lives is increased'. So empowerment was not a neutral force; rather it was a 'discursive construct, with its assignment meaning resulting from the exercise of power' (Friedmann, 1996; Lyons *et al.*, 2001:1234). The

Head of the MSL argued that this politically empowered network deformed new feudalism. He stated that:

"[The] new power structure is now polarised in and affiliated by party based political networks in the community. This party based politics are spread out so strongly from grassroots to international levels. All parties have organisations everywhere. They are holding power. There is no power at the hands of educated and conscious neutral people such as teachers, social workers, and young generations."

It was found that many local NGOs' executive committee members had political involvement, which ranged from the UP chairman to the Ministry level. The local NGOs are now part of the local power structure (Hossain, 2006:239-41). *Proshika* was accused of embezzling funds for developing NGOs during the Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) regime from 1996 to mid-2001. It was alleged that the *Proshika* chairperson (who was also the head of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB)[19], maintained a direct connection with the party in power, and tried to influence the ADAB in favour of his political will (Hossain, 2006:243-44). Hossain (2006:243-44) found that, out of thirty local NGOs in the Rajbari District in Bangladesh, only two NGOs had been exploiting opportunities through their networks and membership with the ADAB, which had good connections to national NGOs and NGO leaders at the centre. Even the membership of local NGOs depends on how deeply the personal relationship and political line were being maintained. NGOs' politics appeared factionalised along political lines, and conflicts were confirmed to power, leadership and resources. The focus on power and trust naturally brings up the issue of inequality: can trust exist among those who are unequal in power? (Cook, 2005:7).

It is also argued that the private power becomes public power when it controls voting behaviour (Islam, 1974:5). Many local producers and community leaders said that the staff and members of *Proshika* were used in the alliance against the existing government. In this condition, NGOs were not considered as

[19] ADAB is a unique network of NGOs developed over the last two decades or so and emerged as a model for the development NGOs across the world. It brings together its members working within the broad framework of people-centred sustainable development. One of its central goals is to knit these constituent parts closer together and respond to their needs creatively. It has been playing active roles in strengthening inter-NGO relations, exchanging ideas and experiences, expanding fields of co-operation, developing organisational skills and enhancing functional relations and communication with government, donors and various groups of civil societies. ADAB is registered simultaneously under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and Foreign Donations Regulation Ordinance of 1978. Currently ADAB has a membership of 886. Of these, over 231 (as of Dec. 1997) are at the central level and 655 are at the Chapter level (SDNP, undated).

autonomous, rather than it was known as the extension of the existing power structure (Hossain, 2006:248). The NGO staff members said that they often faced extraordinary challenges both at a personal and organisational level. They reported that they had to work long hours with limited resources in uncertain and volatile political and economic circumstances in order to help the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of their communities (Hailey, 2006:1).

Lack of social trust

In Bangladesh, the lack of 'social trust' has become a crucial barrier for NGOs' work. I stated earlier in this chapter that a number of networks, such as NGO staff members, community people, local leaders, local institutions and administration, funding agents, the Government, and civil society were involved within NGOs' initiative through collective actions and partnership contacts. The research found that the 'trust' is absent within and between these networks. For example, one community leader of PAB said:

"I have no faith in PAB. What are they doing for the blacksmiths? I did not find anything there. I heard that they provided some training, but they did not give any kind of capital to utilise their training. It is worthless."

Due to lack of trust, NGOs' social enterprise concept could not function well. It was one of the barriers to achieve mutual benefits. One blacksmith's opinion was:

"Why would I share my business with others? It is my business and I want to get all money as I earn. Why would I give and share my earnings and experience to others? It is my property. I don't think that everybody has trust in each other. Sir, please do not do anything else like that. If you do so I am not with you. We will protest that."

It found that the trust between the cross networks, such as NGOs with donors or NGOs with community people or community leaders/religious leaders or civil society and vice versa was low. The research found that the trust between NGOs and local producers was limited to the 'give and take' policy, as many local producers reported that their relation with NGOs was just for 'loan purposes.' There was neither any mental or social attraction, nor any kind of commitment, other than the financial. I argue that such exchange of trust is so slight and ephemeral that it could not give any guarantee to achieve any kind of long-term social change toward achieving community development. The local producers never believed that *Proshika* would do something for them in crisis periods, such as *chatabaji* (money collected by someone illegally), business loss, leadership crisis, local conflict, and control over the local market. The goldsmiths of SEED found that they did nothing when they suffered those problems. In response to

the question about the involvement with SEED, one goldsmith answered that, like other NGOs, *Proshika* is a 'new moneylender' (Hossain, 2006:239; Davis, 2006:12-13), and it was helpful to get some loan from them. His comment was:

"When there is no way to get loan from elsewhere then they take loans from SEED".

This kind of 'NGO dependency' is the dark side of social capital (Huda *et al*., 2005:11). On the other hand, the blacksmiths were not significantly happier whether or not PAB would provide them other supports, such as further training, loan incentives, and help during leadership crisis, as they found nothing before.

The community leaders of both NGOs said that they were not happy to say that one NGO's relation with another or relevant organisations was good. They observed that the NGOs' relation in regards to knowledge and experience sharing was not cooperative; rather some were hostile to each other. One community leader of SEED said:

I don't find one NGO's relation with another is cooperative. Rather I find there is a cold war among them. I am saying this to see their overlapping activities, commercial motive and exclusion the 'ultra' poor from their activities. I heard from my village neighbours that many NGO staff members caution that they will withdraw their support if they go to another NGO".

The lack of trust from donors is a fundamental problem in the NGO sector. There remains a huge gap between donors and NGOs as to what they expect from each other (GPF, 2005). It is because some NGOs, such as *Proshika,* were trying to compromise between Western knowledge and pressures, which, because of financial supports, became complex. Wallace & Chapman (2003:2) referred to an experience in Africa, which indicated that in spite of a commitment to participation and bottom up approaches, there was a recognised need for sustainability. They also found that the focus was still on 'us' solving problems for 'them' (be they individuals, households, communities, or governments) and little trust was given to agencies.

I stated earlier in this chapter that NGOs' political involvement and corruption limited their capacities. Due to these kinds of involvement, many local people, community leaders, local administrators, and the Government could not trust *Proshika* as this NGO was patronised by a political party. It was observed that many local people, who had no political involvement or were of specific political ideologies, withdrew their membership from *Proshika*, and many social agents became their rivals. NGOs' involvement in corruption was another

negative image, where people's general faith was completely hampered. The news of corruption, with NGOs taking money from the local poor peoples' savings, is frequently cited in Bangladeshi newspapers. In a recent study of twenty NGOs, the TIB (Transparency International Bangladesh, 2007) found that many NGOs were registered with the government in exchange for bribes and some of them had existence only on paper, and the government officials assisted them in the process. The research did not find any proof of such kind of corruption in relation to these two NGOs but, in general, the local peoples' trust for the NGOs weakens the overall perception to the NGOs' activities. There is no regulatory mechanism in Bangladesh for ensuring local peoples' savings and safety of deposits (Jackson & Islam, 2005:46).

External intervenors, donor dependency, and organisational autonomy

The majority of Bangladeshi NGOs are largely designed, funded, and managed externally (Hashemi, 1996; Buckland, 1998:237). In connection to this, the government-donor relations in Bangladesh (also stated in Chapter One) are shaped by a history of donor dependence and reactions against it (Green & Curtis, 2005:389). There were a number of issues that the research found, which were important, where NGOs' community empowerment became challenging. Essentially, NGOs' donor dependency became a matter of power relations (Wallace & Chapman, 2003:8). This suggests that NGOs shared an international community development culture reflecting their own national cultural norms (Jamil, 1998:43).

With this, the local level planning, organisational accountability, autonomy and social trust became problematic to apply so called 'universal knowledge'. The 'accountability' problem is traditionally concerned with the unequal relationships within the aid industry between donors, Northern and Southern NGOs (Lewis, 2007; Edwards & Hulme, 1995:5). It is because the donors bring universal values, self-colonisation and elitism, individualism and anxiety. The NGOs often pretend to represent 'fashionable' and universally acceptable development ideas, knowledge and skills. As a result, enormous pressure gets put on the rural poor to comply with certain 'universal conditions' (Nyoni, 1987:53).

These universal conditions are considered as inappropriate or invalid, where less consideration is given to its validity (Abdulla, undated:2; Wood, 2007:6) for the local context. It creates dual dependency (Ferguson, 1994; Escobar, 1995). It is directive, not facilitative (Garilao, 1987: 119). Ahmad

(2006:629) calls this 'donorship', rather than partnership. The Bangladeshi NGOs find this inappropriate. This is because there is a fundamental gap between the socio-economic conditions of developed countries and the developing world. This kind of 'imported knowledge' (Miedzinski, undated:1-2) does not always fit well with the national development priorities and development systems (OECD, 2003:10). Such kind of aid based development practices have long been a barrier to sustainable technology. Schumacher (1973) believes that foreign aid is able to play only a limited role in bringing about sustained economic development. Such substantial input of foreign aid is doing much damage to the spirit of self-respect and self-reliance; its loss is greater than its gains. It creates a 'development' gap, which does not encourage innovative practices (Hossain & Marinova, undated:9). In connection to this point, one PAB staff member stated:

"Sometimes the donors do not want to extend their projects or increase the funding for those though it needs to continue these for its local community demands. It is a big problem that we cannot provide any follow-up services for them. We all know that these social development projects need to serve continuously for a longer period of time for achieving actual outputs. But they are bound to stop those at a 'half-done' stage because of donors' discontinuation of funding supports."

Development is not apolitical, and 'the process of organising and empowering communities and poverty groups is in itself a political act' (Garilao, 1987:119). This de-politicisation (see Ferguson, 1994; Escobar, 1995) of NGO development efforts, experienced in Bangladesh over the last twenty years, is part of a broader global trend in NGO policies (Edwards & Hulme, 1996; Fisher, 1997; Hulme & Edwards, 1997; Kamat, 2004). As a result, the NGOs were increasingly shaped by the Western-dominated international development discourse (Rahman, 2006:456-457). However, this explanation can also be seen as 'one-sided' (Rahman, 2006:456), 'marginalised', question of 'sustainability' (Grootaert, 1998; Khan, 2006:174), since this Western development model ignored the important influence of local conditions that the NGOs face as their constraints and policy choices. Within this discourse, do aid agencies have the right to be the 'voices of the poor' and to decide correct approaches for humankind and to speak on behalf of grass roots' communities (Abdulla, undated:2) such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths? The research found that this Western model could not explicitly promote participation, but created confusion among local producers versus NGO workers, due to the lack of social trust.

The research conjectured that around the aid process, there was insufficient dialogue, or an attempt at dialogue that would sometimes be totally unheard. Partnership relations in NGOs' activities in Bangladesh are inhibited by the instrumentality that each side brings to the equation: donors seeking conformity with current reform prescriptions or conditionality clauses, recipients seeking least (political) cost thresholds (Green & Curtis, 2005:389). In this condition, both parties felt constrained in being more responsive and accountable to their superiors than to others. Like Green & Curtis (2005:397) I believe that under these circumstances, improved donor co-ordination in any form may be conceived more as a threat than an opportunity by the national government. In addition to this, the South-Asian NGOs' have tensions regarding cutting-off funding supports from the donors (Fernandez, 1987:43-44). Globalisation, new (and ever changing) trade agreements and aspects of the emerging new international political order all contain perceived threats (Green & Curtis, 2005:397).

Due to donors and external pressures, NGOs' organisational autonomy regarding low managerial capacity (Kusumahadi, 2002:4) and inconsistent with the operations (Hulme & Edwards, 1997:8) is now an issue. Both NGOs had mixed opinions about this. Some NGO staff members observed that there were some barriers to increase control over programme management, where a certain level of external/donor pressure existed. Some staff members said that they still had shortages of funds and had to depend on donors. As PAB (2006d: 12) stated in the review of the MLP programme, it took funds from a number of donor agencies, such as DFID, ETC Foundation, and KATALYST during 2001 to 2006. They faced some problems from the donor agencies, such as project discontinuation and lack of flexibility. Some PAB staff members said that their central management was not decentralised enough to implement some local peoples' urgent demands, such as loan supports, equipment supply, and supports during natural disaster. It was seen that both NGOs were based on the new public management (NPM)[20] approach. Both NGOs' staff members believed that too much donor dependency was bad for an organisation. An organisational self-

[20] NPM originated from the crisis of the Keynesian welfare state in the 1970s in developed countries such as the UK, Australia and New Zealand. The use of management techniques and practices drawn mainly from the private sector is increasingly seen as a global phenomenon. NPM reforms have shifted the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management. Key elements include various forms of decentralising management within public services (e.g., the creation of autonomous agencies and devolution of budgets and financial control), increasing use of markets and competition in the provision of public services (e.g., contracting out and other market-type mechanisms), and increasing emphasis on performance, outputs and customer orientation (Larbi, 1999).

assessment can facilitate some serious realisations to do with investments in learning versus investments in doing, policy awareness versus policy influence, insulation versus influence, and independence versus partnership. A foreign partner may damage a local NGO's credibility and effectiveness, especially as a leading voice in the policy arena (VanSant, 2003:7).

However, in crisis states capacity is often limited, which increases the risk of corruption (Larbi, 1999). This was particularly true for *Proshika* as I stated earlier in this chapter. Moreover, the public-sector reforms were externally driven by donor conditions and timetables. The over-ambitious nature and the demand for quick results failed to take account of weak institutional and management capacities (Larbi, 1999). These kinds of capacities can use a new technocratic language, whilst failing to deal with political problems and contradictions arising between the situation of people in developing societies and the fashionable neo-liberal ideology (Arce, 2003:855). The research found this kind of evidence in both NGOs' interventions. However, I argue that the NGOs need to develop partnerships with consideration of fair measures and accountability (details in the next chapter). It is necessary for funding organisations and NGOs to put themselves in each other's shoes in order to understand better their mutual constraints (Donald Terry in Ebrahim, 2004:11).

Religious leaders frustrate many initiatives

The research found that the overall attitude of the religious leaders to the NGOs was very negative; this situation was worse in *Proshika* than PAB. Traditionally, the religious leaders are hostile to NGOs' activities such as those of *Proshika*. According to the evidence of the research, there were three causes: political involvement with the progressive political party Bangladesh Awami League (BAL), using donations from Western country sources and partnerships with them, and taking 'interest' through micro-credit for women's empowerment. According to Islamic beliefs, interest, in the financial sense, is prohibited. Also some extremist interpretations of Islam prohibit some forms of women's empowerment which *Proshika* was advocating. This problem was greater in rural areas than in urban. The extent of this problem was not great among the goldsmiths, but it was still problematic among the businessmen who are Muslims. According to a staff member of SEED:

"The Mullah (religious leaders) groups are our main enemy; they want to demolish Proshika's activities. We know that some Mullahs are committed and that they will continue their jihad (a holy war) until they win against us."

As a result, many federations and groups of *Proshika* could not progress their work. *Proshika* had 14,000 dysfunctional groups. Still it was not clear how many groups and federations were really functioning (Yildiz *et al*., 2003: x). More than half of the groups and federations had collapsed because of organised propaganda and harassment by the extremist religious groups and gangs orchestrated by political leaders. This situation was aggravated by the competition from credit-providing NGOs and the Islamic Bank, and controversial allegations against *Proshika*. This complex combination of realities had resulted in anxiety among some members, decreased attendance in meetings, and regular savings and withdrawal of savings in some areas of *Proshika* (Yildiz *et al*., 2003:x).

Local power structure, inaccessible market, and lack of GOs' help: Evolving new initiatives

The local power structure, mainly élites, is a threat in both advanced societies and developing countries (Bottomore, 1964; Malki, 2006:58). The research found that local power structures changed and there evolved new forms of power structures through a slow transformation.

Edwards *et al.*, (1999:120) described civil society as a 'magic bullet'. The changing power structures often conformed to or used approaches utilising civil society (Edwards *et al.,* 1999:120), middle class (Hossain, 2006:236), and local NGO workers (Hossain, 2006:236-37; Rahman, 2006:452). But the research found that such power structures were still part of the so called élite class, and not ready to lend itself to building positive social networks and community empowerment. They had political links and worked against traditional NGOs (Hossain, 2006:236-237; Rahman, 2006:452). The local government bodies still continue to be dominated by élites (Khan, 2001).

It also found that the Chairman of a local NGO- *Jana Unnoyan Bahumukhi Shamabai Shamity* (Multi-cooperative Association for Peoples' Development) at *Mostafapur Bazar* of PAB was a local political leader of BAL. This finding was supported by Hossain's (2006) study. He conducted a study of two local NGOs (Voluntary Family Welfare Association and *Karmajibi Kallan Sangstha* (Workers' Welfare Association) in Rajbari District and found that the executive directors of both NGOs had links with the main political parties. It is a relatively recent norm that local power structures are more dynamic, diverse with higher occurrences of bargaining. Internally, these power structures seek to build power bases in the village through pursuing a 'politics of reputation'. Externally, they are active with

a broad range of strategies for securing and maintaining external relationships, such as 'NGO-ing', party political manoeuvring and securing patronage from *upazila* level administration (Lewis & Hossain, 2008). As a result, the decision making process was skewed towards those with more power and resources (Edwards *et al.,* 1999:120).

This repeated reorganisation of local government structures has not only weakened the power and authority of local government, it has also undermined the legitimacy of local government as an institution for expressing the voice of the citizenry. It has been observed that the local government had become simply another element of the élite contest for political power (Siddiquee, 1998; Khan, 2001). Combined with increasing corruption in local government and in the provision of social services at the local level, the rural poor had come to see political participation at the local government level as irrelevant, relying instead on kinship and patronage networks for assistance and support (Khan & Asaduzzaman, 1996; Rahman, 2006:463). In this situation, the local leaders thought that either the NGOs were trying to do something for the local people or the NGOs were taking over the leadership role they hold. As a result, their role with and control over local people weakened. In relation to this, local money launderers, most of them community leaders, thought that *Proshika* was a big threat to their traditional business, so they viewed NGOs as the opposition. Due to oppression and deprivation, they could not provide opportunities to develop individual capacity (Sen, 1999; Rifkin, 2003:169).

I stated earlier in this chapter that the business sector in Bangladesh is controlled by the 'syndicate', where a group of a few wealthy individuals are controlling this. The producer groups were unable to access the wider market (Bebbington *et al*., 2007:611). They were stocking all products and controlling the market prices. It was seen that the NGOs failed to work with the market channels, as they had outlets through the market map as social networks. The local producers were bound to sell their products at a low price to those brokers; then the wholesalers buy from them and in turn the consumers buy at high prices. Sometimes the consumers buy faulty products, as the brokers and wholesalers some times adulterate the products for their own profit. This process destroyed social trust among local producers and local consumers, while local producers had rival relations with brokers, wholesalers and vice versa.

The findings showed that the local wholesalers (known as rich and local leaders and financially rich people) persuaded the blacksmiths (financially poor

and uneducated) that the market was not able to pay them a high price for their products and such kinds of undermining and discouragement deterred them. Because of this demoralisation, the poor class remained poor and its transformation was very slow. A popular advertisement of Banglalink[21] in Bangladesh illustrates this trend:

Advertisement:

Son: Hello dad. I told you that you would be able to catch more fish today. You must take me to the 'fair' (exhibition) today.
Father: I could not realise the smiling[22] of dad, I shockingly thought that why dad's smiling was so mucky.
Rural broker (Mahajan): Today fish is being sold awfully cheap. Give me all at the rate of Tk.2.00 per Kilogram.
Father: I could realise little bit of dad's sadness Dad could not escape from the brokers, as well his dad, and his dad…
(Mobile ring from urban wholesaler)
Father: What is the news? What is the price?
Urban wholesaler: I am coming, I am coming.
Village Broker (Mahajan): Hello uncle (mama)[23]. Fish is very cheap; give me all at the rate of Tk. 40.00 a kilogram.
Father: I see, is there time like before, time has been changed?
Commentator: Time really has changed.
Son: Mum, I am coming.
Commentator: New days just start. Where there is change of day, there is Banglalink.

The theme of this advertisement is related to the findings of the research. It shows how a village fisherman and his father were demoralised by a locally powerful broker, and also how the mobile telephone contact was helpful in overcoming this situation. But this kind of achievement was not true in the context of the projects undertaken by goldsmiths and blacksmiths. It was seen that due to inaccessible local markets, they did not get their benefits from their products. In addition, with globalisation, their products were under enormous competition in the urban market. The findings confirmed that due to shortages of funds and the lengthy loan system, the local producers, such as goldsmiths and blacksmiths, could not emerge from under this newly evolved power structure.

I stated in Chapter One that the relationship of policy makers (Government), funding authority (donors) and implementing organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh was not cooperative. As a result, many projects could not minimise political and institutional limits and pressure of the policy makers, which

[21] Banglalink is a mobile telephone company which has been working for the last eight years in Bangladesh.
[22] This expression describes 'false smiling'. The father could not express his bad feeling towards his son so instead he shows that he is happy as people do that to hide the real situation.
[23] In Bangladesh the economically and socially powerful people sometimes call their socially inferior people uncle (*mama*) - which means mum's brother. It is the symbol of good relations with each other.

resonated with their ideological assumptions. The findings of the research can also be compared with Ahmad's study (2003:20), which found that NGOs can create new social capital through induced collective action. However, their efforts were hampered because of the short period of time it had been in operation, and because of weak government support. The government has always participated, to a relatively limited extent, as a provider and regulator for micro-finance in Bangladesh (Hulme & Moore, 2006:2). It is because historically, the relationship between the Bangladeshi government and the NGO sector has ranged 'from benign neglect, to co-option, to smear campaigns and repression', depending on the state's 'perception of the balance of power between itself and the NGO sector' (Stiles, 2002:125; Rahman, 2006:460).

Centralisation in decentralised management

The NGOs' 'control'[24], otherwise known as 'ownership' (Jones & Laverack, 2003:9) over programmes, is one of the key elements of community empowerment. It is comparatively more important to the Bangladeshi NGOs whose funding depends on foreign donations. I stated earlier in this chapter that due to 'donor-dependency', most of the NGOs have lost their management control. Many community leaders and local producers thought that these NGOs were controlled and managed by the donors, who were either ignoring the local context or imposing GK or they were trying to destroy local cultures and skills. Many stakeholders thought of it as a form of 'westernisation[25]'. Many staff members agreed that their management system was the 'personal leadership style'[26] of administration, where the decision came from the top, and some were neglected whilst others were delayed because of bureaucratic problems. Lewis *et al.,* (2008:10) argue that managers play the lead role and all other actors remain silent, whilst the organisations unfold their objectives in a participatory way. That is why the NGOs sometimes did not provide many of their funding and resources as quickly as the field level NGO staff members wanted. Sometimes, the field

[24] Control is generalised to the broader range of organising efforts such as administration, finance and management (Laverack, 2006:5)

[25] Westernisation is a process whereby non-western societies come under the influence of Western culture in matters such as industry, technology, law, politics, economics, lifestyle, diet, language, religion or values. Westernisation has been a pervasive and accelerating influence across the world in the last few centuries. It is usually a two-sided process, in which western influences and interests themselves are joined by a wish of at least parts of the affected society to change towards a more westernised society, in the hope of attaining western life or some aspects of it (*Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa,* 2004).

[26] It is defined as self-confidence backed by conviction and understanding. Another term might be 'personal mastery'—knowing where you stand, where you want to go, and what you need to sacrifice to get there. Whatever you call it, personal leadership stems from one's core beliefs and values and is essential to leading others (Heider, undated:3).

level staff members observed that they did nothing, as the central level staff members could not go beyond the restriction of the central management. One fieldworker of PAB said:

"The blacksmiths have been demanding financial support for the last two years, but I could not give any hope to them. There is nothing I can do for them, but I feel they need that. I came to know from the central authorities that they have no funding support for this project except training."

Some other problems were NGOs' lack of communication and turnover of staff. PAB could not run many projects properly, as they had no offices at the grassroots level. Most NGOs utilise a branch and headquarters structure in which branches had limited autonomy from headquarters (Gauri & Galef, 2005:2045). PAB's local office at Faridpur controlled the project offices of Faridpur, Madaripur, and Barisal districts. Some of those were 120 miles away from their local office. In some areas, they had partnership NGOs such as GUP, which managed the project for the blacksmiths. But PAB was unable to convey many of its ideas to GUP properly. Some senior level staff members of SEED stated that junior staff members could not provide efficient advocacy and counselling services, as their educational background was insufficient. It found that more than 90 per cent of the SEED staff members were from a 'Commerce' background, which was dominated by the Head who was from this background. I argue that a 'multidisciplinary approach' (with different disciplines) is needed together with 'credibility' based on technical expertise (VanSant, 2003:6). The staff turnover was another problem for *Proshika*. The annual turnover rate was high during year three of Phase VI. Lack of promotions, low salaries, expressed dislike of the emphasis on loan collection and uncertainties about *Proshika*'s future were reasons for staff leaving (Yildiz *et al*., 2003: vii). It was difficult to recruit good people in any low-status, low-pay occupation and very difficult to keep them (Ahmad, 2007:362). Because of this turnover, *Proshika* failed to respond to the community adequately.

The limitations of social capital and community empowerment approaches

The NGOs' capacities, derived from the theories of social capital and community empowerment, had significant implications for Bangladeshi communities. There were some other areas where these theories failed to generate a substantial amount of positive results. It is acknowledged that the NGOs were not based on social capital and community empowerment theories,

but their programme outcomes were related to the components and objectives of those theories. In general, the NGO staff members had little theoretical knowledge about social capital and community empowerment approaches used in the research, though they still practised them. Moreover, the measurement of social capital and community empowerment within the role of NGOs was not easy. This is because the definitions used for both concepts are vague, qualitative and open to subjective interpretation. In addition, such approaches have limitations in terms of broad applications in the Bangladeshi community. In some cases, the NGOs did take initiatives, but due to some community problems, the NGOs could not substantiate those in proper ways. Moreover, NGOs' social contributions could not be visualised entirely.

The notion of social capital has been articulated as a concept which is homogeneous and recognises primarily 'positive' social norms, values and practices. The fact is that the communities in the research were rarely discrete entities, and some communities have greater power to define and legitimise meaning, values, norms and practices than others. Bangladesh and other poor countries are immersed in multi-dimensional relationships, whether these are hierarchical or reciprocal. Here, multi-transactional ties were strong, both between patrons and their clients as well as more reciprocal within kin groups (Wood, 2005:16). Access to community membership and intra and inter-community conflict and competition were structured by power relations.

Putnam refers to the crucial 'bridging function' of social capital, but gives little attention to inequalities in the distribution of income or other economic, physical, environmental and social advantages, which structure relations in the field of community life (McClenaghan, 2000:571). The lack of consideration of power as an important shaping feature of social capital might lead to horizontal associations, while neglecting vertical relationships (Bayat, 2005:10).

Clearly, the traditional associational ties and forms of closure to which Putnam and Coleman refer may well contribute to the reproduction of these advantages and, by implication, the reproduction of disadvantage and exclusion (McClenaghan, 2000:571). The findings of the research showed that inequality in terms of loan distribution, distribution of wealth and resources, power relations, social control, and decision making in both communities, made it difficult to get the benefits of social networks. It also encouraged a process of 'political mobilisation' to advance demands based on rights, rather than on rebuilding the

community through a process of coordination aimed at developing and enhancing social cohesion.

This process clearly reinforced the very exclusion that community development activists in disadvantaged communities, such as *Mirpur* (1) Market and *Mostafapur Bazar* were struggling against to those of more powerful groups' (Lister, 1998:231; McClenaghan, 2000:572). Sometimes, the social network or relationship pattern was more or less linked with interest-gaining processes, that sometimes stopped the natural flow of social relationships (Purvez, 2003:viii) as found through *Proshika*'s political networks.

The findings of the research also confirmed that the NGOs' initiatives toward development created more problems than solutions for powerless people (Kusumahadi, 2002:12), such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. The prescription of the components of community empowerment approach provided by Laverack (2006) was found to be ambiguous. Laverack listed a total of nine components as 'domains', which the stakeholders felt were too many and some were duplicated. The notion of their feelings about these elements was not positive, as they found them complex, long, gloomy, loose, and incomplete and to some extent obscure. Moreover, Laverack emphasises the role of small groups in the community, which can improve problem assessment capacity. However, practically, in urban society, the NGO workers said that it was not possible to establish such kinds of groups properly, as they faced busy time constraints. I personally feel that Laverack also avoided some important elements; some could be shortened or left out to avoid repetition. For example, the stakeholders could not find the real difference between 'increase problem assessment capacities' and 'critical awareness about people's needs'. Furthermore, two other elements such as 'strengthening links to other organisations and people', and 'create equitable relationships with outside agents' looked similar and were repetitious of one another. The reality is that it should be distinguished in such a way, that the community people, community leaders and NGO staff members can understand and apply them properly.

Secondly and paradoxically, Laverack's approach appears incomplete. I personally feel that there should be some other important elements added within, for example, fulfilling community 'felt needs' and 'real needs'. The research showed that community participation was not fully secured by increasing people's assessment capacities and critical awareness, as they actually felt that they need to fulfil some felt needs immediately, then to address their real needs. It can be called 'social welfare', which is included in the study Kusumahadi (2002:5-6). I

also think that the elements they used to 'increase access' and 'social control' are two other elements, which should be added to Laverack's empowerment approach.

To increase access is also important to build and promote community capacity, and to achieve greater access to all the resources needed. On the other hand, social control is also important to increase control of the environment and all aspects of life: social affairs, economy, politics, and technology. It found that, to build organisational structures and increase control over management, could not save the NGOs from bureaucracy and corruption, where there evolved a 'personal type of management'. Ultimately, it failed to improve real participation, mobilise local resources and accommodate outside interventions properly. Significantly, the NGOs failed to improve asset endowments and opportunity structures of the community (Bodja, 2006:26).

Empowerment, it found, was influenced more by commitment rather than by understanding (Kusumahadi, 2002:12). My own assertion is that there needs to be increased access of the local producers to resources and capital, and the NGOs should increase social controls, where their supervision and monitoring systems can work smoothly. The final element is that to 'increase control over programme management' is phrased badly. It should be re-stated as 'increase self-management'. The concept 'self-management' is more decentralised, understandable and pursuable. This approach would be considered as more convenient for the NGOs, as a function of their direct links with grassroots organisations to gain a better insight into what kind of programmes are needed and desired by the poor themselves. It would also be helpful to grasp comparative advantages and experiences at the micro level be brought to bear on the formulation of alternative and hopefully more successful development strategies (Drabek, 1987:ix).

NGOs, social capital, and community empowerment: On the three-way relationship for community development

This section considers the three-way relationship for community development: NGOs, social capital and community empowerment. The findings of the research suggest that the contemporary 'community development' has now concentrated on this three-way relationship in countries such as Bangladesh, where the NGO sector is crucial for national development. The findings supported this relationship to some extent. It was stated in the previous chapter that both NGOs had a significant level of capacity for social capital and community

empowerment, but their contributions were not convincing; this is because they could not amalgamate the components of social capital and community empowerment properly to achieve community development. The main limitations were shortages of resources, non-cooperation between the GOs-NGOs, and country's existing socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. It is noted here that the NGOs' activities were not focused on establishing this three-way relationship, but their recent activities and the ultimate objectives of those activities were to achieve community development, where social capital formation and community empowerment were two important foci.

Many researchers show how a sustainable community can be achieved through the interface of these concepts. This section highlights this issue through a combination of field data and contemporary literature. Lyons *et al.,* (2001:1234-35) argue that the integration of social capital and community empowerment as a form of 'organisational approach' creates many avenues for community development. It is likely that attention to social cohesion, social capital, community capacity and community empowerment results in calls for a variety of community initiatives intended to (re)build civic society (Poland, 2000:304).

It finds that social capital and the role of supportive NGOs are receiving attention as the key catalytic elements in encouraging and assisting community-based initiatives. But it is true that empirically there is not sufficient research-based literature. However, in Bangladesh the role of the actors (NGOs and GOs, local societal actors, and external actors in the civil society, both in combination and in isolation) in the process of social capital formation is little known (Mondal, A. H. 2000:495). Bebbington (2004:729) also argues that still little is known about the social and institutional networks out of which NGOs emerged, and through which non-governmental action occurs, or about the ways in which NGO interventions relate to more deeply embedded social and institutional processes. In this regard, Uphoff (1999:215) thinks that social capital has received impressively rapid acceptance within the community of development professionals, but it remains an elusive construct. Many development theorists and practitioners have accepted the pertinence of social capital as an essential component of social organising and the creation of a strong civil society (Abom, 2004:342). Like Putnam (1994:12), the research argues that the social capital approach can help to formulate new strategies for development. Lin (2000:786) defined social capital as the investment in, and use of, embedded resources in

social relations for expected returns. In Bangladesh, both governments and the NGOs make use of social capital as a tool for implementing poverty policies (Mondal, A. H. 2000:495); it is a necessary condition of social integration, economic efficiency, and democratic stability (Newton, 2001:202). Based on the above discussion, I consider social capital to have mainly two broad aspects. First, I think social capital can be used as an 'innovative way of thinking' about how the country's resources could be mobilised and distributed equitably within society. Another aspect is that social capital can be used as an 'umbrella' term that can reconcile many debates around issues, such as community development and public policy including economic, political and cultural problems in Bangladesh.

The literature shows that social capital generates from the government engaging private initiatives, local associations (CBOs or community based organisations), networks or social associations (Khan, 2006:161). Based on evidence, the research argues that it has emerged as a powerful new metaphor within social development thinking. Indeed, in Bangladesh it has been popularised as the 'missing link' in development (Grootaert, 1998; Arce, 2003:853; Svendsen & Svendsen, 2004:11). The research found social capital to be the fabric of society (Bullen, undated), and the NGOs used it as the 'cement' of society's good will for a cohesive society. The findings of the research support the argument that the networks trust and shared values of social capital brought human values, skills, expertise and knowledge of blacksmiths and goldsmiths from their daily communication between and within their neighbours. It appears to be the raw material of communities (Coleman, 1988) as the blacksmiths and goldsmiths used their social networks, norms and values, and collective actions through their everyday interactions and contributed to economic and social development. These interactions were considered as 'bottom-up' phenomena, which were derived from their social connections and networks, such as trust, mutual understanding and norms of action. It found that, though there were some group conflicts among the local leaders, their social connections and networks helped to build up a common sense of 'civic' responsibility that integrated them more than a collection of individuals. As a result, both communities improved 'we' feelings attitude and they understood the positive aspect of group interactions. I believe that, without a degree of common identification with forms of governance, cultural norms and social rules, it is difficult to imagine a functioning society (Grootaert, 1998; McClenaghan, 2000:570).

However, the benefits of social capital were found in the research as follows:

- The norms and values of blacksmiths and goldsmiths were the form of the basis of their social identity, as they earned these distinct characteristics through their daily practices. The community people recognised them in this way.
- The social interactions and networks provided them the instruments for productive output, which started their skills learning process to product marketing. This process brings social mobility, alliance, social adjustment, and adaptation capacities, and improved their leadership quality.
- The social trust and cooperation offered them an indispensable unity in the social context to ensure that collaborative efforts were integrated in a sustainable way, where social cohesion and harmony were mutually beneficial and important for their ultimate output.

In networks-based resources (networks referring to Coleman's 'structure of relations'), social capital was seen as significant in an economic development on industrial and marketing networks of firms (Malecki & Tootle, 1996) for blacksmiths and goldsmiths. External resources, such as loans, training, counselling, monitoring and supervision were essential for such kinds of small enterprises. However, cooperation was most important (Robertson & Langlois, 1995) to link with one another. It was seen that these kinds of enterprises run through cooperation in a number of market channels. Indeed, the constituent elements, such as trust, norms, and networks that they achieved from their communities were important to maintain their day to day life (Malecki, 1998:10).

Buckland (1998:241) asserts that trust, norms and networks are essential for achieving indigenous-efforts at community development. Local social cohesion and mobilisation ensured the vibrancy and success of both local community and broader state development projects. Local cohesion and mobilisation were viewed as the willingness and capacity to co-operate and engage in collective action for mutual benefit. The research found both bonding (between close family members, friends and neighbours) and bridging (between more distant associates and colleagues) (Woolcock, 2002:23) social capital, but it was observed that social capital was not created in a direct way; rather within the market map, the local producers used the metaphor of various kinds of commodities from consumer goods to durable goods. Then social capital took time to build and hence represented an investment for future return, such as forging relationships or membership in associations, but differed from other investments in that the process itself could provide satisfaction.

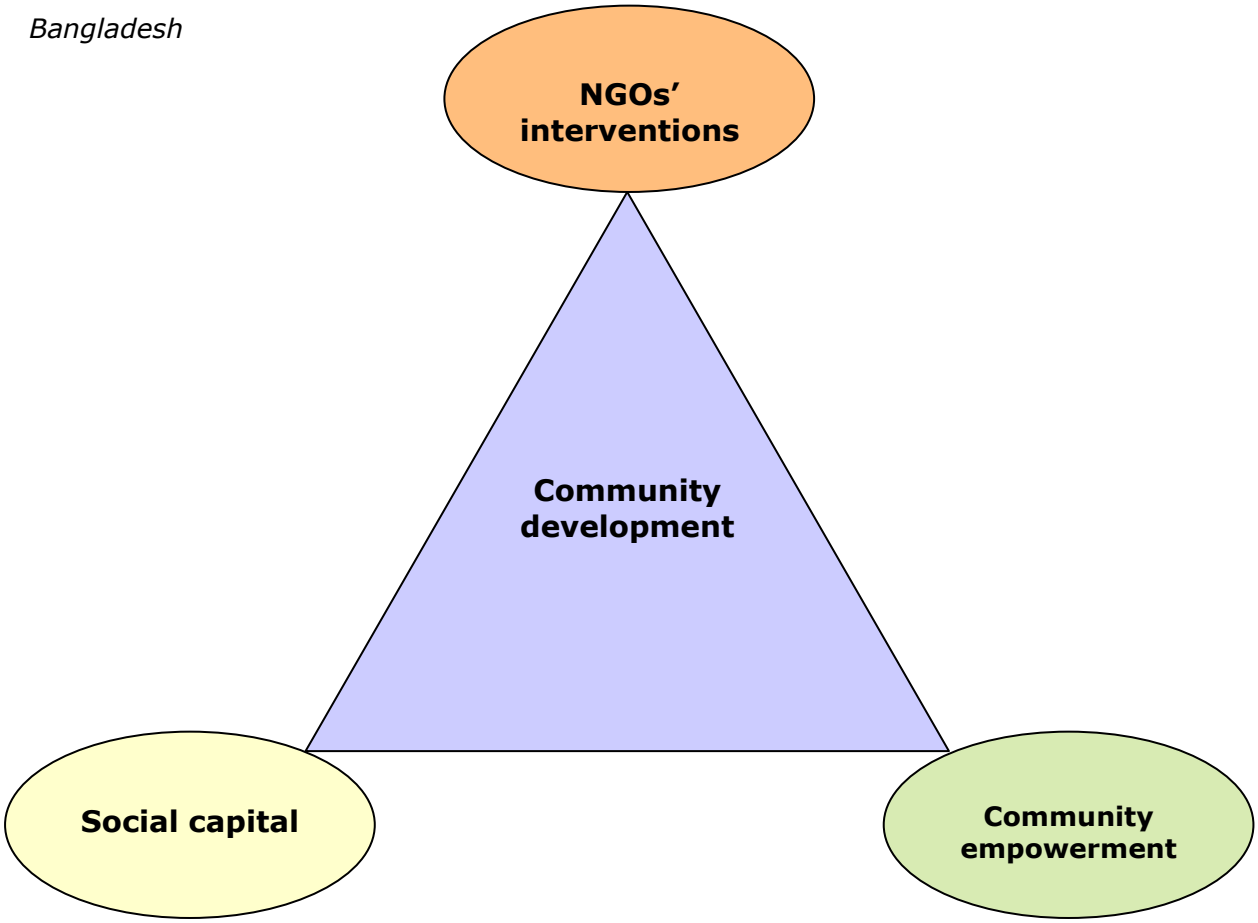
The research found that community empowerment is a key goal for effective development (Patel & Mitlin, 2002:125). It is generally accepted that a local or a national NGO opens its branch in a particular community to address the common needs of that community. The principal objective of the NGOs is not only to create just financial capital or income, but rather to create social capital in terms of collective action, social trust, sharing norms and values, and mutual benefits toward an empowered community. The people in an empowered community are able to manage their own lives as they see fit and deliver services and access to resources equitably. Here empowerment is a process in which its major elements of choice, agency, resources and information, and participation (Hamyaran, 2006:48) are fully secured.

An authentic 'empowered community' secures peoples' democratic decision-making, and a congenial atmosphere for the problem-solving that they face in their livelihoods. Generally, these come from a body capable of interacting collectively with the local authority, agencies from higher levels of government, NGOs, and civil society. The research uses empowerment as a desired process by which individuals, typically 'the poorest of the poor' take direct control of their own lives for their 'self-reliance' and 'grass roots' development' (Abdulla, undated:2). The research also considers empowerment at a personal/individual level as well as at a community level, where it defines psychological empowerment as a 'consequence of participating' in collective action and gaining greater control over the means to one's own and to societal livelihood issues. The research argues that the people in developing countries such as Bangladesh, especially the poor people's ability to benefit from globalisation, are part of the ongoing struggle for their livelihoods. Here, empowerment takes place at distinct organisational levels, ranging from individuals, through households to communities. Social networks and organisations are of importance, because they can contribute to individual or household empowerment. This is closely related to concepts that Lyons *et al.*, (2001:1234-1235) call 'individual' 'social' or 'organisational capital'.

Based on the above discussion, if we place social capital and community empowerment within the role of NGOs in Bangladesh, we would clearly discover this three way relationship (Figure-7). The components of social capital, such as collective action, social trust, sharing norms and values, and mutual benefits were helpful for improving and increasing community empowerment, such as participation, leadership, problem assessment capacities, awareness of people's

needs, critical awareness, empowering organisational structure, resource mobilisation, links with other organisations and people, relationships with outside agents, and control over management. Here, NGOs' capacities, such as providing resources such as loans, training, technological support, counselling and advocacy were supportive interventions to bring together those efforts. As a result, community development was achieved.

Figure-7: *A model of the three-way relationship of community development in Bangladesh*



NGOs' interventions: Loan support, training, technological support, social scheme, counselling & advocacy
Social capital: Collective action, social trust, sharing norms-values, & sharing mutual benefits
Community empowerment: Participation, leadership, problem assessment capacities, critical awareness, awareness of needs, organisational structure, resource mobilisation, linking other organisations and people & relationships with outside agents
Community development: Increase income, create social network, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, community awareness, participation in economic & social activities, resource mobilisation, group feelings, increase savings, capital investment, improve human capacities, increase social safety net, increase social responsibility, improve institutionalised attitude, improve leadership among poor, increase management skills, improve local knowledge, introduce new knowledge, improve social learning, partnership, improve ownerships & availability of community assets

Source: Prepared by author

It is agreed that community development is a broad term. This kind of development depends on how capitals, including social, are available in the

society and the community empowerment is achieved to utilise these capitals. For example, the research found that community participation is a significant route through which social capital is generated (Gillies, 1998; Graney, 2001:172). On the other hand, the members of the community can utilise social networks, when their problem assessment capacities reach a certain level. In addition, people would not link with other people and other organisations and outside agents unless their social trust would be established. As a result, sharing mutual benefits and community resource mobilisation would be hampered. In this position, the NGOs' empowering organisational structure was seen as an important aspect for achieving an overall and sustainable community development process. Here the networks were helpful to promote mutual learning; shared commitments and a common vision, so that people could work and lived together in relatively stable communities.

The purpose of community development was to maintain and renew 'community' as a foundation for diverse initiatives and identities that were independent of both the public and private sectors (Gilchrist, 2004:11). The NGOs' work was to persuade policy makers and practitioners, who were responsible for community involvement. The networking was a necessary and effective way for building bridges and linking social capital. The networks facilitated the processes by establishing and fostering the important, but more difficult, boundary-spanning ties that supports for collective actions and empowerment (Gilchrist, 2004:11). The most important goal of community development in the research is to facilitate people as subjects rather than as objects, acting on their situation instead of simply reacting to it. In this connection, the research found that community empowerment is rebalancing the structure of power within a community by addressing the control of resources, control of decisions, control of information, and physical domination, so that communities are better able to influence their own lives (INTRAC, 2005).

The above discussion illustrates that community development is an immense term. The research argues that the process of community development should emphasise this three-way relationship to integrate and accumulate all resources properly. The research reflects that sustainable development depends on how much availability of social capital exists in the community, and how community people are empowered to utilise these capitals to fulfil their needs. As I have stated several times in the thesis, due to the shortage of government initiatives, the NGO sector has introduced a new element to social capital and

community empowerment in Bangladesh. The next chapter (Chapter Six) will consider some indicators for community development in favour of this new knowledge paradigm.

Conclusion

The findings have identified some critical aspects of NGOs' interventions, where social capital and community empowerment approaches would be more feasible ways for developing countries such as Bangladesh. It found that both NGOs were using IK and GK through their interventions, though the use of GK is increasing over time. The analysis shows that the NGOs were facing some contradictions to use these knowledge approaches. In many cases, the NGOs were negotiating to integrate these two knowledge approaches to overcome those contradictions. However, the overall assessment of NGOs' capacities was convincing in terms of community awareness, sharing values and norms, introducing new technologies, increasing human rights and problem assessment capacities, responding to financial crisis, encouraging participation, mobilising resources, and providing income generation activities.

On the other hand, NGOs' contribution towards collective actions, sharing mutual benefits, developing local leadership, empowering organisational structure, and increasing control over management was weak. The NGOs' partially failed to create a congenial atmosphere, where the local producers could work properly in the market. They could not build-up effective networks with negotiation of GOs, community leaders, community people, and with the external donors. In addition, the research found that NGOs' political networks had developed a negative trend toward human services. More or less both NGOs had money laundering tendencies, leadership and management crises, and donor dependency. It is important that both NGOs recognise the spontaneous participation problem from the community people and community leaders. In this connection, NGOs' social trust with community people and GOs became hard-nosed. Moreover, local peoples' low socio-economic, cultural and political conditions were other barriers to authentic community empowerment of the NGOs.

Chapter Six

NGOs and community development in Bangladesh

Introduction

This chapter considers the indicators of the new knowledge paradigm in the context of competing indigenous and global knowledge approaches. The chapter shows how community development in Bangladesh could be attained by combining the elements of social capital and community empowerment approaches.

Search for a new knowledge paradigm: NGOs' contested role for capacity development

It was seen in the literature that the development initiatives by NGOs did not help the less developed countries such as Bangladesh as much as had been hoped. Thousands of projects were conducted and much technical advice was unsuccessfully accumulated. Too many methods of planning, preparing and implementing developmental actions, strongly backed by 'scientific' certainty, have shown their perceptual bias, their historical inadequacy, and their imaginative sterility in such environments (Malki, 2006:50). As a result, NGOs' real capacity development was not achieved accordingly.

Miedzinski (undated:1) argues that capacity development should be seen as a capacity to learn and innovate based on local partnerships and the ability to build on, as well as re-invent, local knowledge (knowledge-based capacity development). In this sense, innovative public policy measures can improve capacity development. It is suggested that the experience of developed countries in implementation innovation and knowledge-oriented policy measures could be used in developing countries, but it depends primarily on how that policy fits with the local context of the particular country. Many authors think that the European experience of the implementation of experimental knowledge and innovation-oriented programmes i.e. Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) could provide a framework and some good practices that may be adapted by developing regions. The thesis considers this prescription, but argues that it should be closely linked with the local context, local cultures, local human choice, local human needs and demands, availability of resources, local capacities, and above all, under the control and management of local authority.

The thesis considers that 'community development' should be characterised by its flexible, dynamic dimension, tailored to local circumstances, and used as a catalyst for development. It must be demanding - driven, socially inclusive and benefit from an enabling policy and institutional environment (Hamyaran, 2006:52-53). The local development strategies can apprehend their full potential only through the motivation, active involvement and organisation at the grass-roots level of local people (Esman & Uphoff, 1984:23; Hamyaran, 2006:55-56). It was seen in the previous chapter that both NGOs' global knowledge based policies were generating a variety of contested sets of social relationships. The thesis proposes different forms of knowledge that incorporate all those relationships. This knowledge can establish new relations between people, objects, and global processes, as functions of the local reconfiguration of modernities (Arce & Long, 2000; Arce, 2003:852). Here, NGOs' crucial role is to integrate and activate this initiative.

Indigenous knowledge as social capital

One of the key questions of the research was to identify indigenous knowledge (IK) as social capital. The findings confirm that the nature, forms, and functions of IK in Bangladesh with NGOs' interventions have conferred distinct characteristics. Gorjestani (2005:6) argues that IK is the social capital of the poor. These skills are remaking traditions, community production, and self and national identity (Islam, 2004:279). The research found that the blacksmiths and goldsmiths considered IK as their pillar of social values, community production, social network, recycling of resources, social interaction, business goodwill, civic identity, social association and integration, knowledge creation and dissemination. As a 'public good', IK was exchangeable and transferable from one social setting to another (Putnam, 1994:10). It was dynamic and it had good market value, which established the members of those communities, through social trust and ties in their individual and group confidence. The blacksmiths and goldsmiths found IK a 'social product', which was a 'marketable good' (Antweiler, 1996:1, 2 & 14). The Head of MLP (PAB) stated:

"PAB's every initiative is based on social capital. When we get any concept among a production group it is not only information, knowledge, or work; we build up a system which brings visibility of production. For example, if one local producer wants to know how to make soup, it is possible to impart this knowledge easily via our technical group who transact this technical knowledge to him/her. Then PAB takes the initiative to offer this knowledge in the market through income generation activities."

The diversity and dynamics of IK were understood as part of the respective cultural system. It had both a social and a practical dimension, which prepared the blacksmiths and goldsmiths for their everyday life. IK lived in their social, political, spiritual, secular and communal daily lives (Whap, 2001:23). It consisted not only of information or knowledge as a resource, but also of factual knowledge, capabilities and skills (Antweiler, 1996:15). The blacksmiths and goldsmiths acquired and applied these skills with respect to their local objectives, situations and problems. This knowledge is generated by communities in order to cope with their natural and social environment in a sustainable manner (Murdoch & Clark 1994). The research found that IK helped local empowerment and development through increasing 'self-sufficiency' and 'strengthening self-determination' (Langill, 1999) within their livelihood strategies. One goldsmith said:

"I am a worker; I do not need capital, loans or anybody's help. I know how to make ornaments. I don't care about anybody. I am sure, as long as people use ornaments, that I will have a job in the market."

Again, one blacksmith said:

"I know how to make billhooks, spades, axes, and knives. If my health is good and if I live, I don't feel that I will face trouble in collecting my food."

So, this IK-based capital brought confidence, freedom, and independence to the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. They created a distinct type of ability, which exerted a pull on other people to reinvest their labour. Their social capital formation was seen here as a poverty reducing strategy (Oyen, 2002:11-14). Social development, with the use of IK holds the promise of capacity building, awareness and participation (Masreque & Khan, 2000:5). IK was seen as social interaction among individuals, families, and neighbours of the local producers. It was a part of their social unit, which was regarded as a potential social resource as they traded and earned money for their livelihoods. This kind of interaction developed good will, fellowship, and sympathy. For example, IK was seen as the form of a communication spirit, which made local producers and their fellow citizens' work with each other, rather than against each other (Uslaner, 2004:501). It also made a good social bondage among them and with other occupants and people in the community. One blacksmith said:

"That's why we have kept our association's name 'Bhai Bhai (brother)[27] Karmar Shamity'. We think that our interests and problems are the same. We believe that we can solve many of our problems through discussing them with each other."

They found their skills were transmitted from generation to generation. These were proven strategies that related to sustainability, holism, and respect for natural processes (Corsiglia & Snively, 2000:83). Their knowledge was considered as a kind of 'soft social infrastructure', generating a sense of citizenship, which increased 'reciprocity, trust and interactive decision-making', and fostered security in the interactions between economic actors contributing to economic innovation (Putnam, 1994:10-11) and creativity (Amin, 1997:133–134; McClenaghan, 2000:569). Here trust was the most important product. Generalised trust was a moral value that connects people to others, who might be different (Uslaner, 2004:501). IK may be seen as a theory of rational action, in which the blacksmiths and goldsmiths had control over certain resources (i.e. human, and local raw materials) and interests (i.e. working attitude, motivation, and skills) and events (i.e. time), then this social capital constituted a particular kind of resource available to them (Fuller & Emily, 2002:3).

The thesis accepts as true the argument that development divorced from its human and cultural context is nothing more than a growth without soul (Costa-Neto, 2000:89). Indigenous and local peoples' traditional knowledge is an essential resource for the development process (Costa-Neto, 2000:89; Warren *et al.,* 1995). In Chapter Two, I said that there are a number of good reasons for systematic exploration of the potential role of IK in development. IK's main strength lies in the fact that it is deeply anchored in the local socio-economic fabric and geographical location, and therefore, enjoyed wide social acceptability. One *Proshika* staff member stated:

"IK is dynamic. For example, if we look at the strategy that we follow for the Coastal belt (the Southern part of Bangladesh), which is different to that from the drought prone Northern part. The strategy is based on local context and geographical location. That is its strength. This strength will be lost if it generalised."

Like social capital, indigenous practices had generally a problem-solving (down to earth) focus. These were considered as low cost, time efficient, flexible and adaptive to the local producers. In the face of the gradual disillusionment with the mainstream development and planning model (i.e. modernisation,

[27] Here 'brother' means people who have equal and close relations with each other.

transfer of-technology, blue-print planning), this IK became a more humane, democratic and popular participatory model of development.

The research found that IK skills, formed within a socio-structure, provided the 'social glue' that united local people through learning, information exchange, and norms and sanctions that governed behaviour. IK worked as social capital, because the blacksmiths and goldsmiths perceived it influenced their capacity to attract and retain resources, customers, and partners. Here social capital was seen as a strategic resource, not uniformly available, mobile, or easily traded or imitated. This social capital was created with the public and private sector interactions that fostered economic and social activity (Putnam, 1993). Building on this thinking, Flora & Jan (1993) and Flora *et al.,* (1997) have proposed elements of an 'entrepreneurial social infrastructure', which represents the presence of social capital in a region.

The research found that the IK of the blacksmiths and goldsmiths reinforced shared values and trust-based relationships that went beyond purely market transactions. I found these skills a 'social art' or 'social talent', which gave them a distinct identity in the community. I was very impressed to see their dealings with customers. They were mature in social education, their convincing attitude with the customers and their courtesies were important resources. The research found a number of merits of IK as social capital; it has significant market value, invested for community well-being like other capital. The research argues that, with human capital, IK gave distinct characteristics that the concept 'social capital' conceives. The goldsmiths and blacksmiths learned these skills through a number of scientific processes, such as observation, experiment, social connections, and practices, which shaped their capacities. Since the relationship was a positive, reciprocal one, there was the potential for a 'virtuous' circle: an increase in the level of civic participation, as it was related with income and livelihoods and had lead to an increase in positive beliefs about others, lead to greater participation, and so on (Brehm & Rahn, 2004; Malecki, 1998:11). The significant element of this IK was trust, which linked with economic relations. The research found three types of trust. The first, contractual trust was seen as mutual expectation with customers. The second type, competence trust, concerned technical and managerial competence and was seen to help them to survive in global competition. And the third type, goodwill trust, referred to mutual expectations of open commitment to each other, and was seen in a

willingness to do more than is formally expected, such as the sharing of information among colleagues (Sako, 1992:37-47).

The worth of this IK was its transferability, which was pliable, shifting in response to Western ideas and practices, but also to an ever-changing mixture of other ways of knowing and doing through local practices. Sillitoe (2001:3) argues that this knowledge in the development context may relate to any knowledge held collectively by a population, informing interpretation of the world. This mode of IK has been reshaped with economic and social change, especially as the result of modernisation. Thus, we must not underestimate the significance of the fabrication of this IK, which influenced the need for different knowledge. This IK cannot ever be understood in isolation from the critical analysis of economic, social, cultural and political conditions as we saw among the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. IK is not simply about language and expression, but leveraged for material gain (Woolcock, 2001; Agrawal, 1995), through which the indigenous people such, as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, were surviving.

It is argued that IK should be considered as social capital. It is true that the present shape and merits of IK among the indigenous occupants such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths is not inclusive. The findings presented earlier suggested that the IK in Bangladesh has some limitations in terms of its social potentiality. But it is also argued here that, considering its distinct features, IK has the characteristics of social capital.

New vision of science

The research contributes to the debate between indigenous knowledge (IK) and global knowledge (GK). It was stated in Chapter Five that both NGOs emphasised GK, as it was seen as more productive. It was also seen that the NGOs got more encouragement and funding opportunities for GK projects. As a result, the consideration of IK is getting less priority in the global development paradigm. Due to global impacts, science has now ignored the virtues of local wisdom, heritage and people's creativity (Rahman & Kabir, 2004:453). One of the problematic areas is the 'attitude toward IK'. However, the 'new vision of science' is acquiring more attention among development thinkers. But science today is required to be more accountable, more communicative and more dialogical (Hoppers, 2002:4; UNESCO, 1999). Part of this 'new vision for science' is the requirement that 'science should comprehend the fact that science is a product of culture, or cultures'. The UNESCO *Declaration on Science and the Science Agenda Framework* emphasised a mandatory role of science for change in attitude,

methods and approaches. The sciences must be put to work for sustainable development, and to the solving of problems in such development, especially in the social and human dimension (UNESCO, 1999). Sciences must transform and become inclusive of other forms of knowledge in terms of its culture of administration and operation. Culture can be loosely summarised as the complex values, customs, beliefs and practices, which constitute the way of life of a specific group (Eagleton, 2000:34; Plessis & Raza, 2004:4).

The research found that knowledge sharing among blacksmiths and goldsmiths was a considerable problem because of their social disadvantages, such as lack of social awareness, social ignorance, social trust, and commitment. As a result, in principle, they could not benefit from technological change – generating easier access to information, higher productivity, lower input cost, less wastage and better environmental management. However, the pace and volatility of change was a problem, particularly when the small enterprises were left behind by larger competitors or forced to take on greater risks in order to compete (Albu & Scoot, 2001:6). This was proved when people from both communities were asked if they wanted to see their present individual small enterprises turn to a bigger joint venture social enterprise. Most were not in favour as they felt insecure. They did not share occupational norms, values, and mutual benefits, as they had lack of trust in each other. The research found that the poor peoples' 'livelihoods' and 'adaptability' were overlooked by the technological changes and expansion due to globalisation (Albu & Scoot, 2001:3). It found that social development fails to explore, and debate new possibilities of whether science or social movements offer new opportunities for social development. Science is needed to create room for human self-expression, where creativity rather than reproduction becomes a central notion within social development (Arce, 2003:855).

Within this vision, Bangladesh needs to be open for achieving sustainability through an appropriate lifestyle, including appropriate consumption, sustainable technology and self-reliance. Such development may be named 'eco-development', as it cares for the ecological as well as the social well-being of people. The 'eco-development' is a tool for achieving sustainability, where the concern concentrates on self-reliance (Riddell, 1981). It is also acknowledged that no nation, however large, can stand alone. Thus eco-development indicates a 'best fit' attempt to optimise the balance between population numbers, locally

available resources and the culturally desired lifestyle of Bangladesh (Hossain & Marinova, undated: 14).

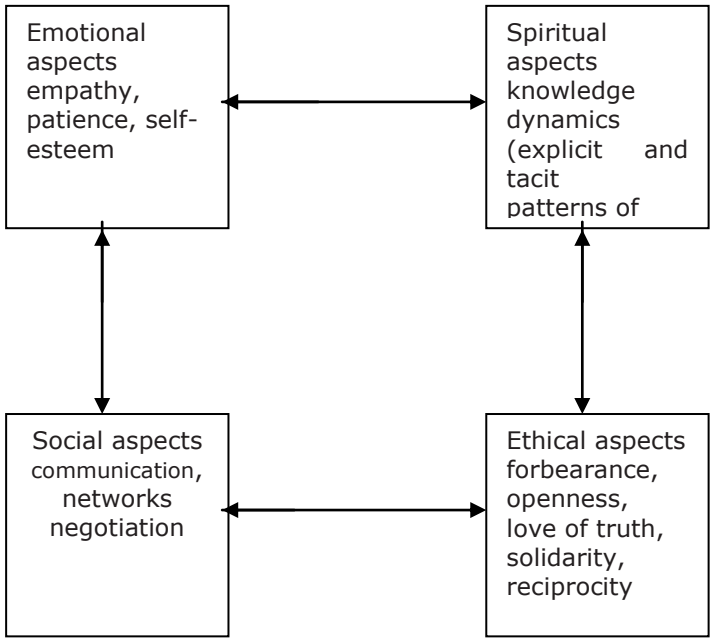
Community development: An appropriate forum for social learning

Learning is considered to be an essential component of organisational effectiveness in all sectors - private, public and NGOs (Edwards, 2002:331). The term 'social learning' is getting more attention in community development, where NGOs' epistemological capacities have been assigned to adapt between the human system and the ecosystem (Malki, 2006:56-57). This is a framework of thinking about knowledge processes that underlies societal adaptation and innovation (Woodhill & Röling, 1998). NGOs' adaptive capacities are important to work with such indigenous occupations as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. Knowledge is a significant element in formative adaptive learning. It includes information, values, beliefs and attitudes. The research argues that this kind of social learning can help the NGOs' in two ways. First, this learning can be used as social capital, as it is exchangeable and transferable and the particular NGO can reuse and reinvest this experience for their next project and/or they can use it for the other project and/or other NGOs can use such experience from the community. Secondly, this can provide NGOs with competencies and capacities to readjust with the changing development strategies due to globalisation.

The local people, who have the ability to learn and adapt to circumstances, can earn this knowledge either individually and/or collectively. This means that meaningful interaction and communication between individuals would be considered a central component for such kind of social learning (Woodhill & Röling, 1998). For example, as we saw in Chapters Two and Five, social capital was defined in a variety of ways, all of which were linked to collective norms, values and relationships reflecting the involvement of individuals in a common life, based on family and community. In this regard, social capital appears to have direct links with community development education. Edwards (2002:338-344) argues that learning should be participatory learning in the field, project-based learning, policy and advocacy-related learning, and visionary thinking. He emphasises that such learning would be more effective if one were connected with another as required. Community development was also defined as a social learning process (Chapter Two), which served to empower individuals and to involve them as citizens in collective activities aimed at socio-economic development (McClenaghan, 2000:565).

I think that the language, concepts, and criteria/process/method of knowledge are more important to improve active participation. This approach should be based on local culture and local conditions, which would provide a valid understanding of the actual meaning and content of community development. By developing participation and engagement of all social actors, the bottom up approach can be transformed as social learning. This approach helps to facilitate a greater common sense, and wisdom prevails as people had the opportunity to communicate in more open ways. It must be said that social learning requires openness from community members to be more critically reflective about what they do and why they do it (Woodhill & Röling, 1998).

Figure-8: *The dimensions of the social learning process*



Source: Author

The research found that both NGOs were playing a 'typical role', rather than searching for a new knowledge paradigm based on local contexts. They were using some tools, such as assessment tools, but their organisational empowerment in terms of 'knowledge efficiency' based on local context was ignored. One of their considerable limitations was the 'attitude' problem. As part of community empowerment, organisational assessment itself can be a powerful learning experience, if it is done by an organisation for itself or done in a highly interactive faction with a facilitating donor, consultant or partner organisation (VanSant, 2003:8). An NGO can learn from this experience, if it carefully formulates and adjusts it to its organisational goals and objectives. Like VanSant

(2003:8), the research proposes that the fundamental organisational functions, such as planning, organising, performance management, and human resource management should all be seen as key learning opportunities. The thesis argues that social learning should be understood as a 'wider social process' that cannot be restricted to an élite of experts, scientists or politicians. From this perspective, the thesis designs this social learning approach, which considers some basic elements of emotional, social, spiritual, and ethical aspects (Figure-8). This process can recognise the need to establish a dialogue between different actors, and the forms of knowledge, such as spiritual, social, and ethical, as they hold as part of this learning process.

Develop effective partnership channels: Social problem-solving mechanisms

Effective partnership channels are now considered as important social problem-solving mechanisms. The research challenges the conventional partnership approaches, which are now being followed by the NGOs. Here, partnership means to make a professional relationship, with accountability within and outside of the organisations. The research found that NGOs could not perform their tasks accordingly because of the pressures and non-cooperation from different groups. In addition, due to globalisation, new forms of solidarity are emerging between citizens and authorities at different levels. The research proposes absolutely different kinds of relationships expressed through partnerships, alliances and other forms of co-operation. Even recent donor discourse points to the potential of faith-based organisations (FBOs)[28] as 'agents of transformation', mobilising the moral energy of faith communities in support of the Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs) (Clarke, 2007:77). This partnership would provide a new framework for NGOs' interventions, which require them to make major changes. The local pressures also reinforce each other to undermine the ability of NGOs to pursue social mobilisation. Thus, NGOs find themselves without the institutional support and legitimacy among the élite that they need to survive. It is true that this type of institutional and élite support is difficult to restore without government reforms and changes in Bangladeshi politics (Rahman, 2006:460).

The research shows that partnership is the best way to solve many problems. The thesis reviews different aspects and different parties of

[28] Non-profit organisations sponsored/funded and founded by a religious congregation or religiously-motivated incorporators and board members that clearly state in its name, incorporation, or mission statement that they are religiously motivated institutions and working for community well-being.

partnership, and suggests that there are mainly five areas, where NGOs' partnership is essential. These are between IK and GK; NGOs and donors; NGOs and GOs; NGOs and NGOs; and NGOs and political leaders - civil society - community and local power structure and vice versa. This partnership may be called 'social partnership' or 'public-private partnership' or 'social problem solving mechanisms' (Waddock, 1989; Lyons *et al.*, 2001:1235). This new paradigm can be an effective approach to secure and accommodate the elements of social capital and community empowerment to achieve the generous goal of community development. It is a collaborative action in which organisations from multiple sectors interact to achieve common ends (Waddock, 1991:480; Lyons *et al*., 2001:1236).

Social partnership is the product of a range of environmental factors, which determine the content or focus of the partnership, through three concurrent and interactive stages: issue crystallisation, coalition-building and purpose formulation, which may include a re-evaluation and possible broadening of the agenda (Waddock, 1989:80). It is true that this kind of partnership is not free from conflict over time, where many conditions should be changed. Lyons *et al*., (2001:1236-37) examine ten years of change and find that there exists conflict between different partners. This conflict is obvious between NGO (recipient) and donor (patron). For effective community empowerment, this relation should be interactive and both donor and recipient cultures must undergo change over time. The research considers new networks and norms of trust and reciprocity evolving in the face of national and global change, which are different from traditional groupings (Buckland, 1998).

The thesis argues that the common dynamics of the local knowledge systems do not match the external interventions. It was said in Chapter-Two that indigenous mistrust of science, on the one hand, and scientific scepticism about IK, on the other, have in common a tendency to evaluate each other according to limited criteria. Yet, despite the methodological gulf between the two, there is room for each system to find accommodation with the other, without twisting the basic values and principles upon which each rests (Durie, 2005). Science is one body of knowledge and IK is another. The NGO staff members often found very apathetic reactions and a certain degree of apathy vis-à-vis the proclamations of new policies, political campaigns, economic concepts and market mechanisms. IK, being the basis for adaptation within development contexts, needs to be further developed through social negotiation processes initiated by NGOs. This can

facilitate local communities to control their own affairs in the light of decentralisation of political power in view of sustainable development. It is obvious that external stakeholders, such as civil servants, development practitioners, and researchers need to fully share all relevant information with the local communities. Communities need to learn in a self-determined process, how to integrate information and knowledge into the IK system under current living conditions. The stakeholders need to gain confidence in their own knowledge system, which would enable them to cooperate with external institutions on an equal basis. The plea to civil servants, development practitioners and researchers to carefully integrate external and local knowledge, instead of just adding them together without considering the context, would fade away unheard of unless new ways of cooperating are practised on a day-to-day basis (Antweiler, 1996:38-39).

In recent times, the importance of dialogue between different knowledge traditions has become increasingly acknowledged, and attempts are being made to build bridges between IK traditions and Western science (Reijntjes, 2004:41). The research consults and verifies a number of approaches, such as 'inter-ontological dialogue' (Rist & Dahdouh-Guebas, 2006:469), ethnoecology (Toledo, 2001:276), the 'transdisciplinarity approach' (Hadorn, 2002; Nicolescu, 1996; Scholz *et al.,* 2000), and the 'interface approach' (Durie, 2005:301). The inter-ontological dialogue is based on an ethno-ecological study of the encounter of sciences and IK. It secures sustainable development as a product of social negotiation and collective learning between the stakeholders involved. Ethnoecology searches intra-cultural variation in resource and management. This approach acknowledges that not all indicators apply uniformity to all people under any and all circumstances, least of all to 'outsiders' vis-à-vis 'insiders'. It allows the demonstration of how new communication, transport or other technologies, as well as unequal distribution of resources, power and opportunities affect the patterns of action, orientation and interpretation of local actors. It gives evidence about 'local counter-notions of globalisation'.

The 'transdisciplinarity approach' aims for a shift from a disciplinary-based scientific to a more societal mode of knowledge production by integrating everything that is between, across and beyond disciplines. It covers approaches which are essentially based on a societal issue setting and the building of bridges between natural, social sciences and humanities as a basis for integrating scientific as well as traditional forms of knowledge and actors. This approach also recognises the plurality of forms of knowledge, world views and the ethical values

connected to them within different social and cultural groups. This new knowledge can be formed through examining the 'corresponding choices' from the scientific and local knowledge approaches. The interface approach recognises the distinctiveness of different knowledge systems, but sees opportunities for employing aspects of both, so that dual benefits can be realised and indigenous world views can be matched with contemporary realities. In order to create new knowledge that can then be used to advance understanding in both 'worlds'.

The thesis argues that there is a need to examine, which particular approach or new approach would be appropriate for Bangladesh. The interaction between scientists and local people helps to identify and resolve implications of social differences and constraints of the contemporary participatory plan in Bangladesh (Sillitoe, 2000b:5-13). Of course, there are many challenges. One of the challenges is knowledge partnership between IK and GK. In order to overcome this challenge, the scientific community, together with those who hold power, whether political or economic, must prosecute an agenda for true universality of science, taking the world's varied social and other knowledge systems into account. These systems can, and do, contribute to, and are influenced by scientific knowledge (Addy, undated)

There are very few examples in Bangladesh where the above approaches of knowledge partnership are used. For example, Chakma (2003:2) reviews an annotated bibliography on biodiversity and national resources management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh, and presents some interesting findings about these knowledge approaches. First, the comparison between the different attitudes reveals that the relations between science and local knowledge depend on specific ethical positions. This relationship would not be 'value-free'. Secondly, an intercultural perspective implies the establishment of the broadest possible field of interaction between different types of knowledge. Even within the current development paradigm, there is growing room for cultural manoeuvre. The third issue relates to the fact that real intercultural communication is more likely to happen when the parties involved do have shared questions on fundamental aspects related to the form of knowledge they represent.

The research clearly shows that the NGOs suffered from obstructions, such as non-cooperation from the government when trying to improve social networks with different actors. The government deprecated these networks where they did not find any political gain. However, inadequate support from the government bodies was frequently cited by stakeholders as a major barrier to progress (Nel *et*

al., 2001:9). In many developing countries like Bangladesh, the GOs-NGOs relationship has been stated as 'public-bad', 'private-good' (Edwards & Hulme, 1992:20). The research found that one of the major causes was the lack of effective partnership. It is seen that in some sectors, such as the textile industry in Bangladesh, the IK and GK approaches are working successfully together (Khan, 2006:158). Based on this discussion, the thesis proposes three fundamental freedoms that need to be guaranteed for the NGOs and community people by the State for effective NGOs performance: freedom of association (the right to organise), freedom of congregation (the right to meet and organise community events), and freedom of speech (the right to share ideas freely). The approach of governments in dealing with the increasing influence of NGOs tends to have a domestic focus. The government needs to determine the space they allow for civil society.

The research found that many possible social entities boiled down to competition over beneficiaries, lack of trust between NGO and government services, and feelings that each had distinct roles (Abom, 2004:350). One SEED staff member commented:

"The GOs are doing nothing for us; rather they are so silent that they are not observing these (incident of chatabaji). They always think that we are always in oppositions to them."

One staff member of PAB stated:

"We know the blacksmiths need loan support to extend their business. We try to encourage the government and commercial banks to allow loan supports to them but they don't care about us. Look, how will we start a joint venture work for achieving community development tasks? We are so unhappy with the government."

In development practice, a major challenge is to find innovative ways for NGOs, government and the commercial sector to work in a synergistic manner to develop institutions that meet human needs into the future. It was seen that NGOs filled gaps in the market and government service provision in the past, which were responsive to community needs. NGOs should have an important role to play in facilitating their development and need to balance these larger issues against their own concerns for organisational sustainability (Davis, 2006:15). In West Bengal, for example, popular political mobilisation successfully led to pro-poor economic reforms in this Indian state. Despite the one-party rule of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in West Bengal, the rural poor were able to use local government as an alternative institutional channel for promoting their

interests (Sengupta & Gazdar, 1998; Rahman, 2006:463). This experience can be considered for Bangladesh.

Banda (2008:272-73) found in his research that the traditional chiefs and local leaders play an important role in development activities, such as traditional healers and traditional birth attendants (TBA) in Chewa AIKS (African indigenous knowledge system) in Zambia. But the research reveals that the NGOs in Bangladesh either ignore the local leaders' capacity or the local leaders consider the NGOs as opponents. In this aspect, the research finds a number of confusions and conflicts, such as non-cooperation, anti-attitude, and leadership problems among NGOs, local leaders and community people. For this reason, NGOs' relations with others become contradictory. Some community leaders of *Mostafapur Bazar* said that many NGOs were working to bring women outside homes under the name of so called 'women empowerment'. They stated that the slogan of many NGOs' women workers' is:

"We don't care about rain-tornadoes; we don't listen to our husbands".

Another community leader commented:

"NGOs' work is just eye-wash. Practically they are doing business".

One goldsmith said:

"Of course Proshika has some financial purposes here. I can't find anybody who is doing something without such purpose."

These attitudes are completely negative towards NGOs' activities. The findings also confirm that NGOs have had very limited relations with grassroots and local institutions. As a result, the attitude of the local leaders and civil society to the NGOs was not positive. One cultural activist of PAB stated:

"They (NGOs) are making concrete houses but the bases of those houses are slopping down – just like a bottomless basket."

Abom (2004:349 & 351) found the same result in Guatemala. It was found that a wide combination of social, cultural, economic, and political factors was responsible for low levels of broad-based social capital and resultant low levels of collective action and social organisation. NGOs' welfare service intervention strategies were not community based. In addition, the 'bigger is better' model is increasing bureaucracy that presents dangers for organisations' better known for their effective partnerships with poor people and communities (Edwards & Hulme 1996; Buckland, 2004:134). The research found the gap between the image/idea of international NGOs and the reality is often filled in with a lot of half truths and myths by the local representatives, most of whom had learnt the language of the

'development game'. This kind of relationship was not advantageous to true partnership. It only encourages the locals to be good beggars for development assistance. True partnership is not possible unless we take our history very seriously and face up to it (Nyoni, 1987:55). The thesis accepts as true that outsiders alone cannot remove those roots of community problems, which have become so deeply embedded in the structures of society. One community leader of PAB commented:

"We know our problems; we know what we have, and we know what we have to do, but we do not know how the NGOs are doing so."

The community people need to dig out these roots themselves.

The thesis argues that effective sharing exchanges through participation can resolve many conflicts of the local leaders, if this is done successfully. If the whole community people are involved in making choices about the speed and extent of change, they are able to secure and maintain that (Patel & Mitlan, 2002:133-134). It was seen that IK was rarely acknowledged by external groups or used as the foundation from which new learning occurs. Development options are transformed by enabling communities to share and explore such knowledge with each other, first through bilateral exchange and then through linking groups into Federations (Patel & Mitlan, 2002:125). The developers need to communicate with developees. Kusumahadi (2002:4) found in his study in Indonesia that partnership between community people, community leaders and community institutions could confirm the accountability of the participation. This kind of partnership secures what kinds of services are needed, and the ways in which the people can participate in the programmes. This implies that the empowerment of the powerless could be achieved within the existing social order without any significant negative effects upon the power of the powerful (Mayo & Craig, 1995). In this regard, the NGOs' role was convincing. For example, as part of the contribution of *Proshika*, T Beck (Columbia University) and R Islam Chowdhury (BIDS) (in Fatmi & Islam, 2001:253) found that *Proshika* is successful in changing the power-relation between rich and poor, in particular on dependence on money-lenders and on participation in local institutions.

For long term community development, the partnership between one community and another is also important. But it was found that the ordinary people were hardly seen at the decision making process, as they know exactly what is wrong in their community and in its surroundings. Social capital is perhaps one of the important resources which could be applied for improving

their decision making (Rahman & Kabir, 2004:464). Social capital is significant because many of the local producers, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, were dependent on a nearby community or market. It was seen (in Chapter Five) that social networks and empowerment approaches were important in the livelihood processes of the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. These networks provided long term relationships in which two or more partners (such as producers and brokers) in mutual trust share responsibility for combining resources to achieve a common goal for their mutual benefit and empowerment. The more extensive such partnership networks are, the better the chances for empowerment success. I personally observed that collaboration among community level stakeholders, and in particular between researchers and rural stakeholders, is often limited by a lack of effective communication. As yet, there is no agreement on how to integrate scientific and local knowledge and perceptions, let alone how to incorporate diverse opinions into policy or management advice (Folke *et al.,* 2002; Reed *et al.,* 2007).

The issue of donor dependency has been explained in a previous chapter and found to be one of the factors, which undermine organisational autonomy. The research argues that proper partnership can ameliorate many unnecessary terms and conditions of donor dependency. Rahman's (2006:489) study of the Targeting Ultra-Poor (TUP) programme of BRAC is a good example. It found that TUP was explicitly constituted as an effort to combine service delivery that builds 'the physical, financial, human and socio-political assets of the poor' with social mobilisation. This social mobilisation reduces 'the exclusion, exploitation, and other risks faced by the poor by changing structures (government, political structures, traditional social institutions, and market transactions) and processes (laws, regulations, policies, social norms, market relations)'. As one recent internal study of BRAC indicates, the weaknesses of the TUP programme's social mobilisation component is the result, not of BRAC's dependence on donors or the hegemony of the global development discourse, but of inadequacies, which can be remedied in BRAC's own policy approach towards fostering and catalysing collective action among the 'ultra' poor (Huda *et al.*, 2005).

The partnership has been increasingly questioned by Southern NGOs (SNGOs) (Lewis, 1998a:504). Such disagreements are often cited as examples of a failure to realise the ideals of partnership and are mostly attributed to the international NGO as the 'dominant' partner (Harrison, 2007:397). For example, recent research in Bangladesh within inter-agency development projects indicates

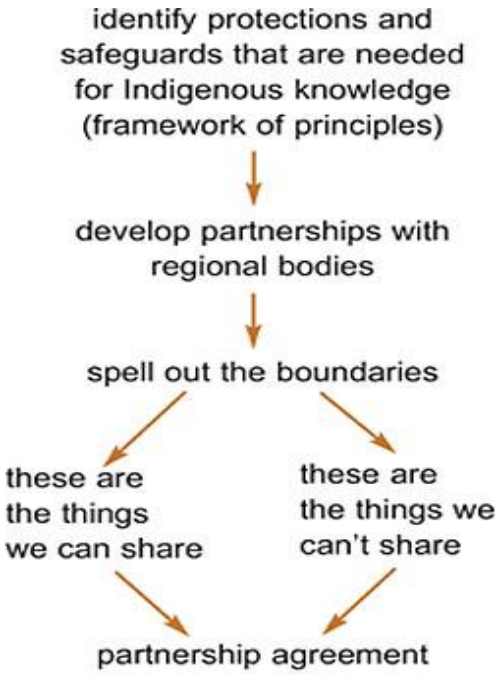
that partnership is a complex concept, understood differently by organisations which have unequal power (Lewis, 1998b). Lewis adds that partnership may bring extra costs, which are easily underestimated, such as new lines of communication, requiring demands on staff-time, vehicles and telephone; new responsibilities for certain staff; and the need to share information with other agencies. I agree with Lewis, but I think this partnership should be considered from a wider perspective, where all of the actors would be involved to achieve development goals. This should be on the basis of mutual confidence as argued by Fernandez (1987:44), where these actors, such as the government, can be considered a 'safety net' for the NGOs when they face trouble in obtaining donors' funding. Lewis (1998a:505) says that it implies a one-way flow of skills and expertise from North to South, but it is not clear that Northern NGOs (NNGOs) have anything to offer besides money. He agrees that there is also evidence that Northern agencies are now also learning from those in the South, as the example of Bangladesh's *Grameen Bank* credit approach and the rise of participatory research show. But I think it is also true that NNGOs are now using many local level experiences and techniques, which they learn from the NGOs such as *Proshika*.

The question is how partnership would be formed. The research found 'downward accountability' (Kilby, 2006; Keystone, 2006) would be more suitable; this can secure NGOs' control over their management. Many donors admitted that they generally do not know how accountable their grantees are to 'beneficiaries'. They use the proxy that, if they perceive an NGO to be a 'good organisation', then it must surely be accountable to its beneficiaries (Keystone, 2006). It facilitates a greater alliance between donors, NGOs and 'beneficiaries' by collectively defining conditions that corresponds to an organisation's accountability to its constituents. I think the 'multi-tiered framework' would be useful to develop a sector-wide approach to aid delivery through meetings with donors, signing of memoranda of understanding, setting accountability requirements and performance agreements, and harmonising annual activity plans and setting targets. This framework facilitates interventions by donors and also constraints recipients within the logics of new public management. This approach is helpful for 'donor harmonisation' for improved aid effectiveness.

The partnership should be based on 'open dialogue' (Tembo, 2004:1032; Reed *et al.*, 2007); this would reduce the overlapping of interventions and services and ensure that community resources are used properly. For example,

effective partnership with GOs-NGOs can ensure the base conditions and external supports (Nel *et al.*, 2001:12). It is not the partnership that the research observed between PAB and GUP, rather a collaboration among and between different stakeholders, such as community people (for examples blacksmiths and goldsmiths), local community leaders, civil society, local GOs-NGOs, donor groups, local institutions and voluntary organisations. This kind of collaboration increases NGOs' socially constructed entities, accountability, and effectiveness of activities (Lewis, 2007:3). The thesis proposes that this partnership should be considered an ongoing process, which would strengthen the existing as well as future relationships with different development actors.

Figure-9: *An IK based partnership approach*



Source: The Commonwealth of Australia (2004:4)

But there remain some challenges, such as staff movement/team changes, communication difficulties, personality differences, and the harsh physical environment (Burt *et al.,* 2004:193-194). In this regard, the thesis considers an indigenous knowledge-based partnership framework developed by the Commonwealth of Australia (2004:4) (Figure-9). This kind of partnership emphasises partnership with regional bodies' protection of safeguards, and then spells out the boundaries and sort out the things that can be shared and the things that can't, and finally reach an agreement. It is also important that the partner countries, for their part, undertake necessary reforms to enable progressive reliance by donors on their systems, as they adopt international

principles or standards and apply good practices. The thesis argues for a 'country-based approach', which gives emphasis to country ownership and government leadership, and engages civil society including the private sector (OECD, 2003:10). I think that the traditional ways of dealing with controversy and conflict can be considered a suitable approach for Bangladesh. These are based on the search for harmony between the opponents, as well as amongst the three spheres of life: the human world, the natural world and the spiritual world. The modalities used are typical for each culture (Millar *et al.,* 2003).

'Real participation': Reduced exclusion of local poor people and marginalisation of local knowledge

Participation has become an act of faith in development. It is a tool for achieving better project outcomes as the process increases the capacity of individuals to improve their own lives, and facilitates social change to the advantage of disadvantaged or marginalised groups (Cleaver, 1999:597-98). Effective participation is a form of citizen empowerment and the more equal sharing of power between the strong and the weak (Paul, 1987; Nelson & Wright, 1995:8). From a development perspective, participation can promote new values, attitudes, knowledge and skills among citizens and build their capacity as agents of change (Bowen, 2008:76). It is true that the theory of participation is complex and deals with many intangible components, such as empowerment and self-reliance, which are difficult to assess and even more difficult to standardise for all development scenarios (Smith-Seen, 1995:31). Choguill (1996:431) considers community participation as a ladder for underdeveloped countries. The concept may be thought of as an instrument of empowerment, where development should lead to an equitable sharing of power and to a higher level of people's, in particular the weaker groups', political awareness and strengths (Choguill, 1996:432; Bowen, 2008:76). As for participation, the thesis argues that the agenda should be decided by and for the community as per local needs and knowledge (Agrawal, 1995). It argues further that improvement within the context of community development cannot occur without the participation of the community (Hayward, 2000; Simpson *et al.,* 2003:283). It is said in Chapters Two and Five that resources cannot be used to their full advantage unless the community drives the process that determines their allocation. The Government cannot say 'Let there be empowerment'. Unless residents of a community in crisis feel that they determine their own future, no programme, however well-intended, will succeed.

Table-23*: Summary of literature survey around participation in development*

Theme	Emerging perspectives
Who defines the participation agenda?	1. Earlier; externally driven; people (end-beneficiaries) not involved in design/implementation; not owned by people, development programmes unsuccessful. 2. Importance of people's participation comes into focus; increasingly practiced; occupies centre stage in development approaches. 3. Move from participation towards empowerment of people. ***Critique*:** hidden agendas of governments; development agencies to usurp power while appearing to promote participation as power to allocate resources still embedded in these structures.
What is the capability of the people to participate?	1. Shaped by socio-political context; constricted by limited domain knowledge; language barriers, illiteracy. 2. Latent capabilities can find expression through facilitation by a sympathetic external agency; empowerment through democratisation and recognition of both instrumental and constitutive roles of participation also enhance this capacity. ***Critique*:** "community" assumed to be a monolith, unproblematic entity; public discussions may inhibit people from expressing opinions frankly; also "local" networks of relationship and power, often invisible to outsiders, deeply modulate what individuals contribute during PRA-like meetings; "time-table" approach counter-productive; recourse to participatory action research suggested.
What is the role of institutional and social structures?	1. Change from central control to more decentralised systems of authority and governance. 2. Human agency expressed as participation has the potential to modify present institutional/bureaucratic structures rooted in historical contexts that hinder participation or to even create new structures. ***Critique*:** Western "blueprint;" political technology.
How to sustain and scale up participatory processes?	By integrating local efforts to larger networks of power and politics. ***Critique*:** Focus on process but not viability or wider acceptability of the end product.

Source: Puri & Sahay (2007:142)

The research found that reflecting on how community participation was envisaged, who was included and who was left out, was also worthwhile (Fraser, 2005:287). One community leader of PAB said:

"Development is a complex and wide issue. It cannot be achieved without counting us. I don't think GUP with blacksmiths can do it alone. So why are we here?"

I said in Chapter Five that ownership is one of the central notions of community participation; and it is questioned whether this is fair. Other questions relating to justice and democracy include identifying whether different community activities are accorded lesser value because of the people who perform them (Fraser, 2005:287). Within development studies, analysts have attributed the frequent failure of development projects during the 1950s to 1970s to the lack of local understanding on the part of the designers (Puri & Sahay, 2007:135); it is because the participatory development approaches were largely ambiguous in policy circles. This often resulted in ill-conceived and inadequately designed programmes in both NGOs. Sometimes unrealistic expectations, such as

'including the excluded', were elusive and frustrating (Bhatt, 1997:373). One of the principal critiques was that the services for blacksmiths and goldsmiths were imagined, implemented, and monitored by international funding agencies in combination with national bureaucracies (Green, 2002). The research points out that it is important to take into account people's needs, perceptions, and IK about the problem in the design of development models. Consider the example of India, where, like many other developing countries, the belief in the superiority of scientific and technical knowledge and methods over IK of communities, and traditional practices is embedded in the functioning of scientific institutions and continues to persist, which adversely influences effective participation (Sahay & Walsham, 1997).

However, the Table-23 shows evidence of how the hierarchical and top down institutional structures promotes user participation. The contents of this participation have many similarities with the findings of the research, which were discussed in the previous chapter. It shows that the participation process in Bangladesh is still confined within hidden government agendas, political paradigm and external control. Efforts to initiate changes in institutional conditions to promote participation are linked to power asymmetries inherent in bureaucratic structures. Regarding the nature of the Government plan in Bangladesh, the MLP head of PAB said:

"I can't find any new policy in the new development plan. The Government development policy is too politically based rather than representing the reality of the country. The Government does not care who are blacksmiths, who are potters, and who are milkmen and how their needs and opinions can be included in the country's total development process."

It was found throughout the research that the whole concept of development is 'foreign'; that is why it is hard for developing countries such as Bangladesh to really own the process. Even if the NGOs are using 'democracy' to achieve development, it is a foreign tool. One field staff member of SEED stated:

"Sir, I believe that the concept of 'development' means different things to different countries and people. I think we could not offer convincing concepts to the goldsmiths. Sir, tell me how a goldsmith could understand the concepts 'market chain', 'sustainable livelihood', 'community development' and so on that we are offering. Can they own those or can they take them to mean what they want and involve those they want? My answer is 'no'. My thinking is that we

make the development process so complex, wide and obscure so that poor and uneducated people cannot find their own way."

I think we can participate in the process, but never really own it, because the concepts and the tools are foreign. Consider the question asked by Laaksonen (2006:7): "Who are the people I am talking about in my research?" Each country has its own traditions of democracy, while each context has its own principles of how to understand development or sustainability or democracy, but how is it a participatory method then? Laaksonen (2006:7) argues that if it is supposed to come from the people themselves, how are we going to take participatory development to the Middle East for example? To them it makes no sense. They have never heard about these languages and concepts of participatory development or democracy. We can't avoid the fact that we are in the global world, and many people struggle against the idea that they will lose their identities, their nation, their language, and everything that they have very bitterly fought for in history (Laaksonen, 2006:8-9).

I said in Chapter Five that the ideal participatory plan is one, where the power in term of decision-making capacity is given to the people. The research suggests that the organisations or the structures are designed and planned to implement the development projects that should help marginalised people. Empowerment also means using the IK and capacities that are available on the ground. These indigenous structures of participation enable people at the local level with the elected representatives to participate in discussions about the development problems and work towards resolving them. I also stated in Chapter Five that the local people themselves should determine their own project - what they prefer and how the resources should be mobilised internally, and what would be needed from outside. Because, they would participate in implementing the project, so the issue of sustainability is easier to keep in mind. So, the ideal is that the project is intended, managed and resourced internally and the community is the master of the process. Empowerment participation emphasises collective voice. Collective voice is something, where people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths and their representatives, put forward their wishes, needs and expectations, something that ultimately is a local decision. And through the exercise of collective decision-making and democratic practises, the people also learn the art of 'winning some and losing some' in the negotiations process (Laaksonen, 2006:5-6).

One of the important problems of participation is structural constraint (Namazi, 2006:66). It found that both NGOs did not take into consideration the local people's native capacities, endowment and abilities for community development management, decision-making, planning, resource mobilisation, resource allocation and priority setting, and determining the future of the members. The tools and methods of participation in both NGOs were problematic because these were invariably stimulated by external and generally professional agencies (Patel & Mitlan, 2002:125-126). The implications of such external interventions for knowledge management itself block a participatory process (Eyben & Ladbury, 1995:197). These external tools and methods ignore local knowledge, where poor people may decide it is better not to participate (Cleaver, 2001:51; Mosse, 1995). This finding is compared with a number of arguments given by Mosse (1995), Biggs *et al.*, (2007:241), and Kothari (2007), where the question about the construction of knowledge and its validation was problematic. The research proposes that community members, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, are better able to determine their own language, knowledge and preferred development options. This statement may be compared with the view of Patel & Mitlan (2002:127-29), that there was no social change to the benefit of low income communities if the poor did not participate in the designing, managing and realising of that process of change.

The above discussion suggests that development interventions that seek participation have two problems. First, the distribution of power within the community may mean that the poorest members are incapable to get their demands tabled and considered (Gaventa, 1999:25) and/or may not feel able to take part in the process. Hence there is an issue about 'who participates?' Secondly, the process of securing participation and empowerment may involve conflict, often within the community itself, as social relationships change and a new set of winners and losers emerges. The head of the local SEED office said:
"Why are we following whole sets of development policy and strategies from the outside? Why are we not thinking about local conditions and whether these fit here properly? I am sure we need to think about that. But really we have a very limited scope to do so as we are directed by them."
This raises a set of issues about how such conflicts can be managed successfully. More generally it raises issue of 'who manages the process of participation?'

The question is what would be the methods and strategies of participation? There are a number of approaches and techniques of participation, such as citizen

control, delegated power, partnership, placation, consultation, information therapy, and manipulation (Bracht & Tsouros, 1990:2002), which were used during 1950 to 1980. Again, Carl Roger's 'people-centred' approach in 1987 and Sen's 'freedom-centred' approach in 1999 argue for community participation. The research offers Sen's (1999) 'freedom-centred' approach as the most acceptable method for Bangladesh. It is argued that social, political, and economic freedoms are both primary ends and key means of development because of their constitutive as well as instrumental roles. The constitutive involves expansion of basic freedoms enjoyed by people, whereas the instrumental role seeks to contribute to economic progress (pp. 36-37). The research suggests that this way of participation can secure the guarantee of the local people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, to solve their financial crisis. Therefore, this kind of participation is crucial as an instrument or strategy of development or management, 'it must also be valued for its intrinsic value' (p. 53). The functioning of individuals relate to their achievement, while capability is the ability to achieve. Capabilities thus provide space to achieve different combinations of functioning within the freedom to choose the desired ways of life. The research agrees with Puri & Sahay's (2007:139) opinions that capability in the context of participation includes five elements: (a) acceptance and internalisation of the responsibility to participate, (b) authority to carry out the consequences of participatory action and take relevant decisions, (c) access to resources necessary to participate, (d) ability to communicate effectively and freely in conditions established to elicit participation, and, (e) the knowledge participants have about the problem domain.

I said earlier in this chapter that people's participation is based on the democratic fervour that can achieve extraordinary possibilities (Umali quoted in ESCAP, 1986:46) in ordinary people. The research finds that the poor and marginalised individuals and communities, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, are frequently not able to achieve the full potential of their capability because of constraints imposed by social/institutional structures of customs, control, and power. This finding may be compared with the study of Puri & Sahay (2007:138-39), who find in their research in India that limited domain knowledge (such as that of computer-based information systems) may also dilute the ability to participate, for example, due to a lack of formal education, language barriers, or limited prior exposure to technological solutions. Therefore, the 'extraordinary possibilities' that Umali hinted at can find expression only if the right conditions exist.

Like Laaksonen (2006:5), the research emphasises the new thinking of decentralisation. This way of thinking can accommodate both local and global knowledge, where local peoples' participation can secure the maximum target limit. The research proposes that a more 'dynamic vision' is required of `community' and 'institutions' for this kind of new thinking of participation. It should integrate social networks and recognise dispersed and contingent power relations (Cleaver, 1999:609). This approach should be on the basis of the 'negotiated nature of participation' and a 'more honest assessment' of the costs and benefits to individuals of becoming involved in agency and state-directed development processes (Cleaver, 1999:609). It would incorporate the local context on the one hand, and be free from external control on the other. The thesis supports this way of thinking from Laaksonen (2006:10) who shows, in an example from Tanzania, that Nyerere's policies[29] bring good results, where all villages first make their development plans and then the representatives from different villages meet in World Development Committees and bring forward their propositions, which they can't implement by themselves. The development plans were formulated, developed, and implemented by the local initiatives and authority; only support came from the funding authority. This experience would be fruitful for Bangladesh.

Development ownership: Space for local community

It was said in Chapters Two and Five that development practices are dominated by certain powerful individuals and agencies in order to further their own, usually opaque, economic and political objectives (Mathias & Overton, 2004:131). It found that the Bangladeshi local market is dominated by a syndicate. However, it is now important to find space for local producers, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. So, their initiatives should enable themselves to have direct access to better markets for their products (Tembo, 2004:1024). Here, some basic questions for development in the globalised world are important: who should be developed? Who defines what development is, and why? Whose interest does that definition serve? Who owns the process under which it operates? Who takes responsibility when this process fails to deliver the

[29] Julius Nyerere was the former and founding President of the United Republic of Tanzania. His rural development was based on encouraging people to live and work together on a cooperative basis through the formation of organised villages or *ujamaa* (a Kiswahili word meaning 'familyhood', the concept on which Tanzanian socialism is based). In addition to raising the standard of living, Tanzanian socialism also aimed to develop a particular quality of life which is people-centred. It attached commitment to the belief that there are more important things in life than the amassing of riches, and that if the pursuit of wealth clashes with things like human dignity and social equality, the latter will be given priority 'for the purpose of all social, economic and political activity must be man (Kassam, 1994).

promised goods, as so often happens? I have focused on the theme: 'Development for Whom in Bangladesh?' It is seen that the so called global pro-poor development agenda, articulated as broad-based ownership, accountability and empowerment of the poor, does not properly replicate what happens at the field level. In this situation, the research proposes a fruitful policy framework, where donors harmonise around support for broad-based, country-owned, poverty reduction strategies that address priorities for the poor in a globalised world.

The research found that local ownership is one of the concerns of external aid-based funding projects. This concern has been more commonly expressed in the language of the needs and 'wishes of the recipient country'. The use of the language of empowerment, participation, negotiation, partnership, consultation, capacity building, and rights has, therefore, only become fashionable. Within the 'actor-oriented development approach', various players are working with the poor, promoting similar institutional frameworks, and using a common language (Tembo, 2004:1027). 'Should non-government development organisations (NGDOs) be moulded into the fashion or should they support the poor in shaping the system into one, which delivers poverty reduction goals effectively?' The research found that the major issue was that the poor people were struggling for space within which to exercise their images of reality, rather than simply being 'voices' at the negotiation. The research argues that in the context of globalisation, the NGOs need to focus on expanding space for poor people to engage with emerging forms of states and markets for their livelihood advantage. One SEED staff member said:

"We need to consult with the goldsmiths what we are thinking about them. I don't think that we do it usually. I think we should not expect that this is a good development strategy and that it can give good outputs. It is totally wrong. I think we are missing something and that something is the thing that we should do first."

This implies creating space, where the poor can effectively negotiate the global discourses and frameworks of development from their particular experiences and images of reality (Tembo, 2003a & 2003b). In this position, the local producers can find room for manoeuvre within which to influence the local, national and global processes and structures for their benefit.

Hughes (2003:20) and Morris (2004:128) refer to the phenomenon of 'boomerang aid', whereby much of the aid benefits consultants and companies

from the donor countries. The products of science or scientific knowledge are not owned by scientists in most cases, as it was stated in Barr and Dixon (1998) in Chapter Two how to integrate IK and GK in natural resources. The research found that these were owned either by politicians or by industrial giants, who took the decisions not only as to how the products should be used, but also who became part of the scientific enterprise. One GUP staff member said:

"The fault is our development manners. We could not create our own development policy. We are implementing as we are receiving from the outsiders. For many things we have not found the clue. Possibly, we are moving in the wrong direction. We have a lot of ground work to do."

Such a situation tends to contribute towards widening the gap between those societies with scientific knowledge and those without (Addy, undated: 4). So, we need to start 'with people not projects' for community capacity building (Simpson *et al.*, 2003:277).

It was observed that there was little consultative participation of the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. It is also seen that participation in civil society is left to a few urban-based NGOs (Whaites, 2002). The World Vision, described in a recent study by the British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND), demonstrated that civil society organisations were considered as project implementers, rather than as political actors in participation. It recommends that civil society must be re-politicised for effectiveness in development dialogue (BOND, 2004). I said in Chapter Five that there is a debatable relationship between civil society participation and empowerment of the poor in terms of representation and legitimacy. The research found that the discourse and frameworks of development projects in both NGOs did not adequately engage the local producers. The processes involved in practise were still 'macro' in character, despite making upfront reference to empowerment of the local producers as the main framework for poverty reduction. In other words, despite the heightened call for 'voices of the poor' in the development industry, this was not translated into practical listening and the accommodation of ethnographies of the poor (Tembo, 2004:1026-27), such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths.

There was a conflict of 'image' and negotiation through 'common understanding', regarding perceptions and total agreement between the people and development agency workers (Tembo, 2004:1027; Dalton & Dunnett, 1992). For example, staff members of both NGOs claimed that they could not offer many services because of the local peoples' low education, social ignorance and

different expectations (as stated in Chapter Five). On the other hand, the blacksmiths and goldsmiths claimed that the NGOs are not actually doing anything for them; rather they were being exploited by the NGOs. So, the development agencies (developers) and the local people (developees) had different perceptions of the process and outcomes, which prevented active dialogue. In other words, the underlying images that were informed from an external power of knowledge, reputation and resources were not adequately explored. On the part of development agencies, this knowledge, reputation and resources came from the use of concepts, such as the rights-based approach (Hausermann, 1998; Arce, 2003:856) and gender and participation. For example, many NGO staff members indicated, '*all our programmes have to be gender sensitive*' (Tembo, 2004:1031). The finding of the research may be compared with the study of Tembo (2004). He observed, in his study of Malawi, that not all people had the same capability to negotiate with external agencies, and women and children were the losers, because they often cannot participate in meetings with NGDOs or donors, even when invited, and are examples of the poor who need to benefit from globalisation, as reflected in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). I found that the local producers, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths were not so reluctant and they were not interested to participate with the NGO staff. However, the need to share their norms, values, needs, and expectations with staff members were not addressed appropriately in their so-called participatory planning.

The thesis offers two important and interrelated suggestions. First, the NGOs should formulate a policy framework where poor people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, can participate smoothly whilst keeping their own understanding. The NGOs should create a congenial atmosphere, which is free from all kind of social barriers, such as the power-relations and social harassment that I discussed in Chapter Five. Secondly, as value-based organisations, NGOs should work for the community people to become free from *clientelism*[30]*,* so that

[30] *Clientelism* (also seen as *clientalism or clientilism*) refers to a form of social organization common in many developing regions characterised by "patron-client" relationships. In such places, relatively powerful and rich "patrons" promise to provide relatively powerless and poor "clients" with jobs, protection, infrastructure, and other benefits in exchange for votes and other forms of loyalty, including labour. While this definition suggests a kind of "socioeconomic mutualism," these relationships are typically exploitative, often resulting in the perpetual indebtedness of the clients in what is described as a "debt-peonage" relationship. In some instances, patrons employ coercion, intimidation, sabotage, and even violence to maintain control, and some fail to deliver on their promises. Moreover, patrons are oftentimes unaccountable for their actions. Thus, clientelistic relationships are often corrupt and unfair, thereby obstructing the processes of implementing true sustainability (Kermath, 2005).

they can develop and become self-reliant. It is recognised that this way of thinking is not easy and is expensive to implement, but it was found that social capital is principally concerned with the reduction of transaction costs through trading with the poor (Fukuyama, 2001). Therefore, NGOs have the potential to create a space for people, especially for the poor, so that they can access different facilities from local institutions (Khan & Seeley, 2005:91).

Localisation of global knowledge: Challenging NGOs' works

It was said in Chapter Five that NGOs' attempt at the localisation of global knowledge, together with considering local contexts and cultures, was one of the successful strategies of their interventions. This process is called 'customisation', which considers the local perspective, local people's capacity and affordability through building networks with internal and external agents. The thesis argues that the Bangladeshi development thinkers, policy makers and planners failed to work with the externals accordingly. In this context, localisation of global knowledge became an important indicator for community development. It is true that the relationship with outside agents in considering local issues had some challenges (as stated in Chapter Five). The first challenge was to identify the communities' own resources (i.e. materialistic and non-materialistic resources and capitals, decision making authority, technical skills, and knowledge) and to ascertain if they were externally initiated and managed. Most of the NGOs in developing countries work with the people, who are, in general terms, 'relatively' economically and politically powerless (Jones & Laverack, 2003). So, the external agents need to look for, and work from, areas in peoples' lives in which they are 'relatively' powerful. The second challenge was to assist individuals to organise and mobilise local people collectively through strengthening the 'capacity domains', as I said earlier in this chapter. The third challenge was to provide material assistance based on i) understanding the nature and dynamics of socio-economic and cultural conditions; ii) supporting the creation of an adequate resource base to support a minimally sustainable livelihood; and iii) having a credible strategy for withdrawing support once the goal is achieved.

The research found that local knowledge in Bangladesh is very rich and valuable, but the NGOs did not utilise these opportunities. For example, the NGOs felt that many of the local producers did not have a clear understanding of the benefits of the market channel. This was a complex issue i.e. how, why, when, and what knowledge should be localised at different levels. Both NGOs found some challenges for this localisation process. Some of these challenges were

related to socio-cultural factors, such as a lack of education, social ignorance, prejudice, religious ignorance and non-cooperation of religious leaders, peoples' traditional practices, and being afraid of the new knowledge. Some challenges had a direct link with financial matters, such as the high cost of GK, a lack of funding, donors' terms and conditions, the poverty cycle, the risk of unemployment, and expensive high technology; and some were infrastructural challenges, such as the lack of physical infrastructure (transport and communication). Some other factors were: the shortage of trained manpower, the unavailability of knowledge, the lack of GOs' help, the lack of government policy, the lack of proper research, and the lack of proper demonstration/display of new technology-based products.

One of the questions was how the local producers could overcome those challenges. The opinions of the stakeholders were to:

- build-up community awareness,
- build-up social networks,
- provide available information, knowledge and technology,
- develop proper partnerships with GOs, NGOs, local institutions, and local bodies,
- develop sufficient physical infrastructure, and
- give ownership of knowledge.

Some stakeholders stated that local knowledge should be developed without considering global concerns. One staff member of SEED said:

"I think PAB has its own style of thinking that should not come through making copies from the West. If it does so it could not be possible to become self-reliant in the development field. I agree that PAB's programmes are not operating in such a way which creates its own style, but I think without doing that there is no way to develop the country."

Some stakeholders said that 'to frequently introduce/demonstrate new technology to those local producers who are afraid of it' whilst considering the local context could be effective. One head office staff member of PAB said:

"There is a higher chance of accepting new forms of technology if the local people frequently observe its positive impact. Some problems, such as lack of knowledge of GK, could be overcome by in this way. Community awareness can also be helpful to connect people with social networks."

One *Proshika* staff member explained the matter as follows:

"There is a need to provide more training, and to arrange workshops where we can exchange our new ideas and knowledge. I think there is also a need to look at universal knowledge and the frameworks which give a wider outlook. These are

good if it is possible to operate those properly, as Proshika is now operating Anderson's livelihood framework. But the important thing is how these are integrating/considering the local context with those."

Some recommended that developing a cooperative partnership with the change agent systems (as stated earlier in this chapter) is more important to overcome these barriers.

The research argues that the availability of knowledge and its proper and equal distribution is more important than creating new knowledge. For example, staff members of both NGOs stated that they had sufficient knowledge of income generating programmes (IGPs), but they could not distribute that knowledge equally among the local producers. The local leaders' view was different. Some questioned 'whose knowledge?' and 'who is the authority of this knowledge?' They believed that many western countries still use Bangladesh as a 'test case' and Bangladeshi people are not getting the ultimate benefit of such kinds of knowledge practices. So, there is a need to explore the potential of developing links between science and social movements as a possible way of reconciling what people want in terms of civic participation. These links should aim to play off the different perspectives, the strengths and weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages of different knowledge traditions to improve the overall understanding of issues and problems by generating synergy (Sillitoe, 2004:158). These links should also attempt to understand both, putting our interpretation of contemporary society into historical perspective and trying to see changes into the future. What is understood and accommodated is neither today's nor tomorrow's local knowledge; knowledge is always in flux (Sillitoe, 2004:159).

Most stakeholders said that Bangladesh needs an adequate physical infrastructure, including proper 'communication systems', where new knowledge can be utilised. The head of MLP of PAB said:

"Our local producers are producing a huge amount of milk in Dinajpur district but they cannot send it to the urban market for selling at a higher price due to bad local transport. It is not the only example; many of our potters cannot send their products to urban markets where these products have a higher value and demand; they are bound to sell those in local markets. As a result they are not financially well-off."

The research also confirms that local producers needed access to the local market. It found that many local producers (who are hand to mouth) could not attend the training sessions, as they did not get any incentives from the NGOs.

On the other hand, the NGO staff members claimed that they did not have any allocation for such kind of incentives from the donors. The community leaders and local producers claimed that none of their area office staff or field officers were recruited from their local community, and they had no idea about the local perspectives, such as local cultures, local practices, and local issues. I quote a blacksmith:

"I don't feel free to talk with that apa (the GUP fieldworker who looks after the project). Firstly, she is a woman, and secondly, she is not from our community. She cannot understand many things as we cannot say many things to her as well. I think she has idea about our local issues. Let us have an example, we have got some leadership problems among our Bhai Bhai Kamar Association but she can not solve them because she can't understand what the real local issue is there."

I probed further and discovered that the fieldworker of the blacksmith's project was not aware about the local resources, local networks, local cultures, and local surroundings. I argue that this NGO field staff failed to make real relationships with the local people and local surroundings; rather she had built-up a formal relationship, where NGOs' traditional role exists (this argument was discussed in Chapter Five). However, the thesis argues that this kind of relationship was not sufficient for understanding about the myth and reality of the local people, their cultures and livelihoods.

Consider global aid as capital

By considering terms and conditions of aid (imposed by the donors), the thesis argues that aid is an 'interest-dominated model of politics'. 'Aid' means development aid or development cooperation, also development assistance, technical assistance, international aid, overseas aid or foreign aid. These names gave negative notions to the stakeholders involved in the research. These notions were the subject of significant disagreement among the stakeholders. One staff member of PAB said:

"*The name of foreign assistance as "aid" is now a political word. We should reconsider this name. I am sure it brings a lot of confusion to civil society, policy makers, development thinkers, and even among the community people. I found many people still think that this aid means some sort of domination and exploitation by the donors as we are still dependent on foreigners. I probably don't have enough words to explain the real situation about the peoples' attitude and how they think about this aid."*

I think the name 'aid' or 'foreign aid' should be replaced by 'capital' or 'international capital'. The thesis also argues that the meaning of 'capital' is more appropriate and positive than 'aid'. Many stakeholders said that the word 'aid' is a 'boring' word. It gave the impression that the countries those were receiving this aid, including Bangladesh, are dependent on the donors (Western countries). The thesis has described this as a patron-client relationship (Chapter Five), which was not helpful in achieving greater community development. The use of the term capital in this regard, would recognise that every country, including Bangladesh, is a resourceful country in terms of its human, social, and natural capital potential, whereas western countries are also wealthy in financial capital. If we consider the global context, it is clear that there is no country which is self-sufficient. Developed countries are dependent on developing countries in term of exchanging human, social, and natural capital, and developing countries are dependent on developed countries in terms of exchanging financial capital. This kind of exchange is meaningful and healthy for community development, and it is possible through effective partnership channels (as stated earlier in this chapter).

Conclusion

Interest in knowledge for development has grown in recent years. As an intangible resource, knowledge can easily travel the world and enlighten the lives of people everywhere (World Development Report 1998/99). NGOs' role as knowledge providers, knowledge distributors, and knowledge creators gives a mixed impression; the research suggests that the NGOs' role was not convincing. This chapter highlighted some areas where NGOs' community development interventions should be readdressed. No doubt this would bring a lot of challenges to the NGOs' conventional role, as they are facing enormous global as well as local pressures. Obviously, the NGOs should come out from their conventional role, and should now emphasise the social enterprise approach. The thesis argues that the improvement of NGOs' services in terms of social capital and community empowerment depends on the cooperation of the local power structure, civil society, and local institutions, as the term 'community development' is comprehensive and needs integrative support.

The thesis proposes some tasks for the NGOs: First, the NGOs should be more dedicated to providing services for the disadvantaged communities, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths. Secondly, the NGOs' role should be non-political, impartial, free, fair, and humanitarian. The first thing is to improve their 'image' through improving social trust. Thirdly, the NGOs should be empowered in terms

of their control of management, fund allocation and financial capability. The NGOs should emphasise local resource mobilisation, rather than depend on foreign donations. Foreign donation may be encouraged, but attention should be paid to the organisation's autonomy. Fourthly, the NGOs should give space to local people, where local people's choices, demands and suggestions can be replicated, so that they can own the development. The urgent thing is for NGOs to formulate their own development policy and frameworks, rather than follow those which are 'foreign' or 'imported'. And finally, the NGOs' initiative should create an atmosphere in the community, where the components of social capital become available for empowerment of the local people. The NGOs should target the local people, who are really disadvantaged, and who really need the help of NGOs to become self-reliant. A collaborative partnership is most essential for this task.

Chapter Seven
Conclusions

Introduction

This concluding chapter summarises the research findings and considers the policy implications for sustainable community development in Bangladesh. The chapter also considers the key limitations of the research. Finally, it suggests some issues which should be considered for further research.

Major findings

The thesis sought to answer the principal question: What are the capacities of Bangladeshi NGOs for social capital and community development in the context of competing global and indigenous knowledge? It was a qualitative investigation, in which qualitative data collection methods were used and data validated through triangulation. The research used social capital and community empowerment approaches in the context of two Bangladeshi NGOs: *Proshika* and Practical Action Bangladesh (PAB). From this perspective, it focused on two programmes: the Social and Economical Enterprise Development (SEED) programme of *Proshika* and the Market and Livelihood Programme (MLP) of PAB, and worked with two sets of indigenous people: goldsmiths and blacksmiths respectively. It found that NGOs were using both indigenous and global knowledge. The rate of the usage of both knowledge approaches was nearly the same, but the application of global knowledge (GK) was increasing over time, as the situation was changed through NGOs' counselling and knowledge transfer services.

To consider the overall activities of the NGOs, it was found that both NGOs were using IK approach in mainly three areas: agricultural knowledge (traditional cultivation capacity, food production, food processing, and use of local fertilisers); non-agricultural knowledge (pottery, blacksmith, animal husbandry, textile skills, fishing, and local forestation); and social knowledge (local business knowledge, group formation, local management, leadership, good observation capacity, local technological knowledge, and local market knowledge). PAB and *Proshika* applied non-agricultural and social knowledge as prime IK approaches to the blacksmiths and goldsmiths respectively. It found that the blacksmiths and goldsmiths acquired these indigenous skills through observations and practice over several

generations, largely through family members (father and elder brothers), friends, and neighbours, and some from their local institutions.

Both NGOs also used a wide range of GK approaches, which were classified under four main headings: policy and planning, programmes and project-based interventions, training, and management. For example, in programming, PAB had fashion and textile, agricultural development, pottery, blacksmith, energy, shelter, transport, water, food production, agro-processing, manufacturing and disaster mitigation, where a certain level of GK was used to increase the amount of production and its quality. At a policy level, this NGO used a number of global knowledge based concepts, frameworks, development models and theories (i.e. sustainable livelihood approach (SLA), social capital approach (SCA), and community empowerment approach (CEA). PAB used the 'market channel network' approach, group formation, participatory plan, 'knowledge transfer' techniques, 'target-based' development strategies, advocacy, counselling and campaigning. On the other hand, *Proshika* had a number of scientific interventions using credit assistance, training, universal education, environmental protection, and health infrastructure building. This NGO has a wide range of training facilities on business plan, accounting, banking system, modern carat system, and leadership training, and most of these are based on global methods. PAB's technological supports and entrepreneurship and business trainings were borrowed from global knowledge. As a part of management procedure, *Proshika* used modern software to conduct all sorts of accounts, including loan service and loan recovery for SEED.

Both NGOs also had modern monitoring, supervision, and evaluation systems, as the staff members used the 'assessment framework' to assess their producers' and staff members' performance. Both used a wide range of modern research and data collection methods, such as PRA, social surveys, and FGD to assess the community situation as well as to verify and justify their project impacts. Both NGOs also used modern communication systems, such as internet, e-mail, land phone, mobile phone, and fax for their office management. They conferred with the local and central offices by the mobile and land phones and e-mail to the local producers, so that they could contact with them for their necessary information

But the research found that there were considerable contradictions, as the NGOs attempted to work with both knowledge approaches. The debate between GK and IK took three distinct forms: opposition to the promotion of science as the

only valid source of knowledge; the rejection of science in favour of IK; and the use of tools that were unable to unravel the essential nature of systems of knowledge (Durie, 2005). Nearly thirty per cent of stakeholders in both NGOs considered IK to be a good approach, thirty per cent favoured GK, and the remaining forty per cent emphasised the integration of both knowledge approaches. It found that in many cases both NGOs were using an integrated knowledge approach. Some NGO staff members and some educated community leaders argued that knowledge bases should be used according to the experiment, which was culturally and socially acceptable, financially affordable and helpful for sustainable development. I have come to realise that the gap between those with access to adequate knowledge sources and those without keeps increasing. The risks and uncertainties associated with its use and limitations hindered progress in achieving sustainable development.

It is said that development can only be achieved by bringing people and communities in line with the universal knowledge of scientific truths. Both NGOs found this initiative to be one of the prime challenges in Bangladesh, where the conflict between IK and GK was high. Many respondents criticised modernisation approaches for being based on the uncritical transfer of science and technology from the North to the South (Peet & Watts, 1993; Escobar, 1995).

The stakeholders, who supported IK, thought that IK was much more useful and had greater value. Many of them argued that the western (knowledge approach) science had lost its universal position, and become one of a range of competing and contested knowledge systems (Homann & Rischkowsky, 2001; Mohan & Stokke, 2000). They considered IK as one of the powerful approaches, potentially empowering hitherto neglected populations (Leach & Mearns, 1996; Briggs & Sharp, 2004:662-63). They found IK to be low cost, flexible, adaptive and innovative (Sillitoe, 2000a:3).

Here 'development from below' is a more productive approach (Chambers, 1980:7). The stakeholders found that GK could not always provide an accurate diagnosis or solution (Thomas, 1997). But IK, based on local values, technology, expertise and institutions, was ecologically and socially engineered on the basis of cultural and traditional experiences and transformation processes. The stakeholders, who agreed on integration, found it to be a 'source of hope', which could provide an alternative to the global neo-liberal vision (Hewison, 1999:21).

The research identified NGOs' capacities in the main four elements of social capital: collective action (interaction between individual, groups, neighbours, communities and agencies), social trust, coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits, and sharing norms and values. It also used nine domains of Laverack's (2006) community empowerment approach: improving participation, developing local leadership, increasing problem assessment capacities, critical awareness about people's needs, building organisational structures, improving resource mobilisation, strengthening links to other organisations and people, creating equitable relationships with outside agents, and increasing control over management.

The research found that both NGOs had some common and general working areas, based on IK and GK approaches for social capital and community empowerment. For social capital, both NGOs had a number of interventions, which included survey and PRA, group formation, family approach, information sharing, meeting & consultation, participatory plan, good staff behaviour, training programmes, coordination, market chain and market map, linking and working with local GOs-NGOs and community leaders, organisational reputation, jobs & IGPs, cultural activities & social festivals, observation, communication, counselling and advocacy, and monitoring and supervision. Some significant areas of both NGOs' capacities were pointed out exclusively. For example, PAB had exposure visits, relation matrix, and partnership, whereas *Proshika* had credit packages, saving programmes, federation, legal aid, programmes for disasters, social schemes, and human behaviour packages. The community empowerment was achieved through a number of interventions, such as community awareness, counselling & advocacy, training, participatory plan, meeting and consultation, information sharing, market chain, market map, seminars and workshops, involvement with association, networking with GOs-NGOs, monitoring & supervision, follow-up, research works, knowledge documentation, using modern communication, and donor friendly.

Regarding social capital, the NGOs' participatory plan created opportunities for social capital involving a number of change agents in the community. Both NGOs used a number of communication channels, such as interpersonal contact, business networks, consulting and face to face meeting, sharing values, training, and monitoring and supervision. The blacksmiths and goldsmiths used these channels to create information flow through sharing norms and values, and mutual benefits for improving their knowledge, social interaction,

social and human skills, social competencies, social strengths, sharing attitude, and leadership ability. It found that, in many cases, the local producers could not interact with those communication channels, due to their lack of education. But the local producers and staff members said that the frequency of the face-to-face group interactions generated some common social norms and created predictable behavioural patterns.

The relation matrix, the market channels and the market map were useful social networks with different people, community leaders, business partners, wholesalers, designers, and suppliers. These interventions generated collective actions that improved their mental confidence to enter in the competitive markets. The kind of market channels generated new forms of social capital with a continuous group interaction with other groups. But the NGOs faced a massive contradiction to implement these market channels, and they partially failed to bring the local producers through the market map. Many of the local producers were much too rigidly tied to tradition (i.e. experience, cultural and social viability, and self-ownership). Rather, they felt those interventions to involve high cost, loss of self-dignity, lack of training, and dependency. In addition, the NGOs could not bring the people into the competitive market due to some local conditions, such as lack of control over the syndicate.

But some of the NGOs interventions for social capital were successful. For example, both NGOs created a substantial number of job facilities within the agencies and through income generating programmes (IGPs), which improved social trust between NGOs and local communities. It was shown that as a highly unemployed situation in Bangladesh, these IGPs worked as 'social glue' and a 'bridge' between NGOs and local producers. The PAB's 'exposure visit' was shown to be one of the successful interventions, where the rural blacksmiths met urban blacksmiths and businessmen. This kind of social network helped to update existing knowledge, and created a thrust toward new knowledge. On the other hand, *Proshika's* credit package, savings and social schemes, federation, and human behaviour package offered a number of opportunities, such as credit versus income, trust and social scheme versus mutual benefits, and federation versus exchange of norms and values with the agency and community people. But in many cases the NGOs faced a number of contradictions, such as a lack of social acceptance, problems of understanding, lack of coordination, and lack of uniformity. Due to these contradictions, the local producers partially failed to use the networks. But the whole process of interventions partially reinforced each

other and created a substantial number of new forms of human and social capitals.

Regarding community empowerment, one of the significant aspects was participation versus community empowerment. Both NGOs followed the so-called participatory plan (PP) and tried to consider the community feelings through their active participation, and then integrated these in community planning. But, practically, they faced contradiction as they could not include many marginal and ultra poor within their PP. However, the research found that this PP could not achieve 'real' or 'genuine' participation, as a substantial number of bureaucratic and top down methods existed. Instead, the thesis suggests that the PP should be based on the local context, where all stakeholders of the community are involved.

Both NGOs used a number of scientific tools, such as the community survey, participatory market chain analysis, market assessment, rapid market survey, PRA, training, technology fair and monitoring and supervision as part of their assessment. The PAB offered some scientific tools to the entrepreneurs, such as learning log sheets, relationship matrix, the need assessment tools, and the market actors' behaviour assessment tools for community empowerment. The research found that the local producers improved their assessment capacities through these practices. But, practically, many of the local producers and NGO staff members claimed that they could not persist with such interventions, as they could not own them effectively. A good number of staff members believed that in many cases they failed to fit with the local context and with local producers' needs and feelings.

The research found that the reputational leaders/the 'organic intellectuals', who informally serve the community, had a better chance of building community capacity. Both NGOs believed that leadership is not a process which could be developed by training; rather it should be developed through usual group activities, such as a participatory plan, market channel and business plan, involving people with different existing associations, and linking with different social networks. But this initiative was blocked by some of the local socio-economical and political processes, such as cultural lag, irrational attitudes, political influence, lack of GOs' help, and non-cooperation of the local power structure.

The research found a positive correlation between social networks and resource mobilisation. Where there were more social networks, there was greater resource mobilisation among local producers. The social networks were helpful to utilise many social, financial, natural, cultural, and human capitals. Both NGO staff members shared their knowledge through a number of interventions, such as exposure visits, training, and supervision and monitoring. Though the NGOs used many local resources, such as local trainers (in cascade training) and local raw materials, some of their social networks, such political networks, used for the interest of NGOs' self-benefit, rather than the benefits of the local producers.

NGOs' communication and knowledge sharing practices strengthened linking capacity with outside agents, and improved critical awareness among the local producers about their needs. Both NGOs used aid channel, knowledge transfer, partnership with like minded GOs-NGOs, participatory plan, and media, including website connection under these interventions. The research indicated that decentralisation and autonomous management systems were significant aspects of community empowerment. It found some contradictions, such as self-dependency versus donor dependency and centralised versus decentralised management systems. It argued that without decentralised and autonomous management systems, the NGOs could not take any kind of decision independently, which would be in support of community empowerment.

The research showed that the NGOs' social enterprise concept was proved an effective intervention for community empowerment. It was considered to be a holistic approach, which could open many windows to coordinate and accommodate many social networks through partnerships. The research illustrated that NGOs recent trend toward social enterprise was convincing, but the NGOs faced some contradictions, which included the socio-cultural barriers (i.e. self-interest attitude, cultural lag, and rigidity of traditional practice, financial insecurity) to such new social technology. The thesis suggests that the concept could secure NGOs' 'social accountability' to the community people. As a comprehensive approach, social enterprise could be effective to achieve broader community development. This could empower local people to generate their own capital in a sustainable manner. Here the aim would be to make profits, which would be distributed among all partners, including local producers. The ultimate target would be to improve social and environmental development. The thesis argues that neither of the NGOs could establish itself as a social enterprise, though some of their interventions were working toward achieving this goal.

The research found that both NGOs experienced a number of threats and limitations, where their capacities were restricted. It was observed that globalisation made these limitations so complex that the NGOs faced tremendous challenges to overcome those problems. There were some common limitations, which were seen in both social capital and community empowerment approaches.

One of the principal disadvantages was the poor socio-economic and cultural conditions of the country. The NGOs could not offer many of their interventions, such as loans, training, new information and knowledge, and technology to the local producers as the local producers were not able to utilise them. Many of their interventions failed because of the conflict between IK and GK. The research found that this debate was extremely sharp, not only among community people, but also among NGO staff members, community leaders, civil society, development thinkers, and policy makers. The NGOs' conventional roles (i.e. micro-credit business, target based approach, monolithic development approach, exclusion of the 'ultra' poor, work with existing employment rather creation new employment sectors, and downward accountability) were caught in this complex situation. However, the NGOs could not fulfil the demands of the marginal communities, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths because of their lack of services and lack of dedication to social capital and community empowerment. In addition, their feeling of isolation was high in the competitive globalised markets.

The research showed that social capital was meaningless to produce sufficient livelihood options for the blacksmiths and goldsmiths without the support of other capitals. It found that such local producers had little access to the community capital and resources, including institutional supports. NGOs' social interventions, such as group formation, practical skill training, cultural programmes, social awareness and training, infrastructural development, and universal education, worked to improve their access. But the research found that recent NGOs' reduction of investment in these social programmes restricted this capital formation and empowerment process. The overall satisfaction among local producers was comparatively low with long-term social development interventions. The most disturbing finding of the research was that social networks and empowerment (politically) could be seen as negative for community development in Bangladesh. The research showed that most of the big NGOs, such as *Proshika* were empowered politically. However, there was neither social trust nor collective community supports. Such networks and empowerment were

used to perform a conventional role robustly. These attitudes created many conflicts among different development agents. Eventually, the NGOs lost people's trust and confidence. Moreover, NGOs' exploitation, through money laundering, corruption, and misuse of donation, gave a negative impression to the community people, including community leaders and civil society. As a result, the NGOs could not find network-based broader supports at the community level.

Most NGOs in Bangladesh were dependent on foreign donation. The research found some interesting and useful data on this issue. It was seen that, within 'decentralised management', there existed a 'centralised management' system. Because of donors' terms and conditions, the local NGOs lost their autonomous management power. However, the NGOs lost their 'ownership'. Rather, they were practising 'formal' and 'universal' knowledge (neo-liberal ideologies), which failed to get responses from local people. On the other hand, both NGOs received pressure from the local power structures, who were dominant groups in local businesses, as they controlled the local markets. In this situation, both NGOs were helpless. The NGOs did not get any kind of help from the government. As a result, neither NGO could implement many of their scientific tools, such as market maps, relation matrixes, and communication channels. Moreover, the religious leaders frustrated many of their initiatives. The research found that a new power called the 'new civil society' including teachers, NGO owners and NGO workers, businessmen, and local leaders had emerged through global aid interventions. But they were also empowered through political networks, and their role toward social capital and community empowerment was also negative.

Under the discrete entities in Bangladesh in terms of power relations, values and practices, variation of social networks, social exclusion, and socio-economical, political and cultural conditions, social capital could not provide solid contributions toward community development; rather it created many negative processes, as I stated earlier in this chapter. On the other hand, some elements of community empowerment could not fit properly in the Bangladesh context.

Policy implications

The research shows that with the paradigms of IK and GK, and with the combination of social capital and community empowerment approaches, the NGOs faced a number of contradictions in working with the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. Based on findings and compared with existing literature, the research identified some policy implications which could address contradictions on the one

hand, and formulate a new knowledge paradigm for community development in Bangladesh on the other.

The thesis suggests adopting 'Regional Innovation Strategies' (RIS), which could bring a new idea of community development through the paradigms of social capital and community empowerment. Chapter Six showed that this new idea could fit with the definition of community development characterised by its flexible, dynamic dimension, adapted to local circumstances, and as a catalyst of development. The RIS could solve the contradiction of the NGOs working with competing IK and GK knowledge approaches, and build-up new relationships between people, objects, and global processes. In this connection, the thesis argues that, with NGOs' policy based interventions, the concept of 'community development' would be redefined. The research found a 'three-way relationship' with combination of NGOs' interventions, social capital, and community empowerment for achieving community development. The thesis also confirmed that this new definition was receiving more attention in today's global world.

The thesis finds that there are many areas in social capital and community empowerment approaches, which can be considered useful aspects to solve the contradictions the NGOs faced to work with IK and GK approaches. Within these approaches, the NGOs' interventions, such as social network, social trust, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer, individual and community awareness, participation in economic & social activities, resource mobilisation, group feelings, savings, capital investment, human capacities, social safety net, social responsibility, institutionalised attitude, leadership among poor, management skills, local knowledge, introducing new knowledge, social learning, partnership, ownerships, and availability of community assets, have significant policy implication for community development in Bangladesh. Social capital was utilised as 'social glue', 'social fabric', and 'cement' of society's goodwill for a cohesive society. Empowerment was seen as a desirable process by which individuals, typically 'the poorest of the poor', take direct control on their own lives.

One of the important aspects of the thesis has been to investigate IK as social capital in Bangladesh. The thesis proposes that this capital has a great policy implication for developing countries such as Bangladesh. The research found that Bangladesh is a resourceful country in this regard. It also found that IK in Bangladesh had the distinct characteristics of social capital. The proper utilisation of IK can solve many problems, such as external intervenors, donor dependency, and organisational autonomy. IK was seen as a social product and

marketable good that was helpful for increasing 'self-sufficiency' and 'strengthening self-determination' among the blacksmiths and goldsmiths. IK proved to be a 'social talent', which brought confidence, freedom, and independence among them. It was exchangeable, transferable, and it had social intercourse among individuals, families, and neighbours. As a part of a social unit, such IK was considered a potential social resource that made for goodwill, fellowship, and sympathy. This IK generated a sense of citizenship, which enhanced 'reciprocity, trust and interactive decision-making' and fostered security in the interactions. It was used as local socio-economic fabric that reinforced shared values and built-up trust-based relationships. As a 'social art' or 'social talent', this gave them a distinct identity in the community.

The thesis argues that, without diminishing conflict between IK and GK, a real community development policy through NGOs' interventions would not be possible. In this view, the thesis proposes some new ideas, which could be considered effective tools to formulate a community development policy for Bangladesh. The thesis presented some interesting and useful indicators (Chapter Six) in order to validate a 'new knowledge paradigm'. These included a new vision of science; community development- an appropriate forum for social learning; developing effective partnership channels: social problem-solving mechanisms; real participation: reduced exclusion of local poor people and marginalisation of local knowledge; development ownership: space for local community; localisation of global knowledge; and considering 'global aid as capital'. Further, the thesis argues that science should conceive a 'new vision'. Today's science is required to be more accountable, more communicative and more dialogical. Science should comprehend the fact that 'science is a product of culture, or cultures'. The research found that, because of globalisation, the conventional vision of science ignored poor people's feelings and their adaptability on the one hand, and the practical value of IK on the other. The thesis proposes that this new vision of science should consider the concept of 'eco-development', which is more sustainable and adoptable with the local issues, including the environment.

The thesis proposes an effective partnership approach with associated groups for improving NGOs' activities, which would be totally different from the conventional partnership approach. The research proposes (based on the description of Chapter Six) that the Government should take initiative for this partnership. In this view, the research clarified that, within this new vision of community development approach, the NGOs should make partnerships with five

elements: IK-GK; NGOs-donors, NGOs-GOs, NGOs-NGOs; and NGOs-political leaders-civil society-community and local power structure and vice versa. This partnership would be called 'social partnership' or 'public-private partnership' or 'social problem-solving mechanisms'. The thesis argues that this partnership could minimise many limitations and dilemmas that the NGOs faced (Chapter Six and earlier in this chapter). This partnership would be considered very effective to accommodate the elements of social capital and community empowerment toward achieving a comprehensive goal of community development. The research found that the NGOs' 'social enterprise' concept was considered a 'holistic approach'. This could create many ways to tackle the challenges (as discussed in Chapter Five). The value of this concept was that it could secure 'social responsibility', 'accountability', and 'knowledge ownership', and it could be useful as a powerful tool to secure equal distribution of profits and resources among the local producers.

The research found that the blacksmiths and goldsmiths could not integrate many of the elements of social capital and community empowerment effectively, due to the lack of coordination between the initiatives of formal and informal organisations. Like Khan & Seeley (2005:87-91), I believe that the linkages between formal and informal organisations and between social customs and state regulations could bring integrated efforts to achieve greater community development in Bangladesh. It was also seen that there was a lack of coordination between different formal organisations and the local government bodies. As a result, goods and services did not usually reach those who need them most. The thesis proposes that the whole process of community development should follow the view that 'community development is a learning process'; authentic learning should be a continuous process. This learning process would be helpful to coordinate and integrate the existing and newly innovated efforts on the one hand, and overcome the limitations of conventional roles (second section in Chapter Six) on the other.

The thesis purposes that an authentic participation policy can solve many contradictions and problems, such as questions of accountability, NGOs' political empowerment, lack of social trust, non-cooperation of civil society and GOs, domination of local power structures, and so on. The research found that the participation between NGOs and other associated groups, such as local producers, community leaders, civil society, GOs and local institutions was not authentic. The thesis proposes that participation should be 'real', where the power should be

held by the local people. This participation would be based on the indigenous structures, where the local people would be able to determine which project they prefer and how the resources would be mobilised and utilised for community development. The research found that the poor and marginalised individuals and communities, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, were not able to achieve the full potential of their capability because of constraints imposed by the social/institutional structures of customs, control, and power. The thesis proposes a more 'dynamic vision' that incorporated social networks and recognised dispersed and contingent power relations. This kind of participation could secure the development ownership for the local community, as the research found that it was appropriated by some powerful people (local leaders and politicians) and institutions (NGOs and donor agencies). NGOs' role as a 'social mobilisation' paradigm of development would be more helpful for empowerment, collective action, and engagement with the broader political system (Rahman, 2006:452). This would create space, where the poor could effectively negotiate the global discourses and frameworks of development from their particular experiences and images of reality, as Tembo (2003a) argues in his paper. In this way, the poor would find room for manoeuvre within which to influence the local, national and global processes and structures for their benefit.

The thesis proposes that policy should be based on the negotiation between local and global knowledge. The thesis also proposes that, through this negotiation process, external resources may be used, but should be utilised under the control and management of the local NGOs. But more attention should be given to whether any negative sign, for example, political networks, is usurping the benefits of this negotiation, as it was found that NGOs' social networks evolved negatively in Bangladesh. There is an opportunity for policy makers to learn what kinds of policies enhance or destroy existing social capital in a community (Dale & Sparkes, 2008:143). The local powerless people, such as blacksmiths and goldsmiths, should have full access to this negotiation process. The local context, local cultures, local peoples' capacity and local resources, their choices and decisions, should be considered seriously in these processes. The thesis argues that these processes can generate a new form of knowledge paradigm, which neither considered only the positive sides of global/scientific knowledge, nor rejected the basic value of local knowledge. It is argued that a group of development practitioners, who have a good knowledge of the particular community, and who have real dedication and patriotism, can develop such a

policy. This would be based on effective partnerships between local experts and local people.

Limitations and threats

The research faced a number of challenges at the field level; it was a big challenge to find out actual data considering the cross-cultural and sensitive issues. The research acknowledged that such a policy based on 'community development' approach is a hard-hitting topic, as it requires consulting with different groups from a wide perspective. The application of qualitative methods is one of the tough issues for such research, as was the consideration of ethical issues when working with the NGO staff members, local leaders, and community people (blacksmiths and goldsmiths). Some aspects of the research, such as utilisation of budget, NGOs' donor dependency, NGOs' commercial attitude, participatory planning, and NGOs' contributions on social capital and empowerment were again sensitive and complex issues. The relevant and useful information with proper concentration and examples were not always possible because of the limitations of time and resources. One of the most challenging limitations was to coordinate a huge amount of field data collected by a number of qualitative data collection methods and validated through triangulation. I still feel that much of the excluded data was important, but I could not use it because of the word limit of my thesis.

Claim for originality of thesis and contribution to new knowledge

The thesis is the output of my three years PhD work. It included a wide range of activities, such as research training, literature review, meetings with my supervisor, fieldwork data collection, data editing and data analysis, and writing up. Moreover, my knowledge and experiences have been developed through different seminars, conferences, workshops, and discussions with academics and researchers in Bangladesh and abroad. I experienced many difficulties, as I tried to concentrate on the particular research question within a broad spectrum and with a vast amount of literature review. However, with the guidance of my supervisor, I focused on the enquiry into "the capacities of Bangladeshi NGOs for social capital and community development in the competing context of indigenous and global knowledge" (Chapter One). The greatest challenge was to absorb the whole range of literature from a world perspective and apply it to Bangladesh. It was particularly difficult to consider two important theories, such as social capital and community empowerment, and to establish their relevancy to community development through NGOs' interventions (Chapter Two). The literature review

clearly indicates that, at present, the NGOs have concentrated on social capital and community empowerment, where the decisive objective is to secure sustainable community development. But I became conscious of a gap in the literature from the Bangladeshi perspective, where NGOs' role in, for example, social capital formation, was little known (Mondal, A. H. 2000). But I felt the importance to develop a policy framework in the context of NGOs' role toward community development in the paradigm of global and local knowledge. I explained (in Chapter Two) that the NGOs were delivering most of the human services in Bangladesh due to the shortage of government initiatives.

A large number of research papers (Chapters One, Two and Five) were found on the role of NGOs and development, indigenous knowledge and its role in fishery, afforestation, environment, and so on. However, there are only a very few papers published on the NGOs' role in social capital formation and community development (Chapter Two). None focused on NGOs' capacity for community development in the context of competing indigenous and global knowledge perspectives. The research claims that it is an original attempt to formulate a knowledge paradigm for community development which distinguishes between the myths and realities of NGOs' capacity in Bangladesh through qualitative investigation. Based on the views of stakeholders and researcher's observations, an appropriate knowledge paradigm as policy framework was developed for community development in Bangladesh (Chapter Six).

The thesis challenged the conventional definition of 'community development' and established a new definition within the concepts of 'NGOs, social capital and community empowerment'. This new definition of community development is a useful knowledge addition for developing countries such as Bangladesh, where the NGO sector is the prime actor for community activities. The thesis showed how social networks in Bangladesh produced a number of negative characteristics, such as corruption, money laundering, political hegemony, and unequal distribution of capital and resources. The research discovered the gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities (Chapter Five), and showed how the NGOs could increase their capacities under the new knowledge paradigm (Chapter Six). It suggested an appropriate knowledge approach, which allowed a number of policy guidelines (policy implications section of this chapter) for the development specialists, policy makers, academics, NGO workers, and civil society. The research also verified the role of indigenous knowledge as social capital. It outlined some important agendas for NGOs' interventions. It located a

new vision of 'science', which should be based on local context considering a wider and global perspective. The thesis proposes that this new knowledge paradigm could be able to confirm that the new vision of science developed through associated partnership channels. This knowledge paradigm could secure the 'real participation' and 'development ownership' of the local people.

Further research

The research could not consult all aspects of social capital and community empowerment elaborately, but they were seen as important aspects for such a development policy. Many issues and areas were so complex that the research could not provide sufficient analysis and examples. It has identified the following areas for further investigation. These include the threats from the local power structure; nature, causes and trends of NGOs' political networks and empowerment; NGOs' donor dependency and threats toward self-reliance; NGOs' exclusion of the 'ultra' poor and the impact of community development.

One of the most important areas was the NGOs' political networks and empowerment, which was seen as a negative sign for community development. This is a big challenge to social capital and community empowerment, where the term 'network' is usually considered a positive concept for community development. The research found NGOs' activities to be contradictory as I defined the NGOs' role for social capital in the Chapter Two (for example, the opinion of Newton, 2001:206). It was seen that, in many cases, the NGOs destroyed social capital rather than created it. It is significant that this trend has now strongly evolved in NGOs' activities in Bangladesh. The finding confirmed that the newly evolved power structure came through the same political networks as it became one of the central tensions to get support from the government and other international lobbies. As a result, NGOs' definitions, missions and visions were seriously weighed down.

The local power structure was one of the negative forces for NGOs' community development activities. But the literature confirmed that this power structure is an important consideration in development activities in countries, such as Bangladesh, where it still had strong control over local peoples' lives and livelihoods. It showed that both NGOs created a substantial level of social capital and community empowerment, but these outputs could not be sustained. Moreover, this local power structure considered NGOs to be their rival groups. It was also seen that local religious leaders had a good control on local people and resources. They were also a part of the local power structure, but they frustrated

many NGOs' initiatives. The research argues that it is wise to negotiate and create partnerships, rather than to form a parallel power structure to foil them. The further research should investigate the causes of the anti-behaviour of local power structures, how the NGOs could bring a positive change in the power structure, and how the government can help the negotiation processes.

The concept of 'social enterprise' in NGOs' activities is fascinating; it is one of the rising aspects of NGOs' development intervention. The thesis stated a number of advantages to this approach (Chapter Five). Social enterprise is considered a process that catalyses social change and addresses important social needs in a way that is not dominated by direct financial benefits for the entrepreneurs. Rather, it is seen as an intervention which has a relatively higher value for promoting social benefits, rather than capturing private economic value (Mair & Matri, 2006:36). This concept is also valuable in resolving negative issues, such as NGOs' commercial attitude (money laundering), exclusion of the 'ultra' poor, monolithic approach, marginalisation, and high interest rate on micro-credit. The research found that the academic discussion is recent and undeveloped. Yet the NGOs had not got sufficient experience in this field, which needs an in-depth study about its effectiveness and wider application. Above all, this would be helpful in mapping-out the role of government, civil society, local power structure, and NGOs.

The government's concern about NGOs' activities and their legitimacy was negligible, but, in general, the NGOs are committed to working to fulfil national development within the boundaries of government policy and regulations. The research showed that the government control over NGOs' activities was 'zero'. Sometimes, the NGOs were considered a parallel government. As a result, many government policies, decisions, and agendas were not successfully implemented due to NGOs' non-cooperation. On the other hand, both NGOs claimed that the government was not helpful in many of their activities, such as control over the market and local power structures. The thesis argues that a full-scale scientific investigation should be conducted by an external research group on this issue.

The thesis also proposes that, for greater community development, the government should work as a safety net, where NGOs' role should be more active on legal issues, safety and security, funding, and negotiation with the international bodies and donor agencies. The research argues that the government role is important for improving functions of NGOs' activities. These include equal partnership between the Northern and Southern NGOs, crucial links

between micro and macro level policies, hunting new sources for funding toward self-reliance, securing NGOs' long term funding requirement, transferring financial resources and increasing technical and organisational skills, preserving and accumulating NGOs' knowledge, valuing NGOs' networks, and activating NGOs' roles toward education and advocacy. It is true that most of the NGOs extended their activities throughout Bangladesh, and they had a very good access and strong acceptance by the grassroots people and institutions. The government should use NGOs' trust, relations and commitment to implement its national development policies. So, further research could provide sufficient information for understanding NGOs and government roles in this regard.

Finally, nation-wide research should be conducted to investigate the scope and value of IK. The thesis confirmed that Bangladesh's globalised knowledge approach is being adopted slowly, but still the majority of local peoples' livelihoods depend on IK based skills. Most of the NGOs' interventions are also based on IK. The research found that IK's social capital status was still problematic, as the civil society and most of the NGO staff members thought that the value of IK in Bangladesh was very high. Unfortunately, most of these IK based technologies are now in decline and its propagation is rare (Islam & Mia, 2007b:17). A further research project could identify the scope, limitations and prospects of IK in Bangladesh.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Working definitions of indigenous knowledge (IK)

Grenier (1998:1) says that indigenous knowledge (IK) refers to the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of women and men indigenous to a particular geographical area. The development of IK systems, covering all aspects of life, including management of the natural environment, has been a matter of survival to the peoples who generated these systems. Such knowledge systems are cumulative, representing generations of experiences, careful observations, and trial-and-error experiments.

Dutfield (2003:20) states that traditional knowledge commonly refers to knowledge associated with the environment rather than knowledge related to, for example, artworks, handicrafts and other cultural works and expressions (which tend to be considered as elements of folklore).

Johnson (1992:3-4) says that traditional knowledge (or what she calls 'traditional environmental knowledge') is "a body of knowledge built by a group of people through generations living in close contact with nature. It includes a system of classification, a set of empirical observations about the local environment, and a system of self-management that governs resource use".

Brooke (1993:36-37) states that IK includes facts, concepts, theories about the characteristics which describe the objects, events, behaviours and interconnections that comprise both the animate and inanimate environments of indigenous peoples. The various types of information and concepts that define an individual knowledge have been developed through that person's observations of, experiences with, and explanations about the physical environment and living resources that characterise the territory in which they live. The content and extent of knowledge varies from individual to individual and there can be a specialisation in expertise. The knowledge is commonly shared between individuals, which encourages an exchange and critique of both facts and idea a any one point in time; and it is transferred from one generation to the next through the oral tradition thus enabling the knowledge base of indigenous societies to be transmitted and expanded over time....Even though indigenous knowledge is not quantitative in nature, it does not mean that it is not precise. In fact, the need to be precise is one of the primary identifying elements of this knowledge base.

IK conference (2005:2) includes the following three definitions: IK refers to traditional and local knowledge existing within and developed around specific conditions of women and men indigenous to a particular geographic area in contrast with knowledge generated within the international system of universities, research institutes and private firms (Warren, 1991). The Convention on Biological Diversity (UN, 1992) calls on all the contracting parties to the

Convention to respect traditional indigenous knowledge with regard to the preservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use. For the World Bank (2004), indigenous knowledge refers to the large body of knowledge and skills that have been developed outside the formal educational system.

Nakashima & Roue (2002:1) define IK systems as the complex arrays of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations that guide human societies in their innumerable interactions with the natural milieu: agriculture and animal husbandry; hunting, fishing and gathering; struggles against disease and injury; naming and explaining natural phenomena; and strategies for coping with changing environments…. It includes not only knowledge but also know-how. Transmission is not only oral, but also in the context of doing.

Boven & Morohashi (2002:12-13) state that IK can refer to the knowledge belonging to a specific ethnic group, for example: 'IK is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.'

Flavier *et al*., (1995:479) denote that IK is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems.

According to IIRR (1996), 'IK is the knowledge that people in a given community have developed over time, and continue to develop. It is based on experience, often tested over centuries of use, adapted to local culture and environment, dynamic and changing'. IK may be related to a common practice seen in communities that are indigenous to a specific area.

Langill (1999 in Johnson, 1992)) says that IK can be defined as "a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature". Such knowledge evolves in the local environment, so that it is specifically adapted to the requirements of local people and conditions. It is also creative and experimental, constantly incorporating outside influences and inside innovations to meet new conditions. It is usually a mistake to think of indigenous knowledge as "old-fashioned", "backwards", "static" or "unchanging".

Warren (1990:2) describes indigenous knowledge as 'the systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of experiences, informal experiments and intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture.'

Hoppers (2004) says analysts have taken the definition and used it to clarify indigenous and traditional peoples as those who hold an unwritten corpus of long-standing customs, beliefs, rituals and practices that have been handed down from previous generations. They do not necessarily have to have claim of prior territorial occupancy to the current habitat as they may be recent immigrants, victims of forced removal, of forced labour or slavery.

Appendix 2: Research instruments

Questionnaire for NGO staff members

[The definitions of the concepts used in this research have been attached with this questionnaire. Please read those carefully before answering the questions. Please explain your opinions with providing sufficient examples. Your opinions will be used only for research purpose and its confidentiality will be strictly maintained]

1. What are the opportunities available to use indigenous knowledge (IK) in your organisation's policy making, planning and programme implementation?
2. What kinds of IK does your NGO emphasise for the beneficiary groups?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of such IK for community development?
4. What kinds of global knowledge (GK) does your NGO use?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of GK?
6. Which kind of knowledge (IK or GK) does your NGO emphasise and why?
7. We know that your NGO's ultimate target is to create social capital and community empowerment. What are the roles of your NGO in the following components of social capital and community empowerment? What are the limitations?
   a) Collective action (interaction among individuals, groups, neighbours, communities, agencies and vice versa)
   b) Social trust
   c) Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
   d) Sharing values and norms
   e) Improving participation
   f) Developing local leadership
   g) Increasing problem assessment capacities
   h) Improving critical awareness about people's needs
   i) Building empowering organisational structure
   j) Improving resource mobilisation
   k) Strengthen link to other organisations and people
   l) Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
   m) Increasing control over programme management
8. Do you consider local peoples' IK as social capital? How?
9. Do you think your NGO is facing donors' pressures in terms of local problem selection, self-decision making, fund allocation, programme implementation, and programme evaluation where your NGO is dependent on donors' support? How?
10. Are the poor socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of local people are the barriers for acquiring GK? If so, how?
11. Do you think localisation of GK is one of the strategies to overcome those barriers? If so, how?
12. What are your opinions about formulating a new knowledge approach for community development in Bangladesh? Identify the NGO's role in this regard?

Guidelines for FGD (NGO staff members)

1. General perceptions about indigenous and global knowledge
2. Application and importance of indigenous and global knowledge by your NGO
3. Their advantages and disadvantages

4. NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital on:
    a. Collective actions
    b. Social trust
    c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
    d. Sharing values and norms
5. NGOs capacities and limitations for community empowerment on:
    a. Improving participation
    b. Developing local leadership
    c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
    d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
    e. Building empowering organisational structure
    f. Improving resource mobilisation
    g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
    h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
    i. Increasing control over programme management
6. Consider local people's knowledge as social capital
7. Donor dependency in terms of identifying local problem assessment, self-decision making, fund allocation, and programme implementation and evaluation.
8. Local socio-economic, cultural and political conditions and use of global knowledge
9. Gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities and suggestions to overcome

Guidelines for FGD (Community leaders)

1. General perceptions about indigenous and global knowledge
2. Use of indigenous and global knowledge by the local people
3. Their importance, advantages and disadvantages
4. NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital in terms of:
    a. Collective actions
    b. Social trust
    c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
    d. Sharing values and norms
5. Your opinions about NGOs' capacities and limitations for community empowerment in terms of:
    a. Improving participation
    b. Developing local leadership
    c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
    d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
    e. Building empowering organisational structure
    f. Improving resource mobilisation
    g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
    h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
    i. Increasing control over programme management
6. Your opinions about the local people's knowledge as social capital
7. Your opinions about donor dependency in terms of identifying local problem assessment, self-decision making, fund allocation, and programme implementation, and evaluation.
8. Local socio-economic, cultural and political conditions and use of global knowledge
9. Gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities and suggestions to overcome

Guidelines for FGD (Community people)

1. General perceptions about indigenous and global knowledge
2. Types of indigenous and global knowledge that you are using
3. Your experiences about their importance, advantages and disadvantages
4. NGOs' services and limitations for social capital in terms of:

   a. Collective actions
   b. Social trust
   c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
   d. Sharing values and norms
5. NGOs' services and limitations for community empowerment in terms of:
   a. Improving participation
   b. Developing local leadership
   c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
   d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
   e. Building empowering organisational structure
   f. Improving resource mobilisation
   g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
   h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
   i. Increasing control over programme management
6. Reasons to involve the NGO and benefits (some examples)
7. Change before and after NGO involvement (some examples)
8. Opinions on NGO's working strategies (some examples)
9. Compare with other NGOs' activities
10. Your opinions about your existing knowledge as your capital
11. Your opinions about NGOs' donor dependency
12. Local socio-economic, cultural and political conditions and use of global knowledge
13. Gaps and limitations of NGOs capacities and suggestions to overcome

Guidelines for In-depth Case-study (NGO staff members)

1. Use of indigenous and global knowledge by your NGO
2. Advantages and disadvantages
2. NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital on:
   a. Collective actions
   b. Social trust
   c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
   d. Sharing values and norms
3. NGOs' capacities and limitations for community empowerment on:
   a. Improving participation
   b. Developing local leadership
   c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
   d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
   e. Building empowering organisational structure
   f. Improving resource mobilisation
   g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
   h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
   i. Increasing control over programme management
4. Importance of indigenous knowledge for community development in Bangladesh
5. Consider local knowledge as social capital
6. Donor dependency in terms of identifying local problem assessment, self-decision making, fund allocation, and programme implementation and evaluation.
7. Local poor socio-economic, cultural and political conditions and use of global knowledge
8. Gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities
9. Suggestions to formulate a new knowledge approach for community development in Bangladesh.

Guidelines for In-depth Case-study (community leaders)

1. Advantages and disadvantages of indigenous and global knowledge
2. Evaluate the NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital in terms of:
    a. Collective actions
    b. Social trust
    c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
    d. Sharing values and norms
3. Evaluate NGOs capacities and limitations for community empowerment in terms of:
    a. Improving participation
    b. Developing local leadership
    c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
    d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
    e. Building empowering organisational structure
    f. Improving resource mobilisation
    g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
    h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
    i. Increasing control over programme management
4. Importance of indigenous knowledge for community development by NGOs in Bangladesh (give some examples)
5. Donor dependency in terms of identifying local problem assessment, self-decision making, fund allocation, and programme implementation and evaluation.
6. Local socio-economic, cultural and political conditions and use of global knowledge
7. Your suggestions to improve local peoples' indigenous knowledge
8. Gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities
9. Suggestions to formulate a new knowledge approach for community development in Bangladesh.

Guidelines for In-depth Case-study (community people)

1. Description about the nature of your work
2. The problems of your business
3. The services that you received from the NGO
4. Change before and after NGO involvement
5. Your opinions about the methods of NGO working
6. Your thinking about your knowledge and skills as your capital
7. Evaluate NGOs' capacities and limitations for social capital in terms of:
    a. Collective actions
    b. Social trust
    c. Coordination and cooperation of mutual benefits
    d. Sharing values and norms
8. Evaluate NGOs' capacities and limitations for community empowerment in terms of:
    a. Improving participation
    b. Developing local leadership
    c. Increasing problem assessment capacities
    d. Improving critical awareness about people's needs
    e. Building empowering organisational structure
    f. Improving resource mobilisation
    g. Strengthen link to other organisations and people
    h. Creating equitable relationships with outside agents
    i. Increasing control over programme management
9. How your work is helping for community development (give some examples)

10. Your general opinions of NGOs' activities that use foreign donations (give some examples.
11. Local power structure and political conditions and use of your knowledge
12. Gaps and limitations of NGOs' capacities
13. Suggestions to overcome those.

Guidelines for PRA and participant observation

1. Local area office/office setting, geographical location, natural setting, activities and organisational culture, and service delivery systems
2. Mapping of community, community setting, physical infrastructure, and community people
3. Beneficiary group, their location, life style, occupations, activities, social interaction and behavioural pattern, cultural pattern, political process, leadership style, food habits, their values and norms, their activities, and responses, and local power structure.
4. Discuss with local leaders, NGO workers, representative of civil society, and seniors about the community and NGO's activities
5. List of local resources (including institutions), utilisation and mobilisation
6. Community's social network
7. Community bondage/social tie
8. Community conflict
9. Dynamics of the community/people
10. Observe the activities of community empowerment