

Role of Union Parishad (UP) For Implementation Social Safety Net Programs (SSNPS) in Rural Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of UP in implementing SSN programs in rural Bangladesh to reduce poverty. It uses a mixed method approach of research, where three types of research methods, such as questionnaire survey, key informant interview (KII), and observation have been used as well as the data were derived from VGD, OAA and EGPP program beneficiaries, the local public, UP members (former and present), government officials, NGO officials, Bankers and local elites in the program running area of Bangladesh. As per the methods of structured and semi-structured questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires and checklists have been used as data collection tools. The findings show that the UP has performed five functions effectively for the SSN program implementation. However, its activities are ineffective for implementing SSNPs at the rural level of Bangladesh. In this case, corruption, nepotism, disobeying the rules and law, political faction, political pressure on UP, lack of coordination and cooperation of the upazila administration, and lack of transparency and accountability are obstacles to the effective implementation of SSNPs through UP. The findings lead to some recommendations that will give insights to policymakers and professionals engaged in this field.

Key Words: Social safety nets programs, Poverty reduction, Union Parishad, Rural Bangladesh

Introduction

Social safety net programs were created mainly in the context of poverty reduction and ensuring security instead of poverty and insecurity (Ellis, Devereux & White, 2009). The concept of the social safety net is not new; indeed, the modern social safety net concept is derived from the idea of social security by political economists such as Adam Smith, Condorcet, and Turgot, which was the relief work in ancient times, became people-friendly in the context of economic crises (Kanbur, 2008). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, recognized the social security of human beings. Article 22 of this declaration states that “Everyone as a member of society has the right to social security” (Khan & Arefin, 2013). However, globally, ensuring social security remains a significant challenge in the context of poverty. It is estimated that approximately 730 million people worldwide live below the poverty line (UNDP, 2023). A study by the World Bank shows that nearly three billion people in half of the world live on less than two dollars a day (WB, 2017), of which one-third, almost 389 million, live in South Asian countries (UNDP, 2023). It is clear that a large section of society is at risk of poverty and insecurity; development is not possible without them. So it is imperative to protect mankind by eradicating poverty and

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guaranteeing basic rights. Social safety net programs are increasingly being implemented in various countries around the world to assist the most vulnerable populations in the hope of poverty alleviation (Rahman & Hossain, 1995). Indeed, the social safety net means such a web of activities that provide basic services to the public, which helps disadvantaged and vulnerable people to survive and be uplifted from poverty in society (Grosh, Del Ninno, Tesliuc, & Ouerghi, 2008). Scholars reveal that if the entitlements are ensured, welfare becomes in the people; hence, the social safety net is one of the main ways to make a welfare state, because it works to ensure the rights of needy people (Ellwood, 1988; Grosh, Del Ninno, Tesliuc & Ouerghi, 2008). Social safety nets have been given prime importance in the National Social Security Strategy to permanently eradicate poverty in the 'Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) after the MDGs period (GED, 2014; GED, 2016). In this regard, social safety net programs are one of the three main indicators of poverty: low productivity, poverty and low income, and anti-dependency activities through job creation, disaster risk reduction through training incentives, and capacity-building programs to reduce interdependency (Ellis, Devereux & White, 2009). Essentially, safety net programs as a method to ensure equity, social risk management, social protection, and poverty alleviation (Grosh, Del Ninno, Tesliuc & Ouerghi, 2008).

Bangladesh has shown considerable progress in reducing poverty towards the MDGs (GED, 2016) as well as committed to achieving 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' announced by the United Nations at the end of the MDG period in 2016, where poverty eradication is the first and foremost objective (WFP, 2018). Although the rate of poverty has reduced a little bit in recent years, the income disparity between the rich and the poor in society has also increased, the value of the Gini coefficient indicates the inequality of income between rich and poor people in the country was 0.39 in 2016, which increased to 0.45 in 2023 (Turag, 2023). Hence, it is apparent that the inequality caused by the unequal distribution of income has increased, and the income gap between rich and poor people is widening. As a result, the rich are getting richer day by day and the poor are getting trapped in poverty day by day. Indeed, Bangladesh is ahead of many developing countries in poverty reduction; however, a quarter of the total population lives below the poverty line (EAD, 2017). In this circumstance, the Bangladesh government has heavily emphasized social safety net programs as the main and well-established tool for poverty reduction, where attention has recently turned to their role in addressing gender and social inclusion aspects of development (GoB, 2013). Although, the budget allocation in the social security sector is not high, in 2017-18 it was only 13.5 percent (GoB, 2008); now, in 2023-24 is 17.5 percent (Islam, et, 2024), nevertheless, Bangladesh is continuing endeavor to implement the SSN programs through making the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) for eradicating poverty focus on the SDGs (GED, 2014; GED, 2017). In this regard, according to articles 59 and 60 of the constitution of Bangladesh, local government ordinance, 1983, as well as VGD, OAA and EGPP programs' implementation guidelines, 2011 & 2013, the union parishad, as a local government authority at the rural level, is liable to implement the social safety net programs. Besides, the upazila parishad administration and related structures work to supervise and coordinate the implementation work. Therefore, it is very important to ensure the effectiveness and good governance of the related structures for the successful implementation

of the program. For relevant reasons, the main objective of this study is to identify the roles of the union parishad in implementing the SSNPs as well as to find out the problems in implementing the functions.

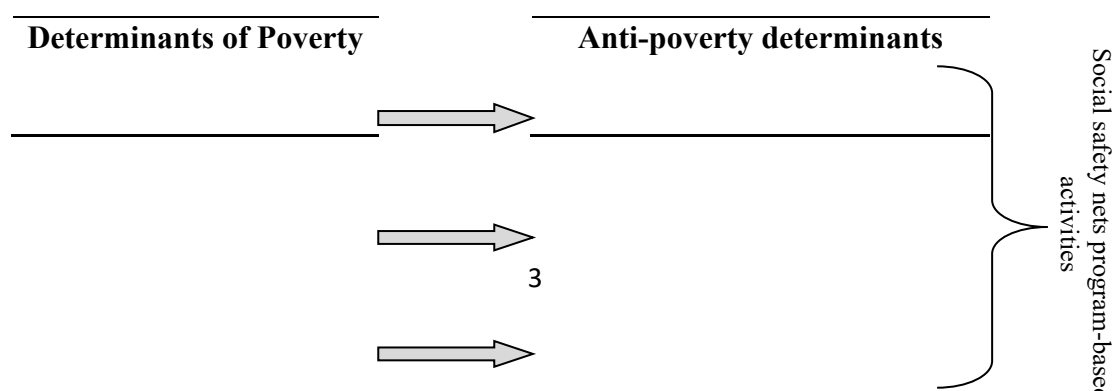
Literature Review

Social Safety Nets and Rural Poverty Reduction: Conceptual Analysis

Social safety net is a major component of social protection or social security system, where ‘social assistance’ and ‘social transfers’ are used as synonymous words for social safety net (Paitoonpong, Abe & Puopongsakorn, 2008). Indeed, the social safety net is a non-partnership-based system which regular and practical assistance to the disadvantaged and poor (WBG, 2015). In addition, the social safety net is a specialized tool (Chu & Gupta, 2002) a type of social assistance program (Howell, 2001) to mitigate the potential adverse effects of poverty through specialized areas of providing assistance or subsidies to improve the quality of life of individuals, families and communities who are disadvantaged in society (Chu & Gupta, 2002; Howell, 2001). Hence, the social safety nets are one kind of support-based program for poor and low-income families in society through which social barriers can be reduced, employment can be arranged for the unemployed, and they can be established as self-reliant (Adema, 2006).

In the context of the developing world, various types of social assistance programs are referred to as ‘social safety nets’, which is not a metaphorical concept; actually, it is essentially a programmatic net to protect those who are falling from higher societal positions (Grosh, Del Ninno, Tesliuc & Ouerghi, 2008). Although the concept of a social safety net, in the modern world, was developed and expressed through the Philadelphia convention of ILO in 1944 (Islam, 2015), however, in the 1990s, social safety net programs were initially formulated based on three objectives: poverty alleviation, formulation of a more politically acceptable adjustment program, and pursuing institutional reforms (Vivin, 1994). In this decade, when the financial crisis occurred in East Asian countries, SSNPs became popular in these countries, and in this context, this program was started in South Asian countries (Paitoonpong, Abe & Puopongsakorn, 2008). Although SSNPs operate in a ‘rights-based approach’ in developed countries; in the third world, however, it works as an approach to poverty resistance, where the main objective of SSNPs is to reduce poverty, assist in the development of disadvantaged people, and create a social security zone (Lindert, 2005). Hence, social safety nets are working worldwide as a big strategy with the intention of anti-poverty intervention. Devereux (2002) analyzed social safety net programs as a means of poverty and poverty reduction (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Determinants of poverty and means of poverty reduction through social safety net programs



Low productivity (chronic lack of work and low productivity)	Income generation (productivity-enhancement program)
Vulnerability (abruptly low income-high irreducible expenditure)	Safety nets Program (direct cash transfers, food assistance and soft loan programs)
Dependency (inability to work)	Social welfare (direct cash transfer programs)

(Source: Create by author as per the table of Devereux, 2002)

It can be seen from the above figure that the social safety net provides social protection to individuals through cash, food, loan assistance and employment-generating programs to reduce poverty in the event of sudden accidents, calamities, old age, physical illness, and disability, etc., so that their capacity increases and quality of life is improved. Thus, it appears that the social safety net system works as a poverty prevention tool in society, as per the nature of poverty.

The world has various types of social safety net programs for reducing poverty in the context of developed, underdeveloped countries. The World Bank has identified six basic types of social safety net programs concerning poverty reduction that are effective throughout the world, that are conditional cash transfers, unconditional cash transfers, school feeding, unconditional in-kind transfers, public works, fee waivers programs (WBG, 2015), among them three types of programs are continuing in all over the Bangladesh (GFD, 2010), that are: (1) Unconditional cash transfers programs, which is serve special benefit for beneficiaries in without condition, i.e. old age allowance (OAA), widow allowance program, etc, (2) Conditional cash transfers programs, which make the human capital through direct cash assistance, i.e. rural maintenance, vulnerable group development (VGD) and (3) Public works programs, which is a labor-based to combat seasonal unemployment of people, i.e. employment generation program for poor (EGPP) (GFD, 2010, WBG, 2015).

Union Parishad as Rural Governance in Bangladesh: An overview

Union parishad, an elected body, is responsible as the rural local authority for implementing the social safety net programs as per the constitutional provision and programs-oriented policy paper of the Bangladesh government, where the upazila parishad and related structures work to supervise and coordinate the implementation work of UP (Ahamed, 2000). According to the law of 1997, the UP consists of a total of 13 elected representatives, among which 1 chairman, 9 members from 9 wards, and 3 women members; also, there is one secretary as a government official (Siddiqui, 2000). This parishad executed autonomous roles as a rural parliament and judiciary for five years. In this case, the key and developmental

roles of UP as a unique institution in rural society, include implementing the development programs allocated by the central government, organizing the rural security and volunteer force, taxation, executing the government survey works, advocacy of government policy and programs, and jurisdiction works as an arbitration court, etc. (GoB, 1983).

Union parishad accomplishes and implements definite works by making various committees per the nature of programs or projects (Ahamed, 2000). In this case, the mentionable committees are budget and public administration, education, health, family planning, public health and disaster management, pandemic management, audit and accounts, social security and social welfare, agriculture and cooperative management, and cottage industry management committee, etc. (Ahamed, 2000). Moreover, as per subsection 67 of the Local Government Ordinance, UP can consist of various types of committees for implementing public-weighty works, and it can execute the works to the needs of other local authorities by collaboration with local administration (GoB, 1983). Hence, as the local governance, the UP is implementing the social security programs through coordination and communication with the upazila administration through the committee system. In this case, the upazila parishad administration is formed by an upazila executive officer, an elected chairman, all union parishad and municipal chairmen and one-third of women representatives, as well as the parliament member of this upazila, who is an advisor to this administration. This parishad administration mainly executed coordination among the unions in the upazila, project allocation and monitoring, and supervision of implementation works of unions' programs (Ahamed, 2000).

Thus, different types of social safety net programs are the security web in socially assisting poor, destitute, and low-income people to mitigate their poverty. In this perspective, the union parishad and relevant structures are assigned as responsible institutions to implement these programs in rural Bangladesh.

Methodology

A research question (RQ) is a summation of some queries in quantitative or qualitative research, which a researcher sets to know about answers in the study, and seeks to answer as per questions in the whole research (Creswell, 2012). In this study, as per the objectives and research title, two RQs are set:

1. What are the functions of UP to implement the SSNPs?
2. What are the problems of UP in implementing the programs' activities effectively?

Based on the RQ, this is a mixed approach research, a single study to understand research problems (Creswell, 2012), with qualitative and quantitative data, where mainly data have been collected from primary sources. However, secondary sources of data (books, articles, newspapers, reports, policy papers, and documents, etc.) have been used for research needs. In this study, the Roumari union of Kurigram district in Bangladesh has been selected as the research area, because it is a poverty-prone area and where the VGD, OAA and EGPP Programs are going on. The number of samples in this study is 440 and they have been selected purposively and regarded as random (Table 1). For collecting data, various types of methods have been used, such as a questionnaire (structured and semi-structured) survey, a

key informant interview (KII), and observation. Data were collected at various times from August to December 2018. Data have been represented with some tables and charts. The following table shows the research tools, respondents, number of samples, and sampling process at a glance.

Table 1: Research Methods, Sample and Sampling of this Study

Research methods	Data collection tools	Respondents	Numbers of sample	Sampling
Questionnaire Survey	Structured and semi-structured questionnaire	Beneficiaries of selected SSN programs	330 (110 from each program)	Purposive
		General public	100	Random
Key Informant Interview (KII)	Open-ended questionnaire	Upazila program officers	3 (1 from each program)	Purposive
		UP members (Former and present)	4	Purposive
		NGO officers	2	Purposive
		Bank officers	1	Purposive
Observation	Check list	Research area		Purposive

Findings

In this study, the research questions indicate and focus on various themes. A theme is the inherent idea and image of a research question (Creswell, 2012), which is the function of the Union Parishad to implement the SSNPs and the problems of UP in implementing the program's activities effectively. Based on these themes, attempts have been made to interpret the findings of research investigations.

Functions of the Union Parishad to Implement the SSN Programs

As per the VGD, OAA, and EGPP programs implementation guidelines (PIG), 2011 and 2013, the union parishad formed different program implementation committees (PIC) to implement various social safety net programs. These committees implement the program in coordination with the program implementation committee at the upazila level (Mamun, 2019). The composition and functions of the committee depend on the nature of the social safety net programs. It is seen that through analyzing the PIG, five types of functions are mainly important among the tasks that the union parishad committee does according to the policy in implementing the program, these are

(1) Ensuring selection and registration of beneficiaries properly

According to the guidelines of the VGD program, the target group of the program is mainly food insecure, landless, land owners with less than 1-10 decimals, families without reliable male earners, women of female-headed families, whose homestead conditions are relatively poor. Again, the OAA program guideline mentioned that the program beneficiaries will be those aged 65 years or more for men and 62 years or more for women, physically disabled, destitute, refugees and landless, widows, divorcees,

endangered, childless, and separated from families (DoSW, 2013; MoWCA, 2011). Thus, in every program, there is a rule to select poor people as program beneficiaries so that the right poor people can be selected, and only by selecting the right poor people can they be lifted out of poverty.

(2) Ensuring the timely delivery of the proper amount of assistance

Timely delivery of benefits or assistance in the right amount refers to delivering the service or assistance to the beneficiary from the program at the specified time and in the specified amount (DoSW, 2013; MoDMR, 2013; MoWCA, 2011). The distribution time and amount of assistance for the beneficiaries are mentioned in the PIG according to the nature of each program. In the PIG of VGD, for instance, there is a rule to provide beneficiaries with rice/wheat at 30 kg per month (MoWCA, 2011). In the implementation policy of the OAA program, there is a rule to pay the allowance to the beneficiary at the rate of six hundred taka every three months. If any members of the OAA die, the allowance for that month and the next two months' allowance have to be paid to the nominated person (DoSW, 2013). In the implementation guidelines of EGPP, the program member has to be paid a wage of two hundred taka for 7 hours of work per day for a total of 40+40 days of employment in the program (MoDMR, 2013).

(3) Maintaining communication with upazila committee and beneficiaries

UP creates communication with upazila authorities through their committee system; in this case, they do a variety of communicative tasks. In the VGD program, organize training for the socio-economic development and social awareness build-up of VGD women through the Union Committee-NGOs/UP itself and organize meetings in the presence of upazila authorities (MoWCA, 2011). Again, the OAA program is said to contact the elderly by checking the condition of the elderly beneficiaries, ascertaining whether any old age pension member is dying in the area, and ensuring a copy of the certificate issued by the UP for receiving the allowance (DoSW, 2013). The EGPP program calls for coordinating meetings with the PIC before the start of the project, during the middle and at the end of the implementation, every project under implementation in the Union at least once a week by the UP chairman and making contact with the beneficiaries by monitoring about the beneficiaries of the project (MoDMR, 2013).

(4) Ensuring transparency and accountability to express of the program progress

Transparency and accountability are the pivotal factors for implementing the SNPPs properly. In this regard, As per the VGD program policy, it is the responsibility of the UP committee to install signboards indicating the progress and nature of the entire program (MoWCA, 2011); and to inform the public through miking about the nature of the program and the selection of beneficiaries in the OAA program (DoSW, 2013); and the committee has responsible in EGPP program to record information on the notice board of the union parishad and publish it through the billboard to inform the public about the traits of the programs (MoDMR, 2013). Indeed, the problems of programs and possible solutions are to be identified through this function.

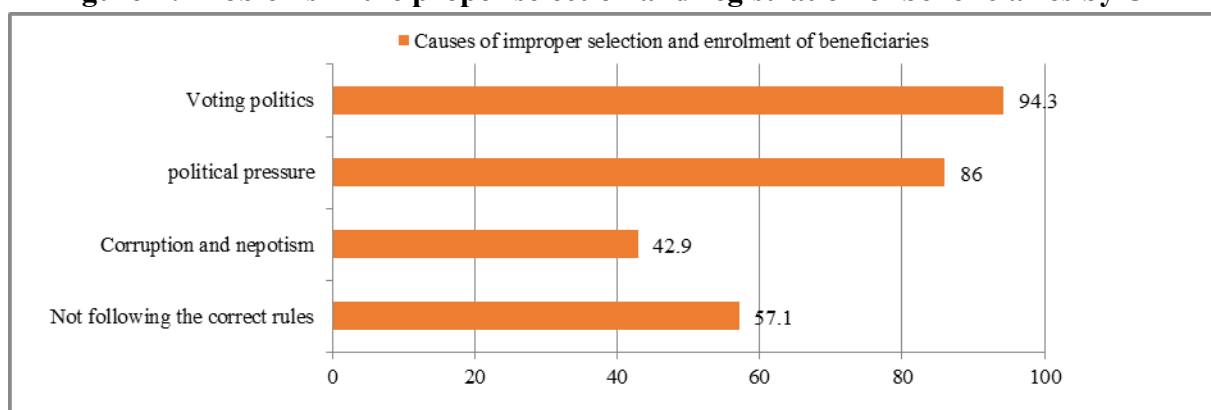
(5) Regular monitoring and reporting to upazila authorities on the implementing process of the programs

A considerable portion of the success or failure of the program depends on the monitoring report. According to the program implementation policy, a monitoring report means preparing a report based on the prescribed table by recording the amount of allocation given by the program, the number of beneficiaries, and whether the beneficiaries are receiving the allocation or assistance properly. For example, the Union Committee will monitor whether the VGD women are receiving the prescribed amount of food allocated in the VGD program and whether the savings money is being deposited. The UP will have to submit the food consumption report within 5 days each month to the concerned Upazila Women's Affairs Officer (MoWCA, 2011). It is very important to submit timely reports to the concerned authorities at each stage of the program.

Problems of UP in Implementing the SSN Programs' Activities Effectively

In this section, the researcher has tried to interpret the problems that are obstacles to implementing SSN programs by UP through the respondents' findings. **Firstly**, in the interview, a question was thrown to the general public as to whether the beneficiaries' selection and registration had been made properly by UP, where 70% of respondents expressed that the selection and registration process was improper. In this case, they mentioned that claiming money in enrolment, nepotism, not following the correct rules, political pressure, and voting politics as the problems in the proper selection and registration of beneficiaries by UP (Figure 2).

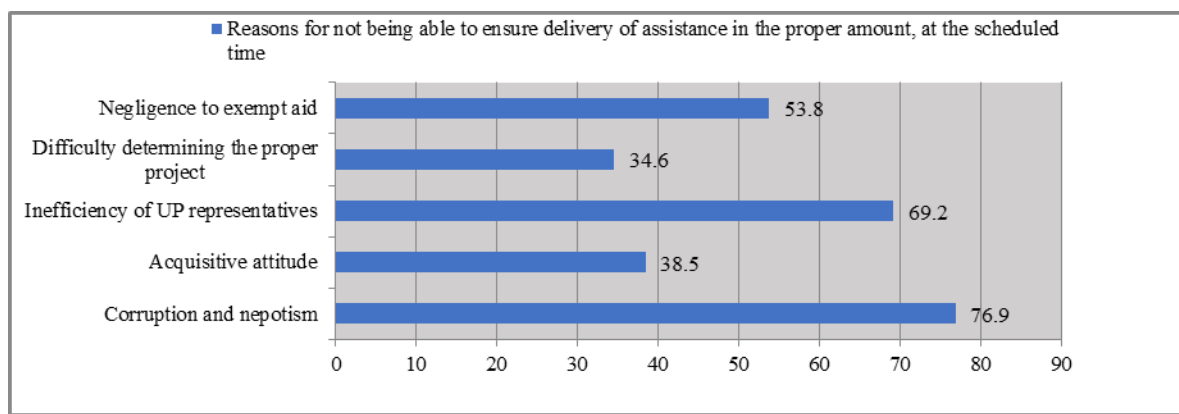
Figure-2: Problems in the proper selection and registration of beneficiaries by UP



(Source: Field Survey, 2018)

Secondly, an interview question was to the beneficiaries whether they received the proper amount of assistance within a determined time through UP. In this case, 165 persons (50%) of the beneficiary respondents responded negatively. In their opinion, corruption and nepotism, acquisitive attitude of UP members, inefficiency of UP representatives, difficulty determining the proper project, and negligence in exempt aid are the problems in ensuring the proper amount of aid in a determined time for beneficiaries through UP (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Problems in ensuring the proper amount of aid in a determined time for the beneficiaries through UP



Source: Field Survey, 2018)

Thirdly, one of the main functions of the UP and related committees is to inform the people about the nature and progress of various social safety net programs running in the Union. Through this, the transparency of the program-oriented work of the UP is revealed and accountability to the people is ensured. However, in this case, as per the obtained responses from general respondents and field observation, it is seen that the UP has fully failed to do its determined functions (Table 2).

Table 2: Functions and problems of the UP to ensuring transparency and accountability

Programs	The bestowed responsibilities of the UP to ensure transparency and accountability (As per program implementation policy)	Actual Picture of measures taken by the union parishad to ensure transparency and accountability (As per observation and respondents' responses results)	Remarks
VGD	Installation of sign boards To ensure transparency and accountability of the program by informing the people, the UP Committee has to install signboards on the UP premises. The center name, total number of VGD women, quantity of food ration, date of distribution, amount of compulsory monthly savings of each woman and duration of VGD food cycle will be written on the signboard clearly. The UP has to inform people about the VGD committee.	Observation of the UP in the study area shows that the UP and concerned committee have not installed any signboards in the UP premises regarding the nature and progress of the program. A total of 100 respondents from the general public, all of whom opined that they do not know who is responsible for the VGD committee.	Information openness and publicity is 100% absent.

OAA	Extensive miking at the union level To ensure transparency and accountability in the selection process of the beneficiaries, the respective Union Committees will undertake extensive miking for the selection of beneficiaries; Open membership selection The vetting process has to be done through open discussions with the local public in open spaces or large halls.	All respondents opined that the union committee concerned never conducted any miking for selection of the beneficiaries and they were never verbally informed about it. Never held any discussion or meeting with the general public regarding the selection of old-age beneficiaries.	Transparency and accountability in the selection process are completely absent.
EGPP	Publicity in the UP's notice board It has to take measures to publicize through the UP notice board details of the union plans regarding approved social projects, beneficiaries, and budget allocations; Installation of signboards/ billboards in the project area Signboards/billboards have to be installed in the project area to inform the public about the nature and progress of the project.	As per the observation, there is no UP notice board details of Union Plans regarding approved social projects, beneficiaries, and budget allocations; Observation of the UP in the study area shows that the UP has not installed any signboards/ billboards in the project area regarding the nature and progress of the program.	Proper information openness and publicity is absent.

(Source: Field observation and Survey, 2018)

Finally, one of the main tasks of UP in implementing SSNPs is regular monitoring, follow-up and reporting of the work process and sending it to the appropriate authorities. However, as per data from the KII, there is political engagement; various political issues and personal negligence of UP members, lack of punctuality, and lack of coordination with the upazila administration are the main problems in sending monthly reports to higher authorities (Table 3).

Table 3: The role of the UP-relevant structures in sending the monitoring report based on the opinion of the officers concerned with the Upazila level

Program and key informant persons (KI)	Role of the UP in sending review report (Based on the opinion of KI)	Remarks
VGD Upazila Women Affairs Officer (WAO)	There is a rule to send the report of the VGD program to the office on the 5th of every month through the secretary of the UP. But in this case, it is not sent even after the due date.	Punctuality is lacking of the UP
OAA Upazila Social Service Officer (SSO)	The UP is often not able to send the reports on time about the old people. Sometimes the report is delayed due to the political engagement of the chairman, and various political issues. Another problem is that there are many errors in the provided reports, which creates problems in preparing annual consolidated reports.	Lack of Punctuality and errors reports

EGPP Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO)	There is a rule to be sent by the secretary of the UP (Secretary of EGPP committee) in the report form provided by the program on field monitoring reports, progress of work, and payment of wages to members in every week. But a major problem in this case is that it is not sent every week.	Irresponsibility of the UP
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Discussions

This study's first research question is what are the functions of UP in implementing the SSNPs? The finding shows that the Union Parishad accomplishes a plethora of functions to execute and implement social safety net programs. As per the PIGs, the functions are different for each program; however, it has a common phenomenon among them. In this case, the UP does mainly five types of functions, which are the selection and registration of beneficiaries, delivery of assistance on time, maintaining communication with Upazila authority and beneficiaries, expressing program progress to ensure transparency and accountability, program follow-up and reporting to Upazila authorities on the implementation process of the programs. Noteworthy that, Union Parishad is the key body at the local rural level for executing different programs, e.g., social protection, relief works, as well as local development and administration management for the local public (Ahmed, 2000; Siddique, 2005).

The second research question is, what are UP's problems in implementing the programs' activities effectively? The findings show that various types of problems exist in the program implementation work of the Union Parishad. Notably, the program beneficiaries' selection and registration are being improperly done due to bribes, nepotism, disobedience to law and rules, political pressure, and voting politics. Besides, the acquisitive attitude and inefficiency of UP members, difficulty determining the proper project, and negligence in exempt aid are creating obstacles to getting the proper amount of assistance in the determined time for beneficiaries. Moreover, Program-related UP committees are failing to ensure transparency and accountability. The finding shows that as per the program implementation procedure, the UP committees have not set up the billboard, signboard, or notice board about the program's progress and process as well nor have not miked properly for publicity in rural areas. In addition, one of the main tasks is monitoring and follow-up and informing higher authorities about the programs' progress. The findings show that the UP is not fully effective in this work due to the political engagement, political issues and personal negligence of UP members, lack of punctuality, and lack of coordination with the upazila administration. Mohabbat Khan (2010) indicated that political pressure, voting politics, administrative complexities and non-cooperation, corruption and conflicts among UP representatives, and lack of training and awareness are the major constraints of UP in implementing various programs with SSNPs.

Conclusion

The literature reviews show that social safety net programs are essential for reducing poverty and the Bangladesh government has highly emphasized these programs as per achieving the SDGs' main goal of poverty eradication and the UP has been assigned as a local body to

implement the SSN program effectively. Hence, the implementation functions should be effective because rural poverty reduction depends on the proper implementation of the UP. However, the research findings show that SSN program implementation activities are not effective through the UP at the rural level of Bangladesh. In this case, as per findings, various problems have been identified in UP's implementation function of SSN programs, i.e., corruption, nepotism, disobeying the rules and law, political faction, political pressure on UP, lack of coordination and cooperation of upazila administration, lack of transparency and accountability, etc. The findings expressed major problems for implementing SSNPs effectively in rural Bangladesh.

Some initiatives need to be taken to implement the SSN programs through UP in rural Bangladesh. Firstly, although there is a program-focused committee for the enrollment of program members at the village level, it can be seen that the UP representatives do the main work of preparing the list. Due to this, the question of nepotism and political involvement in determining members arises. To solve this problem, it is necessary to form a verification committee with district, upazila and local dignitaries, who will check the quality of the members of the given list and prepare the final list. Secondly, Local political leaders or representatives exert pressure to elect members of UP according to their preferences. As a result, those who are poor are left out in many cases. It is for this reason that it is important to create an environment free of political pressure in the selection of members and support activities to make the safety net program a success. Also, updating and maintaining the lists, follow-up and monitoring, and encouraging private enterprises for program implementation works should be set as the functions of the UP in the implementation of SSNPs.

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