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**Exploring reasons of variation in target achievement in sanitary latrine construction
under school sanitation programme of BRAC WASH**

**Tahmid Arif
Shamim Ahmed**

**Environment Research Unit
RED, BRAC**

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Abstract

Since 2007 BRAC's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme has been promoting construction of sanitary latrines with water source and waste management provision at the girls' secondary educational institutes in 150 sub-districts across Bangladesh. In all cases BRAC offered partial financial support for constructing sanitary latrines and rest of the cost was managed by the school authority. Three educational institutes from each union in a sub-district were considered for this intervention. Each educational institute received Tk. 35,000 from BRAC for procuring construction materials. However, it was observed that target achievement in constructing sanitary latrine was not equal in all the regions. For instance, in the south target achievement was lower compared to the north. Although, it was assumed that in the south achievement would be higher compared to the north as socioeconomic status of the south is better compared to the north. This study explored the reasons of different levels of target achievement in constructing sanitary latrine for girls' in those two regions. A qualitative study was done in Bogra, Thakurgaon, Khulna and Jessore districts. The first two districts were selected from the north and the rest two districts from the south. Each sub-district represented one district. From each sub-district five unions were selected for this study. Data were collected through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observations from WASH staff, school teachers, school management committee (SMC) members and guardians. Findings show that financial support of BRAC played a vital role in attracting majority of the institutions to construct the sanitary latrine. However, for some of the institutions particularly for those in the south, the amount of money allocated by BRAC was not attractive. It also shows that unanticipated price hike of construction materials, natural disasters such as cyclone and flood, political affiliation, unwillingness of some of the SMC members and school authorities, negotiation-related issues, school selection criteria and misconception about BRAC were some other major constraints against achieving the target in the south. Whereas in the north, necessity and design of the latrine, donation from the community people, self interest of teachers; SMC members and guardians, role of village WASH committee, role of female teachers, reputation of BRAC and support from the union *parishad* chairmen helped in achieving the target.

Introduction

Evidence shows that literacy rate among women in Bangladesh is substantially low compared to men (Schurmann 2009). Similarly, the rate of dropout among female students is higher than that of the male. Even though an UNICEF report shows that Bangladesh has been successful in achieving gender parity in primary and lower secondary education level enrolment, retention rate among the girls in secondary schools however, still remains low (IRIN 2009). According to a baseline survey on primary education conducted by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), the dropout rate for both boys and girls increased from 33% in 2002 to 47% in 2006 (Ahmed 2009). There are several factors associated with this high drop out rate of female students. One of these may be is the improper arrangement of latrine facilities for the girls or the total lack of it, which at first results in hesitation to attend schools during menstruation and at a later point dropping out. IRC (International Water and Sanitation Centre), The Netherlands supports this statement and according to them, absence of appropriate environment for menstruating girls is one of the vital reasons for their dropout from primary and secondary education which is notable in the rural part of Bangladesh (IRC 2005).

A study among adolescent girls of BRAC non-formal primary education shows that 81% of adolescent girls used old rags, cotton, cloths during menstruation (Ali *et al.* 1996). Use of such materials may result in emission of bad odors and leakage. When these are not efficiently managed, causing embarrassment to the girls especially when they have to spend long hours at schools. Moreover, if they want to change sanitary napkins they hardly get convenient places as well as separate latrines. This accelerates dropout of adolescent girls from schools. Furthermore, fear of eve teasing, sexual harassment in the common male-female toilets, absence of separate latrine for the girls, cultural and religious anxieties, absence of proper hygiene education, poor institutional infrastructure, etc. can be some other reasons responsible for higher rate of adolescent girls' dropout from schools (IRC 2005).

It is evident that obligation to fulfill Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and presence of many public private initiatives have increased access to education in Bangladesh. However, in many educational institutes basic necessities for students are still inadequate. In providing quality education basic necessities such as healthy learning environment play an important role where children can perform well. Children have right to basic facilities such as school toilets, safe drinking water, clean surroundings and information on hygiene and if these conditions are created, children come to school, enjoy learning, learn better and take concepts and practices on sanitation and hygiene back to their families, especially siblings (Snel 2004). According to UNICEF, schools are the central places in the community as well as most important places of learning for the children after family (UNICEF and IRC 1998). Likewise some other developing countries, sanitary and hygienic conditions at the schools of Bangladesh are appalling, characterized by the absence of adequate supply of safe water, sanitary latrines and hand washing facilities (Rashid 2009). There are around 17,000 secondary and junior secondary schools in Bangladesh. Of these, most of the schools lack adequate water and sanitation facilities (Nahar and Ahmed 2006). However, an educational institute with improved sanitation facilities can influence the communities through the students (UNICEF and IRC 1998).

For the well-being of the school going children, in 1992, the government of Bangladesh (GOB) initiated a pilot project in collaboration with UNICEF. The project was known as

'School Sanitation Project'. Approximately 4,500 primary schools in 44 districts were intervened and the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) and DPE with support from UNICEF, developed a school-based hygiene behaviour change project for both boys and girls under this project (Nahar and Ahmed 2006). The project recognized the need for separate latrines for boys and girls and hygiene education but the special need of girls' menstrual hygiene was not considered either in latrine provisioning or in hygiene education (Nahar and Ahmed 2006). The project was mainly primary school focused and during its piloting from 1992 to 1996 the school management committees were not consulted for any intervention but during the period from 1996 to 2000 they were incorporated for its successful outcome (Nahar and Ahmed 2006). Later in 2006 the project was extended to 123 sub-districts across 24 new districts and covered 18,000 primary and 615 secondary schools. The project was then known as 'Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water Supply in Bangladesh Project (SHEWA-B)' (Nahar and Ahmed 2006). In 1995, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched "Health-promoting Schools" programme in Bangladesh to mobilize and strengthen health promotion and education activities at the local and regional levels and with this to improve health of students, school personnel, families and other members of the community (Snel 2003).

The GOB has been undertaking several policies over the last 20 years to increase the enrollment of girl students. "Female secondary school stipend" was one of such initiatives (Schurmann 2009). BRAC and other national level non-governmental organizations also have taken several initiatives for the female students to increase their enrolment in schools and to provide basic education. Of late, to facilitate education, BRAC has initiated school sanitation programme in 2007 through its water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme. One of the important objectives of this programme is to improve healthy teaching-learning environment through health education and providing separate sanitary latrine for female students. Children are the agents of change at home, in the community, and as future parents, and investment in education is more productive (Snel 2004). BRAC WASH programme considers this fact and believes that once the students have learned about sanitary latrine and became habituated to use it, they will continue to practice till the end of their lives and will bring knowledge diffusion for other people as well as to their successors. Besides, it is expected that this intervention will facilitate to reduce dropout of school going children, particularly of adolescent girls.

With this end in view, WASH programme of BRAC is promoting separate sanitary latrines for the adolescent girls along with covered bin (for dumping used sanitary pad) and water source in some selected educational institutions (as per programme policy) in 150 sub-districts across the country. In order to construct sanitary latrines the respective schools share a certain amount of money while BRAC provides financial support of Tk. 35,000. However, it was observed that in achieving the target of construction of sanitary latrine some areas were performing better than others. For instance, the southern part had lower achievement rate compared to the northern, although, it has been assumed that achievement would be higher in the southern part than the northern as economic status of the people in the former was better. But the result, provided by the programme for the first phase up to July 2008, gave a reverse picture. In the north the target achievement rate is higher (51%) than the southern part (32%) (Appendix 1). It indicates that the target of installing school sanitary latrines was not satisfactory in the southern part compared to the northern part up to July 2008.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to explore the reasons behind the difference in levels of target achievement in constructing sanitary latrines under BRAC WASH school sanitation programme in northern and southern parts of Bangladesh.

The intervention: The school sanitation programme of BRAC WASH

The vision and mission

BRAC WASH programme is providing sanitary latrines along with water source to girls' schools in 150 sub-districts across the country since 2007. In each union three schools are selected for constructing sanitary latrines. Besides achieving 100% sanitation coverage the WASH programme has a vision to reduce dropout of adolescent girls who leave school due to problem of proper sanitation facilities. In Bangladesh, the adolescent girls usually discontinue to go to educational institutes during menstruation due to lack of any separate latrine for them. It is a crucial problem in the rural areas of the country where most of the educational institutes lack appropriate sanitation facilities particularly for girls. BRAC WASH programme is working with school management committees to install separate latrines for girls where it is lacking. BRAC provides Tk. 35,000 (currently this amount is Tk. 45,000) to each selected schools for construction one latrine for girls' and full consultation to the school managing committees.

School selection

The secondary schools/madrasas are being provided with separate sanitary latrine for girls. The following criteria are followed in selecting the institutes:

- a) Should be a girls' high school
- b) Should be a co-education high school where number of female student is considerably higher (whenever girls' secondary school is unavailable)
- c) Should be a girls' *dakhil* madrasa (whenever above two categories are unavailable)

At first the girls' high schools are contacted for intervention. If the targeted numbers of girls' high schools are not available then the second category is considered. Thus, finally, the girls' *dakhil* madrasas are contacted if the first previous two categories are not found. However, during the field investigation it was found that in some cases all the three categories were tried to consider for programme intervention.

Coordination, advocacy and counseling

Before selecting eligible educational institutions, the Village WASH Committees (VWC), regional managers, *upzaila* managers and programme organizers (PO) of WASH arrange several meetings with the beneficiaries. Participants of these meetings are members of school managing committees, teachers, students, parents, local elites, chairmen, imams and some common villagers. These meetings are arranged to inform about the vision and mission of the programme, benefits, procedure of work, how it will facilitate education and health of the area, type of facilities to be provided, how the financial part will be managed, how the ownership will be developed, etc. The POs do the main part of counseling as they maintain contacts with the beneficiaries continuously.

Fund management

To build the sense of ownership of the latrine the total construction cost is borne by both the WASH programme and the respective school authority. Approximately Tk. 60,000 - Tk. 80,000 is required to install a latrine. The cost depends mostly on the decoration (exterior and interior fittings) of the latrine and local market price of the construction materials. The allocated money is not provided in cash but in three phases during purchasing any construction materials or giving labour cost only. A locally formed tripartite purchase committee manages the allocated money along with the amount shared by the respective committees. The members of this committee are the upazila accountant of BRAC, a teacher from the respective school and the programme organizer for the union.

Sources of money shared by the school authorities in both the regions

School authorities and WASH officials mentioned several sources from which they managed fund. Donation of the teachers, SMC members and UNO, student scholarship subsidy, student admission fee, examination fee, coaching fees, various fees from student (e.g. Tk. 50 per student each year who passed examination, Tk. 100 for each student to get certificate), money from student scholarship fund, selling old furniture and other materials, income from school shops, income from trees, vegetables and selling fishes from ponds of schools, annual *jalsha* (*Madrasa*) and mortgaging property (Land) (*Madrasa*), etc. were some the sources.

Latrine construction and facilities provided

Latrines are installed as per the uniform design approved by the WASH programme. The entire work is done under close supervision of site engineer of BRAC WASH programme. Local mason and labourers are hired for construction work. Construction materials are purchased from local markets. Each of the latrine consists of twin pits (10 rings each), pucca superstructure, tubewell (or water pump where electricity is available), one covered bin for dumping used sanitary pads, towel holder, mirror, soap case, etc. Some decorative items like mirror, towel, etc. are purchased to attract the girls to use the latrine whenever necessary (Appendix 8).

Maintenance

School authority is responsible for the maintenance of the latrine. Mainly they employ a caretaker or cleaner to perform regular maintenance and cleaning of the latrine. They also look after the latrine so that no one other than the girl students can use the latrine. The entire procedure is done under the close and regular supervision of the local respective BRAC WASH staff.

Methods

Selection of the study areas

Four sub-districts from northern and southern part of Bangladesh (two from each region) were selected for the study. These regions were selected due to variations in target achievement rate in installing the latrines. All these four sub-districts were selected from four districts where BRAC WASH programme has been working since 2007 that is from first phase. These four study areas were Rupsha sub-district from Khulna district and Monirampur sub-district from Jessore district representing the southern part and Pirgonj sub-district from Thakurgaon district and Sherpur sub-district from Bogra district representing the northern part of the country (Figure 1 and Appendix 3). From each sub-district, five unions were selected based on target achievement rate. Secondary information, that is, status of target achievement up to July 2008 was considered in conceptualizing this study but during the survey and preparing the report, data up to October 2008 were considered. The reason is that, this study was a qualitative study which was performed from November 2008 to January 2009 in the selected sub-districts but conceptualized in June 2008. It took relatively larger time to initiate and complete the survey and within this period BRAC WASH programme moved much forward towards its target-achievement regarding school sanitation programme.

Survey designing, training and data collection

A qualitative study was performed from November 2008 to January 2009 in these four sub-districts. In each sub-districts four research assistants (RA) were employed for data collection. Focus group discussions (FGD), in-depth interview and observations were performed to collect information. Three sets of questionnaires (for WASH staff, school teacher) were formulated for data collection. Before final data collection these were finalized after field testing. RAs were given training on data collection. They were divided into two groups (two per group) and asked to conduct FGD and in-depth interview with the selected population. Observation was conducted with a checklist in each educational institution and photographs were taken (Appendix 2).

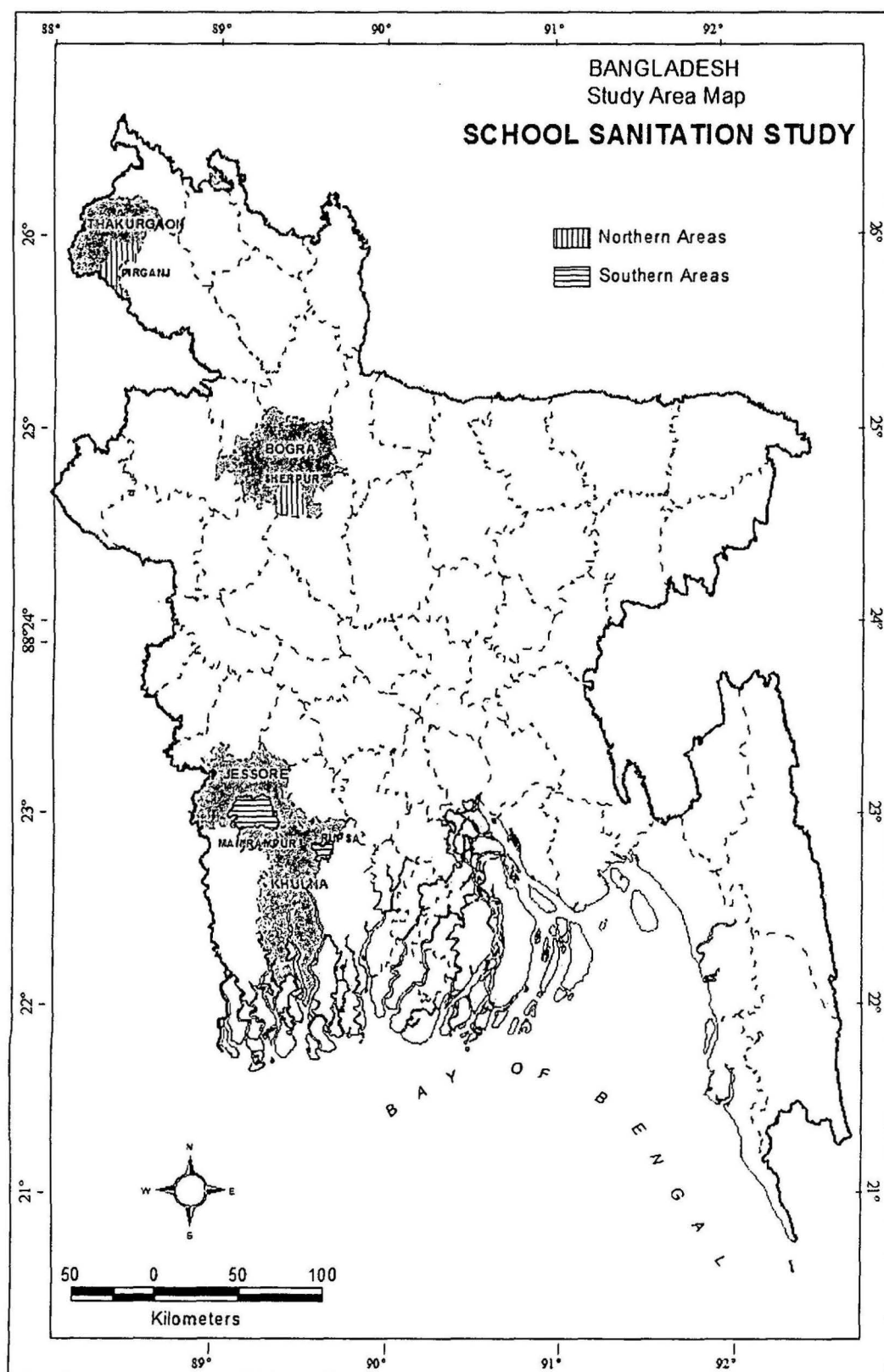


Figure 1. Selected districts for the study

Study population and sample size

In this study four types of educational institutions viz. the girls' high school, co-education high schools, girls' madrasa and co-education madrasa were investigated. Five schools from each of the four sub-districts were selected for investigation – two girls' high schools, two co-education high schools and one madrasa (girls' or co-education). Data were collected from the school managing committee (SMC) heads and members of respective educational institutions, purchase committees for this programme, concerned teachers, BRAC WASH staffs viz. senior regional manager; regional manager; upazila manager; programme organizer; site engineer, students, parents, sub-assistant engineer of Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) and local elites viz. Imam, union *parishad* chairmen or member or other community leaders (Appendix 6).

Sampling technique

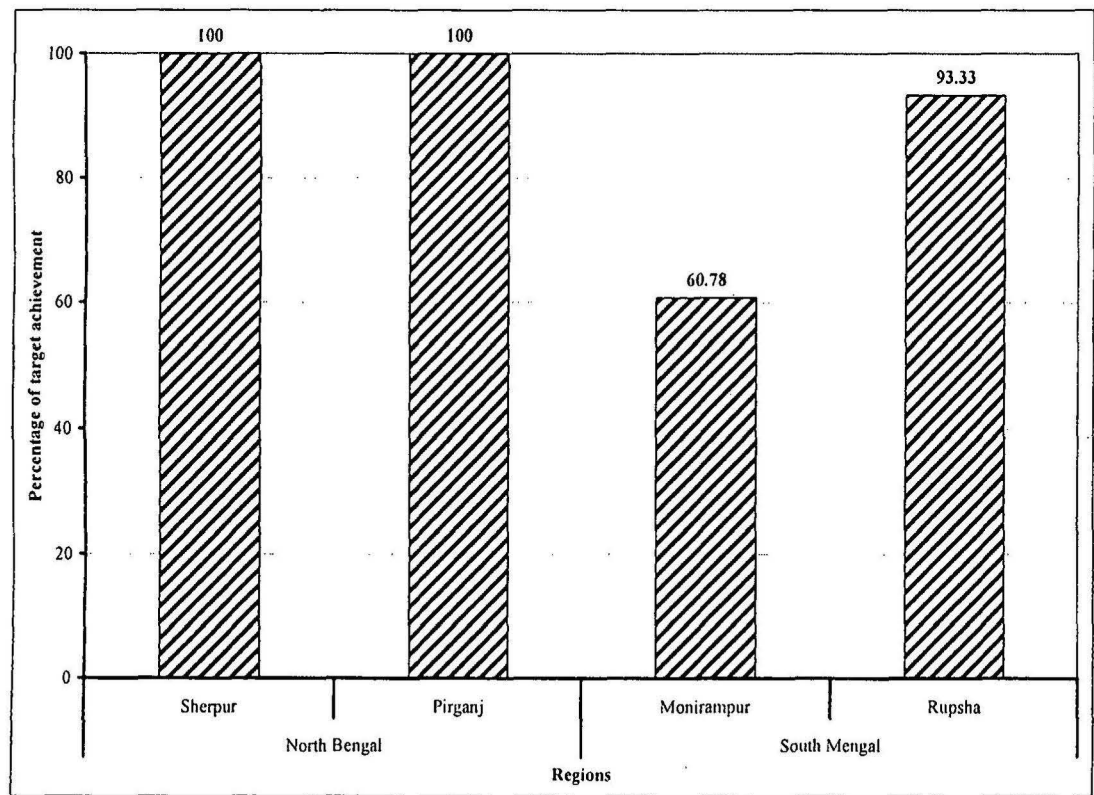
Purposive sampling technique was followed in selecting the sample. From each sub-district (sub-districts) five unions were selected. Of these, two were the best, two were the worst and one was average in achieving target (where at least one *Madrassa* was there). From each union two educational institutions (criteria mentioned above) were investigated. Educational institutions were selected based on WASH inclusion and exclusion criteria (Appendix 4).

Findings

Status of target achievement

In the northern part up to October 2008, target was fully achieved in installing separate sanitary latrines for the high school girls. On the other hand, it could not be achieved at the same rate in southern part (61% in Monirampur, 93% Rupsha). Data show that there was a discrepancy in the target achievement and it was higher in the northern part compared to the southern during July 2008 when the study was designed (Fig. 2 and Appendix 1).

Figure 2. Area-wise performance in northern and southern parts of Bangladesh up to October 2008



Common factors influencing target achievement in both northern and southern regions

Some common factors were identified which brought the success of school sanitation programme. However, while describing about some of these common factors, the respondents from the northern part of the country opined differently than those of the southern part.

Financial assistance from BRAC WASH programme

BRAC WASH's share of Tk. 35,000 for latrine construction worked positively in many cases in both the regions. One of the beneficiaries said:

“We needed a separate latrine for the girls in our school but we could not proceed earlier for budgetary constraint.” (Opinion from a FGD at Begum Shahjahan Talukder Dakhil Madrasa, Sherpur, Bogra.)

Dedication of the school authority and SMC members

There were some institutions in both the regions where the SMC members were found to be devoted for the well-being of their schools. These schools did not have sufficient fund to install sanitary latrines. Donations from the teachers, especially in a larger amount (ranged Tk. 2,000 to 5,000 per person) from SMC members helped a lot in this regard. Moreover, some SMC members contacted BRAC WASH programme personally when they heard about the offer and accelerated the latrine installation process.

“It is a kind of social work of BRAC. Students will be benefited from this programme. I have full support in taking this offer.” (A SMC member, Patharghata Secondary School, Rupsha, Khulna)

Design of the latrine

Design of the latrine was one of the motivating factors for some of the schools. Easy access to water, availability of covered bin, basin, looking glass and towel with hanger increased their interest. Moreover, according to a sub-assistant engineer of Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) ‘twin pits water-sealed latrine’ technology was a new design in northern area. For this new design some of the school authorities agreed to take the offer.

Role of BRAC staff in motivating and sensitizing

Continuous communication with the school authorities by the WASH staffs played vital role behind success of the programme in both the regions. A good number of school teachers and SMC members mentioned about the motivation activities of BRAC WASH staffs. In some cases upazila manager and programme organizer of the programme took SMC chairmen and other teachers to the schools where latrines were installed. After visiting those schools and knowing about the usefulness, they agreed to install latrine in their institutes.

“I did not imagine that the latrine would be so beautiful. I will immediately tell my school authority to take the offer from BRAC WASH Programme.” (SMC Head, Kella High School, Sherpur, Bogra)

Reputation of BRAC's other programmes activities

Reputation of BRAC's other programmes such as education, health, social development and microfinance helped a lot for success of this programme in some cases. Some of them mentioned that success of BRAC's oral saline programme (OTEP or Oral Therapy Extension programme) and the popular slogan about BRAC, 'Jono Sharthe BRAC' convinced them that BRAC is a welfare organization and keeps promise.

“When the government gives a latrine they just install it but whenever BRAC gives, they continuously monitor the latrine. Moreover, BRAC also gives training on the use and maintenance of the latrine after installation.” (A teacher, Patharghata High School, Rupsha, Khulna)

One of the respondents opined that reputation of BRAC's activities such as village library inspired them to take the offer of latrine. To them BRAC is a well organized, welfare oriented, pro-poor organization which is committed to perform its work efficiently.

“This is an excellent project. We might not install a separate latrine for girls if BRAC would not offer.” (A teacher, Begum Shahjahan Talukder Dakhil Madrasa, Sherpur, Bogra.)

Need of a separate latrine

In most of the co-education schools there was one toilet for all teachers, male and female students. Getting offer from WASH staff, the school authorities welcomed it and decided to take after a meeting with the SMC. They felt that this type of sanitary latrine would be useful for the girl students as well as for healthy environment of the institution.

Factors influencing target achievement in southern region

Coordination among the teachers and SMC members and their devotion

In some schools the teachers and SMC members were found to be well organized. Some had good coordination with their school authorities. This helped a lot for programme's success in those institutes. Moreover, some SMC members considered their affiliation with such programme as a contribution to their family and community. The students were as like as their children and also some had their own school going children among them. So, from the personal point of benefit they agreed to take part in the programme.

Opportunity of infrastructural development

According to some of the school authorities it was an opportunity of infrastructural development which would add an aesthetic value to the institution. They also opined that it would help them to attract more female students to the school and other schools might take it as an example.

Lack of proper sanitation facilities in some schools

Lack of proper sanitation facilities also influenced some of the school authorities to take the offer. For instance some schools/madrasas had only one latrine for all. This led them to take the offer.

“Already we talked to the UNO of this sub-district for a new improved latrine in the school and BRAC’s proposal helped us a lot in this regard.” (A senior teacher, Alaipur United Secondary School, Rupsha, Khulna)

Factors influencing target achievement in northern region

Donation and pressure of the guardians

In some schools of the north, the guardians donated rest of the amount after BRAC’s share for latrine construction. They took it as their social obligation since their daughters were students of those institutes who could not attend school during menstruation. They felt that if separate latrine for girls could be provided, then they would be benefited much. However, some guardians did not like use of same toilet by teachers and male-female students (especially at the madrasa). They urged the respective institutes to take the offer from BRAC WASH for installation of separate latrine for girls.

Membership of Village WASH Committee (VWC)

Some SMC members and teachers were members of the VWCs and this worked positively for success of the programme. In such cases the members felt that if they did not take the offer of BRAC WASH programme, their position in the committees would be criticized by the people who knew about the programme.

Role of female school teachers

Some female teachers acted positively for the programme. In some schools there was no separate latrine even for the female teachers. When they heard that BRAC WASH would provide financial assistance for installing separate sanitary latrine for the girl’s they just pressurized their respective school authorities to avail the opportunity. The school authority thought that their female colleagues would also be benefited.

Special promotion technique by WASH staff

When one of the school authorities rejected the offer, the respective regional manager (RM) initiated a special technique to convince them. In a district level meeting with union *parishad* chairmen after annual examination of schools where most of the school teachers were present, the RM of BRAC WASH programme informed them about the programme which worked well. Moreover, in some cases the WASH staff persuaded to the female students to ask for separate latrine to their respective school authorities and again it worked well.

Support from the local government representatives

One of the union *parishad* chairmen supported the programme and requested school authorities to take the offer and told them that otherwise their other infrastructural supports would be reduced. For this kind of positive pressure by chairmen, some of the schools agreed to take the offer.

Others

Reducing the rate of absence of adolescent girls in school during menstruation was another reason to join the programme, mentioned by some school authorities. Some of them opined that during menstruation, the girl students like to stay at home due to absence of proper and secure sanitation facilities in their schools. Some institutes had intention to develop or reconstruct their traditional sanitary latrines (which was in their annual plan) but could not manage to do so due to shortage of money. In such cases offer from BRAC WASH helped them a lot and it served both the purpose of the institute and BRAC WASH programme.

Factors behind the failure in achieving target in southern region

As the programme succeeded in achieving the target in northern part by October 2008, the reasons behind failure in the southern part is mentioned below.

Financial crisis

One of the major problems behind failure of the programme in some of the institutes of southern part was their financial crisis. The institutes which refused the offer mostly did not have enough money for their infrastructure development. In some cases it was too tough for them to manage fund separately for the toilet. Some institutions were newly formed and had budgetary constraints. As such, they could not take the offer as they were unable to provide rest of the cost for latrine installation.

People with complex-mind set

Some people in southern part had a misperception about this initiative of BRAC WASH. They thought that BRAC would make only promises but it might not give money as per commitment. Moreover, they commented that it might be a technique of BRAC to do harm to them in future.

“Definitely an NGO like BRAC has specific and long-term hidden agenda which is not good. BRAC does such collaborative work to accomplish their ill intentions. Only the Hindus can agree for such offer.” (It was a comment of a religious teacher noted by a SMC member, Alaipur United Secondary School, Rupsha, Khulna)

Non-cooperation by some SMCs and school authorities

In some schools the members of SMCs were not that much cooperative as the teachers. For some institutes it was too tough to get permission for installation of latrine where SMC was headed by *Upazila Nirbahi* Officer. Hence some institutes could not take the offer.

“Some SMC members of this area cannot think about this offer simply. They are complex-minded and argue for different other facilities.” (A WASH official, Manirampur, Jessore)

Greediness and political affiliation of some SMC members and school authorities

In some cases the programme was failed due to greediness of SMC members and school authorities as they wanted more money than the allocation (Tk. 35,000). Some asked to provide all the money in cash and at a time before starting latrine installation and some again asked to bear the entire expenditure. Most of the SMC members had political affiliation and they tried to use their political power in this regard.

Violation of programme policy

In a madrasa (co-education), the authority wanted latrine for both girls and boys. It was beyond the policies of BRAC WASH regarding construction of separate latrine for boys hence, the institute could not get latrine. In one case, a school authority wanted to construct latrine on the first floor of the school building and in another case, a madrasa authority in Rupsha sub-district wanted to renovate their existing latrine and install a new latrine with septic tank but not with the ring-slab. These were also beyond the programme policy.

Existence of sanitary latrine previously

Due to existence of separate sanitary latrines for girls earlier, some institutes refused to take the offer. However, such institutes were not eligible for the programme as per programme policy.

Others

The price hike of construction materials restricted installation of latrine in some institutions. Geographical constraints such as water logging in many school compounds impede installation of latrines. Unwillingness of some of the SMCs and school authorities was another factor in this regard. However, some institutions disagreed to install latrine without any reason.

Constraints admitted during implementing the programme in both the regions

WASH staff of both the regions mentioned that they experienced some constraints in implementing the programme which included problem of convincing the SMC members and school authorities with the allocated money, political affiliation of some SMC members and un-willingness of some school authorities. However, sometimes inclusion

and exclusion criteria for selecting an institute could not be met. Natural disasters and physiographic problems such as water logging and design of the latrine also hindered the work. These were also responsible for the failure of the programme. Sometimes the respective school authority expanded the space of corridor in front of the latrine which increased the total costs of installation. Sudden price hike of construction materials in the local markets, vacation in the schools, rainy season, troublesome communication, lack of land space, unavailability of adequate number of mason, etc. created problem. For these reasons the authority stopped work for sometimes.

Besides, in a school at Rupsha, Khulna the pan of a latrine was installed in east-west direction. No Muslim in the world defecates or urinates facing or showing back to Kibla – the Kaba and this is strictly prohibited for the Muslims according to the Hadith mentioned in Sahi Bukhari Sharif. The Kaba is located towards west from Bangladesh. And construction of latrine pan in east-west direction created huge hatred about the programme.

“BRAC is an organization of Christians (non-Muslims). They intentionally installed the pan of the latrine in east-west direction. They want to convert all of us from Muslim to Christian.” (It was a comment of a teacher noted by a SMC member of Alaipur United Secondary School, Rupsha, Khulna)

However, the school authority later changed the direction of pan from east-west to north-south, but such installation created religious rumors. The teachers became so angry with BRAC that they continuously pressurized the school authority not to accept BRAC offer. A teacher said:

“I think BRAC should be cautious during setting up the pan of the latrine. It should not be east-west facing which would create severe religious sentiment.” (A teacher of Alaipur United Secondary School, Rupsha, Khulna)

Suggestions of school authorities and SMC members

The following suggestions were made during investigation by the school authorities and the SMC members to improve the programme:

- BRAC should increase, revise or readjust the amount of its financial support considering local and current market price of construction materials
- More institutions should be covered under the programme
- Design of toilet should not be same for all schools. There should be area specific (physiographic) latrine design.
- BRAC should start initial construction work like foundation, earth work with their own money
- Separate latrine should also be provided for male students and teachers
- BRAC (WASH) should continue follow-up and training for the next two years up to the end of the programme in 2011
- Instead of rings BRAC can provide septic tank to increase the longevity of latrines
- Training and motivation for using and maintenance of sanitary latrine should be arranged by BRAC for the students in a special session in schools.

Discussion

A unique feature of BRAC WASH programme is to bring different groups of population *i.e.* men, women, and children under hygiene education and promotion, and sanitation facilities for female students at secondary schools, which are otherwise overlooked (RED 2008). This study has explored reasons of high and low performance in achieving the installation target of separate sanitary latrines for girls' under school sanitation programme of BRAC WASH. A comparative analysis was done between the southern and northern areas of Bangladesh. One is known as high performing area and another one as low performing area. It was anticipated that the target achievement would be better in the southern part than the northern as the area is in a backward position than the southern in terms of resource availability, economic condition and infrastructure development (Khaled 2008). In the northern part 51.2% of population is below poverty line while it is 45.7% in the south (BBS 2007).

Findings show that in the northern part target-achievement performance was higher compared to the southern. Although in both the regions same intervention policy was followed but the southern part could not meet the target numbers of latrine construction which was achieved in northern part. In both the regions financial support played a vital role to attract some of the institutions to install latrines. However, in some of the institutes of the south, money allocated for latrine construction was not attractive enough. Hence in this part, cent percent target of latrine construction could not be achieved. Some institutes wanted to have the full expenditure and some wanted this money before starting the construction work. According to programme policy no money is provided before starting the construction work and also not in cash. It can be mentioned here that, to create a sense of ownership the educational institutes are invited to share the expenditure of the latrine. This ensures better use and appropriate management of the latrine even after the end of the programme. Thus, every educational institute shares almost half of the construction cost of a latrine. The financial sharing worked efficiently in the northern part where the institutes responded enthusiastically and optimum target was achieved.

In the southern region some of the institute authorities showed negative attitude towards this initiative and commented that it might be a technique of NGOs like BRAC to come with a hidden agenda. They also opined that through this programme BRAC might convince their soft-hearted school going children to convert their religion from Muslim to non-Muslim (Christian or Hindu). Such misconception and complex mindset of the authority and local people also resulted in low target achievement rate in the south. On the other hand in northern region most of the institutes welcomed this BRAC initiative. Many of them had previous good experiences with BRAC as it fulfilled its promises. So, when they were informed that BRAC would share a certain amount of money for installation of latrines they trusted it and responded positively.

Political situation of the area and political affiliation of SMC members had a considerable influence on latrine installation in both the regions. In the southern part political situation worked negatively while in the northern part it worked positively. Some chairmen and members of union *parishad* in the northern part were found as members of the SMCs, and they influenced their respective school authorities to accept the BRAC offer. On the other hand, the critical mindset of the same local government representatives of the southern part impeded programme intervention. In some cases they forced some school authorities not to accept the offer. However, the SMCs in the northern region found to be more active,

enthusiastic and well organized which accelerated the programme in this region. A few union *parishad* chairmen of this region also helped in implementing the programme through promotion and counseling activities. Although the WASH programme has been working with the same strength in terms of set-up and number of staff in both the regions, the intervention was started intensively in the northern part few days earlier than the southern, which might be another reason of variation in performance between the regions. Furthermore, the southern part is susceptible to natural calamities like Sidr and Aila than that of the northern part which might contribute to such variations.

In this study four types of schools were contacted from both the regions to compare the percentage of target achievement in separate latrine construction for the high school girls. These four types included girls' high school, co-education high school, girls' madrasa and co-education madrasa. During comparing this target achievement of northern and southern regions, individual school type was not found as one of the significant factors influencing success or failure of target achievement. According to WASH officials, mostly the girls' high schools and co-education high schools were contacted for intervention who reported almost same positive comments towards the programme. The number of madrasas under this intervention was less compared to the other two types, because the programme found that the madrasas usually got donation from various sources where the girls' high school or co-education high schools had less or zero access. Therefore, the few madrasa's which were selected for intervention responded enthusiastically to accept BRAC offer according to WASH officials of both the regions. This was also reflected in the results of FGDs and in-depth interviews.

Therefore, it is assumed that the ultimate benefit of the programme can only be met if the respective schools start practicing hygiene education provided by the programme and simultaneously if they can ensure that the girl students are using their separate latrines. Thus, the result will be reflected in the girls' students' droptout rate and magnitude of water and sanitation-related diseases in future.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion following recommendations have been made. Although the programme has stepped much forward than the period when this investigation was conducted, these recommendations would be helpful for two other phases and further expansion of intervention.

Design of the latrine

- ☐ In installing latrine, north-south facing position of the pan should be strictly followed to avoid any misunderstanding
- ☐ In the areas where water logging and flood are common phenomenon, elevated latrine should be promoted.

Financial support

Present allocation of financial support from BRAC should be adjusted with regional variation in relation to the market price of the construction materials as price fluctuates frequently. Or, the programme can increase the present allocation.

Counseling/Advocacy/Promotion

- ☐ Special promotion should be adopted to convince the educational institutes. Local elites such as *Matbar*, *Imam*, former chairmen and members of the local government and village leaders should be included in this process; thus, convincing will be easier and authentic. There can be a coordination committee in this regard at sub-district level.
- ☐ Success stories of this project should be shared in new schools during promotion. Video footage, interview, etc. can be shown to them to increase their interest to participate in the programme.
- ☐ District, sub-district or school level annual sports and cultural events may be targeted to disseminate the message of the programme such as vision, mission, benefits and success stories.

Management

- ☐ Successful and unsuccessful stories, problem solving experiences, promotional techniques and threats behind programme intervention should be shared among staff across the regions through arranging special meetings.
- ☐ Training and motivation on use and maintenance of sanitary latrine should be arranged for the students in a special session in the schools.

Programme expansion

Programme should expand in all the educational institutes (eligible as per programme policy) of BRAC WASH working areas which will definitely enhance the success of the programme.

Further research

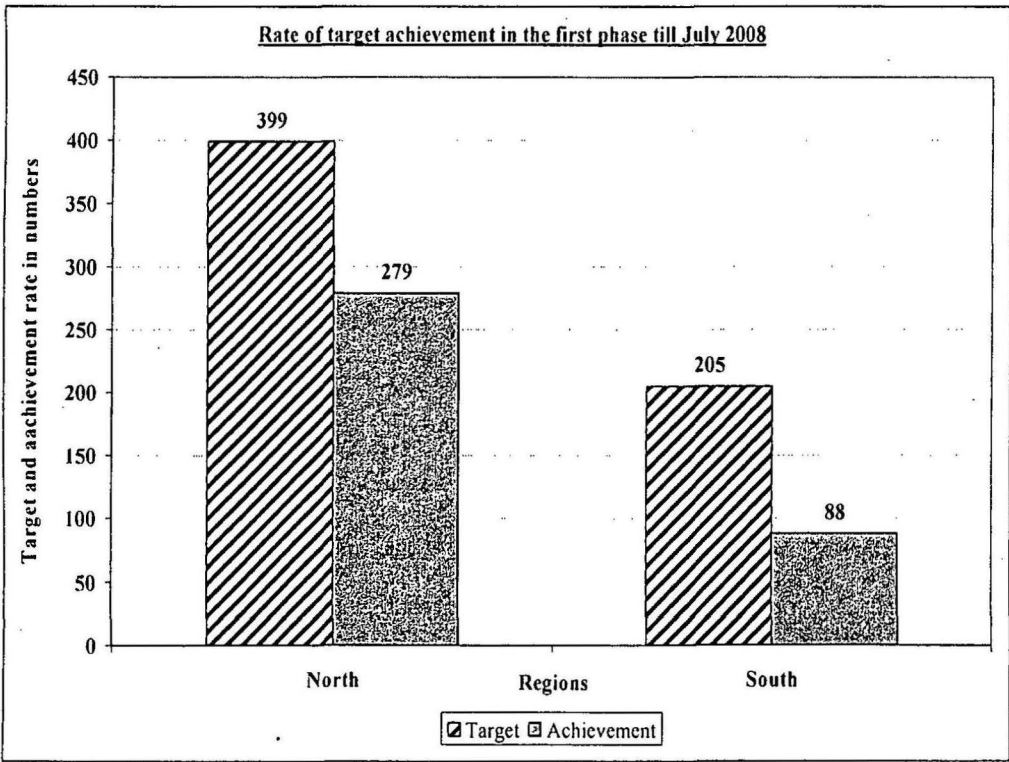
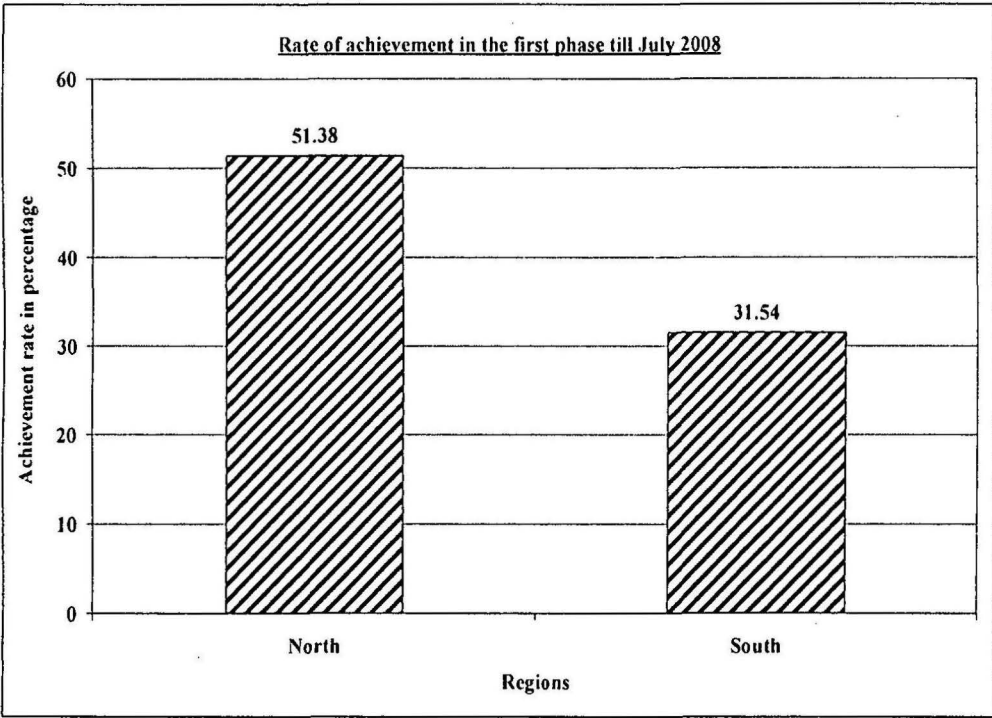
- ☐ This study was done to explore the reasons of differential performance in the two regions. However, to know the benefits of the programme further research is needed where more educational institutes will be investigated.

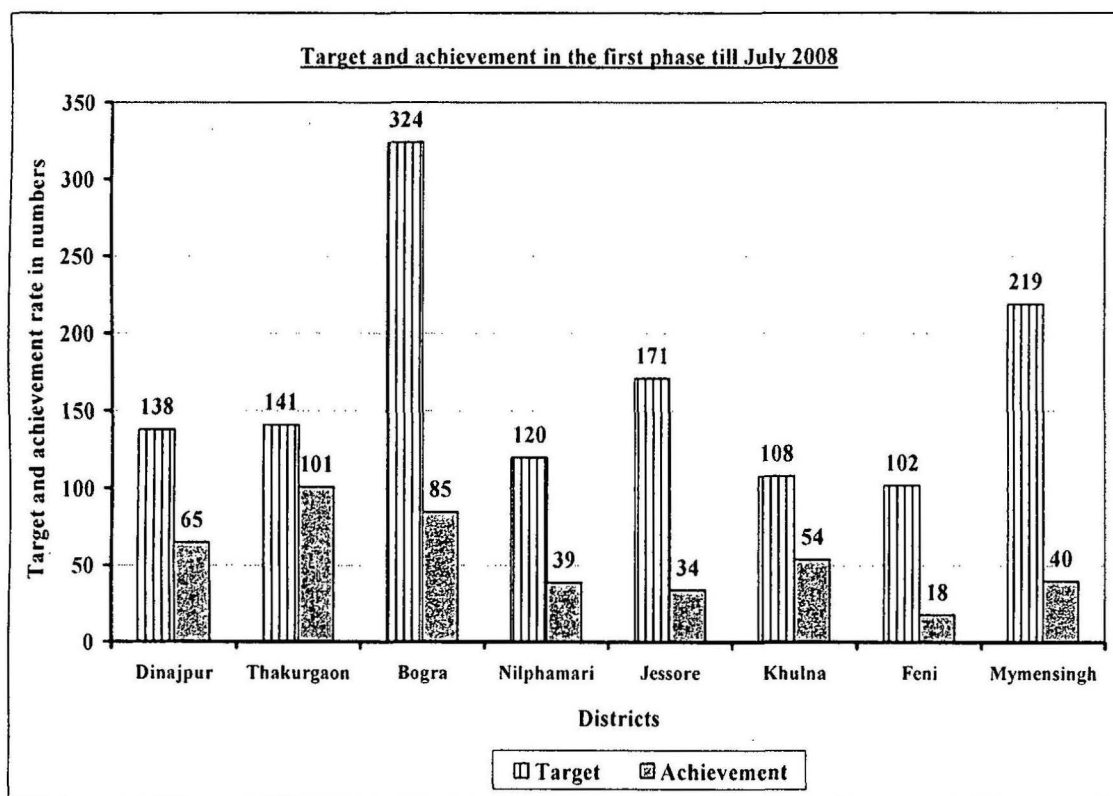
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Appendix 1





Appendix 2

Checklist for the interview of WASH officials

- Number and name of the unions under intervention
- Status of target and achievement (Union-wise distribution)
- School type-wise distribution within the unions
- How the numbers (implemented) are achieved?
- Reasons behind success or unsuccessful/factors influencing the school sanitation intervention in the area
- Facilities provided in the school sanitation programme
- Experience (problems, potentials, possibilities) during counseling and approaching for latrine in a institute
- Experience (problems, potentials, possibilities) during construction of latrine in a institute when the process is on going
- Experience (problems, potentials, possibilities) after installation of latrine in a institute (maintenance and overall)
- How the problems are minimized (if there is any)?
- How the potentials are incorporated/shared (if there is any)?
- Which category of school is more/less in terms of latrine installation and why. (e.g. why girls or madrasa or co-education is more/less and why)?
- Staff distribution for school sanitation programme
- Financial burden sharing by the respective institutes in school sanitation programme (all achieved and ongoing)

Checklist for the interview of school teachers/authority and FGD

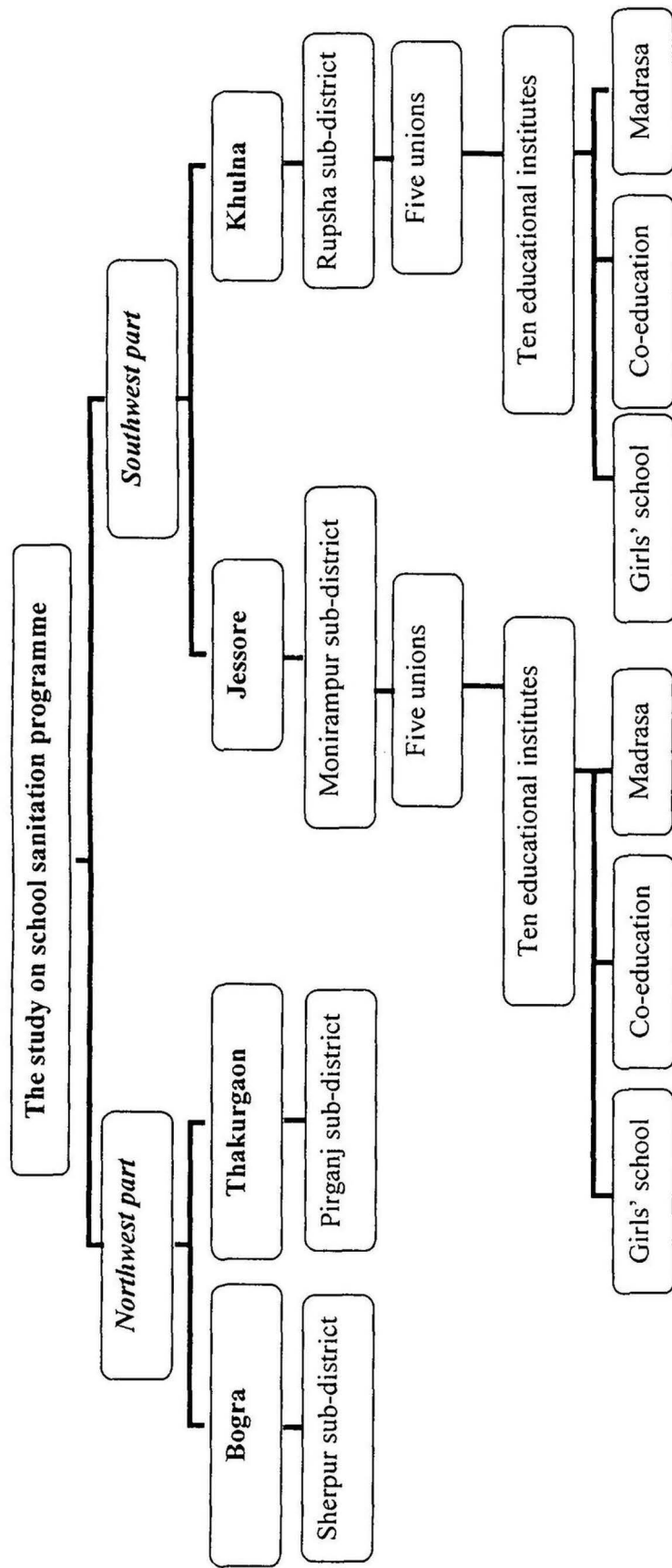
- Why were they interested/motivated/influenced to participate in the programme and what were those factors?
- What is their perception about the school sanitation programme?
- How they manage the rest of the fund? Who contributed? Their profession/social status/economic situation?
- What do they think about how the programme will benefit them?
- What are the problems/constraints of the programme according to SMC?
- How the problems can be resolved (if there is any)?
- What are the prospects of the programme?
- How they will be/are facilitated or benefited by the programme?
- What facilities they get from the programme?
- How do they do maintenance of the latrines after completion and during using?
- What are their suggestions for the betterment of the programme or making the programme more successful?

Appendix 3

The study areas were as follows:

1. North Bengal
 - a. Thakurgaon district
 - i) Pirganj sub-district (5 unions)
 - ☐ Jaburhat
 - ☐ Borchona
 - ☐ Daulatpur
 - ☐ Vomradaha
 - ☐ Syedpur
 - b. Bogra district
 - ii) Sherpur sub-district (5 unions)
 - ☐ Kusumbi
 - ☐ Vobanipur
 - ☐ Garidah
 - ☐ Khamarkandi
 - ☐ Shimabari
2. South Bengal
 - a. Khulna district
 - i) Rupsha sub-district (5 unions)
 - ☐ Aichgati
 - ☐ Noihati
 - ☐ TSB
 - ☐ Ghatvog
 - ☐ Sreefaltola
 - b. Jessore district
 - ii) Monirampur sub-district (5 unions)
 - ☐ Nehalpur
 - ☐ Kulita
 - ☐ Jhanpa
 - ☐ Shyamkur
 - ☐ Manirampur

Appendix 4
Flow chart of sampling technique



Note: Union, educational institute selection criteria is same for both regions.

Appendix 5
Target achievement in the study areas up to October 2008

Name of the region	Name of the district	Name of the sub-district	Name of the selected unions	Number of girls' school	Number of co-education schools	Number of madrasahs	Target	Achieved	(%)
Southern part	Khulna	Rupsha	Aichgati	1	1	1	15	14	(93.33)
			Noihati	1	3	1			
			TSB	1	2	0			
			Ghatvog	0	3	0			
			Sreefaltola	0	0	0			
	Jessore	Monirampur*	Nehalpur	-	-	-	15	10	(66.66)
			Kultia	-	-	-			
			Jhapa	-	-	-			
			Shyamkur	-	-	-			
			Manirampur	-	-	-			
Northern part	Thakurgaon	Pirgonj	Bomradah	1	2	0	16	16	(100)
			Syedpur	0	3	0			
			Borchona	0	3	0			
			Jaburhat	1	3	1			
			Doulatpur	1	1	0			
	Bogra	Sherpur	Kusumbi	0	3	0	17	17	(100)
			Garidah	0	4	1			
			Khamarkandi	0	1	2			
			Vobanipur	0	2	0			
			Shimabari	0	2	2			

* Detail Information were not available

Appendix 6

Survey technique

FGD

- ☐ Participants: Parents + Imam + other community leaders/members/chairmen
: 5 schools per 4 areas = 20

In depth interview

- ☐ School teacher (Head master/concerned): 5 schools per 4 areas = 20
- ☐ SMC head : 5 schools per 4 areas = 20
- ☐ Sanitation engineer of WASH : 1 for all the areas = 1
- ☐ DPHE Sub-assistant Engineer : 1 per 4 areas = 4
- ☐ SRM : 1 per 2 areas = 2
- ☐ RM : 1 per 4 areas = 4
- ☐ UM : 1 per 4 areas = 4
- ☐ PO : 1 per 4 areas = 4

Observation

- ☐ Use of latrine : 5 schools per 4 areas = 20
- ☐ Construction of latrine : 5 schools per 4 areas = 20

5 schools = 2 girls' high schools + 2 co-education high schools + 1 madrasa (girls'/co-education)

Appendix 7

Opinions of BRAC WASH staff and school authorities regarding target achievement of school sanitation programme by region

Table 1. Opinions of WASH staff regarding target achievements of school sanitation programme by regions

Indicators	South region (Monirampur and Rupsha)	North region (Sherpur and Pirgani)
Factors associated with success	- Need of a latrine - Opportunity of infrastructural development - Financial assistance of BRAC WASH - Lack of proper sanitation earlier - Coordination among the teachers and SMC members - Dedication of school authority and SMC - Individual interest of some SMC members	- Need of a latrine - Design of the latrine - Donation by teachers and SMC members - Donation and pressure by guardians - Members of VWC - Self interest - Role of female teachers - BRAC's reputation and special promotion techniques - Support from union <i>parishad</i> chairmen
Factors influencing failure	- Financial crisis - Existence of sanitary latrine previously - Poor/no cooperation by some SMCs and school authorities - Greediness of some SMC members and school authority - Violation of programme policy	None (as 100% of the target was achieved)
Problem areas	- The price hike of construction materials - Natural disasters, water logging, etc. - Local political situation or political affiliation of some SMC members - Unwillingness of some of the SMCs and school authorities - Cumbersome negotiation/convincing/advocacy - Mismatch in school selection criteria - Misconception of SMCs about BRAC - Religious misconceptions of some teachers	- The price hike of construction materials - Communication problem during rainy season - Lack of land space in the school premises - In adequate number of expert mason
Benefits	- Separate latrine for girls - Acceleration in achieving 100% sanitation - Combination of hardware and software - Easy and auto hygiene promotion by the pupils to their families - Reduction in the dropout of adolescent girls	Same
Suggestions for the programme	Region wise revision and adjustment of BRAC's financial share	Same

Table 2. Opinions of school teachers and SMC members regarding target achievement of school sanitation programme by region

Indicators	South region (Monirampur and Rupsha)	North region (Sherpur and Pargani)
Why interested/ motivated/ influenced	- Feeling the necessity and devotion towards the community - Opportunity of infrastructural development - Financial assistance of BRAC WASH - Design of latrine - Lack of proper sanitation earlier	- Reputation of BRAC's other programme - Role of WASH staff - Separate latrine for girls - Financial assistance from BRAC WASH - Opportunity infrastructural development
Perception about the programme	Positive	Positive
How Fund was managed	- Donation of teachers and SMC members - Donation from the <i>Upazila Nirbahi Officer</i> (UNO) - Student scholarship subsidy - Fees (Admission, examination, coaching) - Income from trees, vegetables and selling fishes of school ponds - Various fees from student e.g., Tk 50 per student who passed exam each year, Tk 100 to get certificate for each student etc.	- Donation of teachers and SMC members - Money from student scholarship fund - Fees (Admission, examination, coaching) - Leasing fruit garden and selling out old furniture - From school shops - Annual <i>jalsha</i> (Madrassa) - Mortgaging real property (Land) (Madrassa)
How they were benefited	- Infrastructural improvement of the schools - Hygiene education - Separate latrine - Reduction of eve teasing while sharing same latrine - Healthy school environment will be established	Same
Problems with the programme	- Insufficient financial share/assistance - Unadjusted financial allocation - Religious factor attached to design of the latrine	Insufficient financial share/assistance
How problems were minimized	Repeated counseling	Same
Limitation of the SMCs	- Financial crisis - Political affiliation - Members are confused and critical minded	Financial crisis
Benefit of the programme in the long run	- Contribute to the sanitation coverage of the area - A kind of development activity for the locality - Hygiene education of the students and their families - Community as well as the society will be blessed with	- Contribute to the sanitation coverage of the area - Hygiene education of the students
Suggestions for the programme	- Increase the amount of BRAC's financial assistance - Separate latrine for male students and teachers - Better interior decoration of the latrines - Incorporation of more institutions under the programme - Extensive training on use and maintenance - Arranging follow-up for next two years - School specific design of the latrine - Initial construction work should be started with BRAC's share	- Increase the amount of BRAC's financial assistance - Separate latrine for male students and teachers - Better interior of the latrines - Septic tank instead of rings for longevity of the latrines - Region wise adjustment of BRAC's financial share

Appendix 8

The following items are being provided:

- a) Separate girls' toilet (A two section sanitary latrines)
 - i. Twin pits (offset)
 - ii. 10 rings and 1 Slab with water seal in each pit
 - iii. Pucca superstructure with 3 inches reinforced concrete cement (RCC) roof
 - iv. Oriental pan
 - v. Tiles fittings (not mandatory)
- b) Water source
 - i. Tubewell or
 - ii. Water pump with overhead reservoir (depends on the availability of electricity and affordability of the respective institute)
- c) Others
 - i. One covered bin (especially for dumping used sanitary pad)
 - ii. Mirror (not mandatory)
 - iii. Basinet (not mandatory)
 - iv. Towel hanger (not mandatory)
 - v. Soap case (not mandatory)
 - vi. Soap, towel, toilet cleaner (liquid) and brush