

Community Improvement through Participatory Planning

Case Study: Purana Paltan Community Organization

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Abstract. Dhaka, the capital as well as administrative and commercial hub of Bangladesh, has seen phenomenal growth in recent decades. The rapid growth of population in the city has been causing a major strain on the existing urban services and infrastructures. In addition to that, demand for the provision of necessary services is climbing at a rate which is becoming very much difficult for the city to keep pace with. The city people are being confronted by numerous problems in their routine life. Traffic jam, scarcity of water, gas and electricity, water logging in the monsoon period, drug addiction etc. have become a common phenomenon to the city dwellers and their community altogether. Many initiatives have already taken by both public and private organizations to solve the community problems. But those seldom came to fruition as most of them failed to address local issues properly. Lack of proper institutional setup, lack of community involvement, disregarding the people's opinion, political instability etc. is hampering the efforts of solving community problems.

When the city authority is being unable to identify the problems of each unit and generate solution, community based organizations are playing a major role for the developing countries over the recent years in this respect. Through solving the problems of each of the community, whole city or in the broader sense, whole country will be problem free. This method of community involvement seeks to ensure transparency, find out the core problems of an area and pay more attention on the problem solving by the community itself. It is focused on involving psychology of the local people in the selection, design, planning and implementation of programmes and projects that will affect them, thus ensuring that local perception, attitudes, values and knowledge are taken into account as fully as possible. So, a study involving the people for the community improvement is imperative to say the least. The present is centered on this issue.