

**Unveiling the Face of Social Capital: Evidence from Community-Based
Solid Waste Management Initiatives in Urban Bangladesh**

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ACCO	Assistant Chief Conservancy Officer
AD	Anno Domini
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AL	Awami League
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BC	Before Christ
BCC	Barisal City Corporation
BDR	Bangladesh Rifles
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BJP	Bangladesh Jatiya Party
BNCC	Bangladesh National Cadet Core
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BPSC	Bangladesh Public Service Commission
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BTV	Bangladesh Television
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCO	Chief Conservancy Officer
CD	Conservancy Department
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CCC	Chittagong City Corporation
CI	Conservancy Inspector
CO	Conservancy Officer
CS	Conservancy Superintendent/Supervisor
DCC	Dhaka City Corporation
DCCO	Deputy Chief Conservancy Officer
FY	Financial Year
GB	Grameen Bank
GO	Governmental Organisation
HH	Household
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
IOJ	Islami Oyaka Jote
JI	Jamat-I-Islami
JCD	Jatiyatabadi Chatra Dal
KCC	Khulna City Corporation

Kg	Kilogram
KTC	Kajal Trading Company
M ²	Square Meter
MA	Master of Arts
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery
MMCO	Malaria and Mosquito Control Officer
MP	Member of Parliament
MSW	Municipal Solid Waste
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RCC	Rajshahi City Corporation
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SWM	Solid Waste Management
SCC	Sylhet City Corporation
Sq. Km.	Square Kilometre
Tk.	Taka
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
USD	United States Dollar
WI	Ward Inspector
ZEO	Zonal Executive Officer

Glossary

Abarjana	Garbage
Adda	Gossip
Arthasastra	Economics
Arzal	The lowest of all (social) classes
Asha	Late evening prayer
Ashraf	High (social) class
Astha	Trust
Atraf	Low (social) class
Atiyata (atiyota)	Kinship, relationship
Awrat	Woman (women)
Badh	Dam
Bahini	Group
Baishak	The first month of the Bengali year
Bangla	Bengali
Bariwala/Bariwali	House owner
Basti	Slum
Bazar	Market
Bediya	Gypsy
Bepari	Trader
Bhadralok	Gentleman
Bishas	Trust
Boinga	Migrated people
Chanda (Chada)	Contribution, ransom
Chittagonian	The inhabitants of Chittagong district
Desh	Country, place
Dhanda	Interest
Doa	Blessing
Eid-ul-Azha	A Muslim religious festival where cattle are sacrificed for the satisfaction of Allah
Eid-ul-Fitr	A Muslim religious festival after Ramadan
ēk ghore	Ostracism
Gali	Small road, lane
Gram	Village
Gusti-gayati	Kith and kin
Halalkhor	Toilet cleaner
Hartal	Total closure
Ijjat	Honour
Jadughar	Museum
Jogajug	Communication
Kala	Black
Khal	Canal
Khorsapati	Expenditure
Kichuri	Medley of rice, meat and legumes

Local	People ancestrally living in a particular place/area
Madrasha	Muslim religious educational institute
Mahalla	Neighbourhood, ward
Mahallabasi	Community people
Masjid	Mosque
Mastan	Gangster, Hooligans
Mehadi	Henna
Mejban	Communal feeding
Mela	Fair
Michil	Procession
Miladunnabi	Birthday of the great prophet of Islam
Mohila	Female
Moila	Garbage, solid waste
Moktab	Muslim religious pre-school
Mosolmani/Sunnat-E-Khatna	Circumcision
Murabbi	Senior citizen, patron
Natok	Drama
Nawab	Big landlord
Pan	Betel leaf
Panchayat	An organisation of five elderly people
Paribar	Family
Parichanan	Clean
Parishad	Council
Poribesh	Environment
Pourashava	Municipality
Puja	Hindu worship
Purdah	Seclusion
Purush	Man (men)
Rahmat	Mercy
Ramadan	Fasting
Riksha	Manually driven tri-cycle
Sabha	Council
Salish/bichar	Arbitration
Samity	Association
Sanda	Evening
Sangbad	News
Sardar	Headman, leader
Sorbojonin	Common, universal
Sradha	Deference
Suba	Province
Swanirvar	Self-help
Tabliq	Preaching of Islam (non-partisan)
Tarabi	A special prayer offers only in Ramadan
Thana	Police station
Unnayan	Development

Urs

An annual fair in honour of a holy man or saint

Valobasha

Love, affection

Varatiya

Tenant

Zila (Zilla)

District

Dedication

To my parents and my wife

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Md. Shahjahan Hafez Bhuiyan

Abstract

This dissertation deals with community development and community action in the field of solid waste management (SWM) in two major cities, i.e. Dhaka and Chittagong in Bangladesh. The objective of the study was to identify whether or not the community-based SWM initiatives have emerged through the influences of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. In line with the objective, it was assumed that the decision to organise a community-based SWM is higher in the neighbourhoods where relatively high level of social capital exists. The theory of social capital has been used here as an analytical tool.

Several interesting results came up from the study such as: (i) it reveals that Putnam's operationalisation of social capital is not fully applicable to a different social and political settings and therefore need to be contextualised according to the local conditions in order to reap benefit. It was found that social capital alone is not sufficient to form community-based SWM initiative in Bangladesh. It works well together with the influence of kinship, patron-client relationship, and power and authority relations of Bangladesh society. Therefore, the localities with a high level of social capital are better able to organise a community-based SWM initiative, if the other factors remain supportive; (ii) failure to organise a community-based SWM initiative not only indicates the lack of sufficient social capital but also is a result of many contesting factors such as: the law and order situation of the country, power politics, political conflict and threat, which contribute either to diminish or to reduce the chances of accumulation of social capital to make collective action possible; (iii) a civic engagement, organising solid waste collection appears to be as much based on strong leadership and patron-client relationships than social capital in terms of social networking and trust; and (iv) the community-based organisations in the urban areas of Bangladesh generally function in accordance with the basic characteristics of the socio-political system of the country.

Chapter 1

Solid waste management through social capital in urban Bangladesh

Introductory discussions

1.1. Prologue

The genesis of waste is as old as human inhabitation on earth; therefore, they go hand in hand. As to the sources of waste generation and associated management problems, the environmental historian Martin Melosi (1983:3) succinctly points out that:

“Since human beings have inhabited the earth, they have generated, produced, manufactured, excreted, secreted, discarded, and otherwise disposed of all manner of waste. Among the myriad kinds of rejectamenta, refuse-solid waste-has been one of the most abundant, most cumbersome, and potentially most harmful to society. Beginning with ancient civilization, there has always been a refuse problem.”

This statement clearly portrays a global scenario and the magnitude of the problem caused by solid waste. By definition, solid waste¹ is useless, unwanted, and discarded non-liquid waste materials arising from domestic, trade, commercial, industrial, agriculture, as well as public services. Fiona Nunan (2000:384) refers to solid waste management (SWM) as the collection, treatment, and disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW). MSW includes wastes from the sources mentioned earlier. In this research, Nunan’s definition of SWM is adopted.

As in many developing countries, SWM is a potential urban problem in Bangladesh. The following sections review the various relevant aspects of the issue.

In urban Bangladesh, the conservancy department of the city corporation/municipality² is formally responsible for SWM. It is evident that since the period of British-Bengal,

¹ In this thesis ‘solid waste’ is synonymously used as garbage, refuse and litter.

² City Corporation in the cities and municipalities in the towns — these two types of urban local government exist in Bangladesh. There are six city corporations in the country, namely: Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, and Barisal, while the number of municipalities is 254 as of August 2001 (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2001, 2002:3). A mayor, a people’s representative elected through the adult franchise for a period of five years, heads a corporation. The mayor is assisted in his/her official work by (a) ward commissioners, and (b) administrative officials. In most cases, a ward commissioner is elected from a ward on the basis of direct election and holds office for a period of five years.

especially from the reign of Lord Ripon, local government institutions are performing the responsibility of conservancy services (Siddique, 1994:35-41; Tinker, 1954). The politico-administrative characteristics as well as of the political culture of Bangladesh society such as: corruption, nepotism and favouritism, abuse of rule and regulation, bureaucratic loyalty to the political parties, and conflict between the party in power and the opposition, affect the performance of city corporations in general and the conservancy department in particular (Bhuiyan, 2001:1). Studies show that nearly 50 percent of the generated solid waste per day remains uncollected in both Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations (Hasan, 1998:193; Kazi, 1998:11). It means that a 'gap' exists between the daily generation and collection of solid waste in the cities of Bangladesh. Therefore, it is assumed that inappropriate and unsatisfactory conservancy services provided by the city corporation have propelled the growth of civil society organisations to handle SWM related issues, such as: collection and disposal of garbage in the urban stations by organising community-based initiatives in Bangladesh (details discussed in chapter 4). Recently it is observed that community-based SWM initiatives are mushrooming across the country. The data and information I have gathered on this issue during my fieldwork show that till August 2003, approximately 150 community-based SWM organisations emerged in Dhaka, while the number of such initiatives in Chittagong was nearly 100. I will show that community-based SWM initiatives have emerged primarily in those communities that have accumulated social capital.

It is a fact that social order encourages trust and cooperative social interaction for the benefit of their community. The abundance of a community's social capital has been used to explain why citizens in one region are trustful and cooperative than that of their neighbours in a nearby region who lack social capital and thus are distrustful and non-cooperative. Putnam (1993:167) defines the term as, 'features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action.' Buckland (1998:241) argues that social capital measures the degree to which a community can cooperate to achieve desired results: where there is a lack of trust, and non-reciprocity is the normative behaviour, cooperation is uncommon or at

least confined to sub-communities. The theory of social capital is discussed in greater detail in chapter 2.

In this particular situation it is understood that “social capital” is a critical determinant of collective action and is possible to achieve through social cohesiveness in the community. The cohesiveness of the community is, in turn, a function of factors like kinship, patron-client relationships, a common heritage and culture, values, political friendship etc (details discussed in chapters 3 and 5). Pargal et al. (1999:1) examined the importance of these potential determinants of social capital in the establishment of voluntary SWM systems as exemplified by the existence of trash disposal committees in their study of neighbourhoods in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They view the creation of these committees as a direct benefit of collective action, which is a function of the social capital in the neighbourhoods.

The main aim of this research is to identify whether or not the community-based SWM initiatives have emerged through the influences of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. In line with the objective, the study is based on the assumption that the decision to organise a community-based SWM initiative is higher in the neighbourhoods where relatively high level of social capital exists. Social capital represents a propensity for mutually beneficial collective action, and it derives from the quality of relationships among people within a particular group or community. Communities with high social capital produces superior outcomes in joint actions, it is claimed; and communities with low social capital can be assisted to build up stocks of this resource, so that their performance will also improve over time. Economic development, community peace, and democratic participation can be promoted in this manner, simply by investing in the stock of social capital (Krishna, 2002:ix).

In spite of utilising public resources, the conservancy departments of the city governments of Bangladesh apparently failed to deliver appropriate conservancy services to their clients. The growth of community-based SWM initiatives has emerged as a sustainable strategy to solve the waste problem in urban neighbourhoods. It is understood

that such organisation lacks human, material, and economic resources, but the driving force behind its operation is social capital. Social capital can increase the efficiency of existing physical and human capital assets. On this aspect, Peter Evans succinctly explained that:

“When sustainable improvement in the welfare of ordinary Third World citizens is the aim, social capital is a crucial ingredient. Without social capital, physical and human capitals are easily squandered. Other features of social capital are even more intriguing from the point of view of countries where other sorts of capital are scarce: social capital does not necessarily require expenditures of scarce material resources in its creation and its stock accumulates with use instead of depreciating” (Evans, 1996:1034).

Operationally social capital and sustainable development are closely interlinked. Ismail Serageldin and Grootarert (2000:40) note that social capital is best studied in the context of the contribution it makes to sustainable development. The first formal definition describes sustainable development as: “[meeting] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Commission, 1987:43). Almost in the same vein, from a social capital perspective, Serageldin (1996:3) sees sustainability as: “...is to leave future generations as many opportunities as we ourselves have had, if not more.” Sustainability as opportunity thus means that future generations must be provided with as much or more capital per capita than the current generation. To this effect, in the context of the study, sustainable strategies are needed to combat the problem of urban waste management and thus environmental degradation through solid waste. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio conference) also emphasised to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in all countries through involvement of local organisations and thereby promises that:

“Sustainable development must be achieved at every level of society. People’s organizations, women’s groups and non-governmental organizations are important sources of innovation and action at the local level and have a strong interest and proven ability to promote sustainable livelihoods. Governments, in cooperation with appropriate international and non-governmental organizations should support a community-driven approach to sustainability” (Robinson, 1993:26).

In the light of the above, the role of the community-based SWM initiatives, which is primarily formed through human interaction, is examined here to see whether or not it can serve as a sustainable means to solve waste problem in urban areas of Bangladesh. In this perspective, the empirical cases and observations that I have collected on three influential sources of social capital, i.e. trust, social networks, and civic engagement is presented in chapters 6 to 8.

The following section discusses the concepts locality, community and then defines community-based organisation.

1.2. Locality, community, and community-based organisation

Locality: From the 1980s onwards, locality has been an important focus of research and debate in social sciences. One of the tenets in these debates has been that locality cannot be conceptualised as an entity of its own but is a relational category which implicitly assumes a relatedness to wider, “non-local” contexts. Locality has been regarded as a particular segment of society which can be defined in spatial terms on a relatively small scale and embraces particular “local” forms of agency. On the other hand, locality has been seen as subordinate to other agencies which are not only more encompassing but also more powerful. This relationship has also been attributed a spatial quality, to the extent that locality often, though not necessarily, has a connotation of being peripheral to the urban centres of power and accumulation. However, the subordination of locality has been debated primarily with regard to political processes, notably the emergence of the state (Project group “Locality and the State,” 2002:1-2), or in the context of urban development (Evers and Korff, 2000).

Arjun Appadurai (1995:210) points out that locality should not just be an existing territory or place inhabited by people who are linked by certain social and cultural bonds, but rather as a processual field. He further notes that the “production of locality” takes place through everyday processes of social and symbolic practice. At the same time, however, locality-producing activities clearly transcend the material and conceptual

boundaries of locality — they are “not only context-driven but are also context-generative”. Berner and Korff (1995:214) also mention that, ‘...a locality is the focus of everyday life; it is not merely the place where people reside but where they spend much of their life, their *Lebenswelt* (life-world).’

In the light of the above description it is understood that locality denotes a particular territory or area generally subordinate to urban centres in terms of power and political processes.

Community: The concept of ‘community’ was discarded from the dominant vocabulary of sociologists during the 1960s, on a variety of grounds, although it has continued to be employed in related fields of social policy and ‘community development’, and if anything has assumed growing significance within political discourse (Day and Murdoch, 1993:83). Like many other terms of social science, there is no agreed definition exactly what do we mean by a community. The term community popularly implies a group of people with common interests (Korten, 1986:2). In another definition, community is viewed as an undifferentiated entity and unified for common action by its needs/demands (Khan, 1999:233). On closer scrutiny, however, it appears that the sense of community is limited to small cluster of neighbours, who cooperate with each other (Korff, 1996:297). These definitions are somewhat vague, because they do not adequately consider some relevant questions like: (i) what interests influence individuals to form a community? (ii) Are the communities lobbying to fulfil a common good?

Referring to Glaston, Paul Streeten (2002:21) has indicated three conditions of “voluntary community”: (i) low barriers to entry, (ii) low barriers to exit, and (iii) interpersonal relations shaped by mutual adjustment rather than hierarchical authority or coercion. But it remains unanswered what particular conditions create a voluntary community. In addition to that, Thomas Bender (cited in Streeten, 2002:21) suggests four characteristics of a community and these are:

- Limited membership;
- Shared norms;

- Affective ties; and
- A sense of mutual obligation.

In sum, the term community intends to refer simply to an interacting section of population living within the purview of a particular territorial boundary who share a common interest.

In spite of the existing subtle conceptual differences between locality and community, this study uses the terms interchangeably to refer to a particular territory inhabited by people who share not only a common interest but are also bonded with closely similar social, political, and cultural ties.

Community-based organisation: Roberts (2001:22) identifies some general characteristics of community-based organisation (CBO) such as: non-governmental character, not for profit, not self-serving, and sharing a mutual obligation. On the other hand, non-government organisations (NGOs) are those organisations that are: “Established and governed by a group of private citizens for a stated philanthropic purpose and supported by voluntary individual contribution” (OECD, 1988). Hence, the following terms concomitant with NGOs: voluntary organisations, CBOs, people’s organisations, public service contractors, and non-profit organisations. But NGO is the most widely used as the umbrella organisation within which the latter ones can be included depending on the scale of operation (Myllylä, 1998:48).

On the basis of the above description, it is understood that a NGO also carries such conceptual characteristics as same as CBO. Therefore, it is difficult to draw a boundary line between NGOs and CBOs. But there are also some distinguishing features such as: NGOs are not restricted to locality or community; they may operate in one or several regions, and may be national or international. On the other hand, CBOs are restricted to a particular locality(ies). In this regard, Kwesiga and Ratter (1994) opined that: “Voluntary membership organizations that are engaged in self-help activities, with a primary goal of improving the quality of life of members within defined localities.” For the purpose of

this study, CBO is understood as such an entity whose members are engaged to improve the quality of life of the population living in a particular urban space by their [co-ordinated] self-help.

I shall now provide a short account on the history of community development initiatives in Bangladesh.

1.3. The history of community development initiatives in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh self-contained and self-governed local organisations existed during ancient times, as early as thousand BC (Jathur, 1964; Majumder, 1963). References are found in Kautalya's *Arthashastra* of *gram sabha* (village councils), composed of the respectable households, responsible for the governing of the villages and making decisions regarding matters of public interests, and the administration of justice (Kautalya, 1929/1977). During the later period there existed *panchayats* composed of five elderly persons of the locality (details mentioned in chapter 3). These traditional organisations have survived through the ages and through all the reform measures of the colonial period and the successive governments of the country. Bangladesh has a rich history of local initiatives undertaken by individuals and groups (Khan, 2003:397).

Samiul Hasan et al. (1992:197) point out that the people of Bangladesh were converted to Islam before the Muslims conquered the country. The converts, therefore, had to struggle against the social odds. As a result, helping each other financially and emotionally became a social need and continued as the religious norm. Like in other religions, Islam, the religion of the majority of the population, is based on the ideology of help and cooperation and teaches voluntarism in all walks of life.

Shabbir Cheema (1983:204-207) illustrates some functions to be performed by voluntary organisations for the promotion of local development and these are: to ensure popular participation and mobilisation, local planning and goal setting, contribute to providing

services, mobilisation of local resources, define and express local needs and demands, influence local administration, and create political awareness.

The organised form of voluntary organisation was first established in what is now in Bangladesh in 1944 following the Bengal famine of 1943, which claimed the lives of some 3 million people. Natural calamities that visit Bangladesh quite often thus paved the way for cooperative and voluntary efforts in the country. Three distinct orientations in the programming strategy of voluntary organisations working for development are: relief and welfare, local self-reliance, and sustainable system development (Hasan, 1993:84). Voluntarism in Bangladesh operates at three levels: individual, community, and institutional. Here, I shall describe the nature of voluntarism in individual and community levels.

At the individual level, one important method of giving in Islam is *zakat*. *Zakat* is a filtration process through alms giving. According to this practice, 2.5 percent of an individual or a household's savings and other forms of movable property is supposed to be given to charity (or poor people) at the end of each year but a large portion of it is distributed during the *Eid-ul-Fitr*, the festival after the Ramadan. Another kind of voluntarism is to donate *chanda* (contribution) to pursue many community development works such as: build, repair, and expansion works of road, schools, mosque, *madrasha* (religious educational institution), *moktab* (religious pre-school), graveyard and other welfare works.

Hasan (1993:88) further notes that organisations like the Grameen Bank, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), and the *Ganosastho Kendro* (People's Health Centre) were organised by enthusiastic individuals. The first one was organised by a University professor; the second one by an accountant; and the third, a physician.

Apart from the above, some civil servants also volunteered to spend their time, knowledge, and energy for organising several programmes (e.g. *Swanirvar* [self-help],

Ulashi-Jadunathpur project) for community development (for details see: Ali, 1982; Huq, 1978).

At the community level, on the other hand, traditional *panchayats* have also existed in the area allowing people the scope to attain security and other basic needs on a collective basis (Azam and Hollander, 1990). In both rural and urban Bangladesh collective community cooperation is observed to run *mokhtabs*, *madrashas*, and night schools (for adult education). Community people, if required, also construct and repair roads/lanes and culverts through their voluntary labour and/or financial contribution. Sharing fruits, vegetables, poultry or cattle products from non-commercial farming among neighbours and relatives is a very common practice in Bangladesh (Hasan, 1993:90).

In sum, one can comment from the above description that reciprocity, trust, and flexibility among individual parties having mutually economic benefits, as well as family and kinship connections, social networks or associational life related to groups or organisations have been instrumental in creating and cementing social relations in community work.

In the following section I shall at first mention the studies that have been carried out so far on this issue and then discuss the topic to be researched here, and finally will illustrate the significance of the study.

1.4. Earlier research, the research topic and the significance of the study

So far published work on the role of social capital in SWM in Bangladesh has been negligible. The lone quantitative study conducted by Sheoli Pargal et al. (1999) examined the role of social capital in the private, community-based provision of a public good, trash collection in the capital city Dhaka. The study found that social capital, particularly the strength of norms and reciprocity and sharing on the probability that a voluntary SWM system is created, are relatively large and significant, while the role of trust is not identified as a significant factor. The major weaknesses of the study are that it focuses

only on a city and provides a cursory look to identify the factors that constitute social capital and that advance the formation of voluntary SWM initiatives in their study area.

Available information shows that a few studies exist using social capital as an analytical tool to explain various development activities in Bangladesh. A study by Lisa Larance (2001:7-18) shows that, by attending weekly Grameen Bank (GB) centres meetings members have the opportunity to gradually change their social situation by building the trust and networks that form their social capital. The success of GB lies primarily on the social relations of its members. In the same vein, Zamana (2003) concludes from her study that interpersonal relationships among and between GB members and GB employees fosters social capital by employing various means, most notably: frequent face-to-face interaction, fellow feeling, trust, norms, rules and regulations of the bank, that facilitate, *inter alia*, the success of the micro-credit programme of GB.

Another study by Robert Thörlind (2003) explores the critical debate on civil society and social capital from the present structural and post-Marxist perspectives. The performance of decentralised governments in West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh is examined to find out whether higher levels of social capital and a stronger civil society could explain any variation in institutional and/or democratic performance, or if these variations rather follow from difference in the politicisation of civil society. At the end of the day, the study found that the usefulness of social capital thesis explained variations in institutional and democratic performance of decentralised governments in both India and Bangladesh.

Apart from the above, there are only limited studies in the field of SWM (also in community-based SWM) from the perspective of social sciences. The journal articles and an edited book by Paul (1991), Ahsan et al. (1992), Ashraf (1994), Hasan and Mulamootill (1994), Hoq and Lechner (eds.) [1994], Khandaker (1995), Hasan (1998), and Asaduzzaman and Hye (1998) have all explained the general aspects of SWM such as: definition, composition of solid waste, Agenda 21 of the Rio Summit and its possible impact on environment, but did not examine the particular roles of the characteristics of politico-administrative and social capital in the SWM process. Contrary to this, the study

by Bhuiyan (2001) attempts to answer how the SWM organisations in Bangladesh operate in practice. The results of his study clearly show that the SWM organisation in Bangladesh functions in accordance with the basic characteristics of the politico-administrative system of the country. The study further concludes that the typical characteristics of the political culture of Bangladesh impinge upon the operational activities of the conservancy department.

In sum, the above description points out the lack of studies in the fields of SWM and social capital. Therefore, an in-depth study to explore the role of social capital in the growth of community governed SWM initiative would be timely and significant and help bridge the existing research gap.

Topic to be researched: Article 18 of the Constitution of Bangladesh ensures the right to healthy environment as one of fundamental rights through the judicial interpretations of Articles 31 and 32³ (Ullah, 1999:annex 1). In accordance with the provision of the articles of the Constitution, the duties and functions of the conservancy departments of the city corporations have been framed in their respective ordinances to ensure conservancy services to the citizens. Despite organisational support, as mentioned in section 1.1 of this chapter, 50 percent of the daily-generated solid waste remains uncollected everyday in both Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and Chittagong City Corporation (CCC).

One estimate shows that some 5.2 million people (including 4 million children) die each year from waste-related diseases in the World and globally the amount of municipal waste product [will] double by 2000 AD and quadruple by 2025 AD (Asaduzzaman and Hye, 1998:386). To this effect, there is no available statistics for Bangladesh, but it is fairly assumed that quite a large number of citizens either die or suffer from various

³ Article 18 of the Constitution says, “The state shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the improvement of public health as among primary duties...” Article 31 provides the right, “To enjoy the protection of law, and to be treated in accordance with law, is the inalienable right to every citizen...” and Article 32 of the Constitution ensures, “No person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty saved in accordance with law” (The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, amended up to 31 December 1998: 6, 9).

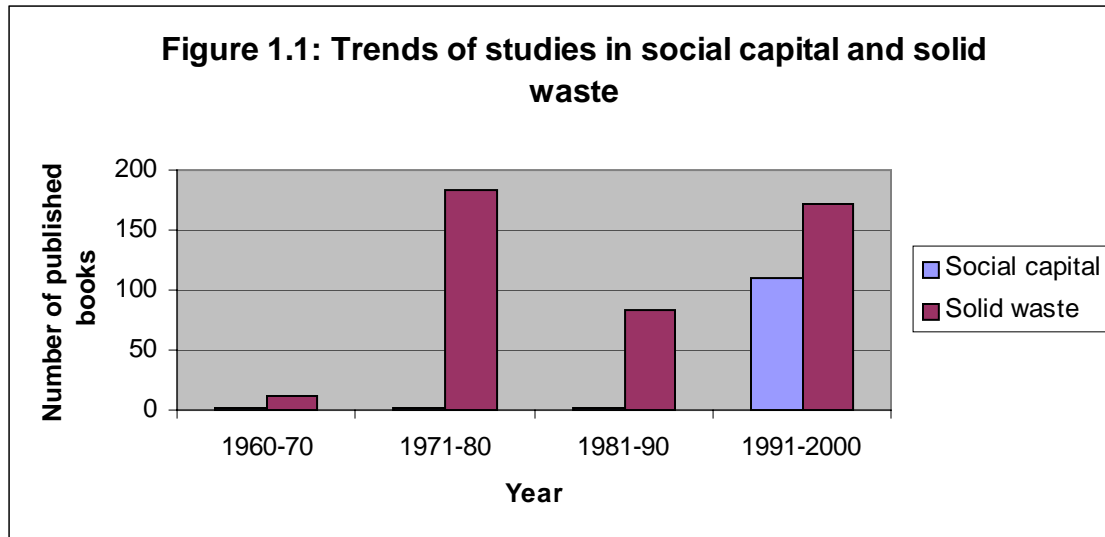
diseases generated from solid waste (chapter 5 points out some diseases caused by solid waste in some of my study areas). Therefore, the nature of the problem is self-explained and an appropriate organisational response is required to reduce the intensity of the problem to a reasonable extent.

The imprint portrayed on the canvass reveals that the apparent failure of the conservancy departments to deliver appropriate services to the respective citizens has influenced the growth of community-based SWM organisations to look after their daily-generated garbage in the study locations situated at the territorial jurisdiction of both DCC and CCC respectively.

In the light of the above circumstances, the following research questions are designed for mapping the central concern of the study:

- What are the current arrangements for SWM in the DCC and in the CCC? Are the community-based SWM initiatives a challenge to the existing SWM arrangement of the city corporations?
- What particular characteristics of the community lead to activism in some neighbourhoods and none in others?
- Why are some communities better able to organise themselves for the collective good than others?
- How does social capital promote or inhibit the formation of community-based SWM initiatives?

Significance of the study: Social capital has been a well-loved addition to the vocabulary, with more than 500,000 “hits” on Google (Kadushin, 2004:77). Analysing the Library of Congress data set show that during the decade of 1960s only one book on social capital and twelve in the field of solid waste were available, whereas the number increased to 110 and 172 respectively during 1990s, and the number of publications (books) still continues to grow. The following figure (1.1) gives a glimpse as to the global trends of studies in the fields of both social capital and solid waste.



Source: Computed by the author from Library of Congress data set

In the realm of the above circumstances, one can reasonably comment that the topics to be researched here are quite significant even in global perspective.

Focussing on the above description, it is understood that social capital and solid waste management are relatively less explored and are less preferred areas of study to the social science researchers of Bangladesh and, therefore, demands due attention. It is hoped that the study will, by and large, contribute to specify the role of social capital either to influence or to inhibit the community capacity to organise an initiative to manage their daily produced solid waste and other relevant problems.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

This thesis comprises of nine chapters. Chapter 1 has provided background information about the rationale and justification for pursuing research on the issue, as mentioned earlier. This chapter also discusses previous studies, the research topic and research questions, and then points out the significance of the study. Chapter 2 sheds light on social capital theory used in this thesis. How the theory has been operationalised and contextualised have also been described here. Chapter 3 gives a glimpse on society-politics nexus in urban Bangladesh. The description made in that chapter portrays a

background to interpret how socio-political factors influence the creation of social capital and growth of community-based initiatives. Chapter 4 provides some rudimentary information about public and community-based SWM initiatives in Bangladesh. Chapter 5 deals with reporting field information and observations about the factors associated with the formation and absence of community-based SWM initiatives in my study sites. Chapters 6 through 8 report field information/data on trust, social networks, and civic engagements respectively. Chapter 9 discusses and indicates the findings of the research work on the basis of the descriptions and interpretations drawn on the earlier chapters. That chapter further tends to link the theoretical frame to the real life scenario and then presents the results of the study.

Chapter 2

Social capital: the tool for explaining the formation of community-based solid waste management initiatives in urban Bangladesh

2.1. Introduction

The objective of this study, as mentioned in chapter 1, is to explore whether or not community-based SWM initiatives have emerged through the influence of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. In this chapter my aim is to develop a conceptual framework for the analysis of my research problem described in the earlier chapter. This thesis analyses the activities of community-based SWM initiatives of four wards⁴ of two major city corporations of Bangladesh, i.e. DCC and CCC — chosen on the basis of methodological suitability (methodological details have been discussed in annex 1). The general characteristics of the community-based organisations in most of the Asian countries include the promotion of group responsibility and group solidarity through weekly meetings, face-to-face interaction, and fellow feelings which supposedly strengthen and foster of social capital. The societal characteristics of Bangladesh (discussed in chapter 3) confirm its closeness with the said features. This particular situation is believed to develop organisational capacity for the co-ordination of activities and collective decision-making for common good. Evidence suggests that local institutions are more effective at enforcing common agreements and cooperative action when the local distribution of assets is more equal and the benefits are shared more equally (Grootarert, 1998:6).

Margit Mayer (2003:116) elucidates that the appeal of ‘social capital’ in the urban context is especially powerful, both in research and practice. Scholars as well as policy-makers and activists in the field of urban development have boldly appropriated the concept and incorporated it into their own work. Since social capital unfolds its very own effects, particularly on the local/community level, it is hardly surprising that its promise has been taken up in this field in so many ways. The innovative potentials of the city, of

⁴ Ward is the lowest administrative unit of urban local government having a population of around 15,000 to 40,000 (Ashraf, 1994:75).

the community, of the neighbourhood and of community-based initiatives are increasingly looked at from the perspective of the social capital approach.

In view of the above, social capital can be considered the *sine qua non* of development activities. I, therefore, use the theory of social capital for analysing the success and failure of the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in urban Bangladesh.

The description of this chapter is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the historical notion of the concept of social capital. The second part not only takes care of the definitional issues of the concept itself but also conceptually elaborates its three major sources, i.e. trust, social networks, and civic engagement. Finally, the sources are operationalised and contextualised according to the need of the study and thus developed into a theoretical framework.

2.2. History of the notion of social capital

Among social scientists, economists, and political practitioners alike, social capital is a concept *en vogue*. As Narayan and Pritchett (1999:872) comment, 'Social capital, while not all things to all people, is many things to many people.' Since the middle of the 1990s the concept of social capital has provoked rapidly growing interest (see figure 1.1), rivalling even globalisation in popularity (Schuurman, 2003:991). Despite the fact that social capital has been given a number of different definitions, Fukuyama (2001:7) identifies that many of them refer to manifestations of social capital rather than to social capital itself. Nevertheless, the concept social capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are embedded. Social capital is the glue that holds societies together and without which there can be any economic growth or human well-being. Without social capital, society at large will collapse, and today's world presents some very sad examples of this (Serageldin, 1998:i).

Throughout the contemporary literature on social capital, different forms of capital are identified. Uphoff (2000) refers to physical, natural, and human capital as the standard categories of capital. According to Grootaert (1998), “These three standard types of capital determine only partially the process of economic growth because they overlook the way in which the economic actors interact and organize themselves to generate growth and development”. Recently social capital, referred to as the “missing link” by Grootaert (1998), has been added as fourth category of capital.

The term social capital has found its way into economic analysis only recently, although various elements of the concept have been present under different names for a long time. A growing number of sociologists, political scientists, economists, and organisational theorists have invoked the concept of social capital in their search for answers to the broadening range of questions confronting their own fields (Adler and Kwon, 2002:17). Rousseau emphasised already in the 18th century the importance of shared values and a social contract. Similar ideas were brought up by Aristotle, observing that the Greek polis founded this way of viewing man’s behaviour as social, and pursuing common interests in the 4th century B.C. (Paldam and Svendsen, 1999). Another well-known example is that of Marx’s class theory in which all individuals, due to class, voluntarily organise to act their common interest. Max Weber (1922/1965) also emphasised the importance of culture. Trust grew out of religious habit. For example, the early puritans developed shared values, which glorified hard work, thrift and honesty. These values were instrumental to the accumulation of capital and capitalism. Émile Durkheim, on the other hand, also values the roles and norms that constitute social institutions are both inside the individuals who have internalised them and outside those individuals in that, once established, these norms exercise an independent influence on their creators, which he explained as the consequences of inter-personal relations (Thompson et al. 1990:130).

Social capital within organisations has long been studied under the label “informal organisation”. This lineage can be traced back to the Hawthorn studies which mapped cliques among workers and showed their influence on work norms and performance. The lineage of social capital between organisations goes back to Marshall’s (1919) discussion

of industrial districts and Macaulay's discussion of non-contractual relations in business. To trace the history of the notion of social capital back before its explicit invocation would therefore largely be to recapitulate the history of organisational research (Alder and Kwon, 1999).

Marshall and Hicks employed the term social capital for a different purpose as early as 1890 to distinguish between temporary and permanent stocks of physical capital (Woolcock, 1998). Hanifan, at the Rural School Community Centre, also used the term in 1916, described social capital terms of "...goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit, the rural community... accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy one's social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole society" (Hanifan, 1916:130).

Mancur Olson (1982) begins his analysis of group behaviour from a pessimistic view of human nature. Hobbes's pessimist view stands in contrast to Rousseau's optimistic view of human nature that offers the reverse solution: third party enforcement. Adam Smith argued in a similar line that man is a rational utility maximiser and pursues private interests in contrast to common interests (Andersen et al., 2000).

According to Jacobs (1961), the term social capital initially appeared in community studies, highlighting the central importance for the survival and functioning of city neighbourhoods with the networks of strong, crosscutting personal relationships developed over time that provide the basis for trust, cooperation, and collective action in such communities.

Over the years, social scientists have during their research adopted different terms that coincide with the concept of social capital, i.e. through Granovetter's (1973) "weak ties" and Boissevain's (1974), "friends of friends" — network members can gain privileged access to information and to opportunities. Finally, significant social capital in the form of social status or reputation can be derived from membership in specific networks,

particularly those in which such membership is relatively restricted (Bourdieu, 1985; Burt 1992).

An overview of the historical contributors to the concept of social capital is presented below:

Table 2.1: Historical contributors to the debate on social capital

Year	Author	Source of social capital
4 th Century B.C.	Aristotle	Viewed man's behaviour as social and pursuing common interests.
1651	Hobbes	Third party enforcement
1762	Rousseau	Shared values and a social contract.
1776	Smith	Man pursues private interests in contrast to common interests.
1890	Marshall and Hicks	Distinguish between temporary and permanent stocks of physical capital.
1904	Karl Marx	All individuals voluntarily organise to act in their common interest. Emphasised also the importance of culture.
1916	L. J. Hanifan	Goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among groups of individuals.
1919	Marshall	Social capital between organisations, with the discussion of industrial districts.
1920's & 1930's	Hawthorn Studies	The importance of the role social psychological factors played in how people acted in organisations.
1963	Macaulay	Discussion of non-contractual relations in business.
1973	Granovetter	Weak ties and embeddedness.
1974	Boissevain	Friends of friends.
1982	Olson	A high level of trust will benefit everybody, and prevent people from doing bad things to each other.
1985	Bourdieu	Networks-particularly those in which such membership are relatively restricted.

Source: Andersen et al. 2000:15

A review of the concept from a historical perspective shows that the root of social capital can be traced back to the Aristotelian age where man's behaviour was considered as a vital force to pursue common interests. Over time, several factors shaped the meaning of the concept to its present state and some of them are: individuals, organisations, community, and social structure as well as society as a whole. Most recent research has

applied the concept to a broader range of social phenomena that include relations inside and outside the family and relations within and beyond the firm.

2.3. Definition of social capital

Despite its current popularity, the concept of social capital does not embody any idea really new to sociologists and political scientists. The term social capital simply recaptures an insight present since the very beginnings of the discipline. Nevertheless the concept still continues to evolve and although there is no single agreed definition. In this regard, some definitions offered by prominent scholars and development agencies relevant to my work are presented below:

Box 2.1: Definitions of social capital

“Social capital refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993:167).

“The totality of actual or potential resources related to the possession of a lasting network of more or less institutionalised direct or indirect social relations” (Bourdieu, 1981 cf. Schuurman, 2003:994).

“The component of human capital that allows members of a given society to trust one another and co-operate in the formation of new groups and associations” (Coleman, 1988).

“The ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations” (Fukuyama, 1995:10).

“The information, trust, and norms of reciprocity inhering in one’s social networks” (Woolcock, 1998:153).

“...the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interaction” (World Bank, available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital>).

“Networks together with shared norms, values, and understanding that facilitate co-operation within or among groups” (OECD, 2001).

Considering the above definitions of social capital reveals that Putnam takes a somewhat different approach from his antecedents. Bourdieu and Coleman, for example, see social

capital as a benefit that accrues primarily to an individual as a result of their participation in a set of social relationships. Putnam sees social capital as a property of communities, cities, and even nations. Johnston and Percy-Smith (2003:324) observe that Putnam equates social capital, in practice, with the level of associational involvement and participation that exists within a community and makes the distinction between ‘bonding’ social capital — links to people ‘like me’- and ‘bridging’ social capital — links to people ‘unlike me’. In other words, the former tends “to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups,” whereas the latter is “outward looking and encompasses people across diverse social cleavages” (Smith and Kulynych, 2002:159). Putnam (2000:24) explains that these two kinds of social capital are not interchangeable and emphasises there is no necessary relationship between a given level of either bonding or bridging social capital and the level of the other.

Adler and Kwon (2002:19-20) classify the afore-mentioned definitions of social capital (Box 2.1) into three broad types depending on whether they focus primarily on the relations an actor maintains with other actors, or on the structure of relations within an organisation, or allow for both viewpoints. The first group (e.g. Bourdieu) focuses primarily on social capital as a resource facilitating action by a focal actor, a resource that is inherent in the social network tying that focal actor to other actors; the actions of individuals and groups can be greatly facilitated by their membership in social network. In contrast to this view, another group (e.g. Coleman, Putnam, and Fukuyama) focus on social capital as a characteristic of the structure of the internal linkages that constitute collective actors (groups, organisations, communities, regions, nations etc as distinct from individual actors) and that can give these actors cohesiveness and its associated benefits. According to the third group definition, a collective actor such as a firm is influenced both by its external linkages to other firms and institutions and by the fabric of its internal linkages: its capacity for effective action is typically a function of both (e.g. Woolcock, OECD).

At this point it is useful to assess the status of social capital as a form of capital. To this effect, Adler and Kwon (2002:21-22) points out both similarities and differences between

social capital and other forms of capital. Regarding similarities, at first, it is argued that like all other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence (Putnam, 1993:167). It means that social capital is a [social] resource into which other resources can be invested with the expectation of future, albeit uncertain returns. Through investment in building their network of external relations, both individual and collective actors can augment their social capital and thereby gain access to information, power, and identity; and by investing in the development of their internal relations, collective actors can strengthen their collective identity and augment their capacity for collective action.

Second, like other forms of capital, social capital is both “appropriable” (Coleman, 1988) and “convertible” (Bourdieu, 1985). Like physical capital, which can be used for different purposes (albeit not necessarily equally efficiently), social capital is appropriable in the sense that an actor’s network of, say, friendship ties can be used for other purposes, such as information or advice. Moreover social capital can be converted to other kinds of capital: the advantages conferred by one’s position in a social network can be converted to economic or other advantages.

Third, like other forms of capital, social capital can be a substitute or a complement to other resources. Actors, both individual and collective, can compensate for lack of financial or human capital by superior “connections.” Social capital can more commonly be complementary to other forms of capital. For example, social capital may improve the efficiency of economic capital by reducing transaction cost. The similar view echoes in the following statement of Anthony Giddens:

“Social capital refers to trust and networks that individuals can draw on for social support, just as financial capital can be drawn upon to be used for investment. Like financial capital, social capital can be expanded — invested and reinvested” (Giddens, 2000:78).

Fourth, like clean air and safe streets but unlike many other forms of capital, social capital is a “collective good” in that it is not the private property of those who benefit from it (Coleman, 1988). More specifically the use of social capital is non-competitive

and it does not diminish (rather increase) with use but (unlike pure public goods) its use is excludable-others can be excluded from a given network of relations.

Several differences have been identified between social capital and other forms of capital from a theoretical standpoint. One critical difference between human and social capital is that one individual alone, for example in form of education, can invest in human capital. Social capital, on the other hand, can only be acquired by two or more people and requires a form of co-operation between them (Grootaert, 1998). Portes (1998:155) observes that whereas economic capital is in people's bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital is based on the structure of their relationship. Scholars emphasised that no individual has exclusive rights to social capital and the strength [capital] of social capital lies in the relations between actors and not within the actor itself (Burt, 1992; Coleman, 1988). Furthermore, when discussing other forms of capital, costs and benefits are crucial factors. There is a growing body of empirical work on the benefits of social capital (e.g. Cummings et al. 2003; Krishna, 2002) but few data on the cost side exist. This has partly to do with the difficulties of measuring social capital. Rationally, investments in social capital require a cost and benefits analysis.

The concept of social capital cannot be easily defined and the key question is the degree to which the concept can be made operational for the purpose of analysis. There is a lack of clarity in research on the sources of social capital. In spite of the prevailing conceptual confusion, doubt, and debate (for details see: Bebbington et al. 2004; Fine, 2001; Harriss, 2002a; Portes and Landolt, 2000), the following working definition of social capital is proposed for the purpose of the study:

Social capital is the conglomeration of trust, social networks, and civic engagement available to individuals or groups. Its source stems from the structure and content of the actors' social relations. The outcomes of such relationships provide information, support, influence, solidarity, and shared beliefs to the interacting actors.

This definition accommodates both internal and external bonds and facilitates social capital's use as a resource not only to individuals but also to groups. However, analysing the definitions of social capital presented in Box 2.1, one can identify several sources of

social capital including: trust, networks, sharing information, norms, social interaction, network ties, shared values and beliefs, and civic engagement. For operational purposes, I chose three sources of social capital i.e. (i) trust, (ii) social networks, and (iii) civic engagement.

In the following sections, an attempt has been made to discuss trust, social networks, and civic engagement — three influential sources of social capital — from a theoretical perspective, and then to contextualise the factors and design for the empirical research.

2.3.1. Trust as a source of social capital

Conceptual confusion prevails about the nature of the relationship between trust and social capital. Fukuyama (1995, 1997) equates trust with social capital, Putnam (1993) sees trust as a source of social capital, and Coleman (1988) sees it as a form of social capital. Gambetta (1988:218) opines, ‘when we say we trust someone or someone is trustworthy, we implicitly mean that the probability that he will perform an action that is beneficial or at least detrimental to us is high enough for us to consider engaging in some form of co-operation with us’. Luhmann (1988) advocates that trust reduces complexity in social relations.

Gambetta (1988:217) further points out that trust only becomes relevant when there is a possibility for “exit, betrayal, and defection”. Bak (2002:1) reminds us that deception, exploitation, manipulation, deceit, and conspiracy flourish when there is unquestioning trust. Trust is the expectation of one person about the actions of others that affects the first person’s choice, when an action must be taken before the actions of others are known (Dasgupta, 1997 cited in Ostrom, 1998:12). Buskens (1998:265), Russel Hardin (1998:11) emphasises the cognitive component of trust evaluations, i.e., a person tends to trust another person because “my trust is grounded in my assessment of your interest in fulfilling my trust.”

It is important to emphasise different forms of trust that may provide the impetus for cooperation in different settings. It is possible to distinguish between two main types of trust: social trust between individuals, and vertical trust between individuals and institutions. Following Kenneth Newton (1997), social trust can further be divided into ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ trust. Thick trust refers to the type of trust generated in situations with a high degree of closure⁵ (Coleman, 1988; Newton, 1997): in small face-to-face communities, thick trust is the essential ingredient of mechanical solidarity or *Gemeinschaft* (co-existence), which is generated by intensive, daily contact between people, often of the same tribe, class or ethnic background. Communities of this kind are generally socially homogeneous, isolated and exclusive, and able to exercise the strict social sanctions necessary to reinforce thick trust. Thick trust might be negatively related to the degree of trust in people outside the close social system.

Putnam defines thin social trust — the propensity to trust fellow humans, although they are not part of one’s immediate circle of close friends or family. While reliance on thick (or personal) trust presupposes knowledge about the persons with whom one is dealing, thin (or generalised) trust “presumes that the structure of the situation is more important than personal character” (Putnam, 1993). Thin trust can improve the conditions for collective action outside the family and close friends, and promote integration spanning established patterns of loyalty (Wollebæk, 2000).

Leana and Van Buren (1999:543) emphasise that trust is necessary for people to work together on common projects and is also a by-product of successful collective action. They divide trust into ‘fragile’ and ‘resilient’ trust. Fragile trust based on perceptions of the immediate likelihood of rewards, and resilient trust based upon stronger and more numerous links between the organisations and its members. This way of viewing trust is in terms of a risk versus reward relationships which of course, affect the interactions between individuals. Organisations strong on social capital exhibit resilient trust. On the other hand, an organisation weak in social capital is characterised by fragile trust. They

⁵ When bonds to outsiders are few, weak or non-existent, norms can be overseen and sanctioned more effectively, conditions on which thick trustfully depends. For example, the Mafia organisation, tribes or social cliques (Coleman, 1988; Newton, 1997)

furthermore separated between dyadic and generalised trust. Dyadic trust is trust between two parties who have direct knowledge of one another, and generalised trust is trust without the other party having much personal knowledge of, or interaction with, him or her.

Let me argue that trust is based on the situated, observable, and accountable reciprocity of every interaction; and it has been documented by many researchers that trust is fundamental in building social capital. Mutual trust and expectations are the social glue that binds many small communities together and helps them accept and manage change (Falk and Kilpatrick, 1999). When two or more parties start to trust each other, they become more willing to share their resources without about worrying being taken advantage of. Trusting relationships inside networks may build up a reputation of trustworthiness⁶, which may be a valuable source and important information for other actors in network. Building on this argumentation, exchange partners with a high degree of trustworthiness are more likely to be preferred than other partners in a network. Such a relationship lubricates cooperation and such cooperation breeds trust (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998).

It is also possible to distinguish the horizontal social type of trust, which refers to individuals' attitudes to other individuals, from a vertical type of trust, pertaining to individuals' attitudes towards institutions. The absence of trust in institutions may be followed not only by lack of trust in other individuals, but also by civic apathy. In a society, where institutions function reasonably well, the more an individual comes in contact with them, the more trustworthy (s) he becomes.

The most striking issue here is to see how trust lives in a society. Can trust be created? Putnam argues that it is a historical endowment therefore prevails in the society. A series of comparative studies conducted in six countries of Asian and Latin American (including Hungary) by Peter Evans and his associates show that the capacity for collective action (in pursuit of sustainable livelihoods, or 'liveability') in a community of

⁶ An attribute of an individual actor involved in the relationship (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998:465).

people is not a matter of historical endowment, but can be constructed, even in likely communities (Harriss, 2001; see also Evans, 1996 and Tandler, 1997 for a similar in-depth discussion). One condition for the construction of this capacity is that the achievement of some common end should appear to be a feasible possibility, but much also depends on the context of a community. Generally speaking, trust is valuable category to explain economic gains by reducing transaction costs.

2.3.2. Social network as a source of social capital

Social capital is the contextual complement to human capital, says Ronald Burt (2000:3). He further explains that the social capital metaphor is that people who do better are somehow better connected. Certain people or certain groups are connected to certain others, obliged to support certain others, and/or dependent on exchange with certain others. Several studies (e.g. Burt, 1997) explain networks as an important source of social capital, though their meaning considerably varies. Researches on social networks sought to identify strongly connected cliques. The cohesiveness of cliques is an important feature of the social landscape, and the sources of this cohesiveness were sought in regard to the relative strength and closure of their ties (Scott, 1991). To some authors who focus on internal ties within a given society (e.g. Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Evans, 1996; Ostrom, 1994; Putnam, 1993) the term networks often simply means informal, face-to-face interaction or membership in civic associations or social clubs. By contrast, network theorists argue that an understanding of social capital requires a finer-grained analysis of the specific quality and configuration of network ties (Adler and Kwon, 2002).

Social networks influence a focal actor's social capital both through the actor's direct ties and through the indirect ties afforded them by virtue of the overall structure of the broader network within which they are embedded (Tichy, 1981). Burt (1992), Coleman (1988), Granovetter (1973) and Lin (2001), among others, point out that direct and indirect network ties provide access both to people who can themselves provide support and to the resources those people can mobilise through their own networks ties.

Coleman (1988) argues that closure of the network structure facilitates the emergence of effective norms and maintains the trustworthiness of others, thereby strengthening social capital. In a more open structure, violations of norms are more likely to go undetected and unpunished. People will thus be less trusting of one another, weakening social capital. In contrast with Coleman's focus on closure, Burt (1992) interprets that a sparse network with few redundant ties often provides greater social capital benefits, if the opportunity to broker the flow of information between groups constitutes a central benefit of social capital.

There are some limitations and pitfalls of closure as well as weaker ties. Leana and Van Buren (1999) indicate that a highly cohesive management team can fail to take good decisions because strong social relations constrain ideas once those in power have expressed their preferences, and not because they cannot think of alternatives. The ties, whether strong or weak, provide the channels for communication but the configuration of the ties is an important source of social capital.

The structures or configurations of a network are also important source of social capital. Portes (1998) observes the structure of the network is the foundation of the creation of social capital. Nahpiet and Ghoshal (1998) provide three properties of network structure: density, connectivity and hierarchy, to exemplify the flexibility and ease of information exchange. Density and connectivity has a direct link to the source of network ties, but hierarchy gives focus to what Granovetter (1973) called the formal organisation⁷. Putnam (1993:173) mentions two broad types of networks: horizontal and vertical. According to him, in horizontal networks, the individuals interacting are of equal status and power. Both vertical and horizontal networks serve to co-ordinate action, but different dynamics are at work. To him (Putnam), a vertical network no matter how dense and no matter how important to its participants cannot sustain social trust and cooperation. It is less helpful in solving collective issues (problems) than horizontal networks (*ibid.*).

⁷ An organisational structure can be both a source of benefit as well as the root to reduce flow of information, depending on what level it is applied, what norms and values the contacts hold, and the network of each individual of the organisation (Andersen et al. 2000).

Putnam does regard social networks as instrumental in relation to other form of social capital. This serves as a catalyst of trust through the experiences made in direct face-to-face interaction with other people, in the sense that other people can be trusted developing the technique: the more we connect with other people, the more we trust them and vice-versa (Putnam, 1995:665).

In short, social networks are a vital source for social capital, because through participation in networks information is gained about the trustworthiness of other people. It reveals from the description that networks contribute to the generation of interpersonal trust- from individuals who know each other personally. The strength of networks to outsiders, i.e. networks with strong ties and weak ties, what network theorists label a clique (Scott, 1991), tends to foster distrust between groups and thus initiates segmentation of the broader society. The networks most efficient in creating and dispersing social capital are horizontal in structure, characterised by moderately strong ties within, and overlap with other sets of connections.

2.3.3. Civic engagement

The term civic engagement is understood as the interest, knowledge, and skills that enable individuals to take part in political and civic life. In this interpretation, it represents, as trust and network do, an individual property, a potential and a resource, not an outcome or end product. In order to make it rational for individuals to take actively part in societal and political matters, their engagement must be accompanied by trust in fellow citizens and a sense of political efficacy. Furthermore, the influence of social networks is also accompanied to make an organised and expressed civic involvement (Wollebæk, 2000:23).

The afore-mentioned three major sources of social capital, i.e. (i) trust, (ii) social networks, and (iii) civic engagement are contextualised in the following sections.

2.4. Contextualisation of the theory and the design for empirical research

The preceding description shows that social capital has the features of social organisations, such as trust, social networks, and civic engagement that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit. The description further indicates that the sources of social capital are found mostly on the micro (or individual/household) and meso (community) level. These are the degrees to which individuals/community are engaged in civic activities, trust each other and interact in overlapping networks.

Trust: In this study, trust was measured by asking the questions to the respondents that Pargal et al. (1999:13) also used in their research on Bangladesh: (i) would you hire someone based on your neighbours' recommendations? The answers to this question were recorded as: (a) yes, I would hire, (b) no, and (c) others. (ii) In an emergency would you leave your young children with your neighbours? The responses to this question were noted in two-point scale: (1) yes, (2) no. These questions are thought to capture the propensity to trust the people whom one does not necessarily know personally. Therefore, it is a measure of generalised thin trust, not person-or group-specific thick trust.

Moreover, a variable indicating the level of vertical trust, i.e. trust in institutions, was included. This was measured by asking question whether or not they trust the community organisers for their SWM initiatives. The response to the question will be accounted as: (a) 'no trust', (b) 'high trust', and (c) 'do not know'/unwillingness to response.

Social networks: In Bangladesh, it is assumed that everyday life of the general people is influenced through the patronage network. Khan (2001) writes that the patrons constitute a range of [rural] elites who, with regional variations of wealth and social status, generally hold formal or informal power positions. They are groups (including small leadership groups) with "considerable social influence" (Bottomore, 1964), who can collectively manipulate the masses.

These patrons enjoy large-scale legal and *de facto* possession of land. They are widely connected to the local bureaucracy and political scene. Most are directly or indirectly involved in local politics, and therefore have access to local government positions. They are backed up by the support of a large family-lineage, and/or clan and clients groups. Finally, they have diversified their occupational and socio-economic activities. These characteristics and sources of power have been observed widely across the regions of Bangladesh.

For the purpose of research, this sub-dimension was operationalised as groups outside the sphere of family and relations that are considered to be important parts of one's social circle. The respondents were asked to check a box for each group that (s) he considered to be part to his (her) social network. More specifically, the respondents were asked questions like: If you look back over the (say) last six months, who are the four or five people with whom you discussed matters important to you? How do you know them? How many times (frequency of contact) did you meet them in the last month? Are they from (i) 'neighbours and local community where you live now', (ii) 'current colleagues or fellow students', (iii) 'former colleagues or fellow students', (iv) 'friends from where you grew up', and (v) 'others'. From this, two measures of social networks were computed. First, the breadth of networks was operationalised as the number of different groups that were considered to be a part of the respondent's network. Second, [a dummy variable] to understand how a network was created, representing the presence or absence of friends obtained in the current situation, i.e., either current colleagues/fellow friends or neighbours, were computed. The indicators intend to measure (i) the degree to which involvement in associations contributes to the construction of new social networks and (ii) the degree of embeddedness of the existing networks.

Civic engagement: In Putnam's research, indicators such as newspapers readership and political interest were used to measure the level of social capital in American society, together with trust and social connectedness (Putman, 2000). Social capital is used interchangeably with 'civic community' and 'civicness', which clearly include political interest and knowledge (Putnam, 1993).

For the typical characteristics of the society, one can reasonably argue the suitability of using the same indicators of Putman, i.e., newspapers readership and political interest to measure the civic engagement in Bangladesh. Because still nearly half of the total population is illiterate and the readership of the (daily) newspapers are notably low.⁸ But in the course of my fieldwork, particularly during household surveys, it was observed that newspapers readership in my sample study sites was almost total. On the other hand, the general political interest of the people of Bangladesh is not very spontaneous for such reasons as: lack of education and awareness, poverty, bureaucratic and political corruption, rigging of election, etc. After having a massive reform in the election administering system⁹, however, the voter turn out rate has significantly increased.¹⁰ In the last parliamentary elections of 2001, the voter turn out rate was around 76 percent (Rashiduzzaman, 2002:187). On the basis of these facts, newspaper readership and political interest (participation) were included as indicators to measure the civic engagement of Bangladesh.

With regard to civic engagement, the study aims here to understand how interest, knowledge, and skills enable an individual to take part in political and civic life. This was operationalised as the level of expressed civic and political interest. In order to measure this, the following indicators were used:

(i) In order to assess the general awareness and knowledge of the respondents, they were asked whether or not they read a daily newspaper and also watch or hear news

⁸ Available statistics shows that in 1998, 221 daily newspapers grossly circulated 2539000 copies (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 1999, 2000:355), whereas according to the preliminary report of the fourth population census of 2001, the total population of the country is almost 129 million (*The Daily Star*, a vernacular English daily. 24th August, 2001).

⁹ In order to ensure the free and fair in the parliamentary election, the provision for a non-partisan Caretaker Government has been incorporated in the constitution of Bangladesh. The immediate past Chief Justice of the Supreme Court heads such government in cooperation with his other ten cabinet colleagues chosen in consultation with the leading political parties and [they] are also non-partisan in character. Such Caretaker Government conducted the parliamentary elections of 1991, 1996, and 2001. National and international observers opined these elections fundamentally free and fair (Bhuiyan, 2003:33-51; Schaffer, 2002:76; Zafarullah and Akhter, 2000:345-59).

¹⁰ Available statistics show that 55.61percent votes cast in 1973 parliamentary election; the rate was 51.29 percent in 1979, 66.31 percent in 1986, 51.81 percent in 1988, 55.45 percent in 1991 and 74.96 percent in (12 June) 1996 (Bangladesh Election Commission, available at: <http://www.bd-ec.org/election.php3>, accessed 17 April 2002).

programmes broadcasted by television (TV), radio, and other means of entertainment, and subsequently share idea/knowledge with their family members and neighbours. Their responses were recorded as: (a) regularly, (b) occasionally, and (c) not at all. The respondents who answered (a) and (b) were further asked whether or not the knowledge gained (e.g. by reading newspapers and watching TV) made them self-motivated to engage with community activities such as the SWM initiative¹¹. The answers were marked either “yes” or “no”.

(ii) To know the nature of the interest of the respondents in their civic life, they were asked questions like: (a) How many times (frequency) you met your neighbours in the last month? Their answers (frequency) were recorded accordingly; (b) what was the subject matter of your discussion? Replies such as: personal matters, community issues, national development, and political issues were viewed; (c) in the next step, i.e., to understand whether or not their mutual discussion strengthens economic avenues and reduces the transaction cost, the respondents were asked further: how do you feel to talk to your neighbour about your personal/community problem? Does it bring any economic benefit to you? Replies such as: I feel comfortable and get some economic benefit; do not feel so comfortable to talk to my neighbour with any problem but sometime receive some benefit; do not feel comfortable and do not get any benefit, were counted; and (d) to view the strength of their (among neighbours) relationships the respondents were asked: do you exchange food/gift [or exchange wish/consolation] to your neighbour on their social occasions (like marriage, birth, or funeral)? Frequency of their meetings was also recorded.

To understand the political interest of the respondents, they were questioned: whether or not they vote at every parliamentary and city corporations (Mayor and Ward Commissioner) elections? The meaning of the question is somewhat close to the understanding of voting behaviour of the respondents. However, the respondents who said “yes”, were asked further ‘what characteristics influenced them to cast their vote for

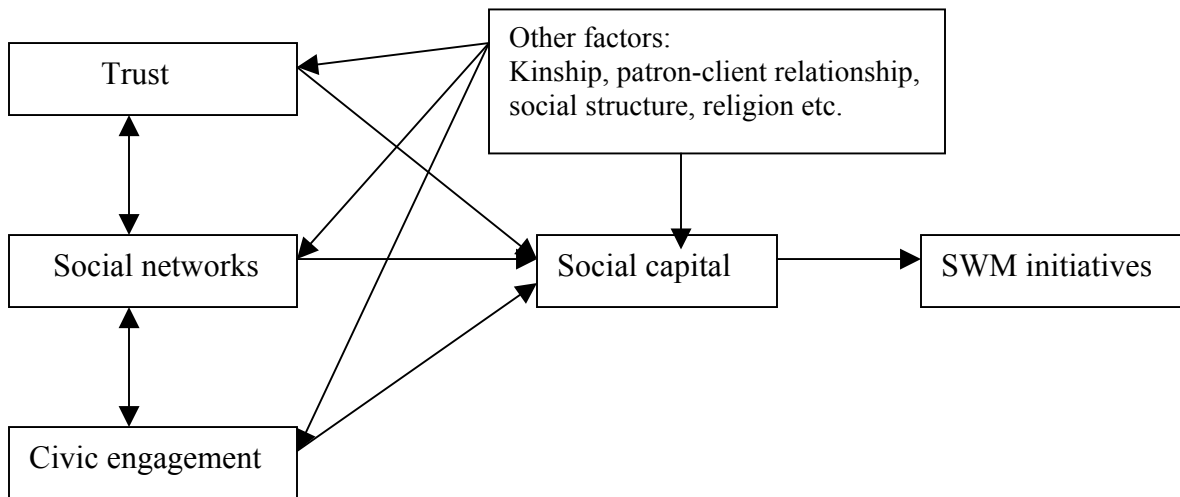
¹¹ In urban Bangladesh, the rate of access to e-entertainments through TV and radio is relatively higher than the rural areas.

a particular candidate?’ Their answers were grouped as: development of the area (as probably the candidate commits), at the request of friends/relatives, personal/political interest, and relationship with the candidate. Respondents who do not vote at the elections were asked the reasons for not voting and the answers were recorded and grouped as: do not have trust on politicians and on their commitments, unsound relationship between party in power and political oppositions, and corruption.

Moreover, the respondents of the sample households were also asked about their membership in some selected organisations (see the interview guide in annex 8) and their answers were reported and computed accordingly.

The above description is schematically summarised in Figure 2.1 and presented here:

Figure 2.1: The factors influence social capital production and thus formation of SWM initiatives



2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented a theoretical framework to understand the role of social capital for the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in my study locations. I have also contextualised the theory and specified the design of my empirical research.

Chapter 3

Society-politics nexus in Bangladesh

3.1. Introduction

The city dwellers and their engagement with social organisation are the primary concern of this chapter. The interaction between urban citizens and their organisation is guided through such characteristics as, *inter alia*, ethos from society and politics. Consequently, the social organisation where they are linked has a structure; and a social process, therefore, builds the institutional conditions of their survival. In terms of rural setting, Jahangir (1982:1) observes that the peasant lives with others in hierarchical structure, as a member of land groups and as a member of kin groups. The life of urban citizens (poor) is in no way different to this but further conditioned in different hierarchies that facilitate their existence.

The objective of this chapter is to understand how social relations and political power are shaped in Bangladesh, particularly in urban areas. In order to explain how social relations are consolidated, an attempt has been made to give a cursory look on such phenomena as social stratification, social class, kinship, patron-client relationship, rituals and other factors. On the other hand, particular emphasis is given on the nature of party politics not only to see how political power emerges but also to count its effects on society.

The chapter, at first, briefly discusses urban community structure and then some relevant aspects of the societal characteristics are touched upon. Subsequently, the salient features of patronage politics in Bangladesh are briefly reviewed with an emphasis on the BNP-led coalition regime elected in 2001. The rest of the chapter, however, shows the society-politics interface on the basis of the characteristics of the societal phenomena and party politics.

3.2. A note on urban community structure in Bangladesh

With extensive migration from rural to urban areas, the urban communities gradually became densely populated. For example, the population of Dhaka city was 6,844,131 in

1991 and increased to 10,712,206 in 2001 (Ahmed, 2004). This increased population created a dearth of land in urban centres. As a consequence, urban settlements are built unplanned and not only reduce the aesthetic beauty of the city but also add new problems. The wealthy and 'local' citizens occupy urban settlements that are better in terms of social and spatial arrangement, and delivery of urban services, whereas urban poor and migratory people, comparatively speaking, live in backward places where the delivery of the aforesaid services either absent or inadequately provided.

The 'local' people who ancestrally live in a particular locality over the years are better linked with their neighbours in terms of family and kin ties. Consequently, the social basis of area-based organisation is anchored with kin relationship. Jahangir (1979) observes that the proximity of homesteads influences the frequency of interaction between members of kin groups.

The urban settlement is roughly divided in neighbourhoods (*mahalla*), which are further subdivided into homesteads (*bari*) and individual houses (*paribar/ ghor*). A *panchayat*¹² (committee) headed by a *sardar* governs the activities of a *mahalla* in all large urban centres across the country. Both *sardar* and members of the *panchayat* are carefully chosen from the elders (*murabbi*) and powerful people of the locality. One of the historical tasks that a *panchayat* performs is to mediate disputes among the inhabitants by means of arbitration (*shalish/ bichar soba*) and the either party generally accepts their decision without raising any serious scrutinization. Referring to rural villages, Bertocci (1970:135-6), Jahangir (1982:3), and Rahman and Islam (2002:109-148) note that

¹²*Panchayat* system (in Dhaka) developed in response to the socio-cultural needs of the various *mahallas* of Dhaka town. It is assumed that the system prevailed in Dhaka even before the mid-19th century, but the system was given a much-organised form by the *nawabs* (an official title for a big landlord) of Dhaka and under their patronage every *mahalla* of Dhaka had a *panchayat*, which functioned well. The *panchayat* was more or less a representative institution. They were collectively known as '*Panch Laeq Biradar*' [five elderly brothers] (Azam and Hollander, 1990:24). One of them was *sardar*- usually an influential (or a rich) person of the community. The *panchayat* system of Dhaka was discontinued following the great changes effected after the partition of India in 1947. Recently the system has been reintroduced in several *mahallas* (Mamoon, 2002). At this point this is to note that formally a Ward Commissioner, the elected leader of the lowest administrative tier [ward] of urban local government, looks after the administrative, economic, quasi-judicial, and development related matters of his/her respective ward (details have been mentioned in chapter 4). It means that the Ward administration and *panchayat* performs an almost similar kind of job, while the sources of their authority greatly differ.

membership to adjudication is restricted only to *sardar* or members of the dominant lineage who, in turn, control *shalish*. Empirical evidence shows that *mahalla panchayat* also carries out such extra judicial role to maintain social harmony in the respective localities reference to which has been made in chapters 5 and 7.

Of late, such a tendency is observed in the relatively new urban settlements where a committee instead of *panchayat* runs the activities of a *mahalla*. The members of this committee are either elected or selected individuals and represent the 'privileged' class of the locality in question. A committee contains several echelons in hierarchy and generally performs their business under the supervision of its executive head. The designation of the executive head (leader) varies from committee to committee but they are popularly called president or convenor where the age-old term *sardar* becomes defunct. The terms of reference of such committees are the same as *panchayat*, but issues like security and development (e.g. garbage collection) are also included in their operational agenda. In this regard, some cases have been delineated in chapters 5 and 6.

The impact of lineage systems is also operative in urban communities. Jahangir (1982:13) identifies the presence of several lineage systems in the rural areas of Bangladesh and these are: elders (*murabbi*), juniors (*nabalog*), men (*purush*), women (*meyachela*), headmen (*matobbor*), and common members (*somajilok*). The above variants of lineage systems, more or less, exist in urban areas, albeit with some differences in nomenclature. The existing lineage systems in urban communities, by and large, are as follows: elders (*murabbi*), juniors (*nabalog*), men (*purush*), women (*mohila*), headmen (*sardar*), general people (*mahallabashi*), and house owner (*bariwala*) and tenants (*varatiya*). It shows that this compartmentalisation of social relations is based on age, sex, wealth, authority relations, and social context. It means that the relationship within and between the pairs (e.g. *murabbi-nabalog*, *purush-mohila*) is not only based on the pattern of dominance (e.g. *sardar* dominates *mahallabashi*) but profoundly linked with mutual interest of one another such as: *mahallabasi* show loyalty to the leadership of *sardar* and, in turn, the former receives support from the latter at the time of need.

To sum up, focussing on the above description reveals that many contesting interests shape urban community structure. The pattern of life style of city dwellers is precisely conditioned with hierarchical social relations. The community activities and leadership move in line with the local context of the power structure. Consequently, community leadership goes to the powerful people with a sound financial background.

3.3. Building social relations: in quest of the role of social phenomena

In this section I attempt to introduce social stratification, social class, kinship, patron-client relationship, and rituals, and to map the contribution of these phenomena in building social relations in urban communities of Bangladesh.

3.3.1. Social stratification and social class: Social stratification occurs when structured social inequalities (those associated with age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, language, region, and so on) are systematically interrelated in the way that they shape people's life chances, and is involved in the formation of large-scale collectivities that stand in hierarchical relation one to another (Scott, 1996:191). The social stratification of a population involves the formation of its members into a system of social strata that are distinguished from one another by their life chances and their life styles, and by the particular causal mechanisms that are responsible for these (*ibid.*).

A predominantly Muslim society¹³ like Bangladesh, from a theological standpoint, should be generally free from any social classes and social stratification because Islam denounces it. But Elliot Tepper (1976:33) has observed the presence of somewhat 'caste-like characteristics' among Muslim populations; what he terms the "Muslim status hierarchy". Study shows that the reason of the presence of such 'status hierarchy' is deeply anchored in the history and culture, and particularly the way Islam was developed in the Indian subcontinent¹⁴. Karim (1976:163) notes that popular Islam in India in many respects copied the essentials of Hindu beliefs, ideas, and social institutions and adjusted

¹³Almost 86 percent of the population are Muslim.

¹⁴ The territory, which is now known as Bangladesh, was a part of British India for about two hundred years (1757-1947) and later twenty-four years (1947-71) of Pakistan.

them to the Islamic system in a very strange way. Hence, Eirik Jansen (1990:26) has rightly pointed out that this hierarchy in interpersonal relationships is now, and for hundred years has been, accepted as necessary and morally right in [rural] Bangladesh, even among the Muslims.

In an attempt to conform itself to the requirements of the Indian social system, Karim (1976:163) further observes that Islam in India patterned its social classes roughly in imitation of the four main Hindu caste divisions. The Indian Muslims used to ‘fancifully’ divide themselves into: (i) *Syed*, (ii) *Mughal*, (iii) *Sheikh*, and (iv) *Pathan*; the Hindu counterpart being: (i) *Brahmin*, (ii) *Khshatriya*, (iii) *Vaishya*, and (iv) *Sudra*. In spite of the said fourfold classification in Bengal during the early part of the twentieth century, Muslim society of Bengal was divided, as Karim (1976:173) indicates, into the following four broad social divisions:

(1) *Ashraf* (high class): Noblest of all, who despise all kinds of manual work and claim real or fictitious foreign ancestry, or claim long-standing marital relationships with such families, as have distinct claims to foreign ancestry. This class also claims some sort of past or present association with feudal status and land control.

(2) *Rising* (middle class): Muslim middle class — who because of their prosperity and education have been able to contract marriage relationship with *Ashraf* class.

(3) *Atraf* (low class): According to the consideration of *Ashraf* class, all except the members of their own class are *Atraf*. The members of the *Atraf* class cannot claim any foreign ancestry and not maritally interconnected with the *Ashraf* class; and

(4) *Arzal* (the lowest of all classes): This class consists of the very lowest occupations such as: sweepers, butchers, *Halalkhors* (toilet cleaners), *Bediya* (gypsy) etc.

In the light of the above, urban citizens of Bangladesh may roughly be divided into two distinct social classes:

(1) *Ashraf*: those élites who hold social, political, and economic power positions, occupy superior civil or military posts, label them with respectable family titles like- *Syed*, *Sheikh*, *Kazi*, *Majumder*, *Chowdhuri*, *Bhuiyan*; and well connected with society's high-ups (e.g. politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen). It is to be mentioned here that foreign ancestry, one of the basic criteria to elevate someone as *Asraf*, nowadays is only rarely viewed with suspicion of its originality. In support to this, the Census of 1921 uncovered the fact that since 1911 the number of *Saiyads* (*Syed*) in the Chittagong division decidedly decreased (Arefeen, 1982:60). However, one's inclusion to *Ashraf* class largely depends on its control over such status symbols as wealth, ownership of multi-storeyed building, education, prosperity, and attainments of individual families.

(2) *Atraf*: Everyone except the members of *Ashraf* class is included in this group. The members of this class are mostly engaged in support service, petty trading, and perform society's dirty jobs. The position of sweepers and cleaners is, however, at the bottom of *Atraf* class (Asaduzzaman, 1990:56; Bhuiyan, 2001:93).

Khan (2002) observes that the urban stratification is beset with important regional variation. In spite of the fact that not all district towns developed on an equal footing, a few have progressed relatively well. Of them, Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna, incorporate large industrial and commercial enterprises along with a vibrant service sector. Cosmopolitanism has come to shape the nature of social stratification of the community living in those large cities. A *bhadralok* (gentleman)-based modern class comprised of such occupations like corporate executives, civil bureaucrats, professionals, intellectuals, art workers, industrialists, and businessmen have emerged in the urban areas. A relatively large labour force engaged in both formal and informal sectors also characterise the urban population. Urban lifestyles, dresses, languages, etiquette, and recreational activities, etc vary along class lines that attest differentiation in social relations. Chapters 6, 7, and 8, in this connection, have mentioned some references where social class and status played a significant role to shape social relations among community people.

In sum, urban society in Bangladesh is divided into several classes and castes depending on such factors like wealth, education, family titles, religion, social position, and occupation. It means one's social status and power are weighed based on the category of social class(es) he belongs to. As a result, social stratification and social class provide useful tools to understand the dynamics involved in building social relations.

3.3.2. Kinship and community: Kinship is a social relationship based on blood ties and is primarily focussed on ties between parents and children, but is generally extended through marriage (Aziz, 2002). In Bangladesh, there are roughly two predominant types of kinship and these are: *lineal* systems and non-lineal or cognatic systems with the formation of kin groups linked by tracing descent through a common ancestor. Kinship operates in various ways and its strength often depends on class relationships.

The role of kinship in the maintenance of the social structure is important. The classification of the nature of urban settlements mentioned in section 3.1 of this chapter shows how social relationships are formed in urban society. Nowadays, a *mahalla* is the combination of both homogeneous (ancestrally living — 'local') and heterogeneous (migratory) people; therefore, a somewhat asymmetric relationship prevails between the groups. However, such a gap is often bridged through weaving *atiyata* (relationship) amongst them. To become an *atiya* a common ancestor is not necessarily a pre-requisite, but the relationship is broadened by establishing relationships between different clans or sub clans. Kinsmen among Hindus are commonly known as *isti*. The members of *atiya/isti* possess a sense of closeness and feel that the relationship among themselves is solid and dependable. Monique Selim (1995:88) indicates that such relationship also allows women to meet their male kin without maintaining *purdah*¹⁵ strictly.

Aziz (2002) argues that kinship bonds make a claim on people's loyalties. Members of same household feel more comfortable to share ideas and information with each other and feel that they can rely on one another for mutual support. For an urban dweller,

¹⁵*Purdah* can be defined as the segregation of men and women to avoid unnecessary sexual excitement (Hara, 1991:38).

certain activities are entrusted with his/her *mahalla* and even with his/her *paribar* (family), patrilineage and bilateral extended kin ties (*atiyata*), all of which might or might not be conterminous with one's *mahalla*. An inhabitant, either Muslim or Hindu, performs several activities associated with religious establishments (e.g. mosque, mandir). In other words, the exchange of private welfare in the form of building madrassas, mosques, and hospitals — a tradition still intact today — is usually initiated by urban migrants who maintain kin relations and build family status by supporting infrastructural capacity in their *desh* or family home (Feldman, 2003:6). Caste, community, and kinship form the core of the urban social organisations and this divides the *mahalla* into different social groupings. Moreover, on some religious (e.g. *Eid*, *Miladunnabi*, and *Puja*) and social occasions (e.g. *mejban*), kin members have certain specific roles to play. By joining important religious and social functions, members of individual kin groups renew their existing social relations reference of which has been provided in chapters 7 and 8.

3.3.3. Patron-client relationship: The actual use of the terms “patron” and “client” is largely confined to the Mediterranean and Latin American areas, but comparable relationships can be found in most cultures (Scott, 1972:92). Scott defines the term as ‘a special case of dyadic (two-person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client); the client in turn reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron’ (*ibid.*). Thus according to the reciprocity demanded by the relationship, each partner provides a service that is valued by the other. The balance of benefits may heavily favour the patron more than their clients; what Powell (1970:412) translates as “A relationship involving an interchange of non-comparable goods and services between actors of unequal socio-economic rank”.

The afore-mentioned theoretical description suggests three distinguishing features of patron-client links that Zaman (1983:606) puts as follows: (a) the relationship occurs between actors of unequal power and status, (b) the relationship centres around mutual

reciprocity of goods and services, and (c) the relationship between the actors tends to be non-corporate. Wolf (1966:16) considers the relationships as “lopsided friendship” and Scott (1977:126) terms it as “...impersonal contract bonds”. In a semi-urban/urban context, where the patron holds official position of authority and power, Cornelius (1977) sees the relationship as a simple case of compliance on the parts of the clients. The existing nature of patron-client relationships that I understood from my empirical observation suggests that the link in urban Bangladesh largely supports what Cornelius observed in the aforesaid study on urban Mexico some three decades earlier. In this regard, chapters 5 to 8 contain several cases that evidenced how social and political relations are developed through patron-client link in my study areas.

3.3.4. Rituals and other factors: In Bangladesh, like many cultures, people perform ceremonies and rituals for such occasions as pregnancy, birth, circumcision, marriage, and death. Hoque (1994:12) observes that these rituals have implications in decision-making processes, leadership styles and authority concepts. Ritualism has implications concerning the ability to live under strain and stress and in taking decisions under conditions of uncertainty. Although the observance of rituals seems very costly in terms of expenditures, it yields rich social value making social cohesion and solidarity possible for the participants.

Apart from the above comments, the influence of traditions and customs is relatively significant for explaining the development of social relationships in Bangladesh society. For example, the culture of *tadbir* (lobby) is a tradition of highly personal lobbying to secure individual benefit. It is manifested in the process of particularistic politics designed to secure individual rather than collective policy and regulatory benefits (Kochanek, 1993:251). Kochanek observes that at any level in the bureaucracy can block action, and the process of *tadbir* begins at the bottom echelons and gradually works its way up. According to Jamil and Haque (2004:56), access to these levels is secured through school ties, kinship, social contact, payment of small gifts, and reciprocal treatment on account of some personalised services.

The mystic of *districtism* (or localism) also plays an important role in building social and political relationship. In certain situation, Bertocci (1996:91, note 49) observes that the citizens of Bangladesh identify in the first instance Bangladesh as their national, political home. But within the country they will first name their ancestral district and/or their ancestral local area when asked by others to say where they are from. One of the first questions previously unacquainted Bengalis of all walks of life ask each other when first meeting is “*apnar bari khotai*” — where is your ancestral home? In so doing, each seeks to identify the other with a particular *desh* (place) within the Bengali motherland and to ascertain if there is any social connection common to both. Exploring several cases in Bangladesh public administration, Anisuzzaman (1985:21-22) illustrated that a bureaucrat prefers to award an employment (mostly lower subordinate staff like *Mali* [gardener], *Darwan* [security guard], *Peon*, *Cook*) to the applicant from his home district through bending government rules and procedures. Some empirical examples mentioned in chapters 7 and 8 show how ritualism, tradition, and customs facilitate the formation of social relationships in my study areas in both Dhaka and Chittagong.

Summing up, focussing on the above description it reveals that various contesting social relations shape the urban community structure; the pattern of life style of urban dwellers is conditioned with hierarchical social relations. Social class, kinship, patron-client relationship, rituals, traditions and custom — all of these social characteristics either weaken or strengthen human activities in a given social context.

The following section briefly reviews the salient features of patronage politics in Bangladesh, with particular emphasis given to the present regime of Khaleda Zia (elected in 2001), to understand how party politics shape the country, and political power emerges in Bangladesh. The discussion on the activities of this regime is accounted only till May 2004.

3.4. The nature of patronage politics in Bangladesh: a focus on Khaleda regime (2001-)

Since after the inception of Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971, the country had been grasped under power politics mostly based on undemocratic and unconstitutional means, with coup d'état as a common form. The following five major regimes controlled the country's in the last thirty years of politics: Mujib (1972-75), Zia (1977-81), Ershad (1982-90), Khaleda Zia (1991-96), and Hasina (1996-01). Khaleda Zia, the widow of slain president Zia, remained installed in state power after winning the parliamentary elections in October 2001.

The general characteristics of the said five regimes were: politicisation of civil-military bureaucracy was end-less; relationships with the opposition political parties were not based on mutual trust and interests, and nepotism and favouritism to kinsmen and party stalwarts and corruption was rampant.

Khaleda Zia (2001-): The parliamentary elections of October 1, 2001 were relatively a peaceful political event where the BNP and its three coalition partners¹⁶ won 216 seats in the 300-member national parliament. Begum Khaleda Zia was sworn in as prime minister of the BNP-led government for a period of five years. However, the AL, the BNP's predecessor as ruling party, accused the BNP and its election partners of a "crude rigging" of the election in connivance with the non-partisan interim government and the Election Commission (Rashiduzzaman, 2002:183). The AL chief and the leader of the opposition in parliament publicly accused the then president Ahmed and several advisers of the interim government of Justice Latifur Rahman, who supervised the eighth parliamentary elections, of plotting AL defeat in polls. But the observers from both home and abroad termed the election largely free and fair in nature.

The BNP-led coalition's electoral victory in October 2001 was immediately followed by violent attacks — killing, raping, looting, and destruction of property — against Hindus and many Muslim AL supporters, by BNP supporters (Jahan, 2003:224). Thus the

¹⁶ Coalition partners are: Jammāt-I-Islām, Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), and Islami Oyaka Jote (IOJ).

government of Khaleda had fallen short in delivering on its number one campaign promise: to improve law and order in the country. In order to meet her election pledge the army was invited to launch a nationwide drive to arrest criminals, recover arms, and restore order. Beginning in mid October 2002, the anti-outlaw drive took the lives of several people as a result of police and military interrogations. But most of the well-known criminals escaped the dragnet, and once the army was withdrawn, crime rates started climbing upward again (Jahan, 2004:59). For example, the Bureau of Human Rights in Bangladesh estimates that as many as 971 people have been killed since the beginning of the year (Adiga, 2004).

The confrontational politics that has plagued Bangladesh for decades continued during these years also. The two major parties — BNP and AL — who alternated power after the introduction of ‘new’ parliamentary politics in 1991¹⁷ blamed each other for patronising criminal elements, engaging in undemocratic behaviour, and hatching plots to annihilate the other and destroy the country. In October 2003, the AL published a list of 101 “godfathers” belonging to the ruling coalition, which included many cabinet ministers and MPs (Jahan, 2004:56, 58). In the same vein, Zafarullah and Rahman (2002:1021) observed that top-rated criminals (e.g. professional murders, kidnappers, rapists, thugs) in the capital city operated under the shelter of only eighteen powerful godfathers who were mainly ministers, MPs, and business leaders.

During the two and half years’ rule of a BNP-led coalition government the country witnessed several government conflicts with the judiciary. First, the government has a tendency to employ delaying tactics on the issue of separating the judiciary from the executive, though it was one of Zia’s pre-election campaign promises. Second, in appointing judges to the higher courts, the government continued to supersede the norms of seniority. Unfortunately, the image of the judiciary was tarnished when bribery charges were brought against an additional judge of the High Court, an alleged BNP

¹⁷ One of the significant political events of the present-day Bangladesh was the election of the fifth parliament on 27 February 1991. According to the observation of some leading political scientists, it, in fact, marked the beginning of a new pattern of parliamentary politics (Ahmed, 2002:50; Hakim, 1993:62). It is to be noted here that BNP won the election in 1991, AL in 1996, and a BNP-led coalition again in 2001.

activist who was appointed by the incumbent government, for flouting an objection raised by the Supreme Court Bar Association. To investigate the corruption charge, the Supreme Judicial Council was formed, the first of its kind in the country's history. The judge was, however, sacked on the basis of the council's recommendation.

The politicisation of the bureaucracy has continued since the beginning of the regime. It is alleged that the government has awarded lucrative and strategically important positions in the civil and uniform administration to officials sympathetic to the coalition politics. Like her predecessors, the government politicised the recruitment of the chairman and members of Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC), a constitutional watchdog to supervise, conduct and recommend all aspects of public personnel administration, including the initial entry to the gazetted posts¹⁸ of the civil service. Numerous examples show that fresh appointments, transfer, and promotion in civil service are made according to the desire and directives of the ruling coalition brushing aside public service ethos, norms, and spirit (Khan, 2003).

For three years in a row, Transparency International, a Berlin-based watchdog, has ranked Bangladesh as the country perceived to be the world's most venal. Corruption in Bangladesh operates with the sweep, intricacy and structured hierarchy of a medieval feudal system, replete with an English-language nomenclature in which "tolls," "fees," and "payments" extorted from the poorest Bangladeshis are funnelled up daily through an elaborate web of "collectors," "higher collectors," and intermediate barons into the ultimate hands of criminal "godfathers" (Adiga, 2004). As a result, in a recent report that appeared in the influential Time magazine (Vol. 164, No. 14, April 2004) introduced Bangladesh as a 'state of disgrace' and Asia's most dysfunctional country.

¹⁸ A gazetted officer is one whose appointment is published in the official gazette. This gives the officials certain privileges, such as being mentioned in the order of priority, the authority to authenticate signatures and to recommend persons for obtaining official documents like passports (World Bank, 1996:112). The total number of gazetted officers (classes I & II) in 1998 was 136575, which was 14.65 percent of the total work force employed in the civil service. The total strength of the civil service was 932050 as of 1998. Calculated by the author from the *Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2001*, p.162.

Apart from the above, analysing two crucial events that occurred in the summer of 2002; noted political scientist Rounaq Jahan opined the presence of somewhat dynastic succession in the BNP. First, on 21 June 2002, President Professor A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury had to resign after encountering criticism in the BNP parliamentary party meeting for not showing respect to the memory of the party's founder and former president Zia (Khaleda had inherited the party's leadership and is the current prime minister). The second event was the emergence from behind the scenes of Tareq Rahman, eldest son of Khaleda Zia, to formally take over the leadership of BNP. On 22 June 2002, he stepped forward and became the first joint secretary-general of BNP. Rumours were ripe that this was a prelude to consolidating dynastic succession; if BNP wins the next election (due in 2006) then Tareq Rahman will take over as prime minister and his mother Khaleda will become the president (Jahan, 2003:226).

Vendetta and violence between the ruling BNP and the main opposition, the AL continued during the years the same as it was in the past. But a recent political programme intensified the relation between the two when the AL Secretary General Abdul Jalil declared that the rule of the BNP-led coalition government would be collapsed by 30 April (2004) through a mass rebellion. To fulfil the objective, the AL staged several street demonstrations and observed *hartals* (total closure) but none of these tools were found useful to overthrow an elected government within a specified time frame. Just some early hours before the expiry of the deadline, Secretary General Jalil met the press and scrapped their programme, putting the blame on strategic flaws.

To sum up, the trend of the BNP-led coalition's rule resembles the characteristics of predecessors where corruption, political murder, and extortion was rampant. Civil and military administration works in line with the party choice in order to earn mutual benefits; and a feeling of lawlessness prevails across the country.

Focussing on the above description, it is reasonable to comment that the pattern of governance affected the everyday life of the ordinary citizens. Krishnasamy (2003:38) also notes that political corruption, bureaucratic wrangling, constant bickering leaders

over personal issues, and popular unrest have continued to plague its domestic political life to a point where it is unclear whether Bangladesh has the ability to manage its economy and implement policies. Moreover, armed thugs continued to terrorise business and civic life through extortion, kidnapping, murder, and rape (Jahan, 2003:224-25). Consequently, a gradual decline in foreign direct investment is observed during the years. A major hurdle in curbing criminal activities is the link of the gangsters with important political and administrative connections. Politicians (also businessmen) maintain connections with gangs of armed youths in order to intimidate their opponents. These hooligans also serve as extortionists- to manage cash for their patrons and sometimes simply to make money for their own. All of these phenomena point to a nexus of corruption, violence, patron-client relationship, and politics. It is to be mentioned here that the empirical data I have collected and reported in chapters 5 through 8 contain such instances that provide general understanding about how political identity shapes human behaviour and action in some of my study sites.

3.5. Conclusion

The major objective of this chapter was to understand how social relations and political characteristics are shaped in Bangladesh. To meet the objective, I attempted to explore the role of social factors like social stratification and social class, kinship, patron-client relationships, rituals, tradition, and customs that facilitate the formation of social relations. Moreover, a further attempt has been made to see how political relationships are developed and affect every-day life by analysing the characteristics of the political regime(s) of the country.

In the Bangladeshi system of patrimonial, patron-client relationships, individuals acquire their prosperity from a higher authority that is legitimised by the individuals' feeling that they have a moral right to command food, subsistence, and abstract goods from those who are well placed. Individuals who command resources in turn are expected to distribute them to clients and, in return, those in command expect to be both feared and obeyed (Kochanek, 2000:548). Therefore, authoritative leadership emerges and authority

remains either highly personalised or within the control of groups. The very nature of Bangladesh society and the hierarchical pattern of interpersonal relations contribute to the problem of institutional weakness, organisational effectiveness, and the lack of consensus among the contestants. Such patterns of behaviour are reflected in the activities of political parties, public organisations, and civil society at large.

Chapter 4

Public and community-based initiatives for solid waste management in urban Bangladesh: an overview¹⁹

4.1. Introduction

In 1999, 30 million people, around 20 percent of the total population of Bangladesh, live in urban areas. By the year 2005 this figure will have risen to 46 million, and by 2015 projections indicate that 68 million (more than a third of the total population) will live in urban areas (Pryer, 2003:19). The combination of rapid and high growth of urban population in developing countries has outstripped the capacity of city administrations to provide and expand infrastructure, deliver services and/or devise and maintain regulatory mechanisms (Gulger, 1996). Consequently, according to the report of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat), quite a large number of urban dwellers live in 'life-threatening' conditions of poverty and environmental degradation and the number is presupposed even to swell significantly by the year 2025 (UN-Habitat, 2001). One such problem, for example, is the increased production of solid waste that urban governments in developing countries are confronted with, and its sustainable management. Solid waste has become a matter of global concern as evident from the conclusion given by the colloquium of Mayors held at the UN headquarters in New York in August 1994 where they identified twelve severe urban problems and the problem of solid waste management (SWM) ranked third (Islam, 1999:3). Bangladesh and its cities are no exception (see annex 4). As will see the reasons shortly, it appears that government initiatives alone cannot solve the problem of solid waste, and therefore community-based initiatives can fill this gap.

The purpose of this chapter is to understand the operation of both public and community-based initiatives for the delivery of conservancy services to the city dwellers of both DCC

¹⁹ Some sections of this chapter are based on ideas and information from the author's M. Phil. thesis entitled, "Solid Waste Management Organisations in Urban Bangladesh: Ideals and Realities," submitted to the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory at the University of Bergen in Spring 2001.

and CCC. To this effect, organisational and operational aspects of these two organisations are briefly analysed here.

In order to make the presentation logical and coherent, the chapter is divided into three parts. Part one briefly introduces the DCC and CCC. The second part focuses on the historical, organisational, and operational aspects of the conservancy department of the corporations. Part three gives a glimpse on the community-based private initiatives undertaking SWM operations within the territorial jurisdiction of DCC and CCC.

4.2. An Introduction to DCC and CCC

In order to provide services to the local inhabitants and to ease the burden and responsibility of the central government, local government bodies have emerged in most countries. The local government of Bangladesh, according to its history and tradition (see Box 4.1 below), has been working to provide welfare and services to the people.

Box 4.1: History and tradition of the local government of Bangladesh

Bangladesh inherited local government structure and functions developed in British-India, whose origin can be dated further back to the pre-British era, particularly the period of *Mughal* rule in India. In the words of historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, ‘...the *Mughals* were essentially an urban people in India,’ and their most distinctive achievements in the sphere of local government were in urban administration (Tinker, 1954:17). The *Mughals* devised a major aspect of the administrative system: the division of the territory into provinces (*subas*) and districts (*zillas*) (Baxter et al. 1994:6). During the reign of the British East India Company, according to Hugh Tinker, a municipality Charter was issued in 1726, setting up municipal bodies for Calcutta and Bombay, and re-constituting the Madras Municipality. In 1793, the Charter was renewed in the occasion for a new attempt to provide municipal organisation for the Presidency towns. According to the Charter the Justice of Peace, a senior Company servant, was appointed. The Charter was authorised to appoint scavengers, to repair the streets and to assess households for the payment of rates (Tinker, 1954:26). However, during the British and Pakistan periods several attempts had been introduced to strengthen the local government system.

Immediately after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the President Order 7 of 1972 was summoned appointing administrators in all tiers of local government and cancelled the *parishads*. In 1973, President Order 22 was promulgated introducing the system of electing Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the local government tiers through direct election and Town Committee were renamed as *Pourashava* (Municipality). In 1977, the *Pourashava* Ordinance was enacted by the parliament providing the provision of directly elected Chairman (but withdrawing the Vice-Chairman post) and nine Commissioners (including a requisite number of female commissioners) (Rahman, 1989:12). At present, 254 Municipalities (as of August 2001) and 6 City Corporations exist in Bangladesh.

Since 1994, the councils of DCC and CCC are composed of a directly elected Mayor and 108 and 49 Ward Commissioners (i.e. including female commissioners) respectively.

Apart from the democratic structure (e.g. both elected Mayor and Ward Commissioners as leaders of the corporations), DCC and CCC have an administrative set-up comprising 17 departments including a secretariat. The departments are charged with specific responsibilities such as: public health, conservancy, estate, engineering, slum development, accounts, education, social welfare, revenue and law etc. Conservancy is one of the departments of the corporations under study.

The Mayor is the chief executive of a corporation. He is assisted by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who, in turn, is assisted by the Secretary and other departmental heads to perform his day-to-day affairs (Islam et al. 2000:143). The Mayor transacts all business of a corporation.

The DCC is divided into 90 wards, which are further divided into 10 administrative zones. Islam et al. (2000:144) have noted that this system was introduced in 1990 with a view to decentralise administration. A Zonal Executive Officer (ZEO) heads each zone and is assisted by an executive engineer, a transport officer, a social welfare officer, a community organiser, and a slum development officer. The zonal office is responsible for the implementation of development projects within a particular zone. The CCC is divided into 41 wards but unlike DCC has no administrative zones²⁰.

The Ward Commissioners are members of various standing/sub-committees and thus play a pivotal role in administrative and financial affairs of their designated area(s). As per the provision of rule of the ordinances²¹, the corporations constitute eight standing committees namely: (i) Finance and Establishment, (ii) Education, (iii) Health, Family Planning and Sanitation including Drainage, (iv) Town Planning and Improvement, (v)

²⁰ But this corporation is divided into 6 conservancy zones. Each zone is equipped with sanctioned conservancy staff.

²¹ Article 31 of the DCC Ordinance 1983 and Article 30 of the CCC Ordinance 1982 has empowered the corporation to constitute the standing committees (Rahman, 1989:42,138).

Audit and Accounts, (vi) Works and Buildings, (vii) Water and Electricity, and (viii) Social Welfare and Community Centres, to supervise the activities of the corporation. The Committee on Health, Family Planning, and Sanitation (including Drainage) looks after the activities of the conservancy department.

Personnel and economic issues of DCC and CCC: Two types of personnel are working in the corporations. The first category consists of elected representatives (Mayor and Ward Commissioners) headed by the Mayor. The Mayor and Ward Commissioners are elected for a period of five years. The second category consists of appointed personnel who constitute the bulk of workforce as well as the backbone of the work force. Islam et al. (2000:147) report that a total of 11,000 employees are working in the DCC. The central government has seconded 18 officials to this corporation. The CCC, on the other hand, accommodates around 6000 employees while the central government has seconded 8 officials to the CCC.

The corporations are heavily dependent on the central government for their human resources. The civil servants on secondment occupy almost all top and key positions. The CEO, for instance, is the key person of the corporation's general administration who belongs to the Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) cadre. The government appoints the CEO generally for a period of three years. He is the principal administrative officer and all other officers and employees work under his supervision.

It is a fact that both DCC and CCC recruit relatively a large portion of their employees by observing their internal rules and regulations, but it is tightly controlled by the central government.

Two basic sources generate the corporation's income. The major source is the collection of tax and levies from city dwellers. It generates nearly fifty percent of its income from its own sources. The rest comes from the central government and other sources. The following table shows the major sources of income of the corporations under study:

Table 4.1: Major sources of income of DCC and CCC

DCC (Taka in crore)				CCC (Taka in crore) ²²			
Sources FY	Tax and Levy	Government Grants	Income from other sources	Total Budget	Tax and Levy	Government grants and income from other sources	Total Budget
1999/2000	134	65	260	521	108	206	333
1998/1999	118	65	204	486	104	179	300

Sources: Calculated by the author from the Budgets of DCC and CCC.

In sum, the above description focuses on the basic characteristics of DCC and CCC. It is understood that the corporations perform service-oriented activities for the welfare of urban citizens. Two types of personnel administer the activities of the corporations, viz: (a) elected representatives, and (b) appointed officials. Though an elected Mayor heads a corporation, the nature of central governmental control is quite pervasive.

The following section provides a brief description on the historical, organisational and operational aspects of the conservancy departments of DCC and CCC.

4.3. Historical, organisational, and operational aspects of the conservancy departments of DCC and CCC

4.3.1. The historical development of the conservancy departments

In this section I shall at first give a foretaste of the historical development of conservancy department of DCC and then the description on CCC proceeds.

The historical development of the conservancy department of DCC: The history of SWM in Bangladesh, as a service task of local government bodies, dates back to the *Mughal* reign in 1717 (Shukur and Paul, 1994:107). Due to administrative reorganisation by the East India Company, the supervisory responsibility of the town administration was conferred upon a European magistrate. The post of *Kotowal*²³ was valid until that period but he was given few duties to perform. In 1814, this post was abolished keeping literally

²² Taka is the name of the currency of Bangladesh. The conversion rate between Taka and USD is: 1 Taka = 0.0169 USD as of 20 August 2004 (available at: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert.cgi> accessed 20 August 2004). 100 million = 1 crore.

²³ *Kotowal* was normally responsible for the maintenance of law and order situation.

no one to look after the municipal services. By 1820, Dhaka became an ugly and totally unhygienic town to live in (Mamoon, 1997:117).

In 1810, some British citizens and employees of the company appealed to the [company] authority to form a committee to look after the development affairs of Dhaka city. But the then ruler Lord Minto turned down this request. However, the company had formed a committee known as the *Committee for the Improvement of the City of Dhaka and Other places immediately Adjacent to the City* as per the special request of John Mirdford. This committee was responsible for keeping the city and its adjacent areas clean and it was in operation until 1819 (Mamoon, 1997:119). In 1820, a committee was set-up and known as the *Town Committee* headed by the District Magistrate of Dhaka and was renamed as *Municipal Committee* in 1864 with adequate manpower to look after the sanitation of the city (Shukur and Paul, 1994:107). Until 1884, District Magistrate was the *ex-officio* Chairman of the municipality, while the Vice-Chairman was appointed by the then Lieutenant Governor.

In accordance with the provisions of the rules of the ordinances, corporations have to perform certain tasks. Amongst others, providing conservancy services to the citizens is one of the major tasks of the corporation. Therefore, all city corporations including the DCC have a conservancy department to provide such services to the citizens as: (a) removal, collection, and disposal of waste; (b) maintenance and cleaning of public streets; and (c) provision and maintenance of streetlights etc.

In sum, the above description briefly portrays the growth and development of the conservancy department of DCC. It reveals that the genesis of SWM dates back to the *Mughal* reign and thus took organisational shape from the British era. The present form of the conservancy department is, by and large, an extension of the earlier British model.

The historical development of the conservancy department of the CCC: the genesis of the growth of the conservancy department concomitant with the formation of the ‘Chittagong Municipality Committee’, under the chairmanship of District Magistrate J. D. Ward, that

dates back to the British rule in 1864²⁴ (CCC Handbook, n.d.:34; Hossain, 1995:232-33). This municipality committee envisaged its duties only to cleaning the roads and streets and to re-build the old roads. In recent days, like DCC, this corporation has also a conservancy department to provide conservancy services to its citizens. The organisational and operational aspects of the department will be described in the following sections.

In sum, the above description indicates that the growth and development of the conservancy department of CCC follows on as a legacy of the British period.

4.3.2. The organisation of the conservancy departments

Article 78 of the DCC Ordinance 1983 and Article 77 of the CCC Ordinance 1982 provide the legal basis of delivery of conservancy services to the citizens. Box 4.2 summarises the basic tenets of the articles:

Box 4.2: Legal basis of delivery of conservancy services

The corporation shall make adequate arrangements for the removal of refuse from all public streets, public latrines, urinals, drains, and all buildings and land vested in the corporation, and for the collection and proper disposal of such refuse. The occupiers of all other buildings and lands within the corporation shall be responsible for the removal of refuse from such buildings and lands subject to the general control and supervision of the corporation.

The corporation may cause public dust-bins or other suitable receptacles to be provided at suitable places and where such dust-bins or receptacles are provided, the corporation may, by public notice, require that all refuse accumulating in any premises or land shall be deposited by the owner or occupier of such premises or land in such dust-bins or receptacles.

All refuse removed and collected by the staff of the corporation or under their control and supervision and all refuse deposited in the dustbins and other receptacles provided by the corporation shall be the property of the corporation.

The conservancy services of the corporations are, therefore, carried out through the conservancy department. A chief conservancy officer (CCO) heads the conservancy

²⁴ Confusion exists as to the date of establishment of the Chittagong Municipality. Available data show that it was established between the periods 1860-64 (Hossain, 1995).

department of both DCC and CCC. In both corporations, the CCO is accountable to the Mayor through the CEO for the performance of the conservancy department. Moreover, as a rule, like any other departments of the corporation, all documents, notes, and files of the conservancy department before delivery to the CEO must be routed through the Secretary of the corporations.

The CCO is assisted by a large number of staff and officers in his day-to-day activities. For example, a Deputy Chief Conservancy Officer (DCCO), two Assistant Chief Conservancy Officers (ACCO), ten Conservancy Officers (CO), twenty Conservancy Superintendents (CS), forty Ward Inspectors (WI), assist the CCO of DCC. On the other hand, a Conservancy Officer (CO), Malaria and Mosquito Control Officer (MMCO), six Conservancy Superintendents (CS), thirty-two Inspectors (mosquito control), forty-seven Supervisors support the CCO of CCC. The organisation chart of the conservancy departments of both DCC and CCC are illustrated here:

Figure: 4.1
Organisation chart of CD* of DCC

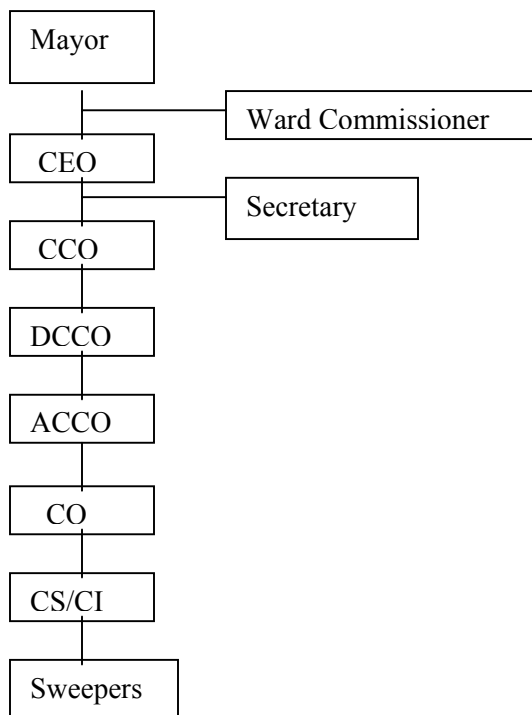
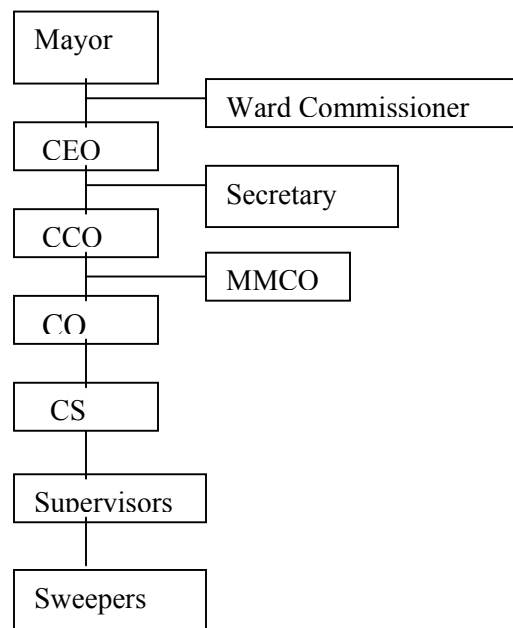


Figure: 4.2
Organisation chart of CD* of CCC



Source: Fieldwork

*CD stands for conservancy department.

The above charts show the hierarchical structure of the conservancy departments of both the DCC and the CCC. In other words, these charts highlight the power and authority relationships among various echelons in the hierarchy.

However, the above hierarchical structures of both conservancy departments demonstrate that sweepers report to their supervisors/inspectors who in turn are accountable to the conservancy officer/CS. In this way all conservancy personnel are held ultimately responsible to the CCO.

The CCO enjoys some administrative authority to run the department. Among others, he can initiate the process for adopting disciplinary actions against his subordinate colleagues, but the final decision to adopt a disciplinary action rests with either the CEO or the Mayor as the case may be.

In both corporations, the daily attendance in work of sweepers is administered by the ward commissioner's secretariat. The corporation, therefore, expects that the field level conservancy staff will work under close supervision of the respective Ward Commissioners. However, I observed during my fieldwork that the commissioners seldom look after the performance of the conservancy staff in his (her) ward. This non-supervision by the commissioners was probably linked to their lack of authority. It is a fact that the rank and status of the ward commissioner is yet to be finalised by the government. However, the Mayor of DCC enjoys the status and privileges of a cabinet minister while the Mayor of CCC enjoys the same as a state minister. Therefore, the decentralisation of responsibility to supervise the activities of the conservancy staff without delegation of appropriate authority to the ward commissioners seems to be ineffective.

Apart from the above, human, material and economic resources are equally important for the smooth functioning of an organisation. In respect of the conservancy departments of the corporations, a brief description is made here on these issues:

4.3.2.1. Human resources and their level of education

The following table exhibits the position of workforce employed by the conservancy departments of DCC and CCC:

Table 4.2: Human resources engaged in conservancy departments of DCC and CCC

Category	DCC	CCC
Supervisory staff/officer	190	90
Conservancy staff	7156	1740
Average workforce per ward:		
Supervisory staff	1.9	2.1
Conservancy staff	80	42.4

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the information provided by the conservancy departments of DCC and CCC.

Khandaker (1995:60) observes that for satisfactory cleaning of a city area at least two sweepers are required per 1000 population. According to this calculation, it shows both corporations deliver conservancy services to their clients with lack of workforce in relation to their actual requirement. My field investigation partly confirms the view but further adds that if the sweepers perform their task appropriately then the magnitude of the problem could be reduced to a minimum extent. Some of my respondents report that the tendency of a large number of municipal sweepers is to draw their salary without doing any meaningful work. In support to this, a report published in a leading newspaper uncovered the fact that about 50 percent of the conservancy staff of DCC receive their salary without doing any work. According to the report, the corporation thus loses about Taka 50 lacs (nearly USD 90,000) per month. The non-working sweepers live in various sweepers' colonies of the corporation; receive salary every month by giving *bokhra* (bribe) to their gurus — the report further added (*The Daily Ittefaq*, a vernacular Bengali daily, 30 July 2000). In a similar vein, a magazine programme of Bangladesh Television (BTV) named 'Apnar Charipash' aired a report on 27 December 2002 where they also pointed out that the conservancy staff of DCC, particularly those employed on contract basis, get their emoluments without work.

In order to ensure the efficient delivery of conservancy services, the organisation needs qualified personnel with appropriate professional background and technical knowledge.

But it was observed that both conservancy departments had a serious shortage of such human resources. The following table shows the level of education and background of the conservancy staff:

Table 4.3: Level of education and background of the conservancy staff as of July 2003

Name of positions	DCC	CCC
CCO (1 for each corporation)	Naval Architect. Deputed from Bangladesh Navy. No prior experience.	M.A. in Islamic History. No technical education.
MMCO (1)	-	Post vacant. Must be an MBBS.
DCCO (1)	Post vacant	-
ACCO (2)	One holds B.A. degree with a Diploma in Public Health and another Higher Secondary (HSC). Both are experienced.	-
CO (10 for DCC and 1 for CCC)	M.A. (1), B.A. (2) and HSC (7). No technical education.	B.A. and experienced. But no technical education.
CS/CI	M.A./B.A./H.S.C. and below, experienced. No technical education.	M.A./B.A./H.S.C. and below. No technical education.
Sweepers	Mostly illiterate. A few SSC and below.	Same as DCC.

Sources: DCC and CCC

The table shows that only an ACCO of the DCC holds a diploma in public health. The other supervisory staff of these two corporations have neither any relevant technical education nor any suitable professional background to perform the job. My field report indicates that they gained experience through working in the conservancy department for a number of years.

The DCC Ordinance 1983 and the CCC Ordinance 1982 do not mention any eligibility criteria for the recruitment of conservancy officials. The service rules of the corporations guide their recruitment like the others except in the case of the deputed officials²⁵. The

²⁵ Deputed officials are recruited through the competitive civil service examination conducted by the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) from time to time.

service rules of DCC and CCC, for example, set the following requisite qualifications for a CCO hired through direct recruitment: holds a minimum of a bachelor degree with a diploma in public health and should have at least five years on-the-job experience in a similar position. In practice this was not appropriately followed.

4.3.2.2. Material resources

In order to run the conservancy department effectively and efficiently, material resources are as important as human resources. The following table shows the overall position of material resources of the conservancy departments of both DCC and CCC:

Table 4.4: List of material resources as of June 2003

Name of items	DCC	CCC
Vehicles:		
Covered/normal trucks	242	63
Demountable trucks	128	10
Van	-	42
Hand drawn carts	3000	220
Dustbins	4500	1348
Demountable containers	420	-
Other equipments/tools:		
Brooms	1/sweeper/month	1/sweeper/month
Long poles	200 for all/month	100 for all/month
Baskets	1/sweeper/year	-

Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the data provided by DCC and CCC.

Looking at the Table 4.4, one can realise the insufficiency of the quantity of material resources to provide services to the huge number of people living in both cities. In this respect, the sweepers with whom I talked also identified the shortage of material resources as a barrier for them to discharge their duties to the satisfaction of the citizens. In this regard, a large number of my respondents (sweepers) said that they face serious problems to dispose of garbage into bins because the bins are short in number and relatively small in size. For example, waste bins are only twenty-seven to ninety-six cubic feet (0.76 – 2.72 cubic meter) in size and are [mostly] open, thus providing easy access for birds and other animals (Hasan, 1998:193). On the other hand, DCC have only

4500 dustbins (see the above table) for 10 million people, while CCC have 1348 dustbins for 3.9 million of inhabitants.

4.3.2.3. Economic resources

Despite the presence of human and material resources, organisational objectives cannot be achieved without adequate financial guarantees. Formally, the budgetary allocations for the conservancy services are reflected in the annual financial statement (budget) of both DCC and CCC. Five years budgetary allocation for the conservancy department is provided here to provide an understanding of the position of the conservancy budget in relation to the overall budget (revenue portion) of the corporation. The following table has summarised the picture:

Table 4.5: Financial allocations for the conservancy department, 1996-2001

Financial Year (FY)	DCC (Taka in crore)			CCC (Taka in crore)		
	Conservancy	Total budget	% of total budget	Conservancy	Total budget	% of total budget
2000-01	14	112.94	8.1	17.5	189.5	10.9
1999-00	13.5	99.66	7.39	10.41	142.43	13.6
1998-99	10	99.11	9.91	10.09	131.30	13
1997-98	9	99.56	11.07	7.5	105.45	14.6
1996-97	7.5	75.06	10.01	5.77	92.4	16.01

Sources: Prepared by the author from the budgets of the corporations.

The budgetary allocations, as shown in the above table, are based on the revenue budget of the corporations. It is evident that the corporations allocate a considerably large amount of money from their development budget particularly for conservancy-related activities. The allocation from the development budget comes on project-based work, such as: construction of dustbins, procurement of vehicles etc. funded by the donor agencies. The allocations for the conservancy department, together with revenue and development budgets, utilise a major portion of the budget. For example, CCC had allocated 13.6 percent of its revenue budget for conservancy services during 1999-2000 FY but the actual expenditure incurred in that FY (i.e. 1999-2000) was Taka 66.1 crore which was 65.51 percent of the total budget (the amount of total budget was Taka 333.12 crore) of the corporation (Budget speech of the CCC Mayor, FY: 1999-2000, p.8). According to my observations, about 70-80 percent of the budget sanctioned for the

conservancy departments of both DCC and CCC is spent for the payment of salary and other financial benefits to its employees, leaving a small percentage of budget for the overall development of the department.

Moreover, according to some studies (e.g. Hasan, 1998; Zamana, 2000), and also my personal observations, the presence of other problems supposedly hampers the efficient operation of the conservancy department, and these are: lack of inter-departmental coordination, corruption, faulty government policies, lack of people's awareness about health and hygiene, and the lack of physical planning and facilities.

I shall now describe and discuss the operational aspects of the conservancy departments of both CCC and DCC.

4.3.3. The operation of the conservancy departments

In a formal sense, the conservancy departments of both CCC and DCC follow almost the same work process to deliver conservancy services to the citizens. The operational activities of the department are described below.

4.3.3.1. Work processes of the conservancy department of CCC

The 41 wards of the CCC have been grouped into the following two categories: (i) conservancy wards [24], and (ii) non-conservancy wards [17]. These 41 wards are divided into six conservancy zones. A zone is constituted with both types of conservancy and non-conservancy wards. At present, conservancy wards cover almost half the area of the city (total area of CCC is 60 sq. miles), and receive regular conservancy services. In the non-conservancy wards services are provided relatively less frequent and irregularly. The city does not operate a door-to-door solid waste collection system (Ashraf, 1994:62).

It is evident that field level conservancy services are primarily carried out through the sweepers. According to the CCC, sweepers clean the city in *three* different groups. Hasan

(1998:192) stated that the *first* group clean the roads and streets and collect the rubbish onto manually drawn carts or bamboo baskets. This collected rubbish is then dumped in some intermediate collection points. The *second* group cleans the roadside drains and collects the silt and the solid waste (which are fallen into the drains) and either carry them to the nearest intermediate dump site, garbage bin, or make another pile on the side of the roads. The *third* group of people collects the wastes from these sites and hauls them to waste dumping sites. The city has now only two dumping grounds which are located at *Halishore* and *Roufabad*; the latter of these is a private landfilling site. Ashraf (1994:67) and Khandaker (1995:51) observe that the whole cleaning task in CCC is done in the following three stages:

1. The residents themselves take domestic refuse from households to the intermediate dumping points,
2. Street and drain wastes are collected and dumped at intermediate disposal points by the corporation sweepers and cleaners,
3. Final collection from the intermediate points and its disposal to the dumping yard.

My field observation confirms the stated three stages mechanism of cleaning task in CCC. The 24-conservancy wards of the city receive the above services. According to the conservancy department, the roads and drains of these wards are cleaned twice a day, particularly in the morning and in the afternoon. The corporation trucks collect and remove garbage from the dustbins at least once a day. My field observations also confirm this but further note that the quality of collection and removal of garbage was not environmentally friendly and could not satisfy the service users. Despite such a drawback, the residents of the conservancy wards have to pay the 7 percent conservancy tax per annum along with their household taxes.

There are 17 non-conservancy wards in the CCC. These wards do not receive regular conservancy services. As per municipal records, the geographical area of such wards is 39.96 sq. miles (Ashraf, 1994:67). I observed during my fieldwork that non-conservancy

wards receive 1 to 2 trips of solid waste disposal by the garbage collection trucks per day. Roads and drains of these wards are occasionally cleaned. Despite that the residents of such wards has to pay 4 percent conservancy tax with their annual household taxes.

About 3.9 million of CCC people, according to conservancy department, generate nearly 500 tons of waste per day in winter and it increases up to 600 tons in summer. A study conducted by the Engineering and Planning Consultants Limited, Dhaka in 1991 shows that 479 tons of garbage is dumped to the disposal site(s) everyday in Chittagong. The consultants calculated the amount estimating an average density per truckload of 877 kg per cubic meter (Ashraf, 1994:70). The activities of the conservancy department, particularly cleaning the roads and drains and garbage lifting, is limited to the daytime hours, i.e., from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening.

4.3.3.2. Work processes of the conservancy department of DCC

The 90 wards of DCC have been divided into ten administrative zones. A CO leads the activities of conservancy services of a zone. All wards in this corporation receive regular conservancy services. It means that the corporation does not have any non-conservancy ward like CCC. All service users, according to the rules of the ordinance of the corporation, have to pay 2 percent as conservancy tax with their annual household taxes.²⁶ Like CCC, the three fold conservancy services by three different groups are also provided in the DCC (Hasan, 1998:192; Paul, 1991) and my observation supports the presence of the cleaning process mentioned earlier.

Formally, the cleaners of the DCC are assigned to sweep the roads, lanes and clean the drains daily in three shifts: morning, day, and night; within the duty hours between 6 a.m. — 2 p.m., and 7 p.m. — 3 a.m. After talking to some of my respondents, I felt dubious

²⁶ The imposition of tax for the conservancy service in DCC is embedded with its historical past. From 1870, Dhaka Municipality had the power to levy taxes for conservancy services. But the concept was so repugnant to the citizens that the law could not be implemented until 1879 when, in the teeth of bitter opposition from the ratepayers, a tax was set at two percent of the rental value of the property (Khanum, 1991:248).

about the strict maintenance of this duty timing by the sweepers. In DCC, however, wastes are currently dumped only at Matuail.

According to Asaduzzaman and Hye (1998:389-90), the system of solid waste collection in the Dhaka city may be termed as a ‘dustbin-based’ (including, of course, demountable containers) collection system. Dustbins together with demountable containers account for about 66 percent of solid wastes, followed by ‘enclosure’ (15 percent), dust-shoot on street collection (10 percent), and block collection (9 percent). The door-to-door collection system covers only a negligible volume of the waste (0.1 percent).

Almost 10 million people live in the 360 sq. km. area of DCC. The city everyday generates, according to the conservancy department, around 3000 tons of garbage in winter and around 4000 tons of garbage (i.e. nearly 0.4 kg/capita/day) in summer²⁷. Therefore, it reveals that the rate of generation of waste in Bangladeshi cities is quite low in comparison with other Asian cities and the following table summarises the picture:

Table 4.6: Per capita waste generation in Asian cities

Typical per capita waste generation	Rate (per day/person)
Industrial countries	0.7-1.8 kg
Middle-income countries	0.5-0.9 kg
Low-income countries	0.3-0.8 kg
Per capita waste generation of selected cities in Asia (1990)	
Manila (Philippines)	0.5 kg
Karachi (Pakistan)	0.5 kg
Jakarta (Indonesia)	0.8 kg

Source: Kirai, 2000:10

In sum, the above discussion clearly indicates the role of various factors such as: lack of human and material resources, insufficient financial allocation, corruption, and lack of facilities, contribute to limit the operational efficiency of the conservancy departments of both DCC and CCC. Therefore, their apparent failure to deliver the conservancy services to the citizens’ influences them to gather to form an organisation to dispose of their daily-

²⁷The growth rate of generation of solid waste is ever increasing. For example, the amount of solid waste generated in DCC area was 1040 tons per day in 1985-86 and increased to 1540 tons in 1991 (Islam, 1999:3).

generated garbage. This situation ushers in the growth of community-based SWM initiatives across the cities.

4.4. Community-based SWM initiatives in Bangladesh

This section briefly reviews the characteristics of community-based initiatives engaged in SWM within the geographical jurisdiction of DCC and CCC.

It is understood from the description portrayed in section 1.1 of chapter 1 that there has always been a gap between the production and collection of waste; and thus nearly half of the generated garbage per day remains uncollected in the cities under study. Against this backdrop, in the last few years some private initiatives (see section 1.1) have emerged around the country to ease the SWM problem. Of them, some notables are: *Prodipan* in Khulna City Corporation (Kabir et al. 1997:1), some [unnamed] initiatives in Rajshahi City Corporation (Gupta, 1998:10), *Parichanan Kalabagan*, *Baddanagar* (Hazaribug) initiative, Earth Watch, *Pallabi Poribesh Songrakhon* (environment conservation) Committee in DCC (Kazi, 1998:14), and *Rumghata Unnayan* (development) *Parishad*, *Sugandha* (moilar depot) Housing Society, *Halishore K & L* Block Housing Society in CCC. It was observed during my fieldwork that most households in a locality had responded to these initiatives by employing their moral support and providing financial contribution in order to keep the area free from garbage.

4.4.1. Why such initiatives?

The primary objective behind the growth of private initiatives is to offer a civic garbage collection from door-to-door so that an environmentally friendly situation prevails in the neighbourhood; the secondary reason may have been to earn some monetary gain from such collective efforts. Also in some cases the local residents organise such initiatives mostly from the sense of belonging to their locality.

My observation supports the reasons of the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in some of the study sites where I did fieldwork. Empirical evidence suggests that the operation of community-based initiatives has opened ‘new’ economic avenues to a considerable number of people, particularly to the urban poor (see annex 5). This initiative not only provided employment (e.g. sweeper, supervisor, or cashier) to some people but also contributed to make solid waste a resource through composting, recycling, and reuse. Several cases collected during the course of my fieldwork and two of them are illustrated in following Box 4.3 to show the usefulness of such initiative for income generation and thus lessening poverty.

Box 4.3: Solid waste — a source of income generation and resource production

Case 1: Faraque Ahmed, a man in his middle, was literally a vagabond before joining as a security guard in *Sananda* residential area (Chittagong) in 2001. His salary was Taka 900 (USD 15) per month. After the introduction of door-to-door garbage collection system in the area, he was given the additional responsibility of waste collection from the households and also disposing it to the nearest municipal’s bin. Pulled by him, a *riksha* (tri-cycle) van was used for the purpose. He was paid Taka 600 (USD 10) for this additional job. In order to earn more money, through source separation, he started collecting such items that the households discarded but with resale value, such as: bottle, paper, plastic, cane, and clothes. From sales of these to itinerant buyers, he continues to add nearly 500-600 Taka (USD 9-10) per month with his salary. This extra income increases his financial strength and, in turn, gave him the opportunity to manage to keep family with him in the city and to send offspring to schools.

Case 2: After the completion of his work, the garbage collector of *Adarshanagar* (Dhaka) immediately separates kitchen and solid waste and sells the former to some NGOs who transform waste to manure through composting and the latter to itinerant buyers. Thus he adds additional Taka 400-500 (USD 8-9) per month with his normal income. Some female members of the locality also treat their household garbage in the same way for some extra earning.

The above cases indicate that as the income from the main occupation was not sufficient to run the day-to-day business of a family, therefore, an additional job or source of income was sought. The examples also point out the value of solid waste to be considered as a means of subsistence to many urban poor. Hans-Dieter Evers, a noted sociologist terms such economic activities as “urban subsistence production” (Evers, 1980:33). According to Evers, subsistence production refers only to goods produced for immediate

consumption within the household, the value of this production in market prices must be considered. Some examples of subsistence production are: growing vegetables for self-consumption, raising chickens or ducks, collecting food from garbage, building or repairing houses (p.34).

In sum, the above description and observations translate the importance of the formation and operation of community-based SWM initiatives as a socio-economic device to ensure sustainable urban livelihoods.

4.4.2. The process of solid waste collection

Under the arrangement of private initiatives, mostly kitchen garbage is collected from the participating households and the waste carried to the nearest municipal dustbin located in the neighbourhood.

My field observations show that under the civic initiatives, once a day (normally after lunch hours) the garbage collection workers make their daily round or tour in the specified area and blow their whistles to draw the attention of the households who can then deposit the garbage in the wheelbarrows specially mobilised for the civic service (see annexes 6 and 7). The garbage collection workers, if required, also clean the drains.

4.4.3. Financial investment and service charges

The initial investment for purchasing of wheelbarrows, baskets, spades/shovels, broom, whistles etc are made available by the organisers from their own sources²⁸. Subsequently, the expenses of purchases and repairs to the equipment, salary to the workers, and fee collectors, and other appliances, are mitigated from the service fees collected from the participating households.

²⁸The principal organiser of *Parichanan Kalabagan*, Mahbub Ahsan Khurram had spent approximately Taka 20,000 (approximately USD 364) in 1986 to purchase the equipments required to begin the operation of their initiative (Bhuiyan, 2001).

The only source of income of these private initiatives comes from the rate of monthly service charges which varies from locality to locality. Generally, it varies between the range of Taka 15 (approximately USD 0.2) to Taka 50 (approximately USD 0.9).

4.4.4. Organisational structure of community initiatives

The functions of the community SWM initiatives are supervised by a group of people nominated or volunteered among the service users. Unlike the conservancy departments, the private initiatives run with a flat organisational structure which is theoretically egalitarian in nature. It is evident that most initiatives accommodate less echelon in their organisational hierarchy. For example, the activities of *Sananda Housing Society*, a private SWM initiative in Chittagong are administered by a committee constituted with the following portfolios: (i) President (1), (ii) Secretary (1), (iii) Treasurer (1), and (iv) members (5).

Most of these organisations recruit one or two sweepers to sweep the streets and clean the drains of the respective localities and a money collector to realise the monthly contribution from the participating households. In most cases, they work on a part-time basis.

4.4.5. Relationship between SWM initiatives and city corporations

Formally, an unsound relationship exists between community SWM initiatives and city corporations. Generally corporations do not provide any sort of assistance to these organisations to run their business. On some occasions, nowadays, DCC assists the SWM organisers by donating old (used) wheels of *riksha* (manually driven tri-cycles) to use in wheelbarrows. Wheelbarrows are widely used by the organisers to collect and dispose the garbage.

In both DCC and CCC, the Mayors seek assistance from the community prior to the *Eid-ul-Azha*, a Muslim festival. During the festival the Muslim households sacrifice

(slaughter) mainly cattle, to distribute meat among the poor and distressed, friends and relatives. In this festival time, the waste exceeds normal quantities and stay on the site for days before being picked up (Hasan, 1998:200). The city corporations alone cannot dispose the garbage, therefore, private initiatives usher in.

Recently, DCC has handed over waste management of eight wards from zones 9 and 10 to four private companies namely: Poribesh Unnayan Forum, LN Corporation, Bangladesh Integrated Environment Development Forum, and Rhythm. This privatisation initiative has enabled DCC to save a considerable amount of public fund. In this connection the Chief Conservancy Officer told me the following in an interview with him: "... Taka 6.5 crore is required for cleaning of eight wards by employing about 646 sweepers of DCC. By utilising the service of private organisations the cost would come down to 3.75 crore per year."

In sum, in addition to the city corporation's initiatives, community-based SWM initiatives are also active in both Dhaka and Chittagong to keep the cities clean.

It is to be noted here that the reasons lie behind the emergence of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study locations are described in greater detail in chapter 5.

4.5. Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to understand the role of public and community-based initiatives for the delivery of conservancy services to the city dwellers in both DCC and CCC. As regards the public initiative, it is evident from the description that the conservancy department of the corporations is formally responsible to provide conservancy services to the citizens. The conservancy department performs their designated tasks by following their schedule and mechanisms. Studies show that the conservancy departments mostly fail to clear the daily-generated garbage from the cities.

This failure has propelled the growth of community initiatives for the management of solid waste.

It has been discussed that cool relationships prevail between the city corporations and community SWM initiatives. A sign of improvement is currently underway but an appropriate initiative is needed for building a sustainable linkage between them.

The major finding of this chapter is that conservancy is considered as an important task of the city corporations as determined by their respective ordinances. Both corporations allocate a considerable amount of money in their budget for the purpose of the activities performed by conservancy departments. Moreover, the conservancy staff occupy almost half of the workforce of the corporations. In spite of providing almost all supportive facilities, conservancy departments simply failed to achieve their goal. Therefore, the reality provides the rationale for the emergence of community initiatives to strengthen the SWM activities to keep the cities free from the problem of waste.

In the light of the above discussion, it is understood that the government departments use considerable public funds, a large labour force and also technical equipment to deliver services to the citizens. Community-based initiatives lack these resources—no physical and financial capital, but operate on the forces of social capital. The sources, among others, that seemingly influence the fostering of social capital for the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas, i.e. trust, social networks, and civic engagement are discussed in detail from chapters 6 to 8.

Chapter 5

The formation of community-based solid waste management initiatives in urban Bangladesh: what determines success and failure? Evidence from the field

5.1. Introduction

In recent days a good number of community-based initiatives have emerged across the country to deal with solid waste collection and disposal. Of them, some succeeded to make collective action possible by organising community people to support them while others either failed or did not try.

The objective of this chapter is to understand the factors that make some initiatives successful whereas others fail to take care of the solid waste problem in my studied areas located in both Dhaka (DCC) and Chittagong (CCC).

The chapter is divided into two major parts. First part deals with such issues as: the motivation behind the organisation of community-based SWM initiatives, the identity of the organisers, and the question of whether or not they voluntarily agreed to form the initiative. The second part, on the other hand, described the reasons responsible for non-organisation of such initiatives in some of my study sites (see Table 5.1).

Before embarking on my field observation and survey findings, it is useful to provide a list exhibiting the areas with or without community-based SWM initiatives. The following table portrays the picture:

Table 5.1: List of areas with or without community-based SWM initiatives in Chittagong and Dhaka

Study areas	Name of wards	Name of the area with an initiative	Name of the area without an initiative
Chittagong	<i>Bagmoniram</i> (ward 15)	<i>Sananda</i> residential area	<i>Masjid Gali</i>
	<i>North Agrabad</i> (ward 24)	<i>Halishore K & L</i> block	<i>Shantibug</i>
Dhaka	<i>Hazaribug</i> (ward 48)	<i>Baddanagar</i>	<i>Maneshwar</i> (first) lane.
	<i>Mirpur-11</i> (ward 5)	<i>Adarshanagar</i>	<i>Baunia Badh</i>

5.2. Why are some people organising community-based SWM initiatives?

In order to understand the dynamics involved in organising community-based SWM initiatives in Chittagong, I have asked the question: “Why did they organise such an initiative?” to some community leaders of both *Sananda* residential area and *Halishore K & L* block. A significant number of them (70 percent) told me that as they retired from their work on attainment of an appropriate age, therefore, they want to utilise their idle time for doing good for their locality. The following statement of Mozzamel Haque, General Secretary of *Halishore K & L* block housing society was representative in character in this regard:

“Despite my presence in this area for the last few years I was not familiar with many neighbourhoods. I was mostly busy with my family affairs. After my retirement from service, in order to make appropriate use of time, I started meeting people at the time of morning walk and also after the prayers in mosque. Besides, I also started joining various social occasions in the area. Such contact brought me close to some of them, which further facilitated the expansion of my breadth of networks and created a condition of interdependency. Therefore, we often shared views and ideas on many issues- from politics to private affairs. Among others, the general problems of our area became an important agenda of our discussion. By this way, the issue of clearing solid waste was included in our plan of action to make our locality clean and environmentally friendly. Therefore, we extended the business of our housing society²⁹ to take care of daily-generated garbage by the households. The administration of the housing society, after threadbare discussion, handed over the responsibility of collection of solid waste to Kajal Trading Company (KTC)- a private service-providing organisation manned by a member of the society. But the organisation (KTC) is accountable to the society administration for its functions and activities. As a consequence, our area is relatively clean now than any other time in the past.”

It follows from the above statements as well as my field observation that goodwill of some people to promote development in their area made them more or less trustworthy to the others. Face-to-face communication and joining social events, e.g. marriage ceremony, funeral gathering, birthday party, as observed, connect people with each other

²⁹ *Halishore K & L* block housing society welfare association was basically formed to look after the activities such as: to ensure security and safety of the area, to resolve internal conflict among the members, to keep a watchful eye to the ongoing building construction in the area, and to look after the activities of the educational and religious institution established by the society. The general functions of the society are governed by a group of people who are either elected or selected by the members (house owners only not the tenants) of the society. An appointed Secretary runs its day-to-day business in accordance with the advise of President and General Secretary of the association.

which further serves as a breeding ground of creating individual trust and broadening of one's radius of social networks.

However, some other leaders (20 percent) responded to my question in quite a different way. Nasir Uddin, President of *Sananda* residential area and Sultan Ahmed, President of *Halishore* K & L block housing society were interviewed separately but their replies to my question came close to each other and are summarised below:

‘My involvement behind the formation of this organisation for SWM and security issue was prompted by the ideas like: it will give me the opportunity to keep control over the area and thus positioning me as the centre of attention, and also to provide conservancy and security service to the neighbouring households to improve their quality of living.’

Explaining further, Nasir Uddin told me that in cooperation with Shahjahan, another house owner of the society, he pushed the issue of organising local people under the umbrella of an organisation. One useful way to organise the community is to point your finger to explore a real problem of the locality. ‘We followed the idea; therefore, approached most of the households that SWM problem and law and order situation of the locality could be improved through collective efforts’- he added. Their seriousness and intention to do a common good for the locality, as he interpreted, made them trustworthy to others. Therefore, active or passive support of the residents to form the initiative as well as their willingness to pay the monthly service charge facilitated the emergence of their organisation. The following representative remarks of Tapan Kumar Bhomick support the above statements of Nasir Uddin:

‘Most of the residents in *Sananda* are always supportive to its president Nasir. He shares views and ideas with us as to how to improve the quality of living in the area and possesses a strong sense of belongingness to the area. Moreover, he helps us in our need and also sponsors community gathering on occasions.’

While interviewing Khasru Meah, the Treasurer of *Sananda* housing society informed me that Shahjahan was enthusiastic about launching the organisation to achieve his parochial interest. It was also reported by some of my respondents that Shahjahan was instrumental

in commissioning the organisation but it was alleged that he did so to facilitate his smooth passage to the Middle East for employment. Box 5.1 summarises the picture.

Box 5.1: The formation of community-based SWM initiative under trap?

Shahjahan, an owner of a multi-storied building at the *Sananda* Housing Society, was awarded employment in Dubai in 2001. He was enthusiastic to take up the position but was hesitant about how to deal with his family affairs. Because he had to leave his family, mother and two *seyana* (who attained 18 years old) sisters alone and there was none to look after his establishments. The law and order situation in Chittagong was alarming as in the past. During his absence, to keep his family and property in a relatively secure condition, he planned to introduce the guarding system in the area beneath the camouflage of ‘common interest’. He, however, succeeded to motivate the members of the society to the understanding that they need to operate their own security system to protect human and material resources from outside interference. In order to put his plan in practice he joined Nasir Uddin, the most powerful person in the locality. With participation of most of the households, they formed the *Sananda* Housing Society Welfare Association whose primary tasks are: (i) to ensure security and safety of the area and (ii) solid waste collection and disposal. After fulfilling his desire, Shahjahan happily left for Dubai. His individualistic endeavour, at the end, made collective action possible.

Source: Fieldwork

The statements and information presented above demonstrate that the primary intention of some organisers behind the formation of an SWM organisation was to achieve their personal interest through it. Despite that the feeling for the community was also living in their mind. Therefore, they made door-to-door contact and gathered together to discuss the problem issues of the area. The strength of leadership and the organisers’ capacity to motivate people apparently made the organisation operative.

In Dhaka, to understand the factors involved in organising community-based SWM initiatives, I asked the same question as in Chittagong, i.e. “Why did they organise such an initiative?” to some community leaders of both *Baddanagar* and *Adarshanagar*. Almost all community³⁰ leaders of *Baddanagar* (almost 80 percent) stated that forming

³⁰The activities of a community/locality in *old* Dhaka, in parallel with formal administrative system, are popularly governed by a *mahalla panchayat* [*mahalla* is a Persian word which equivalent meaning in English is ward. For an explanation on *panchayat* see footnote 12 in chapter 3]- an informal but traditional institution exists since several hundred years. As a part of *old* Dhaka, *mahalla panchayat* also plays an important role in shaping the activities of *Hazaribug* area. The *panchayat* leaders receive significant deference from the inhabitants and hold a good command over their area(s).

an organisation for SWM is a ‘demand driven’ initiative to make the area at least liveable. In an interview with me, F.K.M. Iqbal, President of the *Ganoktoli Social Welfare Samity* (association) at *Baddanagar* gave the following statement about the reasons of introducing an SWM initiative:

“*Hazaribug* survives with a lot of problems. From environmental point of view, it is one of the worst areas in the country to live in. About 200 tannery industries situated at this area and they release a huge quantity of liquid and solid waste that contaminates everything and made the area a ‘living hell’. From urbanisation point, it is densely populated and highly disorganised. Municipality trucks cannot enter into the area to collect garbage because of its narrow lanes. Diarrhoea, enteric fever and skin diseases are very common in the area, which is caused by solid and liquid waste. Considering the overall situation of the area we started an SWM initiative to handle our household garbage in discussion with *mahalla panchayat* and local ward commissioner.”

The above statements and information indicate that the community leaders are motivated to organise an SWM initiative from the feeling of oneness with the area. The local residents support their initiative, as observed, due to their relationship with them, as well as the wish for *panchayat*.

Omar Faraque, a permanent resident of *Baddanagar*, gave me the following impression about the objective of forming an SWM initiative while I interviewed him:

‘Apart from the environmental issue, local leaders want to initiate an SWM organisation to materialise their own *dhandra* (interest). If they succeed to keep the area clean the chances to rent out their houses on a higher price would be strengthened.’ ‘I am not critical to their endeavour but they are not organising it keeping only others benefit in mind,’ - he further added.

In our interview, Molla Sohrab Hossain, President, of the *Adarshanagar* Plot Owners’ Association told me the following preferences to organise an SWM initiative:

- To keep the area clean because DCC does not provide conservancy service in the area,
- To organise the community to do a common good,
- Trust on leadership,
- To earn some extra money through source separation of solid waste.

My field observations found both *Hazaribug* and *Adarshanagar* as literally dirty and any initiative to clean the garbage is welcomed by the citizens.

To sum up, the motivation to organise community-based SWM initiatives in both Dhaka and Chittagong areas may be categorised in four forms and these are: (i) intention to do a ‘common good’, (ii) to exercise power over the community, (iii) lack of conservancy service, and (iv) to articulate personal interest and economic gains.

In order to understand the residents’ perception about the activeness of group/association in their areas, the participating households both in Dhaka and Chittagong were asked the question: “How do you evaluate the role of group/association in your area?” The respondents made different factors responsible to make group/association active in their respective localities and the survey result is summarised here:

Table 5.2: Respondents’ perception about the activeness of the groups/associations in Dhaka and Chittagong

Respondents’ perception	Dhaka (N = 85)	Chittagong (N = 71)
Commitment of leaders	22 (26)	15 (21)
Strong sense of community	24 (28)	19 (27)
Facilitator/community-organiser/NGOs etc.	5 (6)	4 (5)
Lack of government service	18 (21)	12 (17)
Economic gains	8 (9)	11 (16)
Exercise of power	5 (6)	7 (10)
Others	3 (4)	3 (4)

Source: Field survey

Note: Parenthesis shows the percentage of opinion

From the above table one can hardly see any difference about the priority of perceptions of respondents on the activeness of the groups/associations in the study areas.

Reviewing the above shows that the survey results generally support the reasons I summarised earlier from in-depth interviews with my key respondents and also my

personal observations as to the causes of organising community-based SWM initiatives in both Dhaka and Chittagong.

5.2.1. Who are the community organisers?

Field information furnished in section 5.2 indicates that mostly wealthy and well-connected senior citizens who could spare time for community work in both *Sananda* and *Halishore* areas in Chittagong became organisers of their respective community-based initiatives, SWM in particular.

My interview with some of the community leaders gave me the opportunity to understand some of their personal information such as: level of education, nature of profession, political involvement and also partly their financial status. It reveals that their education levels range between secondary and bachelor degree which is quite high according to Bangladesh standards.³¹ As to the profession and political connections, it was found that they were either involved in business or in service; and political connections, by and large, were limited to three major parties: (i) BNP, (ii) AL and (iii) JI. Regarding financial status, my observation was based on their visible assets only, such as: ownership of multi-storeyed buildings, private cars, and entertainment equipment (e.g. colour TV), and room decorated with costly furniture. At the time of my field research, almost all of them were owners of some of the above-mentioned items. It means that their earnings are also high by any Bangladeshi standard.³² All these characteristics, however, apparently made them the representatives of the élite class which holds formal or informal power positions in the society.

Reviewing the above, the question arises as to their contract as an organiser. Are they democratically elected or selected individuals? In my studied areas in Chittagong, as observed, the selected persons filled up the executive body of almost all initiatives. The

³¹ Literacy rate of Bangladesh was 7 years⁺: 48.7 percent and 15 years⁺: 62 percent as of 1999 (available at: www.banbeis.org/bd-pro.htm, accessed 09 November 2003).

³² Per capita income of Bangladesh was Taka 18560 (USD 350) during 1999-2000 financial year (available at: www.banbeis.org/bd-pro.htm, accessed 09 November 2003).

survey report shows that almost all respondents (97 percent) opined that the leaders of the associations were not democratically elected or selected. Even at the time of selection, as alleged by some of my respondents, mostly house owners were selected to occupy the strategic positions. Other criteria that were taken into consideration at the time of selection of members, as I observed and was also told by some leaders at the time of interview, were: known person, preferably from the same area or district, friends/mates, relatives, and business partners or colleagues. It means that people from within and between the network boundaries were chosen to contribute to the committee and thus they accumulated social capital through their face-to-face interaction and previous acquaintance.

In order to experience what factors qualify an individual to be included in a committee, a story based on the discourses precisely took place during the selection of the executive committee (installed for the year 2002-2003) of *Halishore* K & L block social welfare association — the organisation administers solid waste collection and disposal through KTC and is mentioned in the following box:

Box 5.2: Discourses in selection process

Halishore K & L block social welfare association was established in 1986 to look after the interest of the house owners and their establishments. Since then, a committee selected on the basis of consensus among the members administered its duties and functions. So far, in the name of the consensus, mostly elderly members captured the portfolios of the President and General Secretary of the committee while the other positions were distributed among the contesting groups.

In recent days some members raised their voice to democratise the pattern of selection of leadership and demanded a committee through ballot. After strong lobbying, the demand was accepted and the committee constituted for the year 2001-2002 was installed through this process. The voters chose young leadership with a reasonably clear past record of honesty. But dissatisfaction appeared as both elected President and General Secretary were from Chittagong district.

Halishore K & L block residential area is predominated by the people from both Chittagong and Noakhali districts. As two *Chittagonian* occupied two key positions, therefore, some members who hail from Noakhali felt deprived of power sharing and thus termed the election as ‘area-biased’. As a result, many stakeholders became interested in it and managed to return to its earlier pattern of selection. The committee constituted for the year 2002-2003 was a product of consensus. This arrangement, however, returns both Chittagong and Noakhali people to enjoy an equitable share of power.

On the other hand, in Dhaka, my in-depth interview with some of the leaders and my observations gave me the opportunity to understand their level of education, nature of profession, political involvement and also their financial status. Analysis of the information that I gathered on them suggests that their educational level ranges between tenth grades and bachelor degree. Professionally, the organisers of *Baddanagar* run either their family business or engaged with an office job. But the organisers of *Adarshanagar* were mostly petty traders.

The political support base of the organisers of *Baddanagar* was divided, by and large, into two parties: (i) AL and (ii) BNP. Interestingly, the president of *Adarshanagar* re-orientated his political identity with the change in central government. The remaining organisers of *Adarshanagar* did not get directly involved in party politics.

Based on their visible assets, most of the organisers in *Baddanagar* were the owners of the following: (i) personal vehicle, (ii) flat/house (iii) entertainment equipment. Besides, the organisers of *Adarshanagar* got their low cost housing from the government on a permanent lease under financial support of Asian Development Bank (ADB). None of them had a private vehicle but low cost entertainment equipment was available.

Reviewing the above, one can comment that the overall circumstances of the organisers of *Baddanagar* elevated their status as somewhat élite, while the *Adarshanagar* leaders were limping to climb there.

Are they democratically elected or selected individuals? The survey reports on this issue suggest that almost all leaders in both areas were selected individuals. It was observed that *mahalla panchayat* played a role in finding the persons to take up the leadership in *Baddanagar*. In order to maintain harmony in the society, as I was told, leadership went to the senior citizens. *Panchayat* considers them as *symbol* of deference and integrity of the locality. Any protest against the decision of the *panchayat* is not well taken.

The selection of the *Adarshanagar* leadership, as reported by my respondents, went in line with their terrain identity (*districtism*) and business partnership.

In sum, it is understood from the above reporting that mostly élites organise the community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas in Dhaka and Chittagong.

5.2.2. Are they voluntarily organising or forced to organise?

The above description indicates that, in Chittagong, many competing interests shape the formation of community-based SWM initiatives. Some initiators, particularly the senior citizens of both *Sananda* and *Halishore K & L* block, organised an SWM initiative keeping altruism in mind. Some organisers also intended to make economic gains and exercise their power through it. Therefore, my field observation and the cases portrayed earlier support the proposition that conditional involvement of some organisers made the overall formation process tricky, and leaves room for suspicion about its objectivity. It means the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in Chittagong maintains the realisation of both volunteering and purposive goals.

In Dhaka, my field observation authenticates that the community-based SWM initiative in *Baddanagar* was somewhat voluntarily organised to relieve the citizens from odours of garbage. Unlike Chittagong, here senior citizens did not play any significant role to organise the initiative (but leadership went to them) rather it was a joint effort of the inhabitants from almost all walks of life. But *mahalla panchayat* and local ward commissioner gave their verbal consent to initiate it — a local resident Yousuf informed me at the time of my discussion with him.

On the other hand, the initiative in *Adarshanagar* was also a product of situational demand. It was formed to take care of their daily produced garbage and to make some extra income from it reference of which has been made in Box 4.3 of chapter 4.

To sum up, looking at the description and field information it is quite clear that the idea of organising community-based SWM initiatives primarily comes from the intuition of ‘doing good for the others’. Therefore, SWM initiatives organised in my studied areas were mostly voluntarily organised though many factors such as: economic benefits and power politics were associated with its formation process.

5.3. Why are some people not organising community-based SWM initiatives?

In my studied areas in Chittagong, the people of both *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug* residential area in *Bagmoniram* and *North Agrabad* wards respectively did not succeed (or did not even start) to organise a community-based initiative to collect and dispose of their solid waste.

“Why there is no community-based SWM initiative in your area?”- I asked this question to Saiful Islam, a permanent resident of *Masjid Gali*, in an interview with me. In reply to this question he pointed out the following reasons as to why the area had not formed such an initiative:

- Lack of leadership in whom they can trust
- Unawareness and lack of knowledge about the environment
- Lack of a feeling of belonging to the locality (applicable for tenants only)
- Lack of face-to-face interaction and associational life
- Unwillingness to pay monthly service charge, and
- Unwillingness to engage with waste-related activities.

Referring to the SWM initiative launched by the *Sananda* residential area, the closet neighbour of *Masjid Gali*, I asked another resident: ‘Why did you not follow the path of *Sananda* residential area?’ Fahmida Alam, a young schoolteacher, explained a number of reasons that hinder the growth of such organisations in the area. “Most of the households in this area are situated besides the road side and the residents themselves (or their servants) simply throw the garbage on the road. The area also lacks any acceptable *murabbi* (informal leaders/patrons) who can motivate the residents and can bring them together to begin such an organisation. Moreover, communication between the households in this area is notably low.” My field observation supports the statement. It

was observed and subsequently reported by some of my respondents that mutual contact among the neighbouring households seldom happened. Exchange of food or greetings only rarely took place. According to my assessment the following statement of Monwar Hussain gives some insight on the possible explanation of such behaviour:

“The social construction of *Masjid Gali* is heterogeneous in nature. People live here either as house owners or as tenants bears various aerial identities, not necessarily from one particular place or district. Professionally, most of them, engaged with office job that takes most of their time and leaves a little for leisure. Therefore, mutual communication among the community people became a far cry.”

In sum, it appears from the above description that the residents of *Masjid Gali* failed to organise a community-based SWM initiative for the reasons such as: lack of seasoned leadership in whom people can trust, unawareness about the health and environmental hazards created by solid waste, lack of a feeling of belonging to the area, lack of face-to-face interaction and associational life among the households etc.

In *Shantibug*, I asked the above question (i.e., “Why there is no community-based SWM initiative in your area?”) to Razab Ali, President of the *Shantibug* Welfare Association. In an interview with me he categorically mentioned that the inhabitants of this area consider the collection and disposal of garbage as the main problem of the area. Showing me the surroundings, Ali gave me the idea about how some people made the area a mess by throwing their garbage here and there. He further told me that some residents have been suffering from diarrhoea and dermatological diseases, of which solid waste is a carrier. Despite that, he continues, they failed to form an organisation to handle SWM through their own initiative for the reasons like:

- Political conflict among the residents that reduces trust and social networks
- Lack of a sense of belonging to the area
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of get together
- Lack of (mostly absence) face-to-face interaction among the citizens.

I observed that party rivalry among the citizens of *Shantibug* reached a point that greatly reduces inter-personal trust, social harmony, and peace in the area. The nature of political

conflict and its consequences that exist in the area during the last few years are summarised in the following Box 5.3.

Box 5.3: Reasons of political conflict and its consequences in *Shantibug*

Immediate after the parliamentary elections of 1996, the residents of *Shantibug* became somewhat over politicised. In the election the Awami League (AL) swept the victory defeating the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). The residents who support the AL became leaders overnight and tried to keep the area under their control. In several cases, as reported, some of them also gave their political opponents a ‘good lesson’ by employing various tactics, physical harassment as a common form. To them, this was a ‘tit for tat’ method that they had learned from the BNP supporters during their reign between 1991-1996. The whole area, therefore, became fragmented into two major political streams: (i) the AL supporters and (ii) the BNP and its like-minded party (Jamat-I-Islami, in particular) supporters.

The conflict was geared up the following 11 September 2001 terrorist attack in the United States and also because of massive electoral defeat of AL in the 2001 parliamentary elections. After the incidents, the AL supporters called the BNP and its allied forces *Taliban*. In response, the BNP supporters also voiced the AL supporters by calling them as *murtad* (non-believer) for the party’s [earlier] principle to make Bangladesh a secular state.

The wave of this political conflict hit out against the belief in religion. Ignoring the general teaching of *Islam*, the AL supporters decided not to go to the *Baitul Azam Jame Mosque* for offering their regular prayers and immediately built a new mosque named *Shantibug Jame Mosque*. The other party(ies) also followed the same foot; usually do not say their prayers in the *Shantibug Mosque*.

The effect of this conflict extended to all facets of life in the area. It was observed that inter-personal relationships were constructed in line with party affiliations. This situation was, therefore, not conducive to develop social cohesion and generalised trust.

Source: Fieldwork

Referring to the success of *Halishore K & L* block to organise an arrangement to handle their garbage, I further asked Razab Ali and A.H.M. Kutub Uddin Chowdhury: “Are they considering establishing an organisation for SWM in their area?” They opined positively but could not suggest any suitable means to bring people under one roof to make the proposed collective action possible due to the prevailing situation in the area.

In sum, the afore-mentioned reports show that community-based SWM initiatives in both *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug* could not be established for the reasons such as: lack of

leadership, unawareness, lack of a sense of belonging to the area, lack of trust and social networks, political conflict among the residents, and lack of face-to-face interaction.

In Dhaka, the residents of *Maneshwar* (first) lane did not succeed to continue an SWM initiative, while the residents of *Baunia Badh* area did not try to organise such an initiative.

“Why there is no community-based SWM initiative in your area?”- I asked this question to Sohel Shikder, President of *Fairplay Boys Club* and a permanent resident of *Maneshwar* lane. In reply, he informed me that:

“We organised an initiative for this purpose but it was axed in the face of political threat just before the parliamentary elections of 2001. We went to the *panchayat* leaders and sought their assistance. They did not show up and explained their helplessness not being able to do something in this regard.”

Why the formation of an SWM organisation attracted political attention needs to be explained. My field observation and available information gathered through interviewing and meeting people paved the way towards understanding of the underlying challenges involved here. The situation is summarised in Box 5.4.

Box 5.4: SWM initiative under political threat

It is alleged that the Member of Parliament (MP) where *Baddanagar* and *Maneshwar* lane is situated sponsors a militant *bahini* (group) to receive administrative and financial benefit by employing illegal means. He is directly involved with the ruling BNP party politics and commanded its student wing (*Jatiyatabadi Chatra Dal* [JCD]) before being elected as an MP.

The organisers of *Maneshwar* lane SWM initiative were dominated by the youth and some of them were [passive] supporters of the AL candidate. This made him opposed to the organisation in the fear that they might organise voters and beg their support for his opponent candidate under an organisational banner. Therefore, they were advised by a *mahalla* leader Haji Ashfaq Hossain Mukul (uncle of the MP) to postpone their activities until the election is over. He advised them to campaign for the BNP candidate and also committed to provide financial support to run the organisation efficiently if the candidate runs through.

Despite the electoral success of BNP candidate the organisers failed to resume its operation due to lack of consent from the political master.

Source: Fieldwork

In sum, experience in *Maneshwar* lane indicates that the lack of respect to the political opinions of others was possibly anchored in the unhealthy political culture of Bangladesh, and led the SWM initiative to disruption.

In *Baunia Badh*, I asked the same question (i.e. “Why there is no community-based SWM initiative in your area?”) to some of my respondents and the reasons for not being able to organise a community-based SWM initiative are summarised below:

- Deteriorating law and order situation in the area
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of social cohesion
- Lack of motivation

I observed that mostly low-income group people live in this area and the government support services (e.g. health, sanitation, and garbage removal) were either absent or inadequate. Shopping benefits from the overall deterioration of the law and order situation of the country, as well as a vast unprotected *badh* (dam) area made this place a safe mating zone for the country’s top gangsters. They raid the area from time to time and plunder the belongings from the poor livelihoods. Thus *Baunia badh* area became a state of anarchy and confusion where gang rap was rampant. I further observed that the leadership crisis made the area vulnerable and incapacitated the citizens to fight against the outlaws collectively. To my consideration, the situation that exists in the area is not suitable for organising an SWM initiative.

In sum, it is understood from the above description that the law and order situation and lack of leadership, among others, mainly contributed to the decision not to organise a community-based SWM initiative in the area.

In order to map how the respondents of the study sites where no SWM initiatives exist conceive the reasons responsible is summarised from the household surveys report and presented in the following table:

Table 5.3: Respondents' perception about localities not organising community-based SWM initiatives

Respondents' perception	Dhaka (N = 91)	Chittagong (N = 68)
Lack of leadership	26 (28)	22 (32)
No strong sense of community	25 (27)	19 (28)
Lack of NGOs/CBOs etc.	6 (7)	9 (13)
Satisfied with government service	5 (6)	4 (6)
Do not know	7 (8)	4 (6)
Others (specify)	22 (24) [politics and law and order situation]	10 (15) [political conflict]

Source: Field survey

Note: Parenthesis shows the percentage of opinions.

The results presented on the above table illustrate a relatively strong impact of the socio-political environment responsible for localities not organising community-based SWM initiatives.

It is to be noted here that the summary of in-depth interviews of my key respondents as well as my field observation on this issue that I reported earlier coincides with the aforesaid survey result.

5.4. Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to understand the factors that make one area successful and others fail to organise SWM initiatives to take care of solid waste problems in my study sites in Dhaka and Chittagong.

Reviewing the aforesaid descriptions, it is clear that in spite of the presence of many factors, the influence of social capital mainly facilitates the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in *Sananda* and *Halishore* in Chittagong and *Baddanagar* and *Adarshanagar* in Dhaka. On the other hand, empirical evidence on the cases of *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug* in Chittagong and *Maneshwar lane* and *Baunia Badh* in Dhaka indicates that failure to organise community-based SWM initiatives stems from either absence or the lack of fostering of social capital. Many factors such as: lack of leadership,

lack of face-to-face communication, no strong sense of community, the law and order situation, and political conflicts reduce the chances of production of social capital and thus impede the advancement of joint action.

In the subsequent chapters, I shall deal with trust, social networks, and civic engagement that have been conceived as major sources of social capital for this study.

Chapter 6

Trust: the virtue of social life

6.1. Introduction

In contemporary literature, the concept of trust is generally understood as the presence of a condition in which an actor chooses to believe in the good will of another whilst having no reliable knowledge that (s)he will behave in the way that is expected — which means that the actor is exposed to the risk of opportunistic behaviour on the part of the other (Harriss, 2002b). In spite of being aware of the potential risks involved, the general human nature is to maintain trust in others. This situation often builds a mutual co-operative relationship among the actors.

In this study, trust is considered as one of the *missing factors* that explain why some localities have organised community-based SWM initiatives while others lag behind. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to analyse the field information and also to report my field observations designed to understand how and to what extent trust influences the growth and development of community-based SWM initiatives in the study sites both in Chittagong and Dhaka.

First, the concept of horizontal and vertical trust will be addressed by explaining the relationship existing between community organisers, residents, and community-based organisations. Second, this chapter will analyse the reciprocal relationship between power politics and trust. Finally, it will report on the network and sources of trust in my study areas.

Let me now discuss horizontal and vertical trust on the basis of the data I collected during my fieldwork through personal observation, in-depth interviews with my key respondents, and an analysis of the household surveys.

6.2. What relationship exists between community, organisers and the individual residents?

In order to understand the level of horizontal and vertical trust, it is necessary to explore which relationships exist between organisers, individual residents and community-based initiatives. Three distinct forms can be discerned in this regard:

For horizontal trust:

- Among community organisers and
- Among residents themselves.

For vertical trust:

- Between organisations and residents.

Relationships among the community organisers in Chittagong and Dhaka: As can be seen from the description presented in chapter 5 that the relationships among the community organisers in Chittagong are rather good. My field observation and the interviews with some community leaders gave me the feeling that trustworthiness among the members (house owners) does influence the formation of a community-based initiative. This feeling was further supported by the following representative comments of Sultan Ahmed, President of *Halishore* K & L block:

“This area belongs to the house owners and the *samity* we established is to serve only our purposes. Our common interest binds us together which is further strengthened through ‘meeting and sitting’. If any misunderstanding occurs between our members we try to resolve it immediately bringing all parties on the dialogue table. We are mostly successful in mediating conflict because our familiarity with each other facilitates an efficient negotiation.”

Referring to the dissatisfaction of some members about the selection method of leaders of their *samity*, Ahmed went on to say that it was a fact that some members were critical but that they were eventually convinced of continuing with the earlier system, i.e. choosing leaders by selection instead of election to maintain the harmonious development of the locality. “Isn’t it proof of our sharing common norms of trust?”- He questioned.

On the other hand, the information mentioned in chapter 5 shows that trustworthy relationships also prevail among the community organisers of the *Sananda* area. As in *Halishore*, my personal observation suggests that they developed these inter-personal relationships through face-to-face contact and participation in social institutions. Moreover, most organisers give their collective support to Nasir Uddin, the President of the *samity* for reasons such as: leadership quality, a better financial position, and a relatively well-established connection to the upper class of the society. Therefore, any initiative taken by him for the development of the area generally receives support of his fellow colleagues in the community. Consequently, as mentioned in the previous chapter, his apparent involvement in the process of the installation of a community-based initiative for security and SWM for the *Sananda* area was an overall success.

The description portrayed in sub-section 5.2.1 of chapter 5 exemplifies that organisers of *Baddanagar* in Dhaka were selected in accordance with the decision of the *mahalla panchayat*. Subsequently, this identity welded them together as a *clique*. Generally, as I observed, they gather and gossip together in the mosque, the local club, and the tea stall and discuss a variety of topics of interest that creates and facilitates a workable relationship among themselves. The President of *Ganoktoli Social Welfare Samity* explained the issue as follows:

“We are *local* and some of us have been ancestrally living here for decades. Therefore, the problem of the locality is considered as our own problem. We discuss the problem issues when we informally gather and offer solutions through coordinated efforts. We consider the whole area as a family.”

The above two statements indicate that permanent residency in a particular area and house ownership are significant factors which promote dependability and thus create a condition of trust for them.

The situation of *Adarshanagar*, however, is not the same as the above. The trust-based relationships among the organisers were created primarily through their business partnerships. The following comments of Mohammad Lavlu, General Secretary of *Adarshanagar Plot Owners’ Samity* are useful to mention here:

“The residents of *Adarshanagar* are mostly small traders. Many of us jointly run a business. Lack of capital and connection (with high-ups) are our major weaknesses and mutual support is required to sustain our business. We do often receive (and also provide) support from our fellow neighbours. Such relationships brings us close to each other.”

Unequivocally, it seems that many obligations and bonds such as: peer pressure, family relations, people of same area/locality, business partnerships and friendship cemented the trustworthy relationships among the organisers.

Relationship among individual residents: In order to measure the level of trust existing among individuals, participating households of my study areas were asked the following two questions: (i) In case of an emergency, would you leave your young children with your neighbours? And (ii) Would you hire someone based on your neighbours’ recommendation? A response to the questions with ‘yes’ and ‘sometimes’ was interpreted as an indication for a high level of trust among the individuals while the answers ‘no’ and ‘others’ suggests a low level of trust. The data analysis shows that most of the respondents who chose ‘yes’ and/or ‘sometimes’ as a reply to the above questions were living in those areas which had succeeded to organise a community-based initiative for SWM. On the other hand, most of my respondents living in areas where there was no community-based SWM initiative preferred not to leave their young children with the neighbours as well as not to hire someone on the basis of the recommendation of their neighbours. Therefore, the data analysis corroborates that a high level of trust among the individuals generates a high degree of community action whereas a lack of it produces hardly any community action. The summary of the survey results are shown in following Table 6.1:

**Table 6.1: Mapping individual trust
Community action**

		High	Low	
Trust	High	142 (46)	26 (8)	168
	Low	13 (4)	134 (42)	147
		155	160	N= 315

Source: Field survey

Note: Parenthesis shows the percentage of opinion

The survey findings on the above questions called for a further investigation into the causes responsible for either not committing the young children to the neighbours or not hiring someone on the basis of their neighbours' recommendation. Therefore, I interviewed some people and in this regard the following statement of Shamsun Naher of the *Sananda* residential area (*Bugmoniram* ward) deserves to be mentioned here:

“The experience of having lived here for one decade induces me to believe that almost all residents in this area generally adopt a friendly and helping attitude to one another. I myself benefited from my neighbours' help on many occasions. During the last illness of my husband, it was my next-door neighbour who called in a doctor for his medical check-up and subsequently transferred him to a hospital for better treatment. Nowadays, the reason people do not want to hire someone on the basis of the recommendation of neighbours or are less interested to commit their children to their neighbours, to me, is directly linked with the deteriorating law and order situation of the country. In several cases kids were kidnapped on their way from school or playground by their relatives and were held to ransom. In some cases children were kidnapped and brutally murdered for pinching their parents' assets. On the other hand, several incidents took place across the country where servants/maid servants were responsible for killing his (her) master as to loot valuable items. Therefore, such incidents made them careful to deal with these issues even with their neighbours.”

To sum up, it is clear from the above discussion that high-level interpersonal trust breeds high community action that enables the formation of SWM initiatives. The lack or absence of it, however, yields low community action. The information I have presented in the above table indicates that a high number of respondents were sceptical of hiring someone on the basis of their neighbours' recommendation or to leave their children with them. The deteriorating law and order situation of Bangladesh can be largely held responsible as a possible explanation for this situation.

Relationship between community-based organisations and individuals: I observed in the field that most respondents in my study sites in both Dhaka and Chittagong want to see that their organisation takes care of two crucial tasks: the regular clearance of garbage from their premises and the ensuring of security and safety in the area. I further observed that the participating households were satisfied if the quality of service pleased them.

In terms of the level of vertical trust, the survey data (see question: 338) authenticates that my respondents (78 percent) generally trust their organisation as it satisfies their requirements and they thus support the operation of the SWM initiatives. Although a

significant percentage of respondents that trust their organisation, some individuals complain about the lack of its transparency with regard to financial transactions. For example, the financial statement of *Sananda* (Chittagong) was found updated only for the first three months after its establishment, while *Halishore K & L block* (Chittagong) updates its financial statement regularly but is reluctant to share it with service charge payers from the tenants group. In Dhaka, the person responsible for maintaining the statement of accounts for *Baddanagar* seldom carried out his task and thus caused a huge backlog. The president of the *Adarshanagar* initiative handles all financial transactions by himself but found the accounts statements to be largely incomplete.

Apart from the above, it is very encouraging to note that the members of the *Adarshanagar* region mobilise their capabilities under the roof of their organisational platform that made collective action possible. A story to this effect is summarised in Box 6.1.

Box 6.1: Trust and capacity building

The people of the *Adarshanagar* area have been surviving without a gas connection; instead they use wood and charcoal as fire materials in preparing their food and carrying out day-to-day household affairs. But these exert a toll on the economy and the environment. The leaders of the *Adarshanagar* Plot Owners' Association, particularly its President Sohrab convinced their members about the comparative advantage of using gas instead of traditional means from economic and environmental perspectives. Therefore, they agreed to install a gas connection in their area for which the cost was estimated to be Taka 6 lacs (approximately USD 10,000).

In order to materialise the decision, they unanimously agreed to pay a compulsory monthly subscription. They further decided to entrust Sohrab with the money and also authorised him to spend the money as and when required. It means that they trusted their association president in terms of financial dealings. By paying their subscription and donations they accumulated about Taka 5 lacs (approximately USD 8500) as of February 2003. During my fieldwork the work was under progress and they expected to be connected by June 2004 at the latest. This endeavour is a unique example in the sense that community members developed their own capability to solve their common problem without seeking any financial support from the government.

Source: Fieldwork

In sum, the above description indicates that the relationship existing between the community-based organisation and its members are based on trust to a large extent. Criticism was mainly expressed with view to the financial statements of these organisations as they were either not prepared regularly or not made accessible to a large group which leaves room for suspicion. Despite this backdrop, the community organisation in *Adarshanagar* succeeded to develop problem solving capabilities of its members which made them relatively more trustworthy to their fellow members and organisations or vice versa.

In the following section I shall describe the dynamics involved with power politics to shape the relationship between community organisers and the residents.

6.3. How do power politics shape the relationship between community organisers and the residents?

Politicians are looked at with suspicion and quite often residents do not trust them. On the other hand, politicians have power and authority and can support community development activities in many ways. As mentioned in the previous chapter and will also be addressed in the subsequent chapters, the organisers of community-based initiatives of my study areas were mostly involved in party politics. The general tendency of such politicians turned organisers is to keep the respective localities under their control. This leads to conflict among the contesting groups (see the case in Box 6.2) who all employ certain techniques to win over the others. In other words, trust-based relationships emerge only in line with ones own group identity, thus leading to a compartmentalisation of social relationships within society. Therefore, a large number of residents are doubtful of the urge of the community organisers for the development of their respective areas. Keeping this background information in mind my field observations partly enabled me to understand the underlying challenges associated with shaping the relationship between community organisers and the individual residents from a power politics perspective.

At the time I conducted my fieldwork in the *Sananda* area (Chittagong) I observed conflicts between community leaders and the family members of Abdur Rashid - who

settled down in the *Sananda* area during the sixties. An example of the general pattern of power politics in this area is summarised in Box 6.2.

Box 6.2: Nature of power politics in the *Sananda* area

Abdur Rashid alias Rasid driver and other members of his family have been living in the *Sananda* area since sixties. All of the assets in and around the area were belonging to his family but a large part of it was subsequently sold to mitigate their financial crisis. He himself and the other members of his family consider them as *local* ('son of the soil') and the remaining as *boinga* (settler or non-local) - a device to label themselves as superior to others.

Rashid driver wanted to be the cornerstone of all activities in *Sananda*. But he failed as he lagged behind other members of *boinga* in terms of education, financial position and social connections with high-ups. Therefore, as I was told, he was not given any portfolio in the committee. As a response to this decision, he created hue and cry in the area and advised his tenants to throw their garbage into the nearest *khal* (canal) instead of giving it to the collector. To him, 'this is my area; therefore, my active presence should be mandatory for all initiatives taken for the development of the area.'

My observation, however, confirms that the present members of the committee intentionally excluded him from the committee to lessen his influence in the area and also to explore avenues for them to be the focal point of all activities there.

As I observed, the pattern of power politics in the *Halishore* area (in Chittagong) did not go far beyond the caricature mentioned in Box 6.2. But the uniqueness of a case that possibly derives from the typical characteristics of societal structure of Bangladesh is mentioned in Box 6.3 as an example of ongoing power discourses in *Halishore*.

Box 6.3: Discourses on power politics in *Halishore*

It was a shock to Arif Uddin, a college student, when he came to know that *samity* leaders would not announce the death news of his father in the mosque under the pretext that he was living in the area as a *vharatiya* and not as a *bariwala*. This was the area where his father had spent more than twelve years of his life, he (Arif) himself grew up and his sisters were born.

The practice is that whenever a [owner] member dies, the *samity* takes the responsibility to announce his (her) death news in the mosque and invite the residents to join *janaza* (a Muslim prayer offered before a funeral procession). The *samity* also provides cooked food to the concerned family as a token of consolation and it continues for four days. The tenants of the area usually do not receive this kind of service.

The ownership of a house makes one group more powerful than others and thus also serves as one of the determining factors for the construction of ones social status.

In Dhaka, as in the case of *Baddanagar*, *panchayat* played a significant role in choosing the actors to lead the organisation manned for SWM. It means that the leadership was imposed upon the general residents without consulting them. According to my observation, common people are generally hesitant to challenge the decision of the *panchayat* in the fear of facing ostracism. *Panchayat*, as an age-old traditional institution, emits its power to the society and all parties accept it as a matter that is taken for granted. On this basis, the relationship between the organisers and the residents became rigid and hierarchical.

In *Maneshwar* lane, the insensitive behaviour of a political leader (see Box 5.4 in chapter 5) even led to the complete stopping of the operation of the community-based SWM initiative.

The relationship existing between the leaders and members of the *Adarshanagar* community-based initiative may be interpreted as somewhat egalitarian. As pointed out in sub-section 5.2.1 of chapter 5, one of the possible explanations for this may be the almost equal social and economic position they share.

It is a fact that the cases and description presented earlier indicate that power politics apparently reduced the chances of creating generalised trust-based relationships between community organisers and the residents. Interestingly, despite the presence of such a situation, community-based SWM initiatives were formed and successfully maintained in my study sites. My field observations and discussions with the key respondents provided information to make explanatory arguments on this issue. One crucial aspect, as field data suggests, was “positive expectation”— the residents lend their support to the organisers with an expectation that the formation of an organisation for the purpose of SWM [and security] would solve several problems and thus make their everyday life easier and more comfortable. According to my consideration, the ‘status hierarchy’ was another influential factor behind the scenes. As can be seen from the previous chapter, mostly *bariwala* and senior citizens occupy all strategic positions of community organisations. According to the societal culture of Bangladesh, it is generally expected that desires (or

wishes) of the *murabbi* (senior citizens/patrons) and powerful people are accepted without raising any question (see sub-section 3.2.3 of chapter 3). Moreover, a general tendency is that common people show their deference to *murabbi* and fear powerful people (e.g. house owners). My observation supports this view but further points out that such a hierarchical ‘group-grid’ bond produces trustworthy relationships among the groups and thus foster social capital. This is why community-based SWM initiatives were formed despite several weaknesses and continued to deliver services to the citizens of some of my study areas.

The following section will take a look at how the network of trust is built and also identifies the sources of trust in my study sites.

6.4. Network and sources of trust

Trust is transmitted through social networks (Wollebæk, 2000:20). It was observed in my study areas in Dhaka and Chittagong that certain social groups emerged on the basis of professional and terrain identity, family relations, schoolmates, and civic work partner relationships. They create their ‘radius of trust’- the circle of people among whom cooperative norms are operative. For example, it was found in the *Sananda* (Chittagong) area that the non-local (settlers) [locally called *boinga*] people were strongly bonded to articulate their interest - particularly to win over the ‘local’ people. The inhabitants of *Adarshanagar* largely built their network of trust in line with their profession. This is how the network of trust is built (see the figure below) and carried on to produce joint action.

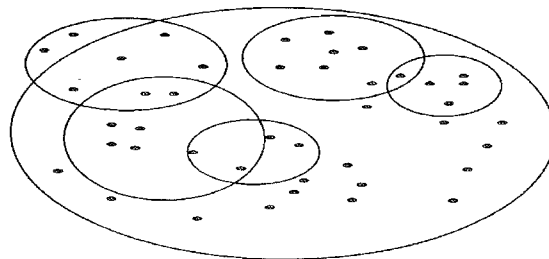
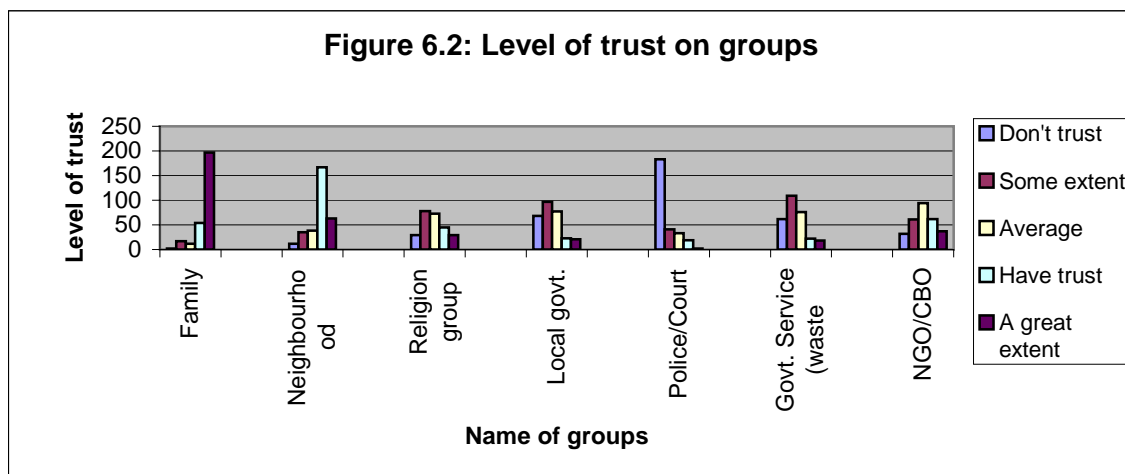


Figure 6.1: Networks of trust

Source: Fukuyama, 2000:5

Looking at the survey data and the content of my interviews, it seems that many sources contribute to the creation of trust. Family is an essential institution to extend the breadth of networks and is generally expanded through marital relationships. Over and again, meeting people in ones working place and making friends in social gatherings like marriages and birthday parties broaden social networks that develop social relations - an essential factor to bring community people together to organise possible community-based SWM initiatives. All these factors apparently serve as sources of trust. At this point it is useful to mention that during the household survey the participating households (total 315) were asked to check a box to express their degree of trust to different groups of people. Their responses were recorded to a 5-point scale where 1 stands for ‘no trust’ and 5 to ‘a great extent’. Figure 6.2 summarises the overall situation:



Source: Survey data

The figure clearly shows that the members of sample households consider their family members as the most trustful social group and the position of neighbourhood comes next to family. In contrast, the participating households consider police and the subordinate court as the most corrupt organisations, and therefore do not trust them. This finding comes close to Transparency International, Bangladesh chapter’s survey report on corruption where they also identified ‘police’ as the most corrupt public institution in the country. According to the report, 87.62 percent of members of their sample households

who went to the police administration for submitting complaints during the previous year were victims of corruption (Transparency International, 2003:xiv).

In sum, it reveals from the above description that the networks of trust are developed alongside with ones 'radius of trust'. Several sources of trust (e.g. family, friendship) have been identified but the position of family, the powerhouse of trust, remains at the top.

6.5. Conclusion

The major purpose of the chapter was to look into the level of horizontal and vertical trust to explain the existing relationships between community organisers, residents, and community-based initiatives. Moreover, the reciprocal relationship between power politics and trust has been examined here.

As mentioned earlier, the relationships prevailing among the community organisers can be described as rather good. Most of the organisers were permanent residents of the area or had been living in the locality for a long time and had thus become a 'local'. Nevertheless, all of them own a house - a status symbol that increased power and prestige of the organisers. This equal social condition enabled the organisers to come closer to each other which resulted in trustworthy relationships. These relationships, as stated, were instrumental to organise community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas.

Despite some drawbacks, the study makes it clear that high-level interpersonal trust existed among the individual residents where community-based SWM initiatives were formed. The lack or absence of it was interpreted as one of the influential factors for the failure of forming such an organisation in some of my study sites.

The quality of conservancy services provided by the community organisations mostly satisfied the service users and thus promoted the creation of trustful relationships with each other. This situation also empowered the community to mobilise their own capacity

for the development of the locality. In this context, the case of *Adarshanagar* (see box 6.1) exemplifies that the members of the *Adarshanagar Plot Owners' Association* translated their capacity into action, i.e. initiated a project to solve the gas problem of their locality without procuring any external support but through collective endeavours.

It can be deduced from the aforementioned cases and insights that power politics partly contributed to diminish the chances of creating trustworthy relationships between the community organisers and the residents.

Reviewing the above, one can reasonably comment that trust is one of the crucial factors to produce social capital which in turn facilitates the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in some localities but none in others.

Social networks, another influential source of social capital, are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Social networks: vices of hegemony?

7.1. Introduction

Any society—modern or traditional, authoritarian or democratic, feudal or capitalist—is characterised by networks of interpersonal communication and exchange, both formal and informal. Some of these networks are primarily “horizontal,” bringing together agents of equivalent status and power. Others are primarily “vertical,” linking unequal agents in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence (Putnam, 1993:173). Both vertical and horizontal networks serve to coordinate action, but different dynamics are at work. A vertical network cannot sustain social trust and cooperation, no matter how dense and no matter how important to its participants. It is less helpful in solving collective issues than horizontal networks are. Richard Rose explains that social networks of an informal nature are face-to-face relationships between a limited number of individuals who know each other and are bound together by kinship, friendship, or propinquity. According to Rose, informal networks are “institutions” in the sociological sense of exhibiting certain patterns and recurring interaction. Even if networks have a formal identity, such as a choir or a rural cooperative, face-to-face networks tend to be horizontal and diffuse, and an individual’s reputation for helpful cooperation is regarded more important than cash payments and bureaucratic regulations (Rose, 2000:149). Thus social networks represent established patterns of communication and cooperation that reduce transaction costs and thus make collective action of various sorts more feasible and profitable (Uphoff, 2000:229).

In this study, social networks are considered as an essential ingredient for fostering social capital which in turn facilitates the organisation of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study sites. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to analyse the field information as well as my field observations to understand the role of social networks in forming community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas in Chittagong and Dhaka.

The chapter begins with a presentation of the field information as to how and under what conditions social networks influence the creation of community-based SWM initiatives.

Secondly, it assesses the strength of ties of social networks with regard to the success of community action.

7.2. Social networks and the formation of community-based SWM initiatives

It was observed and subsequently reported that almost all of my respondents (81 percent) were members of various groups/organisations. Some of these groups or organisations were created to look after the professional interest of their members (e.g. lawyers association) while others were designed to serve various social purposes. Religion-based groups, for example, generally take care of religious matters such as the local *masjid* (mosque), the *mandir* (temples for *Hindus* for worship), and the *moktob* (Muslim religious pre-school); they organise *milad* (Muslim religious celebration) in the neighbourhoods on various occasions as well as funerals. The involvement of my respondents in groups/organisations is summarised below:

Table 7.1: Memberships in groups/organisations

Name of groups/organisations	Chittagong (N=142)*	Dhaka (N=181)*
Religion	28 (19)	31 (17)
Political party	21 (15)	35 (19)
Sports	15 (11)	19 (11)
Finance/saving group	16 (12)	26 (14)
Neighbourhood association	32 (22)	36 (20)
Social support group	18 (13)	21 (12)
Professional group	12 (8)	13 (7)

Source: Survey data

*Note: In total, 315 households were surveyed for this study. 81percent of the respondents provided information about their membership in various groups/organisations, i.e. 256 respondents, of which 112 were from Chittagong and 144 were from Dhaka. Moreover, some respondents were members in several organisations and, therefore, the total number increased to 323 (Chittagong: 142 and Dhaka: 181). The numbers in parenthesis show the percentage of the respective group.

7.2.1. *Social Networks in Halishore*: Depending on the patterns of interest, as observed, a particular group/organisation may take different shapes and conceive various

nomenclatures in my study area at *Halishore*. It was reported by some of my respondents that in the *Halishore K & L* block (in Chittagong) regional identity played a significant role at the time for organising a competition of seasonal sports (e.g. football, badminton, volleyball) in the locality. Two contesting and dominant groups in the area, the *Chittagonian* (people of *Chittagong* district) and the *Noakhali* group, wanted to maintain their supremacy over others and thus separately organised it. My interviews with some organisers left the impression that the competition to be known according to ones terrain identity has many folds implications. First, if both organisers and the supporters' belong to the same district that may yield better understanding, which promotes collective action. Secondly, it strengthens the inter-personal relationship between the actors as they make relatively frequent face-to-face contact. Third, this pattern of mutual relationship facilitates a situation of trustworthiness, which is highly contributive to the accumulation of social capital.

In practice, though, no clashes or violence occurred between the groups despite their contending interests. As my respondents told me, they demonstrated their solidarity and cohesion to each other on several occasions. According to the field report it is understood that in spite of the presence of the characteristics of division in terms of social relations in the area, natural disasters apparently drive out almost all of these issues as the following case makes clear.

Box 7.1: Pursuing a common interest and strengthening social networks

Halishore was ravaged by the devastating cyclone and tidal bore of 1991 that claimed the lives of thousands of people in both urban areas and the countryside. The waves of the tidal bore flooded the area that severely that all kinds of transport broke down for several days. Food and medicine were intermittently provided to the victims. In this precarious situation, the inhabitants of the area (mostly men) collectively came forward not only to help the people of the *K & L block* but also the others living within the vicinity of the locality. They cooked food on the roofs and distributed it according to the need of the people both within and outside the area. In those days, one of the major problems was to provide safe and secure shelter to the women and children. It was solved as some volunteered to take the responsibility of shifting a number of families (both *bariwala/bariwali* and *vharatiya* to their village homes where the effects of the cyclone/flood were not as severe. A.T.M. Salauddin Ahmed, for example, transferred five *non-Chittagonian* families to one of his relatives' home at *Fatikchari* in Chittagong. This natural calamity brought them back to a "we" feeling and this reciprocal relationship elevated them as a part of large social networks. In other words, new patterns of social relations emerged through this network structure, which initiated the operation of a community governed solid waste collection and disposal system in the *Halishore K & L* block.

social networks in *Halishore* grew up in line with the boundary of their terrain acquaintance. But it is understood from the aforesaid story that natural disasters brought the neighbourhoods under one umbrella that apparently dissolved the differences, at least partly, which had prevailed in everybody's mind before. Fellow feeling, face-to-face communication, mutual obligation, and vulnerability during the crisis time strengthened the relationships among the inhabitants and increased the trustworthiness among one another and in effect contributed to fostering social capital. The community-based SWM initiative administered by the *Halishore K & L* block housing society is considered as a product of these social resources.

7.2.2. *Social Networks in Sananda*: In addition to regional identity, patrilineal relationship, a reasonable economic position, and connections to the society's high-ups serve as the background for the creation of social network in the *Sananda* area in *Chittagong*. The process of creating social networks among the dwellers begins with their *atiyata* (kin ties), and *gusti-gayati* (patrilineage/kith and kin) relationships. My field observation and the understanding from the in-depth interviews with some of my respondents interpret that the following factors were more or less responsible for constituting the structure of social networks in *Sananda*:

- Information for job, support in business
- Recommendation for credit, bank loans
- Provide various favours, e.g. persuasion for getting a contract and
- Social/moral obligation.

Field report explains that the President of the *Sananda* residential area, Nasir Uddin, and some of his associates were the last resort to a large number of residents to salvage their souls at the time of despair and crisis. Many residents welcomed the role of the leaders in solving community problems as the following information provided by Sultana Zaman in an interview with me testifies:

“...the leaders of our *Sananda* residential area take care of a wide variety of issues, e.g. protecting the gender from eve teasing to clearing water logging. If we seek their assistance even

in the middle of night they do not hesitate to comply with our request. Such a positive attitude of behaviour made us dependent on them to some extent on many social and private issues. In return they receive our *doa* (blessing), *valobasha* (love/affection), and *sradha* (deference). ”

While pursuing in-depth interviews and a household survey in the *Sananda* area, some of my respondents reported that they received generous support from their community leaders in various forms and on numerous occasions. Some representative cases derived from the interviews/survey are summarised here to understand the social construction of network in the *Sananda* area:

Box 7.2: Formation of social networks: some cases from *Sananda* area

Case 1: Apu earned an MA in Islamic History & Culture but was unemployed even three years after his graduation. He applied for a job in many organisations but did not succeed. His father, a retired government staff, maintains a 6-member family through his tiny pension. Apu therefore was under heavy social pressure and family obligation to take over the responsibility of his father’s family as quickly as possible. One evening in *Ramadan* (fasting), while he was returning from the local mosque after a *Tarabi* prayer (a special prayer prescribed for the month of *Ramadan* which is held after the *Asha* [late evening] prayer), he met one of their neighbours and exchanged views with him on many issues including politics and society. At one point of their discussion he (neighbour) assured him to do his best to find a job for him shortly. By activating his connections, he managed to find a lecturer position for Apu in a private college.

Case 2: In order to receive a loan from a commercial bank in Bangladesh one has to mortgage his/her physical assets or need to produce a guarantor (with the notable exception of the Grameen Bank). Sheli Chowdhury, a schoolteacher, was in need of money to bring her husband to India for medical treatment. Finding no other suitable alternatives she applied for a loan of Taka 1,00,000 (USD 1800) to a local bank. The bank authority, in reply, advised her to satisfy their ‘must follow’ conditions to get the money. She approached her problem to some leading persons of her known in the area and most of them agreed to be a guarantor. She finally chose Khasru Meah to be the guarantor as he was a bosom friend of her husband.

Case 3: During the marriage ceremony of the eldest daughter of Nur Muhammad, almost all men and women helped him to organise the party. Some volunteered to organise the bridal party. Moreover, a *mehadi sanda* (henna evening—a traditional function where [mostly] palms of both bride and bridegroom are decorated applying an emulsion of henna. This emulsion turns their palms into a crimson colour) was also observed.

Source: Fieldwork

The above three different cases precisely describe the conditions that were found largely useful to promote social networks. In the first case, an educated but unemployed young man got a job with the help of his neighbour. This occasion made himself and his family

much obliged to that person who went to great lengths to find a job. It is a fact that the rate of unemployment in Bangladesh is quite high and a large number of educated young have to survive with underemployment. In the midst of this situation, getting a respectable job means a considerable achievement according to the reality of the Bangladesh society — because it guarantees the realisation of ones basic needs and also ensures a position in the society. The second and third examples are cases of collective support and assistance on the part of community to overcome individual's problems.

Apart from the above, the survey data reported that a considerably large number of inhabitants of *Sananda* came from *Chittagong* and its neighbouring districts. Of these, the dominant groups came from *Fatikchari* and *Chokoria* upazilas³³ of the districts of *Chittagong* and *Cox's Bazar*. It was further observed that the people who migrated to *Sananda* from *Fatikchari* were more or less linked either with their kin ties or with *gusti* (patrilineage) relationships. The same applies to the people of *Chokoria*. This inter-group (between *Fatikchari* and *Chokoria*) relationship, as reported by some of my respondents, was mediated through the internalisation of connections by means of [inter-group] marriage, partnership businesses, and support to the same political party. The survey data further revealed that the community leaders mainly came from these two areas and thus strengthened their power base with the support from their groups. This explains the following statement of the president of the *Sananda* residential area, in an interview with me:

“Everyone living in this area is bound to support the organisation (i.e. the *Sananda* residential area welfare association primarily responsible for providing security and waste collection services) as a message has been sent to them from this house.”

The above statement, as it is understood from its content, was a conceit as well as a ‘soft’ threat to the critics of his authority in the area.

The canvas painted on the basis of the aforesaid examples, cases, and statements uncover the mechanisms involved with the construction of social network in the *Sananda* area.

³³ An administrative tier located between district and union. There are 507 thana/upazila in the country as of 2001 (Statistical Pocketbook of Bangladesh 2001, 2002:3).

This network structure, however, mostly refines the social relations and also contributes to the production of social capital, which is engine to the mobilisation of collective action. The success to the formation and operation of the *Sananda* residential area welfare association — the organisation responsible for the collection and disposal of solid waste—may be considered as a product of collective effort introduced through networks relations.

7.2.3. *Social Networks in Baddanagar*: Field investigation shows that the inhabitants of *Baddanagar* (in Dhaka) were also divided into two major groups. The people who claimed to be the ‘sons of the soil’—a generic term for ‘local’, i.e. those ancestrally living in the area—constituted the first group while the second group consisted of the ‘migrated’ people—those came to the area from across the country for exploring economic venues for their survival. At some point of time they may find the area suitable for living there permanently possibly due to the presence of better financial options caused by tannery industries. There were also several variants, as observed, of the migrated people in terms of their origin. Among them, the influential regions were: *Noakhali*, *Comilla*, *Chadpur*, *Mymensingh*, and *Faridpur*. They line up their networking primarily according to their local identity. But to broaden the horizon of their power base and the limit of network, inter-group communication functioned relatively well, which apparently reduced the risk of producing conflict among the contesting groups hankering after power. In this regard Shah Abdul Bari, a permanent resident of *Baddanagar*, made the following comment in an interview with me, which I consider representative in nature:

“It is a fact that there are groupings in our area on the basis of *zila porichiti* (districtism) but it does not create any remarkable interruption in our everyday life. We meet each other at various social gatherings and share sorrow and happiness. Moreover, some of us make regular *boikalik adda* (afternoon gossiping) in the local tea stalls after returning from work. These *addas* are not organised according to the district identity but as *sorbojonin* (common) value. This is invariably an opportunity to get to know each other closely and thus to make life socially comfortable. Such contact develops our social relations and also strengthens the foundation of our *parosporik bishas* (mutual trust), *somporka* (relationship) and *jogajog* (communication).”

During the fieldwork it was noticed that in some parts of *Baddanagar* social relations took a defiant shape on the basis of civil-military relationships. It is a fact that some establishments of the paramilitary force—the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR)—are situated in

Hazaribug. Therefore, some in-service and retired BDR personnel live in the area in a private arrangement. It was reported that some of them had a general tendency to scare the civilians with their power of uniform. In several cases the former threatened the latter to take extralegal means and to harass them if they failed to lend support to articulate their personal interest. The very common form of their misuse of power, as my respondents told me, is the grafting of land. Thus the local people are largely antagonistic to the BDR personnel. My field observation documents that such a situation reduces the chances of making face-to-face communication, which is a necessary pre-requisite to build trust-based social relations and networks.

On the other hand, the *mahalla panchayat*-the traditional organisation [in]formally responsible for mediating local problems-comes to play here. Many incidents and uncomfortable situations that took place between the BDR personnel and local people, as reported, were successfully settled down through the mediation of the *panchayat*. The following statement of Haji Ashfaq Hossain Mukul, a *panchayat* leader, is useful to mention here to understand the circumstances that induces the competing actors to accept the resolution offered by the *panchayat*:

“The managing committee of the local *masjid* (mosque) selects the *panchayat* leaders among the local *murabbis* (senior citizens). According to the Bangladeshi culture, people pay respect and devotion to both *murabbi* and *masjid*. Therefore, any verdict delivered by the *panchayat* becomes an integral part of obligation to follow by the parties concerned. Failure to comply with any decision is strictly abhorred by the society and the person concerned may even face social sanctions including *ēk ghore* (ostracism). For example, if the *panchayat* takes any punitive action against a member of the locality (s)he is looked down upon by the rest also, as a consequence, the other members of the victim’s family face serious social problem to maintain their daily business. This is why any measures taken by the *panchayat* to solve local problems are widely accepted.”

In addition to performing the role of social control, the *mahalla panchayat* adopts initiatives to promote social solidarity and strengthen social relations among the residents by organising picnics and traditional *Tazia michil*³⁴ (mourning procession). The field information indicates that such social gatherings increase the chances of meeting and

³⁴ The tenth of the month of *Muharram* (the first month of the *Hijra* year), held in memory of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (grandson of the Great Prophet Hazrat Muhammad [be peace upon him]) and his companions in *Karbala* (now in Iraq). Generally, *Shia* Muslims organise the *michil* (procession) to commemorate the day. In *old Dhaka*, however, some *Sunni* Muslims also perform the culture of bringing out *Tazia* procession.

communicating with people relatively frequently. Such contact reduces transaction costs and therefore improves social networks among the actors and thus renders collective action possible. As a practical demonstration of this improved relationship, the following box accommodates a story based on an illustration how *panchayat* succeeded to rehabilitate a widow through securing support from the neighbouring households.

Box 7.3: The role of the *panchayat* in social rehabilitation: do social networks matter?

Muggers killed Golam Rasul, a 47-year old small trader in 1999. He left his wife Hosna Surat and two *nabalok* (who did not even reach 18 years of age) boys behind him. The deceased Rasul was the only source of income of the family; therefore, his brutal killing put an end to their earnings. Hosna Surat studied up to XII class but was never engaged in any paid employment before the death of her husband. It was not possible for her to re-start her husband's business due to social and economic reasons and it was equally impossible to seek a suitable job as she crossed the age bar of 30 years. Some of their relatives and family friends who visited them immediately after the incident left some cash, which helped her to mitigate initial expenditures including the educational expenses of her children. When the money was used up she became completely helpless. Some of her neighbours reported the matter to the *panchayat* leaders. To solve her problem the leaders appealed to all households in *Baddanagar* to make financial contributions to do the following: (i) to buy a swing machine, (ii) to provide her training to operate the machine commercially profitably, and (iii) to make a fixed deposit from where (i.e. interest) the educational expenses of her sons would be borne.

At the request of some *panchayat* leaders, Omar Faraque (a permanent resident of *Baddanagar* and a businessman by profession) contacted one of his friends who had a business relationship with a senior official of a company and requested him to convince the concerned official to get a swing machine for the woman free of charge. Eventually, Faraque succeeded to get a new hand-swing machine (Singer brand) for Hosna Surat on nominal payment and they also provided her with free technical training to operate the machine.

A considerable amount of money was collected through voluntary contribution of the residents. A large portion of this amount was deposited in a local bank on a fixed five years term to safeguard the educational expenses of her sons. The remaining money was given to her in cash to administer their everyday needs. It was reported that she invested the cash in various income generating schemes and partly succeeded to increase her earnings.

Source: Fieldwork

The story mentioned above is the conglomeration of both internal and external networks that solicited the social rehabilitation of the widow. The inhabitants of *Baddanagar* joined the *panchayat* leaders and thus constructed the walls of internal networks irrespective to their identity as 'local' or 'migratory'. A local (Omar Faraque) arranged to give a swing machine to the widow from a company on nominal fee (and free training) with the help of one of his friends. Apparently it seems that Faraque's friend who

volunteered to provide the machine did not make any immediate profit from it. But the statement of Faraque suggests that in order to cement their [business] relation this was an investment of his friend who might probably ask for a suitable return in future. On the part of Faraque, as confessed in an interview with me, his help was not only entirely altruistic but rather motivated by the fact that it might link him better with the *panchayat* leaders to earn their support and favour to uplift his social position in the locality. This means that inter-connected interest increases the chances of building a broader social network and also fosters the mutual understanding among the individuals/groups. The relationship developed through such social interaction more or less builds a cooperative environment favourable for achieving common goals. Therefore, it can be said that all the afore-mentioned societal and cultural characteristics contributed to the growth and development of the *Baddanagar* community-based SWM initiative.

7.2.4. *Social Networks in Adarshanagar*: From my field observations it became apparent that most of the residents of *Adarshanagar* are petty traders. Therefore, their network primarily develops according to their professional relationship. But there are many factors that strengthen their individual/group ties. The survey data shows that a large portion of the inhabitants (68 percent) came from the *Faridpur* and *Barisal* districts. Mainly economic factors pushed them, as respondents confirmed, to migrate to the capital city of Dhaka as they lost their ancestral homesteads and other tangible assets due to river erosion.

In order to understand how the inhabitants of *Adarshanagar* bind one another with the fabric of network it is useful to take into account the process of migration. The following information provided by Manik Meah (from *Barisal*) in an interview with me gave a picture as to how they finally anchored in Dhaka:

“At the very outset we sent two elderly men— Abdul Latif and Sultan Bepari to Dhaka to make a feasibility assessment after our decision to migrate to Dhaka. The task their visit was: (i) to find a suitable place to live with the family, and (ii) to explore economic opportunities. Before their arrival in Dhaka, these two men contacted some of our local (also known) people who migrated to Dhaka (from *Barisal*) several years before. Almost all of them assured them to provide all possible support during their trip to Dhaka and also offered their hospitality. After their arrival at Dhaka they did a small survey concerning their task. After a number of sittings and consultation

with the people who moved on to Dhaka earlier, our representatives convinced them to jointly decide the following: at first, six families would move from *Barisal* and would start living with six already settled families for 2-3 weeks. Within this period, we settled down with the help of the old migrants. Following this process all 60 families gradually migrated here in three months. An open space near *jadughar* (ethnological museum) in the *Agargaon* area became our final place of destination which was an unsafe and dangerous place to live with families. In order to protect outside interference we started night patrolling around the area. In order to make living, however, the men began hawking from *mahalla* to *mahalla* to sell household items and to distribute newspapers while the women engaged in garment jobs.”

The above statement point out that fellow feeling, mutual cooperation are embedded in their social relations which gave them the strength to keep themselves organised to face the challenges during the unstable period of their life. Frequent sitting and meeting with one another and sharing ideas and information to solve their common issues improved their relationships and subsequently transformed them to be network points (for building network path) for the efficient realisation of their common goal.

Field investigation further documents that a total of 53 families migrated to Dhaka from *Faridpur* following the same process as the people of *Barisal*. “In the beginning we established contacts with our relatives, known persons or friends and then came here group by group with their active support and cooperation. After our arrival at Dhaka we immediately set out to find work and shelter by using their channels and our contacts”- Binoy Krishna Biswas and Korshed Alam made the above statement in an interview with me. “We started dwelling at *Taltala*-a place near *Agargaon basti* (slum)-and to save our souls most of us started small trading like selling ready made garment, household items etc whereas our *awrat* (women) went to the nearby garment factories to work”.

At this stage it is important to know why and how the people of two different districts (*Barisal* and *Faridpur*) who also settled in two different locations of *Agargaon* became closer to each other and finally [most of them] moved on to *Adarshanagar* to live permanently as they managed plots there especially built for the low-income people under financial support from ADB. The story that the following box contains is the summary of information based on my formal interviews and informal talks with the respondents on the above:

Box 7.4: The reasons that glue the people of *Faridpur* and *Barisal* together

Shamsul Alam and Jan Sharif originated in *Barisal* and *Faridpur* districts respectively and were living in two different locations in *Agargaon*-Alam in a place near *jadughar* (museum) while Sharif lived in *Taltala*. Both of them were selling household items in the nearby *mahallas*. Once they had met at *Adabar* and became acquainted with each other. About one week later they met again coincidentally in *masjid gali* at *Mohammadpur* and took their time to discuss many issues of their life. On the day they also exchanged their addresses and promised to keep in touch. About a month later, Sharif visited Alam with his family and also invited Alam to take his turn to the best of his convenient time. One evening Alam went to Sharif's house with his family. After several recurrences, these two families became closer to each other and even established a self-imposed relationship of *bhai-vohn* (brother-sister). Through them almost all of their neighbours became familiar with each other and maintained the good relationship.

One day Kamal Anwar, a neighbour of Jan Sharif disclosed the information that the Government of Bangladesh initiated a housing project for the low-income group people of the capital to be implemented at *Adarshanagar* under financial support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). This message quickly spread over the area through the communication channels of Alam and Sharif. After a long discussion, they decided to seek assistance from Mujibur Rahman and Molla Sohrab Hossain—two influential persons of their known who were intimately connected with the political high-ups-in order to acquire a plot.

In response to the request of the people both Rahman and Hossain showed their solidarity to them but requested a payment of Taka 50,000.00 (approximately USD 1200 according to the conversion rate of 1996) to mitigate necessary *khorsapati* (expenditures) in various offices to do it in their favour. The people welcomed the demand and collected the amount through paying mandatory but equal contributions. As the money was handed over, these two relatively powerful persons exploited their connections and succeeded to allot 112 plots for their clients (and also for them). After observing the necessary formalities they took over the possession of the plots (each plot 40-m²) in 1997.

The relationship initiated through the friendship between Alam and Sharif generated a family feeling in almost everybody, i.e. the creation of a network lineage. This fellow feeling, however, made them the owner of a plot—an influential instrument to uplift ones social status in Bangladesh.

Source: Fieldwork

Reviewing the above, it is understood that many factors contributed to the creation and development of social networks. A large portion of the inhabitants of *Adarshanagar* who were stationed at the *Agargaon* area originally migrated from the *Barisal* and *Faridpur* districts and initially built their relationships according to their local identity. The social relationships among the members of each group were refined and reformed through mutual interaction and attention to overcome their problem of existence. Such dynamism within relationships empowered the groups to succeed to solve their individual/common problems by utilising their own network capacity-as the cases of *Barisal* and *Faridpur*

showed. This kind of network capacity generates social capital that also serves as a powerful tool to attain common goals of the community. Therefore, the collective efforts employed to acquire plots in *Adarshanagar* were invariably an influential example of translating community capacity into action. To make meaningful utilisation of the capacity, the forum of the plot owners, i.e. the *Adarshanagar* Plot Owners' Association was created to look after the interest of the inhabitants. Consequently, the association took up the initiative of the collection and disposal of solid waste by investing their resources to keep the area odour free and environmentally healthy.

To sum up, the four cases portrayed above clearly show that social networks are an essential factor to foster social capital which in turn facilitates the achievement of common goals. In all cases systems for the collection and disposal of solid waste were developed as a part of relatively large community schemes drawn up for the improvement of quality of life of the citizens concerned.

I shall now describe the reasons for non-formation of community-based SWM initiatives from a social networks perspective.

7.3. Non-formation of community-based SWM initiatives: do social networks matter?

In section 5.3 of chapter 5, I have presented the factors responsible for the non-formation of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study areas in Chittagong and Dhaka. This section deals with analysing field information with regard to the non-formation of community-based SWM initiatives from a social networks perspective.

7.3.1. *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug*, Chittagong: Both the *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug* areas under the wards of *Bagmoniram* and *North Agrabad* respectively did not succeed to organise community managed SWM initiatives for reasons such as: lack of leadership, lack of integration into the area, lack of trust, political conflict among the residents and lack of face-to-face interaction.

In *Masjid Gali*, several asymmetric relationships were observed among the residents. First of all, most of them came from different parts of the country, which curbed the dominance of any particular district or area. Therefore, the presence of divergent culture and language impeded the chances to maintain close contact with one another. Secondly, a large section (60 percent) of males, were engaged with *Tabliq* (non-partisan preaching of religion) in addition to their normal job. They were found preaching the teaching of *Islam* to the people outside their area. These extra jobs leave little room for promoting in-door communication and frequent face-to-face contact with the neighbours.

The field report shows that most of the females in the locality were housewives which gave them the opportunity to maintain contact or exchange greetings between themselves, particularly whenever they pick up their offspring from school. This kind of contact lays the foundation for commencing cooperative activities. In this regard the following comment of Joynal Abedin is representative:

“Unfortunately, I was not quite familiar with my neighbours. But my wife developed a somewhat friendly relationship with some of them, which opened an avenue for exchange of information. One night my wife informed me that Shefali *bhabi*³⁵ had become very sick and needed to be hospitalised soon. Her husband was away to Dhaka. Therefore, I immediately called on a doctor for her medical examination and upon advice she was subsequently transferred to the hospital for better medication. We looked after her kids until she back to home.”

The above statement vividly indicates the presence of the characteristics like fellow feeling and willingness to help others in their social relationship. The following incident did not succeed to activate sufficient networking among the residents to advance joint efforts to solve common problems of the locality. Joynal Abedin shared his experience in an interview with me which is summarised below:

“*Masjid Gali* is situated just above the water level. During the rainy season the whole area was flooded and the residents faced enormous problems. After consulting the others, I (Joynal Abedin) took the initiative to increase the height of the lanes by throwing earth on it. Since this procedure was rather costly, I sought financial assistance from my neighbours. Most of them encouraged me to do the job and also promised to share the cost. After completing the work I

³⁵ The literal meanings of *bhabi* are: brother’s wife, sister-in-law. In Bangladesh, it is usually used as a common form of address.

turned to them but some of them declined to pay me back. At last, I had to bear the major portion of the total expenditures incurred in the project.”

In order to understand the dynamisms involved in the non-sharing of cost, I asked several people about their logic behind it. Many responses were recorded which reflect the dissatisfaction of the tenants about the quality of service they receive from their house owners. A schoolteacher justified his behaviour with the following words: “I am a *vharatiya* not a *Bariwala*. I cannot pay for the repair of lanes/roads. *Bariwalas* should share the cost of the development works made in their area.”

My observation shows that this double-tongued game played by some residents led to an erosion of the fellow feeling. Hence, the social relations were characterised by a lack of mutual trust and thus impeded the creation of social networks. All these factors contributed to the failure to produce social capital to the extent essential for the formation of community-based SWM initiative.

In *Shantibug*, as mentioned in chapter 5, the inhabitants were grouped in line with their political support. Most of the house owners in this area migrated from the following areas: *Noakhali*, *Hatiya*, and *Swandip*. The initial networking evolved in line with their ‘root’ identity and at times intersected between the groups through friendship and marriage. In spite of the prevalence of these networks, political vandalism weakened their social bonds. On the basis of his own experience, Minhazul Kabir pictured the area during an interview with me. In his words:

“*Shantibug* was an ideal place to live even some years ago. The inter-personal relationship among the neighbourhoods was reasonably good though terrain identity played an influential role to be closer to each other. Exchange of greetings and views was a common feature of the locality. Two –power-greedy *bariwalas* changed the overall environment of *Shantibug*. One of them was linked to the *AL* politics while the other was attached to the *Jammat* (JI). To keep control of the area they utilised power politics against each other. In order to maintain a ‘win-win’ situation, they were mostly engaged to create troubles in the area by employing various heinous tactics. Taking benefit from the power conflict during the parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2001, they succeeded to divide the area according to their political loyalty. As a result, many unfortunate incidents took place here including the separation of the mosque. There is a lack of non-partisan *murabbi* in the area who can act as guardians to bridge the gap between the contestants. They have made the area a problematic one.”

Rafia Joynab added the following to the above statement: “The Almighty saved the area from a bloody clash as some of the contesting actors were connected through *atiyata* (kin ties).”

My observation goes to the heart of the above comments. Despite the prevalence of networks among the neighbours, the vices of power conflict distorted inter and intra group connections. This lessened the opportunity to make frequent face-to-face communication — a useful device to share ones grievances and to establish a “we” feeling.

Reviewing the above, it is understood that power conflicts and the lack of non-partisan leadership *inter alia* are responsible for foiling the chances of creating social networks among various groups in *Shantibug*. The network existing in the area did not yield a sufficient amount of social capital to mobilise the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in the area.

7.3.2. *Maneshwar lane* and *Baunia Badh*, Dhaka: The dwellers of *Maneshwar* (first) lane did not succeed to sustain the operation of an SWM initiative while the people of *Baunia badh* did not even try to organise such an initiative for reasons such as: a deteriorating law and order situation in the areas and a lack of efficient leadership.

As my field observation suggests, the geographical distribution of the population living in *Maneshwar* lane is almost the same as in *Baddanagar*. This means the inhabitants of the area were also divided into two groups, i.e. ‘local’ and ‘migratory’. ‘Local’ are the people ancestrally living in the place while the others migrated primarily from the following districts: *Noakhali*, *Chadpur*, *Mymensingh*, and *Comilla*. My interview with several respondents confirms that economic dire straits induced them to leave their hometown. The prospects of finding means of subsistence attracted them to come to the capital city Dhaka and to *Hazaribug*.

In the beginning they developed their networking in line with their terrain identity which was subsequently widened in the quest for inter-group cooperation to create new networks. It was observed that the people of *Maneshwar* lane frequently make face-to-face contact and occasionally exchanged food and gifts irrespective of their identity. This environment rendered possible trustworthy relationships among the interacting actors which in turn makes collective action possible. By using these social resources, the authority of the *Fairplay Boys Club* introduced various programmes of learning life skills such as: to provide knowledge of the alphabet and arithmetic, knowledge on health and hygiene, usefulness of family planning, and the conservation of the environment with the help of some NGOs. They provide the service free of charge and encourage everyone through motivational campaigns to join the programme. This makes the local people interested in the activities of the club. Some participants expressed their feeling to me by stating that the lessons of the programme increased their overall knowledge and awareness.

The above information confirms the presence of a favourable environment in *Maneshwar* lane to cultivate common goods by providing joint action. But the vices of party rivalry forced the organisers to scrap their initiative originally formed to look after their daily-generated garbage. Several years after the parliamentary elections of 2001, the [political] moratorium imposed on the operation of the organisation could not be lifted. I realised that due to this situation some people of *Maneshwar* lane were reluctant either to re-start their earlier initiative or to launch a new one as they feared to face harassment.

The territorial combination of the people living in *Baunia badh* was heterogeneous in nature. Unlike *Maneshwar* lane, people gathered here from across the country; hence the dominance of a particular district(s) or area(s) was not possible. The survey data shows that small trading was the dominant profession of most residents (72 percent). Professional inter-dependence, as observed, acted as a pile driver to create relationships among the males of the area. By using the strength of these relationships they formed a institution providing micro-credit through weekly contributions to serve them at the time of their economic crisis. This organisation gave them the opportunity to keep touch with

each other through relatively frequent face-to-face contact. Most of my respondents opined that they were better linked after the growth of the micro-credit institution.

Recognising ‘solid waste’ as one of the influential problems of the area, some of the respondents sadly noted their inability to launch an organisation to handle the issue due to the reasons mentioned in chapter 5. In support to this, the following representative comment of Abul Kalam deserves to be mentioned here to understand the overall situation of the area:

“*Abarjana* (garbage) is a big problem of our area. But we are encountering even more difficult issues, i.e. the deterioration of the law and order situation of the locality. All dangerous criminals of the capital and their followers live here. Despite several divisions among them, their main objective is to earn money by employing repressive methods on us. They regularly collect *chada* (ransom) from us and refusal to pay may pose a threat to one’s life. It is widely believed that the Police maintains an under table relationship with them and receives a share of their earning. Lack of local leadership made us vulnerable to the situation.”

My observation confirms the situation as described above and further looks at the tendency that the formal leadership of the area goes to the controversial person—though elected through adult franchise. For example, Abdur Rob Nannu, the elected Ward Commissioner of ward 5, was sent to jail during the time of my fieldwork for his alleged involvement in unlawful activities.

The special feature of the area that I noticed during my field study was the almost total isolation of women from the outer space. Some of them even could not maintain minimum contact with their next-door neighbour in the fear of losing *ijjat* (honour). It was rare but not uncommon in the area that quarrels between two neighbours were brought to the criminals with the mindset to teach the other party a lesson. Some respondents reported on the presence of at least two alleged ‘god fathers’ in the area—one was Faraque Hossain who commands the *Falani group* and the other was *Kala* (black) Jahangir, the ring leader of the group named after him (i.e. *Kala Jhanagir group*). However, another reason for women to remain at home was to save them from possible physical harassment by the gangsters. It was not an exaggerated thinking on their part as one old woman reported the following incident to me:

“My grand daughter was kidnapped when she was returning home from her work in the evening. One day later she was found in an unconscious state near *badh*. She was gang-raped – what remains to a woman if she loses her pride of chastity. Finding no other way, I sent her back to her mother’s home.”

Focussing on the above description it appears that the males of the *Baunia badh* area almost reached the state a perceived community feeling which could have been conducive to extracting benefit from the limited network they developed during the process of the formation and operation of the micro-credit institution. But the amount of social capital produced by the effect of the said network did not bring any outcome to support the formation of a collective action for SWM. Evidence suggests to hold the law and order situation of the area primarily responsible for this failure. The role of women, however, was found to be relatively sensitive to the creation of networks for the reasons mentioned earlier.

To sum up, the afore-mentioned four cases provide sufficient evidence that several factors such as: political rivalry, a law and order situation, and a lack of leadership limited the chances of creating social networks among the inhabitants. Due to this lack of face-to-face interaction and fellow feeling the amount of social capital required to operate collective action such as: community driven SWM initiatives could not be produced. Therefore, some of my study areas were not able to form a community-based initiative to collect and dispose of their daily-generated solid waste.

The following section briefly summarises the relationship between the presence of social networks and its impact on community action.

7.4. The presence of social networks and its impact on community action

Social networks are spread over network ties. The strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterise the tie (Granovetter, 1973:1361). The field information presented earlier documents the presence of a number of ties based on kinship, friendship, business partnership, religion, people from same

home district/area, and living in the same neighbourhood serves as a foundation for building social relations. Family and kinship relations exhibit the characteristics of a dense network, but the ties in those relations are too strong. Thus, the reciprocity norm developed family and kinship networks often fails to spread to the society as a whole (Ostrom and Ahn, 2001:23). This is why Putnam argues with Granovetter (1973) that overlapping “weak ties” are more important than intense personal ties with a view to sustaining social stability and collective action. “Weak ties” somewhat form the family and kinship networks mostly on the basis of face-to-face contact.

Analysing the gist of my field observation and summarising the survey data, it is clearly understood that the community-based SWM initiatives emerged in those areas where social networks among the residents were found active or present. On the other hand, a lack of networks among the residents was observed in those areas where there was no community action. This connection deduced from the summary of the survey results is presented in the table below:

Table 7.2: Social networks and community action
Community action

Social Networks		Yes	No	
	Yes	196 (63)	15 (5)	211
No	31 (9)	73 (23)	104	
	227	88	N= 315	

Source: Survey report.

Note: Parenthesis shows the percentage of opinion.

It is, therefore, derived from the analysis that the presence of social networks among the inhabitants generates high community action and leads to the growth of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study areas whereas the lack of it either produces low or no community action at all.

7.5. Conclusion

The objective of the chapter was to analyse the field information as to how and under what conditions social networks are socially constructed which influence the organisation of community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas. Throughout the chapter I have tried to respond to this question by using the collected information of my field observations, in-depth interviews with my key respondents, and the exploration of the survey data.

Social networks are developed in line with one's group identity, kinship, patron-client relationship, fellow feeling, quality of leadership, one's ancestral home in the same area, and mutual obligation. These characteristics of social features strengthen social relations among the people concerned which contribute to the production of social capital to facilitate collective action. On the other hand, the inhabitants of the study areas those failed to form community-based SWM initiatives either yielded distorted or no network ties at all. This means that the strength of social networks makes collective action (community-based SWM initiative) possible, while the lack of it responds with the absence of community action.

Civic engagement, one of the three major sources of social capital used in this thesis is described in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

Civic engagement: the glue for bonding the community together?

8.1. Introduction

Like many concepts in social science, the meaning of the term ‘civic engagement’ sparks ambiguity. Due to the lack of a widely accepted definition of the term, it is understood as the interest, knowledge, and skills— the characteristics that accompany individuals in their day-to-day life, either political or civic. Thus it is an individual resource which is shaped through mutual interactions among social actors on various societal, economical, political, and ecological issues. Moreover, the strength of social trust in fellow citizens and the density of their social network may be considered as contributive factors for organising civic involvement in a community.

In this research, civic engagement is considered as one of the essential factors for fostering social capital that helps to understand why some localities succeeded to organise community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study areas but others did not. Therefore, the main objective of this chapter is to analyse the field information and my field observations to explain the effects of civic engagement for community development including the formation and operation of community-based SWM initiatives in my research areas in both Chittagong and Dhaka.

The chapter, at first, introduces the citizen’s perception on SWM problem of their locality. Secondly, it discusses the field data with regard to the social construction of civic engagement and then looks into its possible effects of the formation (and also non-formation) of community-based SWM initiatives in my study areas.

8.2. Citizens perception on SWM problems

Both sets of my interview guides (see annexes 8 and 9) designed for data collection from common citizens through household surveys and community leaders contain a section on “Idea about locality and environment” to map their knowledge and awareness about

locality and environment. The survey findings are summarised and presented in the following table:

Table 8.1: Idea about locality and environment

Issue	Answer
Three important problems of locality	(1) Solid waste (2) Water logging (3) Security and safety
Solid waste as a problem	Yes (81 percent) No (19 percent)
Solid waste as a threat to human health and the environment	Yes (69 percent) No (31 percent)
Three common diseases caused by solid waste	(1) Skin (2) Diarrhoea (3) Enteric fever

Source: Field survey

Analysing the data gathered from the questionnaires and reviewing my field observations it is evident that people prioritise the problem of their locality according to the pretext of their local context. For example, most of the inhabitants of *Baunia Badh* (in Dhaka) conceive solid waste as a problem but did not grade it as one of the top three problems of their locality. Security and safety come to their mind first as the main problems of their area. On the other hand, the people of *Halishore K & L block* (in Chittagong) conceive both solid waste and water logging as the number one problem of the area.

Looking at the data table above, one can notice the variation in opinion between terming solid waste as a problem and then consider it as a threat to human health and environment. My field observation shows that a considerably large section of the respondents possess insufficient knowledge as to what extent solid waste poses a threat to human health. However, they share the opinion that inappropriate management of solid waste vitiates the environment and is a potential carrier of many diseases. Less than half of my sample size (46 percent) only correctly stated the afore-mentioned three diseases, of which solid waste is a carrier. The name of the diseases were either unknown or vaguely known to the remaining respondents. The reasons for ignoring the potential risk

of solid waste borne diseases to human health were explained by Nasreen Kibria, one of my respondents from *Baddanagar* (in Dhaka), whose statement was representative in nature and is mentioned here:

“A large section of the population of Bangladesh lives below the poverty line. Most of them pass through their days with pangs of hunger. Therefore, fulfilling the demand for food is the first thing that comes to their mind. Moreover, the lack of appropriate formal and informal training or education makes people largely unaware about health and hygiene. All these practicalities lead people to ignore the risk of the diseases caused by solid waste.”

As to the general opinion on SWM, most of my respondents considered solid waste as one of the major problems of their locality. Poor quality conservancy services provided by the city corporations mostly failed to satisfy them although the department utilises a great deal of the city government’s economic resources (for details see chapter 4). Consequently, some of them proposed launching GO-NGO/CBO partnerships for a sustainable delivery of conservancy services. Others suggested contracting out its operation to the interested private concerns. Furthermore, it seems that various interests influenced my respondents to offer the aforesaid two sets of suggestions for the operation of the conservancy department. In detail, these were: (i) to control the misuse of public resources, (ii) to ensure a transparent and accountable service delivery system, and (iii) to elevate community capacity to solve their problems by employing local knowledge.

In sum, urban citizens generally consider solid waste as a major problem of their locality and emphasise the importance of its sustainable management either through building public-private partnerships or privatising the delivery of conservancy services by means of contracting out its operation.

I shall now describe the relationship between civic engagement and the growth of SWM initiatives on the basis of empirical information.

8.3. Civic engagement and the growth of SWM initiatives

In order to understand the relationship existing between civic involvement and the growth and operation of community-based SWM initiatives it is useful to analyse the patterns of discourse that the actors share during their course of interaction on various occasions. For this purpose the data and observations gathered during the field study are presented here to understand the situation in my study areas Chittagong and Dhaka.

8.3.1. Civic engagement and SWM initiatives in Chittagong

8.3.1.1. *Sananda* area: Field reports indicate that the residents of the *Sananda* area usually get together on a number of social and religious events. Though it is difficult in Bangladesh to draw a boundary line between social and religious functions as these are deeply anchored in almost the same type of social norms and tradition. In the realm of such social settings, the people of *Sananda* exercise many social and religious functions in their everyday life such as marriage, *urs* (an annual fair in honour of a holy man or saint), *mejban* (communal feeding), birthday parties, *Sunnat-E-Khatna*³⁶ (circumcision but locally called *mosolmani*) of boys, and nose and ears piercing of girls.

At the time of my fieldwork a marriage took place in the *Sananda* area, of which reference has been made in the previous chapter. During this ceremony the neighbours of Nur Muhammad, the father of the bride, not only helped him to organise the programme but also donated gifts to the bride and the bridegroom as a gesture of their goodwill. The bride's family distributed invitation letters to both *bariwalas* and *varatiyas* and people of both groups, as reported, joined the programme. It was further reported by some of my respondents that this occasion not only gave the inhabitants of *Sananda* but also to the people of its vicinity the opportunity to meet and exchange greetings with each other.

³⁶ According to the teaching of *Sunnah* (the sayings and the general conduct of the Prophet of Islam, also known as "the traditions") the Muslims of Bangladesh carry out *Sunnat-E-Khatna/mosolmani* (circumcision) of their baby boys normally when they between 6-9 years of age. To make the event remarkable in ones life various social functions are organised by the respective family where friends, colleagues, mates, and kith and kin are invited to join.

Such contact, it is believed, reinforces social relations and strengthens social ties. In this context a *varatiya*, Dr. U. Chaw Shwe, explains his view through the following words:

“Almost all house owners of the *Sananda* area do not pay appropriate respect and attention to their respective tenants. They consider themselves as ‘boss’ and treat the tenants as ‘subordinate’. Therefore, the inter-personal relationship existing between the two was not based on mutual trust and respect. But during the marriage ceremony of Nur Muhammad’s daughter we noticed an improved pattern of behaviour (with us, i.e. the tenants) on the part of some house owners who extended their wholehearted cooperation to make the ceremony a success. Some tenants praised their activities and this event made both parties interested to improve their relation with each other. Henceforth, the frequency of communication between them was substantially increased, which helped us enormously to solve some common problems of the area through collective efforts such as the issue of SWM.”

The benefit of joining such civic occasions were reiterated by Khasru Meah, the Treasurer of the *Sananda* Housing Society while he was talking to me at his residence during my field study. He reported that in practice participation in social occasions countervails the vices of miscommunication and provides the opportunity to establish personal contact which yields solid social relationships among the community members in question. Joining a social gathering in his locality, he availed the opportunity of talking with two of his neighbours who were non-supportive to their initiative and succeeded to motivate them to pay the monthly service charge for garbage collection and security. Based on his personal experience, the following story gives a glimpse into how Khasru Meah succeeded to win the support of his neighbours for their organisation.

Box 8.1: Strengthening community cooperation through civic involvement

Abdul Gani of Badsha Meah Lane (close to *Sananda*) organised a party to celebrate the *mosolmani* (circumcision) of his elder son Tayef. He invited some of his friends, relatives, and neighbours to attend the party. As a friend of Gani, Khasru attended the party and two relatives of the former from the *Sananda* residential area also joined the programme. After introducing one another, however, the invitees started gossiping on society and politics of Bangladesh. They covered quite a variety of issues and the problem of waste management received due attention from the discussants. Moreover, they sharply criticised the poorly organised delivery of the conservancy services provided by the CCC. On the other hand, some of the participants appreciated the growth of community-based SWM initiatives across the urban centres in Chittagong to respond to the need and demand of the citizens. As a consequence, performance of the *Sananda* welfare association in providing conservancy and security services was also discussed but earned criticism from some participants. They grilled Khasru Meah on the allegation of misappropriated funds by the association leaders.

The Treasurer of the welfare association, Khasru Meah, patiently responded to all pejorative allegations brought against the association and convincingly gave proof through facts and [rough] figures of their progress in administering the project. He apologised to all concerned if any of their activities had displeased them, inadvertently though, and appealed to them to join the association for the interest of the development of the locality. The position adopted by him in this regard, however, apparently satisfied many including those two who had come from *Sananda*. Consequently, they agreed to support the initiative through paying their contribution (service charge) regularly.

Source: Fieldwork

Referring to the case caged in the box above, clearly demonstrates that different opinions were at currency as to the objective of the operation of the organisation. To some critics, it was merely a means to earn financial benefit, an accusation rejected outright by the organisers. They asserted that their basic motivation was the concern for the development of the locality. However, participation in a social gathering gave both parties the chance to listen to each other which not only reduces the risk of misunderstanding, but also *a priori* creates solidarity—one of the pre-conditions to make collective action possible.

Other forms of social gathering that generate a “we” feeling among the people are: *urs* and *mejban*, both of which were organised in *Sananda* to commemorate various occasions. My respondents told me that the Muslim devotees of the locality collectively organise *urs* only during the celebration of the *Miladunnabi* (birthday of the great

prophet). On the basis of his past experience, Md. Alamgir told me the following in this regard:

“Almost every year we celebrate *Miladunnabi* here with honour and enthusiasm. Last year’s (2002) celebration was the largest in the near past where several cattle were slaughtered and a special meal *khichuri* (medley of rice, meat, and legumes) was prepared not only to feed the inhabitants of *Sananda* but also a large number of poor living in the surroundings of the area. To administer the programme, voluntary money contributions were collected from the inhabitants. Almost everyone of this area attended the function irrespective of their religion identity. To me, this is an opportunity to meet and establish contact with a huge number of people. If the relationship is maintained, this event can serve as the best way to create social networks among the people of *Sananda* and its neighbouring areas.”

Other occasions such as *mejban*, on the other hand, are individual or family sponsored programmes where community members normally participate on invitation. Some of my respondents came to be part of such a *mejban* just before I began my fieldwork in *Sananda* (October 2002) which was organised by Nasir Uddin, the president of the association in his village home at *Fatikchhari* (in Chittagong) to commemorate his father’s death anniversary. Some of the participants who talked with me about this issue later on left the impression that this programme constituted a further chance to them to repair their inter-personal relationship towards the direction of a “we” feeling.

Turning to the other tools, apart from the above, which were proxies either to create or to improve the existing level of civic engagement such as membership in civic organisations, participation in civic activities, and political engagement, more or less, found present in *Sananda* area.

Earlier on, section 7.2 of chapter 7 indicated the state of involvement by the community members in several organisations. But neither a club nor even a common place of meeting was observed in the area where people could get together and exchange their views. Due to the lack of such a forum, the residence of Nasir Uddin (president of the association) was used as a ‘manor house’ to provide a meeting place for people in need of exchanging views and information. Although these activities inflicted particular disadvantages on his private life, his preference remained unchanged to invite people to

his backyard to serve the interest of the community. According to the assessment of some of my respondents, this made him a trusted and respectable person in the area.

Moreover, the survey data shows that almost all of my sample households received a newspaper on a regular basis. Most of my respondents (75 percent) stated that they exchange views and ideas with their fellow neighbours on published news items whenever possible.

In addition, the survey data further revealed that almost all members of my sample households watch television (TV) regularly. Among the most popular programmes were the *Bangla Sangbad* (the Bengali news) and entertainment programmes such as *natok* (drama/plays) and cinema. My observation supports the above information derived from the survey data and further shows that mostly women were enthusiastic about sharing information with one another about the programmes (mainly drama, Hindi cinema and serials) televised through several domestic and international channels. By exercising these habits, the female members get the chance to increase the strength of their network of social capital that apparently increases the possibility civic involvement.

As to the political involvement, a large section of my respondents (69 percent) failed to exercise their voting right to elect a ward commissioner for the *Bagmoniram* ward (my study areas *Sananda* and *Masjid Gali* are geographically located in this ward) during the CCC elections³⁷ held in 2000. Summarising the comments that they stated as the reasons for not going to the polling station were:

- Decision to boycott elections under the AL regime by all major political parties;
- Lack of safety and security;
- Lack of any suitable candidate to be elected as ward commissioner.

Talking to a representative cross section of my respondents about the role of community leaders during the election, I gained the opinion that they disapproved of the paternalistic

³⁷ The Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation was elected uncontestedly in the election of 2000.

attitude of advising people to choose someone of their choice; rather they favoured to leave the decision to the voters to exercise their rights freely.

The voters of the *Sananda* area, on the other hand, reluctantly exercised their voting rights in the last two parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2001. The Data and information gathered on this issue after talking to my respondents suggests that community leaders were divided on their political loyalty, and some of them tried to win the support of the inhabitants to enlarge the radius of their power base in the locality. This attempt was partly met by anger of who felt that the leaders' attitude usurped their rights. But others, however, followed the footsteps of their patrons to sustain their symbiotic relationship.

Reviewing the above, the syndrome observed here paints a complex scenario. In the local city corporation's election the inhabitants voted for their candidates freely despite some local leaders' attempts to influence the choice of the voters in order to be selected MP. The reasons for such behaviour on behalf of the leaders remained largely untraced as the respondents were hesitant to talk about the issue. However, this cleavage impedes the consolidation of democracy in Bangladesh.

To sum up, it is understood that the involvement in various civic programmes such as *urs*, *mejban*, *miladunnabi*, and e-entertainments increases the frequency of face-to-face contact among the inhabitants that develop their social relations. Therefore, participation in these activities contributes to the strengthening of social networks and the creation of trustworthy relationships among the people which apparently facilitate the production of social capital—one of the most essential elements to make collective action feasible. The growth and operation of the community-based SWM initiative in *Sananda* area is considered, *inter alia*, an outcome of civic engagement.

8.3.1.2. Halishore K& L block: Similar to *Sananda*, the dwellers of *Halishore* K & L block organised numerous gatherings on the occasions such as *urs*, *mejban*, annual sport events, picnics, birthday parties, marriages, and death anniversaries.

In accordance with the religious culture of Chittagong, the residents of this area also perform *urs* chiefly at the time of *miladunnabi*. On the basis of their experience, some of my respondents report that *urs* takes place almost every year through financial contributions from both [Muslim] *bariwala* and *varatiya*. The amount of contribution varies from person to person depending on one's income, but I was told by some house owners that the major portion of the expenditures incurred in these events were borne by them. This attitude of the house owners, however, yields suspicion about their objectivity. Some of my key respondents believed that the willingness of the house owners to pay relatively high amounts of money was not only to achieve spiritual *rahmat* (mercy) but also to increase their power over the tenants and other interest groups in the area. Moreover, it was not quite clear from my in-depth discussions with some respondents (from the tenants group) whether they are entrusted with any kind of responsibility during organisation of the *urs*. Analysing the responses I received, I realised that the house owners mostly undermine the capacity of the tenants, and therefore leave little room for them to participate in this event. In this regard my respondents referred to many instances where house owners humiliated the tenants through their behaviour and activities. Among the instances, A.T.M. Salahuddin Ahmed, a man who has been living in this area for a decade, reported his experience of last (2003) *miladunnabi* while I was with him for an interview:

“Like previous years, the organisation of *miladunnabi* in *Halishore* K & L block in this year (2003) was enabled by contributions of both house owners and tenants. As in the past, the house owners were reluctant to report to the tenants about their progress in work or to seek their advice as to how the programme could be organised more efficiently. However, several cattle were slaughtered for this purpose and ‘dal-bhat’³⁸ was prepared and served to the invitees. Unfortunately, it was observed that the house owners (with their friends/relatives) jointly took their meal in a separate arrangement to which the commons were denied access. It was also alleged that special food was served to them. These activities went beyond gentility and also the teaching of Islam.”

Reviewing the above, it is understood that the relationship prevailing between the house owners and the tenants is somewhat ambiguous. During the initial stage, a convergence of interest could be observed in terms of the organisation of the *urs* but subsequently both

³⁸The literal meaning of the term ‘dal-bhat’ is legumes and rice but commonly used as synonym for cheap food.

responded differently. The mistreatment of the former led to largely antagonistic attitudes of the latter to the programme. This situation diminishes the quality of face-to-face contact among the members and is also not conducive to reaping the benefit of civic involvement.

Unlike *Sananda*, this area has a common place (open field) located within the compound of the housing estate. A high school (till X grade) is situated in the west corner of the field and the students of the school as well as the children of the locality play here. Several sports competitions were organised here under the sponsorship of local leaders. The interest that induced them to organise these competitions has been discussed in the previous chapters. Despite the dearth of land, it was particularly interesting to enquire into the matter to understand the reasons that influenced the house owners to leave some space for common use. In this connection I interviewed both the President and the General Secretary of the association separately and the basic tenets of their answers are summarised below:

“We unanimously agreed to keep some plots vacant for making a field for the purpose of using it as a common place of gathering and also as a ‘sports ground’ for our future generation. It is a fact that the economic value of this place is quite high if it was sold for the construction of a multi-storied building. But we decided against this option because of the social value of the land, which is more precious to us than anything else. Consequently, the dwellers gather here on occasions and some of them take the taste of fresh air at the time of their morning/evening walk. Our motive is to keep the area clean and environmentally healthy. As a result, we introduced the garbage collection system to uphold our feeling for the area and its people.”

My field observation primarily supports the above statements given by the President and the General Secretary of the association about their preference to keep a common place for local use. Forgoing the opportunity to earn a considerable amount of cash by selling off the estate [now converted to field], they performed a commendable task for the overall development of the locality. The members of the community praised the attitude of the leaders and their material sacrifice.

Apart from the above, the survey data illustrates that almost all of my sample households subscribe daily newspapers. I observed that the leaders of my sample households, mostly men, first took the opportunity to go through the paper early in the morning before they

began their daily business. Afterwards, it exchanged hands on the basis of one's status in the *paribar* (family). The housewives, however, took their turn when they could spare some time from their busy schedule to read it. Moreover, I further observed that intra-household members regularly share ideas and information on lead news items whereas discussion between the households rarely took place at all.

It can further be revealed from the survey data and my observations that almost all of my sample households (98 percent) own a colour TV and watch programmes regularly. They not only view the programmes broadcasted by BTV but also were highly interested in entertaining events (e.g. drama, cinema, music). It was a common feature of the area that members intra and inter households frequently turned to each other to critically review their viewed programmes. Mostly women engaged in this procedure but men were not totally excluded from the scheme. This particular situation, therefore, keeps them in close contact with each other which, in turn, creates and/or promotes the dynamism in their social relations.

Analysing the field data and extracting the essence of my in-depth interviews with some respondents, it can be summarised that the inhabitants of *Halishore K & L* block employed their constitutional rights to political involvement in two ways: (i) to participate in *michil* (processions) in support of a candidate backed by a particular political party and (ii) to vote for a candidate. During the last election in the CCC (held in 2000), the contesting candidates were largely careful to organise processions as they feared the harassment of the supporters of the political oppositions who boycotted the election in the plea of a lack of neutrality of the AL regime and who also demanded to the appointed government to carry out all elections under the supervision of a non-partisan interim Caretaker Government, the way parliamentary elections in Bangladesh are held since 1991. In the midst of this sensitive situation the inhabitants of my study area I talked with refrained both from joining the processions and from voting for the candidates, which explains the low voter turnout rate (15-20 percent).

On the other hand, the dwellers of *Halishore K & L* block did exercise their voting rights during the parliamentary elections of 2001 without any remarkable internal and outside interference. All major political parties of the country participated in the election which caused zeal and enthusiasm among their supporters nationwide. This wave of contentment also reached *Halishore*. Therefore, a large section of the community joined the procession to support their candidates and also voted for them accordingly. The role of the local organisation was particularly significant here as they publicised the following slogans (translated here in English from Bengali) before the election to make the voters aware of their rights and duties: ‘vote is your birth right’, ‘do not elect a corrupt candidate’, ‘cast your vote according to your choice’, and ‘do not go for a proxy vote’.

To sum up, it seems that civic engagement is a useful instrument to advance community action. It is evident that some of its factors contribute to the shaping of social relations in order to pursue a common good such as the formation of community-based SWM initiatives. Some factors, however, yield weaknesses to streamline the collective efforts for advancing development schemes in the locality.

8.3.2. Civic engagement and SWM initiatives in Dhaka

8.3.2.1. *Baddanagar*: Notwithstanding the report of the field survey, my observations confirm that the people of *Baddanagar*, according to the culture of the area, collectively enjoy the traditional festivals such as *Eid* (a Muslim religious festival), marriages, and annual picnics etc which support cementing their inter-personal relationship. During the last few years, as several of my respondents report, a *Baishakhi mela* (a festival which takes place during the first month [i.e. *Baishakh*] of the Bengali new year) was organised in the area by collective efforts of the dwellers in which many people across the city participate. In order to understand whether or not such occasions promote joint community action I talked with some of my respondents. The statement of Rafiqul Amin was representative in character and is therefore presented below:

“...When joining social gatherings one gets the opportunity to talk and mix with one’s neighbours from a close proximity to exchange knowledge and ideas to solve neighbourhood problems.

Gathering in an *Eid-ul-Fitr* (a Muslim festival after the completion of *Ramadan*) reunion, some years ago, the inhabitants of the area decided that everybody would be solely responsible to take care his/her own garbage produced during the celebration of *Eid-ul-Azha* (another Muslim festival where cattle are sacrificed for the satisfaction of the Almighty Allah). It was also suggested in the gathering that the households would collect and dispose the bones and remains of their cattle to ease the task of the municipality sweepers. Since then the vast quantity of cattle waste from this religious festival was managed through this agreed localised manner. The sweepers of the municipality and volunteers of some NGOs and other organisations like Rover Scouts, BNCC (Bangladesh National Cadet Core) took a special measure to clean the area after the waste was driven off for its final disposal.”

The above statement illustrates that social organisations possess the capacity to govern people to bring them together under their roof to lead community activities for the purpose of common goods.

Unlike Chittagong, *urs* and *mejban* were not used as popular forms of social gathering in this area. But the dynamism in the social relationships among the dwellers rendered possible the participation in social activities such as the *Eid* congregation, birthday parties, marriages, and funerals. During such events people generally visit each other not necessarily on formal invitation but exchange greetings and bestow a gift. I myself witnessed during a marriage ceremony in *Baddanagar* during my fieldwork that the invitees of the bride’s side were somehow connected with one another. I further observed that they mostly took their time to deal with their issues of interest; particularly business and politics received a lot of attention whereas local development issues were neglected. But it is a fact that the participants of such gatherings get the opportunity either to establish or to renew their social relations which helps to improve the quality of social contacts.

Looking around the geographical boundaries of *Baddanagar*, I observed a striking lack of free spaces (except a small space in front of the ward commissioner’s office) in the area to be used either as a playground or as a meeting place for the commons. The absence of such physical facilities, as observed, sparks tension among the inhabitants as it affects their life and leisure. As a consequence, some parents told me with dismay that they were anxious about the future of their offspring as they noticed the tendency of the latter to choose their playmates from the alleged unruly boys who were said to be linked with the mischief done by the sweeper’s colony - the crime den of *Hazaribug*.

The need of the open space was, however, partly compensated by the *Ganoktoli Social Welfare Samity*³⁹ as they allowed people to use their office room as an assembly place on social occasions. This place was also used for indoor games such as playing cards, chess. The *samity* also provides free medical services to the local people such as vaccinations against poliomyelitis and health check-ups.

The survey data shows that almost all my sample households in *Baddanagar* read a daily newspaper. A large section of the respondents (68 percent) stated that they first discuss the published news items with the members of their family and then with their colleagues and neighbours - depending on the public importance of it. The only exception were the readers who read a newspaper under the auspices of the *Ganoktoli Social Welfare Samity* office where they spent a considerable time discussing and challenging each other on the printed issues.

In regard to the e-entertainments, the survey data and my observations both show that all of the sample households own a TV and regularly watch various popular programmes. Regardless of gender, none of my respondents were eager to watch the programmes that develop their life related skills as they regarded watching TV as part of their spare time only. Again, a limited number of my respondents (46 percent), mostly female, was found interested to share their knowledge with their friends, mates, and neighbours while the rest preferred to be attached only with their adult in-house mates.

The elections of the Mayor and the Ward Commissioners of DCC were held in 2002. In the midst of the political vandalism orchestrated by the AL to foil the election, the BNP and its alliance-backed candidates contested these attempts and swept the victory. Contrary to this, several respondents informed me that they voted for the present ward commissioner of *Baddanagar* Haji Md. Mojibur Rahman alias Moju commissioner irrespective of any individual political ideology for the following reasons:

- Being an honest man with amiable disposition

³⁹ The organisation that initiated a garbage collection system in *Baddanagar*.

- Possessing a strong sense of belongingness to the locality
- Leadership quality
- Previous experience (as ward commissioner)
- Family background
- A good financial position

It was further reported that both the *panchayat* and local political leaders did not try to influence the voters to choose their favoured candidate as ward commissioner. However, during the mayoral election BNP supporters not only carried out a door-to-door campaign in favour of their [Mayor] candidate Sadek Hossain Khoka but also urged them to say ‘no’ to opposition politics by voting their candidate (Khoka) in power. In a similar egocentric move, the AL boycotted the election, and its activists tried to persuade voters to abstain from voting in order to diminish the power base of the BNP regime. Eventually, Khoka was elected Mayor as the other candidates were largely unknown to the public.

In the parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2001, the people of the Dhaka 8 constituency (where my study sites *Baddanagar* and *Mansehwar lane* are located) alternatively elected Haji Md. Salim (of the AL) and Nasiruddin Pintu (of the BNP) as MP for the respective periods. Prior to the 1996 parliamentary elections, Haji Salim was a BNP leader and aspired to be nominated as candidate for the election by the party. When the decision went against him, he quitted BNP in protest and joined the AL. He subsequently succeeded in obtaining a nomination and went on to win the election by defeating the BNP candidate. In the parliamentary elections of 2001, Nasiruddin Pintu was nominated by the BNP while the AL continued its support to Haji Salim. In this election, however, the former swept the victory, defeating the latter by a landslide.

The anecdote on the afore-mentioned two politicians that I gathered after talking with some of my respondents furthermore hints at their alleged involvement with unlawful activities. For instance, the ruling BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Pintu was sent to jail for several weeks (in 2003) for his alleged connection with hooliganism in the area. Keeping

this background information in mind I asked my respondents about the reasons to elect such persons as their leader to represent them in the national assembly. Many responses have been taped to this effect and among them the following statement of Sheikh Abdul Malek, to my consideration, touched the heart of the problem and is thus appended below:

“Most of the local people of this area and the people of *old* Dhaka in general take into account various criterions to vote for a candidate, i.e. the location of the candidate’s ancestral homestead. A candidate with an *old* Dhaka background receives support and co-operation from them. Only whenever there are many candidates with similar identities the support shifts on the basis of one’s political loyalty. In many cases the personal and human qualities of the candidates are undervalued. Therefore, it is not that surprising if a hoodlum is elected as the leader of the area on the basis of popular vote.”

Focussing on the above description it is understood that the voters were generally [psychologically] influenced by their patrons and peers ‘to vote for a candidate of their choice’. Against the background of these circumstances, the governmental claim of institutionalising free and fair elections in the country has to be seriously questioned.

To sum up, the social construction of civic engagement in *Baddanagar* shows several strengths and weaknesses. The community cohesiveness gains momentum through interaction of the citizens on social occasions which develops network relations and creates trustworthiness. But it is unclear from the empirical evidence documented earlier whether and to which extent the role of newspaper readership, electoral behaviour, and entertainments shapes human activities with the purpose of advancing collective action for the holistic development of the society. In spite of the positive impact of some factors of civic engagement to promote joint action, its role remains somewhat underexplored in the context of the growth of SWM initiatives in *Baddanagar*.

8.3.2.2. Adarshanagar: As the survey data demonstrates, the vast majority of my respondents (82 percent) collectively enjoys only a limited number of social occasions such as *Eid*, marriage ceremonies etc. Since most of the inhabitants of this area were petty traders, their financial position somewhat incapacitated them to organise parties to

celebrate birthdays, circumcisions, picnics, and *urs*, which were relatively common in the other study sites described earlier.

My personal observation shows that this area also lacks an open space to use as a playground as well as a place for the common citizens to gather. However, some vacant space (approximately 250 m²) was found within the vicinity that was said to be reserved as a graveyard of the locality. Due to the scarcity of any playground in the area, several children were found playing in this designated graveyard which worried their parents. A general conviction prevailed in the area that spiritual malediction awaits those who trample down a sacred place. It is a fact that the Muslims treat graveyards as one of their holy places. As observed, the citizens of *Adarshanagar* were strong followers of this religious belief. On the contrary to this, Molla Sohrab Hossain, the President of the *Adarshanagar Plot Owners' Association* informed me during the interview with him that some local *mastans* (gangsters) attempted to grab the land (graveyard) but failed to materialise their attempt in the face of citizen resistance.

My respondents reported that the need of a general place of meeting was mitigated in two ad-hoc ways: (i) emergency sittings took place in the house of the association's President and (ii) monthly general meetings were organised in front of the local mosque where all [male] members participated to carry out business transactions. On the basis of my interview with some respondents it is understood that the second category meeting was the appropriate forum for its general members to take part in discussions on community development issues, including SWM. Recapitulating a past meeting, local resident Khandakar Motinur Reza informed me the following:

‘...On that meeting people raised many issues of their interest to assess the overall situation of the area. Issues such as the improvement of the sewerage system, the collection of garbage from the households, and the law and order situation of the area were discussed. The participants offered many suggestions to handle these problems. After an extensive discussion, the meeting decided to begin their work with the collection of garbage from the households on a cost-recovery basis.’

The above interviewee (Reza) went on saying that the people of the locality availed the opportunity to make face-to-face contact on private and community issues in such

meetings which brought them closer to each other. My observations support the above view but further add that such personal contact improves their social relations and also facilitates widening the horizon of their network base. Consequently, the amount of social capital produced through the human interaction advances the formation of community-based SWM initiatives.

The newspaper readership in *Adarshanagar* is much lower (30 percent) compared to the other study areas. Very few people subscribed a newspaper privately for the purpose of reading it and the rest either read it in their work place or gave a quick look at it during their *adda* (gossip) in the local tea stalls. The newspaper readers with whom I had a talk informed me that they shared the précis of any important news first with their family members and then the neighbours depending on the nature of the issue. It was further observed that almost all women of the area did not read newspapers due to their engagement in household affairs. However, the same managed to find spare time to enjoy trivial TV programmes (e.g. Hindi/Bengali cinema, drama, film's songs) either on their own or with their neighbours.

The survey data further shows that quite a large number of my respondents (86 percent) cast their vote in the last DCC elections held in 2002. As reported, Molla Shorab Hossain, the President of the *Adarshanagar Plot Owners' Association* stood as candidate for the post of ward commissioner in this election but failed to win. According to the statements of some inhabitants, his candidature largely influenced them to support him throughout the election. For the neighbours, this was not only a matter of moral obligation but rather a chance to acknowledge his service and cooperation to acquire the plots in the area referred to the last chapter. Talking to several people in the area, I understood that the latter served as 'vote bank' to the former (Hossain) for the purpose of receiving his support as and when required.

Moreover, my respondents also cast their vote in the parliamentary elections of 2001 to elect their MP. Several of them clearly indicated that they voted in favour of the candidate recommended by the President of their association (Molla Sohrab Hossain) as

he promised to ensure a better life for them by solving the major problems of the area if the candidate of his choice was voted. Despite their electoral support, the AL backed candidate of Hossain's choice failed to succeed.

To sum up, a paradoxical situation prevails as to the benefit reaped of the factors of civic engagement to produce community cooperation which supposedly steers the activities of common interest, including garbage collection. Some factors yielded trustworthiness and social networks among the inhabitants to put forward the common good while the role of the other factors remain opaque.

8.4. Civic engagement and non-formation of SWM initiatives

This section attempts to explore the reasons for the non-formation of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my research locations through the lenses of the civic engagement perspective. I therefore undertake to explain the phenomena on the basis of my field observations and the survey data gathered from four study sites namely *Masjid Gali* and *Shantibug* in Chittagong and *Maneshwar* (first) lane and *Baunia Badh* in Dhaka.

8.4.1. Non-formation of SWM initiatives: the cases of Chittagong

8.4.1.1. *Masjid Gali*: The field reports illustrate that the residents of this area do not frequently get together at social and religious events. A considerable number of respondents indicated their preference to go to their paternal (or in-laws) home during the *Eid* vacation as this occasion reunited them with the rest of their family members and kith and kin. A respondent explained the importance of the issue through the following words, "... visiting the relatives at least once (or twice) a year not only rekindles our mutual relationship but also tightly binds us with our 'root' identity." Besides, visiting some *paribars* who stayed in the area during the *Eid-ul-Fitr* of 2002 I got the impression that a large section of the adult [male] members stayed within their own houses and seldom greeted their neighbours. Most of them were found enjoying Hindi movies and special TV programmes telecasted on the occasion of *Eid*. Responding to my query about not

visiting their neighbours some of them informed me that they left the task for the next day (but never did) and the others simply refused to do so on the grounds of a lack of familiarity. But some women visited their neighbours and exchanged food and greetings.

As in the *Sananda* area, this area was also characterised by a lack of open space and of a club. But as the situation presented above made clear, people do not feel the need of a club for gathering purposes, as the tendency of the majority of residents was to avoid to take part in social events. Besides, almost all of my respondents felt a serious need of a playground (open space) in the area for their children, but no effort was observed in this regard.

The survey data shows that the level of newspaper readership in the sample households was very high. My respondents stated that they rarely discuss the published news items with their neighbours as they do with family members and friends.

It was also reported that almost all of my surveyed households own a TV and regularly watch various programmes, preferably news, movies, and entertaining episodes. But my observations suggest that knowledge and information on the viewed programmes was shared somewhat irregularly among the neighbouring households.

A large section of my respondents (78 percent) of *Masjid Gali* were found reluctant to participate in political activities of the locality. They also did not attend any processions in favour of any particular candidate during the CCC elections (of 2000) and also did not take the risk to go to the polling station to exercise their voting right to elect the commissioner of the *Bagmoniram* ward in the face of the threat posed by the political opposition at the time. In the parliamentary elections of 2001, less than 30 percent of my respondents went to the polling station to elect their MP. The reason that induced the others not to participate in any electoral activities (including voting) which was phrased as ‘we are *vharatiya* not *bariwala* or permanent’— indicates the lack of belongingness to the area diminishing their interest to vote to elect the local MP. It was further reported

that due to the lack of identical leadership in the area the dwellers instantly made their political decisions.

To sum up, the picture portrayed above clearly demonstrates the weakness of the factors of civic engagement to create face-to-face contact and trustworthy relationships among the inhabitants of *Masjid Gali*. Therefore, the situation reduces the chances of creating social capital. Moreover, the lack of it hinders the advancement of collective activities for the development of the area. As a result, community-based initiatives for SWM could not be formed here.

8.4.1.2. *Shantibug*: It has been mentioned in the previous chapters that the people of *Shantibug* were divided in accordance with their political identity. It was observed that the citizens of the locality perform various social and religious celebrations like *urs* and *mejban* where participation was limited to their ‘own group’. Even at events such as the *Eid* congregation, the residents offered their prayers in two different mosques (i.e. *Baitul Azam Jame Mosque* and *Shantibug Jame Mosque*) which symbolises the nature of conflict and feud embedded in the inter-personal relationships among the residents. As a result, exchange of food and greetings during the *Eid* days was limited only within the coterie of the respective groups.

Eventually, some low-lying land was found in the area which could have been converted to a playground or a community place increasing the aesthetic beauty of the locality. But no initiative was taken to this effect during my fieldwork.

The survey data revealed that almost all sample households regularly received a newspaper. It was also observed that the leader [male] of the households read the paper first and was then handed to the other members of the *paribar*. The adult members of a *paribar*, as reported, limited their discussion to the leading news, which was rarely shared between the different households.

During my fieldwork in the area TV was found to be a common instrument for entertainment. Without exception, the dwellers of *Shantibug* also enjoyed watching trivial programmes during their free time. In most households, [TV] programmes were viewed en bloc but seldom the views (on viewed programmes) were shared with their neighbours. Maksuda Akhter, one of my respondents, succinctly commented on the reasons in the following words:

“...since interpersonal relationships are maintained solely on the basis of one’s political identity and people hardly talk with one another outside their ‘group’, it is invariably an over expectation that they will share ideas and exchange information about their day-to-day activities.”

Regarding involvement in political activities, the previous chapters documented how party politics upset the natural human relationships in *Shantibug*. My respondents reported that in the beginning of the CCC’s election people enthusiastically joined various activities but some of them became sceptical when the major oppositional political parties boycotted the election and urged the general public to abstain from voting. In spite of this the AL back candidate won the election. Particular caricatures, as reported, occurred during the parliamentary election of 2001. One group supported the BNP-led four party alliance, who was successful eventually in the elections, while the others formed a coalition with the AL politics.

These facts indicate that political rivalry in the area drives out many cooperation-enhancing qualities, e.g. face-to-face contact, participation on social occasions. Thus social qualities such as trustworthiness and networks among the fellow neighbours are not developed, which in turn destroys the forces of mobilising joint action for pursuing common goods. It is therefore understood that the non-formation of SWM initiatives in *Shantibug* can be ascribed to the lack of collective action of the dwellers.

8.4.2. Non-formation of SWM initiatives: the cases of Dhaka

8.4.2.1. *Maneshwar (first) lane*: Like *Baddanagar*, the people of *Maneshwar* lane enjoy all sorts of social, cultural, and religious festivals. In addition to *Baishakhi mela*, the traders of this area organise another programme popularly known as *halkhatha* (a festival

on the occasion of the ceremonial opening of a fresh account/ledger book—opened usually on the eve of Bengali new year) where the [male] adults join and also clear their dues of the previous year(s). As a token of gratitude to the visitors, the traders entertain them with sweets, tea, *pan* (betel-leaf), and cigarettes to be able to enjoy the support of their clients during the years to come. Such occasions increase the frequency of face-to-face contact among the people concerned and develop their networks and social relations.

During the study of the area, I observed the existence of a playground and also a club in the area. During my fieldwork, a large number of children as well as the youths were found playing football there. Some parents categorically opined that the engagement of their children in sports (during their leisure time) saved them from mixing with the alleged bad elements of the locality.

On the other hand, the activities of the club, i.e. the *Fairplay Boys Club* have been briefly mentioned in sub-section 7.3.2 of chapter 7. It was also observed that the club was involved in providing health services to its members and their family in cooperation with BRAC, a local NGO.

The survey data reveals that almost 80 percent of my respondents subscribed a daily newspaper. The members of a household read the paper whenever they had the opportunity and discussed the issues of importance among themselves. According to my observation, the preference of the respondents to share the gist of the news with their neighbours, friends, and colleagues was conditioned by the circumstances. However, it was further noticed that the *Fairplay Boys Club* subscribes a number of newspapers and some of my respondents read papers there and exchanged views with their fellow readers in the club premises.

Furthermore, both the survey data and my field observations show that a large number of my respondents (85 percent) view TV programmes regularly and share information not only among the family members but also with their close neighbours. This habit not only increases the frequency of face-to-face contact but also tied-up their social relations.

A reasonable portion of my respondents (72 percent), casted their votes for the elections of the Mayor of the DCC and the Ward Commissioner for their respective ward (*Hazaribug*). Similarly to *Baddanagar*, the people of *Maneshwar* lane voted for Moju commissioner irrespective of their political orientation to re-elect him as ward commissioner. Responding to my question, Sohel Shikder and Safiquel Alam, the President and the General Secretary of the *Fairplay Boys Club* respectively enumerated some qualities of the Moju commissioner that were, by and large, similar to those mentioned in sub-section 8.3.2.1 of this chapter, which apparently influenced the voters to re-elect him as the commissioner.

In the parliamentary elections of 2001, nearly 57 percent of my respondents exercised their voting rights to elect their MP. In the midst of the open canvassing by some *panchayat* leaders as well as the local politicians in favour of their respective candidates, as reported, some dwellers went in line with their local patrons, while the others done the job according to their own preference. Nasiruddin Pintu, the BNP-led four party alliance candidate, made several election pledges to solve such problems of the locality like water logging, sewerage, streetlight, and garbage. In spite of his electoral success defeating the AL candidate, none of the above pledges were fulfilled. Even the operation of the SWM initiatives which had been forcibly shut down before the parliamentary elections of 2001 (case reference made in chapters 5 and 7) could not be reinstalled due to a lack of consent of the local political guru.

In sum, the situation prevailing in the area facilitates the production of a sufficient amount of social capital to exercise joint action such as the formation of SWM initiatives in the area. However, but the ongoing political rivalry between the different parties tended to foil this process.

8.4.2.2. *Baunia Badh*: It was reported by my respondents that the general tendency of most of the inhabitants of *Baunia badh* was to avoid joining social and religious gatherings. The law and order situation of the area, as noted in the earlier chapters, was primarily responsible for the restriction to one's own household. This pattern of

behaviour is explained through the following words: ‘...the level of distrust among the residents became so grave that they only hesitantly embraced each other and rarely visited one another even during the *Eid*,’- Lutfur Rahman told me while he was explaining the overall situation of the area.

Despite the availability of a large open space near and around the *badh* (dam), it was not recommended to the children to play there on the grounds that it would not be safe. It was also observed that quite a significant number of migratory people built some shanty houses near the *badh* to live in. Allegedly these people serve as aides to the gangsters who intermittently rob the area. It was further reported that drugs were commonly sold in the area. Its availability particularly made the young generation addicted to it. However, this area also lacks a club where people can assemble in case of any sorts of emergency. Analysing the nature of relationship prevailing among the dwellers, though, it has to be seriously questioned whether a club would be used at all.

The survey report shows that around 40 percent of my respondents subscribe a newspaper for their home and read it regularly. The other respondents who did not subscribe a newspaper or a magazine either read them in their workplace or in their place of gossiping, preferably in the local canteens. They also stated that the exchange of knowledge and ideas on the lead news items rarely took place with their friends and neighbours; it was a common feature within the family, though.

The survey data further revealed that almost all sample households of *Baunia badh* own a TV and enjoy such programmes as *sangbad* (news), cinema, and music. Due to a lack of familiarity with the neighbours, the people were shy to talk to each other not only about the TV programmes but also about the state of their everyday life.

Analysing the in-depth interviews, it is understood that a reasonable number of the respondents (57 percent) exercised their voting right to elect their ward commissioner, while the same instrument was used far less (36 percent) for the election of the mayor.

The reasons lies behind these are succinctly presented through the following representative statements of Akhter Hossain:

“Unfortunately, almost all contestants for the post of ward commissioner in the 2002 elections were popularly known in the city for their criminal activities. There are fewer criminal records of the elected commissioner (Abdur Rob Nannu) than of his contenders. The immediate past commissioner was highly criminal; therefore, people voted him out. But the irony was that the newly elected commissioner (Nannu) was also arrested during the anti-outlaws campaign ‘Operation Clean Heart’ for his alleged involvement in criminal activities. Moreover, the failure of the former AL backed Mayor Mohammad Hanif to improve the law and order situation in the area during his long eight-year rule (1994-2002) explains the dissatisfaction of the people not only with his regime but also with the mayoral position. Besides, after the BNP and its allied forces assumed power in 2001 they did virtually nothing for the development of the *Baunia badh* area and its people. Therefore, the voter turn out rate in the mayoral election was relatively low.”

In the parliamentary elections of 2001, a considerably large number of my respondents did not cast their votes due to their apparent frustration with party politics which yielded no positive outcome to solve the problems of their area over the years.

To sum up, it can be said that the law and order situation of *Baunia badh* greatly hampers the establishment of face-to-face contact among the inhabitants and of social gatherings, which in turn impedes the production of social capital required to advance joint action such as the formation of community-based SWM initiatives.

8.5. Conclusion

The main purpose of the chapter was to understand the citizen’s perception on the SWM problem of their locality and to see how civic engagement is socially constructed and how it does or does not facilitate the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in my study sites. Throughout the chapter I discussed the issues on the basis of my information gathered by means of field observations, in-depth interviews of my key respondents, and the extraction from the survey data.

Field evidence suggests that urban citizens consider solid waste a major problem of their localities, but particular emphasis is given to its sustainable management either through

building public-private partnerships or privatising the delivery of conservancy services by means of contracting out its operation.

As to the social construction of civic engagement, it is understood that participation in various social and religious occasions promotes face-to-face contact among the inhabitants—which is one of the essential ingredients to shape civic engagement. The other factors that contribute to the construction of civic engagement are: patron-client relationship, solidarity, social cohesion, kinship, local leadership, civic involvement like newspaper readership, e-entertainments, and voting behaviour. Analysing the cases where community-based SWM initiatives exist it becomes clear that the afore-mentioned factors of civic engagement, by and large, broaden the base of social networks and create trustworthiness which in turn produces a sufficient amount of social capital to facilitate the formation and operation of community-based SWM initiatives.

On the other hand, the cases where the community-based SWM initiatives do not exist generally also exhibit a lack of frequent face-to-face contact, a lack of participation on social occasions, a law and order situation, political rivalry, a lack of efficient leadership, and a lack of civic involvement. These factors create a situation which supposedly produces an insufficient amount of social capital to enable the growth and operation of community-based SWM initiatives.

The following chapter presents the discussion of findings on the positive and negative examples of the formation of community-based SWM initiatives and then points out the results of the study.

Chapter 9

Does social capital matter? The experience of community-based solid waste management initiatives in urban Bangladesh

Discussion of findings and results

9.1. Introduction

In chapter 2, I have presented a theoretical framework — a conglomeration of the sources of social capital, i.e. trust, social networks, and the norms of civic engagement — to understand how and to what extent community-based SWM initiatives have emerged in the urban areas of Bangladesh through the influence of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss findings on the formation (and also the absence/non-formation) of community-based SWM initiatives in the context of the theoretical framework and then point out the results of the study.

The chapter at first discusses the operational aspects of the conservancy departments of the DCC and CCC, and then illustrates the rationality of the growth of community-based SWM initiatives. Subsequently, three major sources of social capital, i.e. trust, social networks, and civil engagement used in this thesis, are discussed to analyse their role for the formation of community-based SWM initiatives. Finally, the results of the study will be pointed out.

9.2. The operation of the conservancy department of DCC and CCC and the growth of community-based SWM initiatives

According to the provision of rules to the DCC and CCC, the conservancy departments of these two city corporations are formally authorised to deliver conservancy services to the citizens by means of sweeping roads, streets, and lanes; cleaning drains, removal of night soil and dumping of collected garbage in the final disposal ground. In order to provide these services to the citizens the operational jurisdiction of DCC and CCC is divided into ten and six zones respectively (4.2).

The DCC Ordinance of 1983 and the CCC Ordinance of 1982 are considered basic sources of formal authority. Moreover, some other administrative and financial regulations of these two corporations also serve as sources of authority in order to run the business of the departments.

Formally speaking, authority mobilises when the organisations operate. Rules and regulations here derive largely from position power, backed by resource power (Handy, 1993:134). In other words, various positions in organisational hierarchy determine how the performance of an organisation will be governed. The organisational charts of the conservancy department of both corporations illustrated in chapter 4 (Figures 4.1 and 4.2) demonstrate the authority and power relationship. According to these charts, the position of sweeper is at the bottom of the hierarchy. They report to the supervisors/inspectors before and after the completion of their work. But these supervisors/inspectors do not possess any formal authority to take any punitive action against the sweepers even if they are at fault, except to report it to the higher authority to adopt suitable disciplinary actions according to the service rule of the corporations. It is the CCO who is authorised to serve memos or call for an explanation from the sweepers and other menial staff for their committed offences, without seeking approval from the Secretary/CEO of the corporation. But the authority for taking such action as dismissal, retrenchment, or termination from the service rests with either the CEO or the Mayor, as the case may be.

The above discussion indicates that the ward commissioners do not play any significant role in the operation of the conservancy department. In chapter 4 (4.3.2), I have mentioned that the daily attendance of sweepers is maintained by the respective ward commissioner's secretariat and then forwarded to the conservancy department for payment of wage/salary. Formally, ward commissioners have been given the responsibility to supervise the work of conservancy staff in their respective wards but they seldom practice it. One probable reason is that the commissioners do not have any authority to take any action even against a sweeper, but can lodge a complaint to the authority about an employee or work in general. Despite the fact that the rank and status of ward commissioners are yet to be fixed by the government, though their advice is

taken care by the CCO or any other supervisory staff of the conservancy department, since they are people's representatives.

The achievement of the organisational goal depends on the appropriate distribution of human, economic, and material resources. Data mentioned in sub-sections 4.3.2.1 through 4.3.2.3 reviewed the allocation of human, economic, and material resources to run the conservancy department of both the DCC and the CCC. In the DCC, under the administrative control of the conservancy department, 7156 sweepers and 190 supervisory staff/officers are employed to deliver conservancy services to almost 10 million of people living within the jurisdiction of DCC. One estimate shows that for satisfactory cleaning of a city area at least two sweepers are required per 1000 population (4.3.2.1). On the basis of this estimation about 10,000 sweepers are required to clean DCC area. It means that the conservancy department runs with an inadequate work force. But this deficiency in the work force was partly alleviated by the action that the DCC took by recently handing over the garbage collection system of its eight wards situated at zones 9 and 10, to four private companies (4.4.5). About 646 cleaners⁴⁰ (nearly 10 percent of the total conservancy workforce) who were working in those eight wards did not lose their job due to the privatisation drive, but were integrated with the existing workforce and subsequently transferred to other zones of the corporation thus enhancing their work strength. Suffice is to note that in spite of the increase in the number of employees the operational efficiency of the conservancy department (of DCC) did not attain any significant improvement over that in the past, i.e. a large quantity of garbage still remains scattered around the city.

On the other hand, the conservancy department of the CCC also suffers from the shortage of workforce. A total of 1740 sweepers and 90 supervisory staff/officers are responsible to deliver conservancy services to almost 3.9 million people living within the territory of CCC. Unlike the DCC, no initiative is yet to be taken to privatise the garbage collection system in this corporation.

⁴⁰ Among them, zones 9 and 10 accommodated 542 and 104 cleaners respectively.

In order to ensure the appropriate delivery of conservancy services to its users, the department also needs qualified personnel with sound professional/educational background and technical knowledge. Table 4.3 summarises the level of education of the conservancy employees of both corporations. The data and information appended in the table shows that the CCOs of both corporations hold irrelevant educational qualifications other than that of the formal requirement needed to be a CCO. The CCO of DCC joined the corporation on deputation from Bangladesh Navy and is a Naval Architect by training and profession. The CCO of the CCC holds an MA in Islamic History and did not possess any technical training, but attended some national and international seminars/workshops on waste management. Analysing the educational background reveals that only an Assistant Chief Conservancy Officer (ACCO) of DCC holds a Diploma in Public Health — a qualification highly relevant to perform a supervisory task in the conservancy department. The remaining employees, however, perform their assigned task without having any suitable professional and technical qualifications, but having attained experience at their work through ‘learning by doing’.

As to the material resources, Table 4.4 summarises a list of equipment used by the conservancy departments of both corporations to operate their assigned task. Looking at the quantity of the materials one can fairly recognise its insufficiency to run the business properly. The conservancy employees also indicated that the existing equipments was inadequate for their work (4.3.2.2). The budgetary allocations for the conservancy department, on the other hand, seem largely inadequate as the departments spent a major portion of their budget (nearly 70-80 percent) for payment of salary/wages and other work benefits to their employees (4.3.2.3). It means that the allocation of funds for taking such initiatives that improve the operational efficiency of the organisation (e.g. education/training to the employees, and procurement of modern equipment) is somewhat underemphasised.

Apart from the above, the operation of the conservancy departments also suffers from other problems such as: faulty government policies and physical planning, lack of

facilities, corruption, lack of inter-departmental co-ordination and compliance, and lack of people's awareness etc., which impinge upon the attainment of their goals.

In the light of the above discussion, the apparent failure of the conservancy departments to satisfy the service users by their work influences the latter, at least in some localities, to offer a civic garbage collection service from door-to-door, so that the neighbourhoods remain clean and odour free. Therefore, the community-based SWM initiatives have evolved across the country and perform their activities under the auspices of collective efforts. In this research four community-based organisations from four different localities of two cities have been studied to understand the dynamics involved in making collective action possible by organising community members to launch and support such initiatives that facilitate solid waste collection and disposal.

Empirical evidence suggests that the motivations lying behind organising the community-based SWM initiatives are many. Analysing the data and information presented in section 5.2 of chapter 5 shows that the primary intention of such organisers was to achieve their personal interest. The other reasons that influenced some people to organise the initiatives were: feeling for community development, lack of conservancy service provided by city corporations, exercise of power over the community, trust on leadership, and economic gains.

The nature and pattern of interests mentioned above illustrates that most of the leaders of the organisations belong to the upper class who largely control both power and resources of the society in question and were also involved with party politics (5.2.1). On the other hand, field information shows that most of the leaders were neither elected nor selected according to established democratic procedures. Even at the time of selection mostly house owners or 'local' inhabitants, or the people loyal to them, were selected to occupy the key positions. Moreover, preference to incorporate in the committee was also given to those people who were linked with each other through such mechanisms as: came from same ancestral home, friends/mates, business partners or colleagues, supporters of same political parties, i.e. members of same network structure. The only exception was

observed in *Baddanagar* (Dhaka) where senior citizens occupied several positions in the committee as desired by *panchayat* to maintain control and cohesion of the locality as the latter considered the former as a 'symbol' of integrity. It is, however, to be noted here that *Halishore K & L block* took an initiative to choose their leaders through election but the system became defunct due to conflict over power sharing between the people of *Chittagong* and *Noakhali* districts (see Box 5.2).

Moreover, this research made an effort to understand the reasons that community-based SWM initiatives were not formed in another four localities namely *Masjid Gali*, *Shantibug*, *Maneshwar (first) lane*, and *Baunia Badh*, situated in close proximity to the territorial jurisdiction of the aforementioned four wards of the cities under study. The information that I gathered from my fieldwork and mentioned in section 5.3 shows that several factors contributed to the absence of SWM initiatives and these were: lack of a feeling of belonging to the locality, lack of trusted leadership, lack of face-to-face interaction and associational life, unawareness and lack of knowledge about the environment, and political conflict among the residents. In other words, the major reasons responsible for constituting such a situation may also be translated through the following words: the reflection of the organisation's own distinctive history, the interaction between the people who have been in it, the groups it embodies, and the vested interests they have created (Selznick, 1957:16). It is reasonable to note here that the overall socio-political environment of the [study] areas divided the inhabitants into several groups on the basis of their political support, terrain identity etc.

Over and again, field evidence suggests further that vendetta and violence due to political party rivalry among the people of the afore-mentioned localities was rampant for materialising their parochial personal and group interests and thus maintained a low quality of inter-personal relationship that limits the growth and operation of SWM initiatives. In this connection two cases mentioned in boxes 5.3 and 5.4 categorically show how inter-personal relationships developed in line with the divergent nature of party politics of Bangladesh. In support of this, information and data mentioned in

section 3.4 provided some rudimentary information about how power politics shape in Bangladesh under the patronage of political parties.

In sum, the operational ineffectiveness of the conservancy departments derives from the lack of several factors such as human, material, economic resources, and also the poor co-ordination of the conservancy departmental activities and the prevalence of corruption. In spite of spending a great deal of public resources, the conservancy departments nearly fail to attain their goal(s). But some community-based initiatives succeeded to provide conservancy services in areas where the following were counted as driving forces: face-to-face contact, trust in leadership, creating public awareness, and associational life — i.e. social capital.

9.3. Trust and the formation of community-based SWM initiatives

Elinor Ostrom (1998:12) illustrates that when many individuals use reciprocity, there is an incentive to acquire a reputation for keeping promises and performing actions with short-term costs but long-term net benefits. Thus, trustworthy individuals who trust others with a reputation for being trustworthy can engage in mutually productive social exchanges, even though there may be dilemmas, so long they can limit their interactions for keeping promises. The empirical evidence that I have collected from my fieldwork indicates that several factors contribute to the construction of trust and these are: house ownership, permanent residency of a particular area, peer pressure, family relation, support of the same political party, business partnership, friendship, and people from the same ancestral area.

It has been illustrated in section 6.2 that trustworthy relationships prevail among the organisers (mostly house owners) of community-based initiatives in my study sites in both Dhaka and Chittagong. The house owners of *Halishore K & L block* (in Chittagong) developed their mutual relationship by virtue of frequent ‘meeting and sitting’ that eventually influenced the growth of a community-based initiative to dispose of their daily-generated garbage and also to ensure security of the area. The same situation exists

in *Sananda* area. The tenants of these two areas received the services but paid a tiny subscription to the organisers for this. However, an asymmetric relationship prevails between the house owners and the tenants because the former tend to position the latter in a low social status. In other words, the difference in status is largely based on house ownership, making one group more powerful than others. The situation supports Floyd Hunter's well-known work *Community Power Structure* where he postulates that men are ranked and classified by other men, in some degree, by the physical elements around them. An office with soft carpeting, wood-panelled walls, and rich draperies immediately suggests that the man occupying it is more influential than the man who walks on concrete floors and looks at plaster-board walls each day, and whose only window decoration is a fifty-cent pull-down shade. Such physical characteristics may not give a completely accurate picture of power and influence, but they are indicative of power, position, and status in our culture. They are part of the power structure in any community (Hunter, 1953:10).

On the other hand, empirical data further show that trust-based relationships exist among the organisers of community-based SWM initiatives in both *Baddanagar* and *Adarshanagar*. The organisers of *Baddanagar* initiative were selected in accordance with the decision of the local *panchayat*. It is, therefore, identical to the earlier conclusion (see section 3.2) that *panchayat* played a crucial role in organising social activities from historical antecedents. Moreover, the role performed by the *panchayat* for the improvement of social relations among the inhabitants within the locality may well be translated through the following words: '...enchained its members in such a close bondage that each shared in the other's sorrows and joys, knew each other intimately in an unparalleled solidarity' (Azam and Hollander, 1990:22).

Analysing the questions used as a proxy to measure levels of horizontal trust among the individual citizens shows that a relatively high degree of trust prevails among the people of the localities who succeeded to form community-based SWM initiatives (6.2). It means that appropriate production of social capital did allow the inhabitants of these areas to leave their young children to their neighbours at the time of emergency and also

demonstrated their willingness to hire someone on the basis of the recommendation of their neighbours. An almost opposite picture was observed in the areas where community-based initiatives were nonexistent — i.e. a low degree of trust was found among the citizens who were willing neither to keep their children to their neighbours nor to recruit someone on their [neighbours'] recommendation. The people who stuck to their choice with the second option sought assistance from those persons who connected with them either personally or through kinship ties. Referring to India, Harriss (2002b) termed such culture as 'selective trust' — characterised by the dominance of private and family control. It is, however, conceived from the Figure 6.2 (in chapter 6) that the people of Bangladesh largely trust their family members in comparison with other groups of people in the society.

Table 6.1 illustrates the relationship between trust and community action. It shows that a high level of trust among the inhabitants yields high community action, which facilitates the growth of community-based SWM initiatives, whereas lack of it provides low or no community action.

The field information labelled in section 6.2 suggests that the relationship between community-based initiatives and individuals (i.e. vertical trust) was somewhat ambiguous in nature. Because at a certain point of time the latter acknowledges their satisfaction over the services provided by the former but subsequently a fraction of members became critical to the leadership of the initiatives due to their lack of transparency in maintaining financial transactions. In the midst of such a situation the members of *Adarshanagar Plot Owners' Association* under the auspices of their organisation succeeded to mobilise their capacity to solve a gas problem in their locality. In this regard, the case reference summarised in Box 6.1 illustrates that the members of the association positively responded to the advice of their leaders and had agreed to take a [gas] connection by employing their own financial resources. In compliance with this, they raised the necessary funds through their monthly subscription to defray the cost of the project. The physical progress of the project went on well during my fieldwork and they expected to complete the task by June 2004. It is fairly understood from this particular event that

local leadership played a significant role in translating community capacity into action. In this connection it is relevant to refer to Kilpatrick and Falk (1999) who postulated that leadership quality and distribution can facilitate and coordinate access to other social capital resources within and outside a community. Leadership can help focus the energies of a community.

It is a fact that power politics play a vital role in shaping the relationships between organisers and the residents in my study sites, reference to which has been made in section 6.3. Many factors contribute either to consolidate or to decompose the relationship between the groups. In this connection Box 6.2 demonstrates the case of the *Sananda* area (in Chittagong), where the residents divided themselves into two dominant groups on the basis of the sources of their settlement; and these were: *local* and *boinga*. In the hierarchy, one group tended to remain on the top of the other; therefore, lack of consensus was observed among them even on their common issues. Such fragile understanding influenced the *local* people not to cooperate in the operation of the organisation formed by the *boinga* to clear their daily-generated garbage and to ensure security of the area. But the upper hand of the migratory (*boinga*) people over that of their counter part (*local*) sustained the operation of their initiative. Almost the same situation prevails in *Halishore K & L block* (in Chittagong) where compartmentalisation of social relations depends on such factors as: *districtism* (or localism), ownership of house, and party politics. The case in Box 6.3 of chapter 6 showed that the leaders of *Halishore K & L block samity* did not perform some essential social rituals to a deceased on the basis that he was a *vharatiya* not a *bariwala*. This understanding roughly coincides with Pierre Bourdieu's social theory where he shows that constant exposure to (for example, privileged, and deprived) socio-economic circumstances produce a social class 'habitus' — i.e. an orientation towards the body and its place-in-the world that is the product of, and which corresponds with, one's socio-economic position (Allen, 2004:488). In this context, however, *bariwala* qualifies to be identified as a privileged habitus whereas *vharatiya* remains as deprived habitus.

Analysing the above cases shows that a group of people share some common patterns of attitude and behaviour and thus form a part of a larger population, interacting with the people from other collectivities within the framework of a social system. It means that those people who belong to a particular group survive under conditions that not only engender close cooperation but also create a trustworthy relationship among the incumbents. The folk of *bariwala* or *boinga*, for example, developed their relationship within the purview of their respective groups following the structural norms mentioned earlier. At such point, Abner Cohen (1974:xiii) elucidates that norms, beliefs, and values are effective, and have their own constraining power only because they are the collective representations of a group and are backed by the pressure of that group.

Moreover, the party rivalry characteristic of party politics of Bangladesh reduces the chances of creating [generalised] trust among the residents of *Shantibug* (Chittagong) and *Maneshwar* lane (Dhaka), reference to which has been precisely accommodated in chapters 5 and 6. Suffice to say here that Bangladeshi society is sharply divided along party lines. Furthermore, Ahmed (2003:73) observes that even the civil society organisations, which have mushroomed in recent years, do not prove an exception. Rather than attempting to mediate conflicts between different parties, many of these organisations engage in partisan conflict. Therefore, lack of both tolerance and consensus on basic issues are widely observed in Bangladesh. All these features signal the presence of a deviant political culture, partly based on distrust.

In sum, trust remains unequivocally as one of the essential factors of production of social capital and proves its value for the formation and operation of community-based SWM initiatives.

9.4. Social networks and the growth of community-based SWM initiatives

Social networks may act as vehicles for social capital, through participation in networks, and by providing information about the trustworthiness of other people (Putnam, 1993). Putnam (1995) considers a social network as instrumental in relation to other forms of

social capital. A network acts as a catalyst of trust through the experiences made in face-to-face interaction with other people as found in the empirical evidence that I have gathered in my case studies. This suggested that several factors contribute to the social construction of networks and these were: fellow feeling, support at the time of crisis, people from same locality, sharing of information, and social/moral obligation, etc.

In the case of Chittagong, sub-section 7.2.1 showed that terrain identity of the members of *Halishore K & L block* played a significant role in the construction of social networks among them. The inhabitants of two influential but contesting groups of the locality who settled here from other parts of *Chittagong*, and also migrated from *Noakhali* districts separately, organised sports competitions — where most of the participants were from their ‘own’ respective groups. The primary motivation behind the said departmentalisation of social relations was to demonstrate one’s sense that other people can be trusted developing the following strategy: the more we connect with other people, the more we trust them and *vice-versa*. In line with this theoretical premise supremacy over the other is important, but field data indicates that such an arrangement yields several benefits including: develops inter-personal relationship relatively easily as the actors originated from some particular areas, and frequent face-to-face contacts that turned into a trustworthy relationship among the incumbents of either group. But the natural calamity that the area experienced during 1991 apparently reduced social divisions and brought them under one roof, reference to which has been made in Box 7.1. This means that the crisis situation mentioned earlier made them relatively better connected with their neighbours to overcome problem(s) through joint action and thus produced social capital that facilitated the growth of the SWM initiative in the locality. In this connection it is useful to refer to the recent study of Putnam (2002) where he found that immediately after the cataclysmic events of September 11 (2001) US citizens became more civic minded, all walks of life expressed greater interest in public affairs, trust was enhanced across ethnic and other social divisions, and people were more united and more prepared to make collective sacrifices. Reviewing the dynamics involved in these cases that happened in two extreme poles of the globe indicates the universal value of social capital in crisis management.

The data analysis presented in sub-section 7.2.2 showed that the social network in *Sananda* area (Chittagong) primarily developed in line with *atiyata* and *gusti-gayati* relationship. Moreover, such factors as: information for job/support in business, recommendations for credit/bank loan, and obligations also contributed to build the network structure. It is understood that the structure was hierarchical in nature where the general inhabitants became dependent on their leaders (organisers) for service and support. The field investigation indicated that a large section of residents of *Sananda* area usually turn to Nasir Uddin, president of the association and his associates to get moral and material support when they are insecure and in crisis. As a matter of reciprocity, the former serves as henchmen to the latter and thus enhanced their (leaders) support base in the locality. In the event of such a mutually interactive situation, the organisers succeeded in enjoining the residents to be with them for organising community development programmes. In effect, the leadership of the area played a supportive role to organise a community-driven initiative primarily for security reasons and then extended its service to the collection and disposal of solid waste (see Box 5.1).

Reviewing the above shows that the social construction of social networks in *Sananda* area is founded, among others, on the following two distinct characteristics: (i) mutual dependence of the citizens and organisers for support and service, and (ii) the strength (capacity) of the leadership to engender confidence and bring the community to the point that apparently facilitated the formation of an SWM initiative. As to the first point, Gibbon and Pokhrel (1999:30) also reached a similar conclusion from their study on the Dhankuta district of Eastern Nepal. One of the findings of their research was that women were visiting each other for social support, and the *Dhami Jankri* (local leader) for health advice, and key households for financial support. In the same vein, on the basis of the conclusions derived from several urban projects in India, Sue Philips (2002:133-150) notes that people rely on their relationships, associations and networks to survive on a day-to-day basis — for example, sharing and reciprocating labour, cash, food, information, friendship, and moral support. In this context, from a general perspective, Lucian Pye (1985:326) also points out that in every Asian culture the basic strength of informal power is the bonding quality of personal, reciprocal relationships between

superiors and subordinates. The amazing strength of those relationships can be seen not only in the intense feelings of obligation and indebtedness that they evoke, but also in their tendency to endure even when they cause annoyance and trouble. The second findings, however, came close to one of the primary understandings of Judith Tandler's influential work *Good Government in the Tropics*. Referring to Ceará, in the Northeast region of Brazil, she convincingly proved that the role of two reformist governors was instrumental in achieving success of several outstanding and innovative projects that they introduced in preventive health, and public procurement from informal sector producers, as well as a large emergency employment-creating public works programme (Tandler, 1997:9-10).

The above discussion reveals that the conclusions drawn from the study on social networks construction in *Sananda* area, that made community action (i.e. the formation of SWM initiative) possible, are close to other similar studies in other countries.

As to the construction of social networks in *Baddanagar* (in Dhaka), sub-section 7.2.3 illustrated the presence of two dominating groups in the area. Based on one's origin of ancestral home, these groups were divided into the following sects: 'local' and 'migratory' people. Empirical evidence shows that people prefer to build their networking according to their locality identity. But inter-group communication functioned relatively well as they met with one another at various social gatherings and enjoyed *adda* during their off time that apparently reduced the possibility of engaging in conflict among the members of the contesting groups who wanted to keep the locality under the control of their 'own' group.

In *Baddanagar*, *mahalla panchayat* performs a significant role in mediating various social problems. It is customary that irrespective of plaintiff and defendant generally all accept verdicts pronounced by the *panchayat*. Non-compliance with the resolution of the *panchayat* causes serious consequences to the incumbent and his/her family; therefore, its traditional authority is widely accepted. Apart from the role of social control, under the benevolent direction of *panchayat*, various social programmes such as picnics and

religious functions (e.g. *Tazia michil*) were organised in the area to enhance social solidarity and to cement social relations among its residents. Field information certified that such social gatherings increased the chances of face-to-face contact with the participants relatively frequently. Such communication not only reduced transaction costs but also improved social relations among the actors that made collective action possible (see Box 7.3).

In short, social networks construction in *Baddanagar* is materialised primarily on the basis of ones 'group' identity. Inter-group communication drives out the vices of inertia in social relations and broadens the horizon of their networks. Such patterns of communication improve the quality of social relationships that contribute to produce social capital and consequently advance the growth and development of SWM initiative in the locality.

On the other hand, social networks in *Adarshanagar* (in Dhaka) were developed according to the professional identity of the residents (7.2.4). Most of the inhabitants of the area were petty traders. Due to river erosion they lost their ancestral homes and migrated to the capital city, chiefly from *Faridpur* and *Barisal* districts. Field investigation shows that economic reasons pushed them to migrate. The story mentioned in Box 7.4 exemplified social sequences that bonded them together and subsequently helped to anchor finally at *Adarshanagar* as their place of living. In other words, frequent interaction and sharing of ideas and information among the residents to solve their problem not only refined their social relations but also bound them with the fabric of friendship and [fictitious] kinship. Thus social networks generate social capital and sustain (or increase) the spirit of doing common good. In this way the plot owners formed an association, namely the *Adarshanagar Plot Owners' Association*, to look after the business of the locality. The members of the association identified SWM as one of the major problems of the area. As a result, the association organised the initiative to collect and dispose of their daily produced garbage. In this case, friendship and kinship served as the basis for the growth of the organisation. Referring to a similar situation, Korff (1996:298) points out that kinship plays an important role in the choice of location for

rural migrants or internal migrants in Manila because information is derived primarily through relatives. Relatives often provide initial access to land, assistance in constructing the house and help to find a job. Regarding friendship, in their study on Bangkok, Evers and Korff (1986:52) identified ‘friendship’ as a valuable instrument to improve social relations that make community cooperation possible.

In addition to the above, summarising the information mentioned in section 7.3 illustrated that community-based SWM initiatives did not exist in the following four research sites: *Masjid Gali*, *Shantibug*, *Maneshwar lane*, and *Baunia badh* for the reasons such as: lack of trust, diverse locations of ancestral home, heterogeneous social relations, power conflict, political rivalry, and the law and order situation of the locality. All of these characteristics, by and large, contributed to the impediment on the development of social networks that also hampered the production of an appropriate amount of social capital to run such collective action like the formation of community-based organisation for SWM in the above areas. Drawing on research in nine case study cities, Jo Beall (2001:1017) also concluded that the same factors as the above were responsible for the distortion of social networks and associational life in her research locations. Referring to Shantiago and Johannesburg, she noticed that whole neighbourhoods and areas are stigmatised by their reputations for being sites of crime, violence and drugs. The case of Johannesburg, as Beall observed, was particularly redolent with examples of gangs, shack lords, drug lords, and pimps intimidating neighbourhoods. In these contexts it could be argued that this erosion of social resources is underlain by lack of social homogeneity and social divisions, fuelled by state repression, political factionalism, social deprivation and dependence.

To sum up, the role of social networks is considered as one of the supportive factors for social capital generation that in a way propelled the growth of the community governed SWM initiatives in some of my study areas. Lack of it ended up with no community action and thus caused SWM initiatives not to be formed.

9.5. Civic engagement and the growth of community-based SWM initiatives

Citizenship in a civic community is marked, first of all, by active participation in public affairs, says Putnam (1993:87). Referring to Michael Walzer, he notes that, “Interest in public issues and devotion to public causes are the key signs of civic virtue.” It is sufficient to say here that pursuit of the common good at the cost of individual and private ends seems close to the core meaning of civic virtue. In the civic community, however, citizens pursue what Tocqueville termed “self-interest properly understood,” that is, self-interest defined in the context of broader public needs, self-interest that is “enlightened” rather than “myopic,” self-interest that is alive to the interest of others (Putnam, 1993:88). It is obvious that Putnam’s writings are very much influenced by American culture and ideology. But I have shown civic engagement has to be differently defined in the context of the characteristics of Bangladesh society. Keeping this theoretical background in mind, my fieldwork went on to explore the local factors responsible for the social construction of civic engagement that galvanised the formation of community-based SWM initiatives. The empirical evidence that I have collected through my field research illustrates that many factors contribute to the construction of civic engagement and these were: membership in associations, various social gatherings, participation in civic activities, and political involvement.

The field reports furnished in sub-section 8.3.1.1 of chapter 8 showed that the residents of *Sananda* area (Chittagong) met with each other on a number of social and religious occasions such as: *urs*, *mejban*, birthday parties, *mosolmani* and other events. Empirical evidence suggests that joining social occasions yield benefit not only to the concerned persons but also to the society at large. Referring to a marriage ceremony (daughter of Nur Muhammad) that was solemnised in the area reveals that both *bariwala* and *varatiya* jointly enjoyed the programme, thus overriding the hierarchical relationships that exist between them based on status and power. Another case explained in box 8.1 gave an idea as to how face-to-face communication not only dissipates misunderstandings between some people who were antagonistic to the operation of SWM initiative, but also subsequently extended their cooperation to the programme.

It was evident from the field data that many factors contributed to the construction of civic engagement in the *Sananda* area. One such factor was a common place of meeting where inhabitants could meet each other and exchange views, ideas, and greetings and thus expanded their network base and build associational life. *Sananda* area lacks such a place but the need was partly compensated by Nasir Uddin (the president of the association) as he enthusiastically allowed people to use the premises of his mansion for community gatherings. Though this arrangement created particular disadvantages to his private life he continued to be the host of several gatherings in his residence. This attitude and sacrifice for the community's benefit not only made him trusted to the others but also influenced people to be supportive to his leadership. Many activities related to the development of the locality initiated from here, even the growth of the organisation under study was prompted through the active involvement of Nasir Uddin (5.2).

The other factors that were used as proxies to measure civic engagement in this study were: newspaper readership, TV watching, and political participation. Newspaper readership in this area was almost total but sharing of information with their neighbours counted under conditions. Regarding TV watching, it was a common phenomenon of the locality where the inhabitants enjoyed various programmes such as: drama, cinema, and news either individually or with their closest neighbours. Exchanges of ideas on viewed programmes were prevalent mostly among the women. Relatively frequent contact among female members developed their mutual understanding that made them trustworthy to one another and thus broadened the radius of their networks. Thus the amount of social capital they generated through their mutual interaction may play a supportive role to make collective action a success. Contrary to this, Putnam (2000:283) identified the effect of electronic entertainment — above all, television in privatising leisure time — as one of the reasons responsible for the decline in civic engagement and thus social capital of American community. It is reasonable to note here that women were not involved in any official capacity in the organising committee formed for SWM and thus their contribution to the creation of social capital remained under-utilised. At this point it is argued that no organisational goal can be appropriately achieved without the active participation of women, as they constitute almost fifty percent of the total

population of Bangladesh. In this connection it is useful to note that social capital has been sustained in Britain largely by virtue of the measuring participation of women in the community (Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003:328).

Field reports portrayed an obscure picture about political participation of the inhabitants of the *Sananda* area. It was a fact that a large number of voters failed to exercise their voting rights to elect a ward commissioner in the fear of harassment as the then political oppositions boycotted and set about to foil the CCC's election of 2000. But the voters of the locality cast their votes in the parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2001 respectively with some reservation as the local leaders publicly exposed their political identity and also tried to bring the residents to the support of their 'own' group, thus making some voters dissatisfied with them.

On the other hand, data presented in sub-sections 8.3.1.2, 8.3.2.1, and 8.3.2.2 of chapter 8 concisely explained the mechanisms involved in the social construction of civic engagements in my other three study sites namely *Halishore K & L block*, *Baddanagar*, and *Adarshanagar* where a community-based SWM initiative exists. Like *Sananda*, the residents of *Halishore* also took the taste of several social and religious gatherings like *urs*, *mejban*, annual sports, and other parties organised in commemoration of several events. But it was understood from the field report that an *urs* was organised in the area under the chieftainship of *bariwala* where *varatiya* were carefully excluded from performing any role except the payment of contributions. Thus the relationship that prevailed between the groups was based on status and power relations where house owners held more power and enjoyed better social status than that of their tenants. Besides, the residents of *Baddanagar* (Dhaka) collectively enjoyed several traditional festivals such as *Eid*, marriage etc and thus availed the opportunity to refine their interpersonal relationship. Unlike Chittagong, *urs* and *mejban* were seldom organised here but the people of the area experienced such social events as *Baishakhi mela* when the participating individuals/family members came into close contact and became familiar with each other, thus seemingly either engendering or improving social relations between them. As regard to *Adarshanagar* (Dhaka), the residents also collectively enjoyed only a

few festivals like *Eid* and marriage ceremony. Somewhat financial awkwardness of the residents did not allow them to celebrate birthday parties, circumcisions, and picnics pompously but nevertheless their general tendency was to organise the aforesaid parties within their limited extent and thus glean benefit of it.

As to the common place of gathering, there was an open field in *Halishore K & L* block that served the purpose but was also used as playground for the children of the locality. *Baddanagar* lacks of such a space but a garret in front of the Ward Commissioner's office was used for numerous purposes, i.e. from playground to meeting place. The situation of *Adarshanagar* was in no way different to this as the area also suffered from the scarcity of space to be used for community purposes. Due to physical absence of any playgrounds within the close proximity of the locality, the children started playing in the designated graveyard that made their parents worried for reasons explained elsewhere (8.3.2.2).

Turning to the newspaper readership, it was reported that the readership in *Halishore K & L* block was almost total. In most cases, the males of my sample households first took the chance to read a newspaper, while housewives generally got their turn at the end — after the completion of their domestic work. The influence of gender remains ambivalent even in such apparently less significant tasks. The sharing of ideas/information on the read news items among the intra-household members was a common phenomenon but similar sharing with the neighbours depended on the public importance of it (news). Almost the equivalent situation existed in both *Baddanagar* and *Adarshanagar*.

Field data further revealed that watching of TV in *Halishore K & L* block was almost total and the residents mostly viewed the entertaining programmes (drama, cinema, songs etc.) telecasted by BTV and other satellite channels. Members of both intra and inter-households critically reviewed the quality of the programmes and thus mutually shared their understandings. A slightly different picture was observed in both *Baddanagar* and *Adarshanagar* where the members of the participating households watched TV programmes but were not enthusiastic to share ideas/information with their neighbours.

Unlike *Sananda*, the voters of *Halishore K & L* block exercised their constitutional rights to choose their MP in the parliamentary elections of 2001 without any remarkable interruption from their local patrons and outside gurus. The local organisation of the area played a laudable task by exhibiting some posters (e.g. ‘vote is your birth right,’ ‘do not elect a corrupt candidate’) for the purpose of awareness of the voters, as well as the general public, about their rights and duties to elect an appropriate candidate to represent them in the national parliament. But a different situation was observed in the local government election (CCC election of 2000) where the then political oppositions declared to boycott the election, and therefore asked the voters to be with them to make their demand successful (8.3.1.2).

Apart from this, most of the voters of *Baddanagar*, in the midst of political impasse, elected a trusted person as their ward commissioner (i.e. Moju commissioner) and also the BNP backed candidate (Sadek Hossain Khoka) was elected as Mayor of DCC in 2002. It is interesting to note that *panchayat* and the local political leaders did not make any effort to influence the voters to choose their certified candidates. In the parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2001, the voters alternatively elected MPs from the major political parties (in 1996 from the AL and in 2001 from the BNP-led four-party alliance) but it was alleged that both of them were involved in unlawful activities. Moreover, almost all voters of *Adarshanagar* actively participated in electoral activities, as the president of their association (Molla Sohrab Hossain) was a candidate for the post of ward commissioner; but he lost in the election. These people also served as a ‘vote bank’ to the AL backed MP candidate in accordance with the advice of Molla Sohrab who projected a good future for them if voted in power. But the [MP] candidate also could not win the election. At this point it is useful to refer to a relevant study by Jo Beall. In her study on Pakistan she concluded on the basis of empirical evidence that a vertical network characterised the relationship between the low-income informal settlement as a ‘vote bank’ and the politicians at various levels that gave it patronage (Beall, 1997:959).

In sum, despite several weaknesses the role of civic engagement appeared as a useful tool to organise joint action through creation of social capital, which materialises the

formation and sustained the operation of community managed SWM initiatives in my study locations.

Over and again, the study locations had no community-based SWM initiative left the impression that the factors of civic engagement did not succeed in fostering sufficient social capital to form such organisations in *Masjid Gali*, *Shantibug*, *Maneshwar lane*, and *Baunia Badh*. Summarising the field reports pertained in section 8.4 (sub-sections 8.4.1 and 8.4.2) clearly pointed out several weaknesses of civic engagement that reduced the chances of making face-to-face contact and constructing trustworthy relationships amongst the residents. Many factors might be held responsible for developing the environment mentioned earlier, but this study took note on a few of them and these were: power politics, political rivalry, and the law and order situation of the areas.

9.6. The formation of community-based SWM initiatives: does social capital matter?

In this study social capital is generally understood as the conglomeration of such sources as: trust, social networks, civic engagement, shared norms, values and beliefs, and solidarity (2.4). But for the purpose of the study I chose and worked with three seemingly influential sources: trust, social networks, and civic engagement. Therefore, field information reported in chapters 5 through 8 attempted to specify whether or not community-based SWM initiatives emerged in my study sites through the influence of social capital.

Field information presented in the afore-mentioned chapters and discussion made earlier provides the understanding that trust, social networks, and civic engagement together with kinship, patron-client relationship, hierarchical social status and thus power relations, loyalty and solidarity, reciprocity etc constitute the face of social capital in Bangladesh that advances collective action. The growth and operation of community-based SWM initiatives in some of my study sites was a response to the value of social capital that the inhabitants of the respective localities accumulated but utilised only if there was a prevalence of a favourable situation and context. The absence of community-

based SWM initiatives in my other study locations was not only due to the lack of social capital but such other factors as party rivalry, law and order situation, and power relations significantly contributed to create the situation. It is, however, to be reported here that the discussion of findings presented earlier did not highlight any significant differences between Dhaka and Chittagong in terms of the factors (also context) responsible for the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in Dhaka and Chittagong. The strength of the theory of social capital [probably] obscures the differences.

The theory of social capital developed in the west and now dissected in the social laboratory of Bangladesh pointed out several dimensions (or sources) for the consolidation of social capital here. Apart from trust, social networks, and civic engagements such factors as power and authority relationships in the society, patron-client relationship, kinship and community structure, and typical social stratification and social class of Bangladesh contributes to the fostering of social capital — an influential social resource to maintain sustainable development.

In support to the above findings of this study it would be useful to mention here the gist of two relevant studies. In the context of Asia, Lucian Pye (2001:374-94) distinguishes between civility, social capital, and civil society. Civility refers to basic core values and rules for inter-personal conduct that in an Asian context invariably include a formal respect for authority and an avoidance of overt disagreement, though not necessarily a respect for strangers. Because of the rule of civility, social capital networks tend to form around kinship, common origin (same village or school) and especially patron/client relationships. Pye argues that historically there have been very weak formations of civil society, taking that term to refer to autonomous interest groups operating independently of the state, the market, and family. Almost in the similar vein, Samiul Hasan and Mark Lyons (2004) reached the conclusion that social capital and sustainable development management in Asia is depended on such factors as: individuals' religious values, social and economic reciprocity, kinship, relationship with social entrepreneurs, and patron-client relationships, that matter most in decisions creating bonds with others, extending

mutual help, building networks, showing loyalty and trust, and being involved in traditional and modern social systems.

The discussion of findings that I have presented earlier coincides with the conclusions of the above two studies.

In the light of the above discussion of findings, I shall now summarise the results of the study.

9.7. Results of the study

The objective of the research was to explore whether or not the community-based SWM initiatives emerged through the influence of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. It reveals from the study that Putnam's operationalisation of social capital is not fully applicable to different social and political settings; these therefore need to be contextualised according to local conditions in order to reap benefit. It was found that social capital alone is not sufficient to form community-based SWM initiatives in Bangladesh. It works well together with the influence of kinship, patron-client relationship, and power and authority relations of Bangladesh society. Therefore, the localities with a high level of social capital are better able to organise a community-based SWM initiative, if the other factors remain supportive.

Failure to organise a community-based SWM initiative not only indicates the lack of sufficient social capital but also is a result of many contesting factors such as: the law and order situation of the country, power politics, political conflict and threat, which contribute either to diminish or to reduce the chances of accumulation of social capital to make collective action possible.

The community-based organisations in the urban areas of Bangladesh generally function in accordance with the basic characteristics of the socio-political system of the country.

Bangladesh society is hierarchically divided into class and caste. These factors have a reflection in the organisation. The power and authority relationship in organisations and society are primarily based on the traditional system of hierarchy of class that has spill over effects on social capital formation.

The pattern of leadership is much conditioned by the values and norms of a society in which it develops over the years. The organisational leadership in Bangladesh has developed in accordance with the characteristics of Bangladesh society. Therefore, the leaders provide social, political, and economic patronage to their supporters to increase their power base and thus develop the patron-client network bonds that play a supportive role for the creation of social capital.

In my opinion, these results have proven the importance of a modified theory of social capital as a useful theoretical device to understand the dynamics involved in the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in Bangladesh. However, it should be emphasised that the study reported here might be regarded as an effort that shallowly digs the surface to find out under what conditions joint action is facilitated, particularly the formation of community-based SWM initiatives in urban Bangladesh through the lens of social capital. More in-depth studies are required to further specify the relationship between social capital and the formation of community-based initiatives in Bangladesh and thereby also develop a more specific theory.

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Annex 1 Methodology

In this study I intended to explore whether or not community-based SWM initiatives emerge through the influence of the characteristics (or sources) of social capital. Both qualitative and quantitative data are considered together to interpret the research issue. Nevertheless, qualitative methods are considered the dominant design for the study. The following sections deal with the strategies and methods used in data collection and also succinctly explain the rationale of sample size selected for the research:

(1) *Selection of Units of Analysis*: Four wards from two city corporations (see annexes 2 and 3), i.e. two wards from Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) and the other two from Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) were selected for the study¹. Two types of wards e.g., (a) conservancy, and (b) non-conservancy exist in the CCC². In order to make this study representative, one ward from each category was selected. *Bagmonirum* represents the conservancy ward, while *North Agrabad* is the non-conservancy ward.

In DCC, two wards — *Hazaribug* and *Mirpur-11* (see annexes 2A and 2B) were randomly selected, but preference was given to one ward from *old Dhaka* (i.e. *Hazaribug*) and another from *new Dhaka* (*Mirpur-11*). Unlike CCC, no non-conservancy wards exist in DCC. All ninety wards are considered to be conservancy wards. The reason for selecting wards from both ‘old’ and ‘new’ Dhaka is discussed elsewhere.

My units of analysis are community-based [private] initiatives for SWM. In CCC, amongst the conservancy wards (e.g. in *Bagmoniram*, see annex 3B), one neighbourhood, i.e. *Sananda residential area* was selected where some households have organised a community-based initiative to manage their solid waste problem whereas other households, i.e. *Masjid Gali* (lane) did not organise an initiative. From the non-

¹ There are 41 wards in CCC, and 90 wards in DCC. The ward is the lowest administrative unit of urban local governments having a population of around 15,000 to 40,000.

² The wards which receive regular conservancy services, i.e. sweeping streets, cleaning drains are considered as conservancy wards. In non-conservancy wards, services are provided relatively less frequently and irregularly.

conservancy ward (i.e. in *North Agrabad* ward, see annex 3A), *Halishore K & L* block society was selected where some residents have organised SWM initiatives whereas the *Shuntibug* people failed to organise a SWM initiative.

In the DCC, the *Baddanagar* area from *Hazaribug* ward (in *old Dhaka*) was selected because there community people have organised an SWM initiative, whereas the people of *Maneshwar* lane from the same locality failed to operate such an initiative. As in *old Dhaka*, in *new Dhaka Adarshanagar* from *Mirpur-11* ward was selected because there the residents organised an SWM initiative but the people of *Baunia Badh* (dam) area [in the same locality] did not develop such an initiative. The reason for choosing areas from new and old Dhaka is to assess whether or not prevailing the socio-economic conditions and infrastructure of a locality promotes/inhibits the growth of community-based SWM initiatives. It is a fact that overall the establishments in *new Dhaka* are somewhat better organised than those in *old Dhaka*.

(2) Why were community-based initiatives selected from eight localities in four wards? In this study, as mentioned, eight localities (a locality was selected on the basis of the presence and absence of SWM initiatives) from four wards were selected mainly for three reasons: firstly, this study envisages case study method to understand the sequence of the problems. According to Ragin (1987:49), a case-oriented approach works well when the number of relevant cases with the same number of negative cases is manageable. Secondly, *manageability* — a concept that is often used for conducting social science research is another reason to choose four wards and two community-based initiatives. The third reason is that case-oriented studies require in-depth study. Given the time available (September 2002 to August 2003) and the resources that I had for the work, I consider the number of cases in this study to be adequate to address the problem appropriately.

(3) Why were the wards and community-based initiatives selected from two cities (Dhaka and Chittagong)? Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh, while Chittagong is the main port city as well as the commercial capital of the country. Therefore, the importance of these

two cities in comparison with other parts of the country is well understood. These two city corporations, i.e., Dhaka and Chittagong, are moderately large in terms of size, number of households, and population compared to the other four corporations³. It is therefore evident that these two cities also produce a relatively huge quantity of solid waste because of their size, and pressure of population (because of continuous migration to cities mostly from rural areas). These may have put pressure on the conservancy departments of the said two cities. The reason of selecting two geographically distinct city corporations is to examine whether or not the diversified politico-administrative, social and economic characteristics of these cities may result in differences in the degree of operational efficiency of the community-based SWM initiatives. The decision to select eight localities within the geographical boundary of the aforesaid four wards (for SWM) from two distinct area of the country gave me an opportunity to compare them by contextualising the factors of social capital and its possible influence on the formation of community-based SWM initiatives.

Data collection methods and sample size: In order to collect data from the primary sources some standard strategies, such as: interviewing, group discussions, and household (HH) surveys by administering structured questionnaire, and participant observations, were used. A total of 315-HH was surveyed in Dhaka and Chittagong. The way I chose the HHs could not be confidently claimed to be randomly selected. The following table gives a summary of the characteristics of survey:

Table: A.1: Characteristics of survey

No. of HH surveyed	315 (Dhaka: 176, Chittagong 139)
Gender distribution	Male: 147 (Dhaka: 88, Chittagong: 59) Female: 168 (Dhaka: 88, Chittagong: 80)
Dominant age group	31-43 (No. 147)
Level of education	X grade to bachelor degree (average)
No. of persons interviewed/HH	01 (either the leader or a <i>de facto</i> leader)

³ In the DCC, total number of wards 90, households 659000 nos., population 3839000 (within the corporation area only); while in the CCC, total number of wards 41, households 276000, population 1599000. Moreover, the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) accommodates 318000 people within the 54000 households and the households are splits into 30 wards. The Khulna City Corporation (KCC) is divided into 29 wards, and the number of households and populations are: 138000, and 731000 respectively (Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, 1998:22-23). The final two corporations, i.e., the Barisal City Corporation (BCC) and the Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) were constituted in April 2001, and relevant data are not yet available.

It is important to note that, before administrating the actual HH survey I did a pre-test in my studied areas and then adjusted the questionnaire in accordance with my understanding of the situation.

Moreover, data were collected from 65 respondents through in-depth interviews; the respondents belong to the following groups: (i) city corporation leaders, i.e., the Mayor, and Ward Commissioners; (ii) civil servants; (iii) political party leaders, both government and opposition parties; (iii) conservancy staff of various hierarchical echelons (iv) academics knowledgeable in social capital and SWM; (v) representatives of environmental NGOs, particularly engaged in SWM; and (vi) civil society in general, etc. I collected information from these respondents using techniques like formal and informal interviews and discussions.

Two different sets of questionnaire were used in this research (see annexes 8 and 9). One set was employed for collecting relevant information from the HH survey; another was used for getting information from both community leaders who organised an SWM initiative and those who did not. Questionnaires were primarily structured in English and then translated into Bengali for the purpose of distribution among the respondents who agreed to fill them out. In order to facilitate the data analysis, all completed questionnaires were translated back into English.

Additionally, data were collected from secondary sources like, extensive surveys of relevant academic literature, documents, magazines, newspapers, and ethnohistoric analysis. The libraries of the Universities of Dhaka, Chittagong, the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), the National Institute of Local Government (NILG), the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh and the National Archives of Bangladesh were useful in this regard.

In the following section let me point out the major difficulties and obstacles I faced to conduct the field research in Bangladesh.

Difficulties and obstacles to conduct the research

The major problem that I encountered at the initial stage of my fieldwork was to make the term *social capital* understandable to my research assistants (total five) and subsequently to my respondents. Because it is relatively a new term used in development research and little work has so far been done in Bangladesh using social capital as an analytical tool (for details see section 1.4 of chapter 1). In order to overcome the problem, I presented my draft theoretical chapter to them and discussed the major analytical aspects. I was, however, convinced that they, by and large, grasped the concept before travelling to the field. For my respondents, I used suitable local words (i.e. *bishas*, *astha*) for expressing the inherent meaning of social capital. On the other hand, for *solid waste*, suitable local words *moila/ abarjana* were used.

The overall law and order situation of Bangladesh appeared as an influential obstacle to conducting my fieldwork. During October 2002 to January 2003, the nation passed a horrified state of life where various unfortunate incidents such as: rent seeking, street vandalism, gang rape, hijacking, and political murder frequently took place. The government partly succeeded to combat the intensity of the problems by commissioning an anti-outlaw drive popularly known as *operation clean heart*. The progress of my fieldwork was affected during the period.

At the time of doing the HH survey and interviews, in some cases, I was not allowed to make a face-to-face interaction with my female respondents because of the *pardah* (seclusion) culture — a system of screening them from the sight of [male] strangers. By recruiting two female research assistants (one for Dhaka and another for Chittagong) the problem was solved.

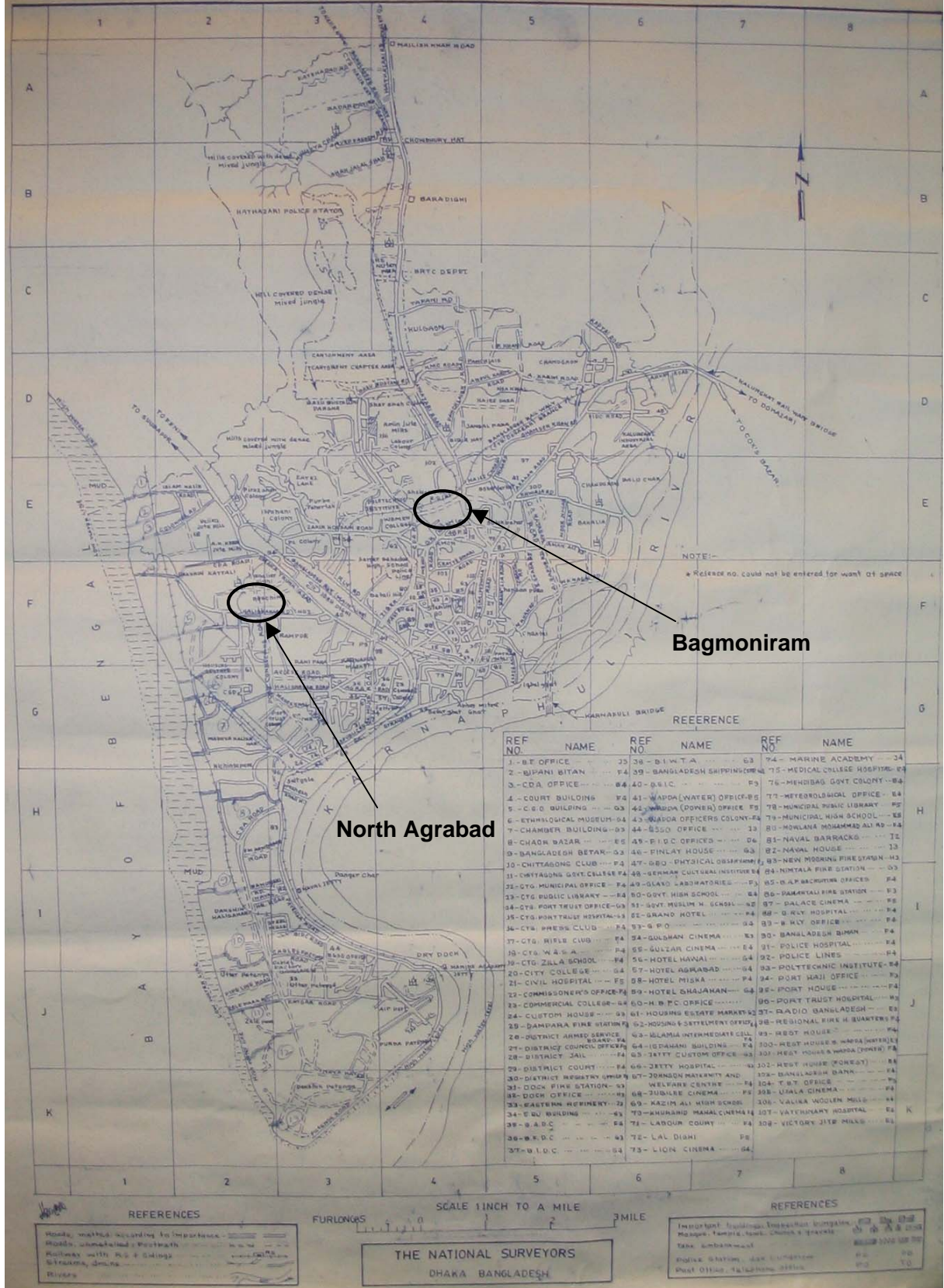
It was a difficult task to reach to the civil servants for holding interviews with them, as their tendency was to escape in the name of their ‘busyness’. It was equally hard to get any documents from public offices in the plea of the Official Secrets Act 1923 and government servants conduct rules of 1979 (as modified up to 2002) that binds the civil

servants to a oath of secrecy even forbidding them to pass some official information to other government departments unless empowered by the government. Reaching to the political masters was not an exception to the above as they are mostly encircled with the interest groups. In spite of all the hurdles, I managed to talk to some political leaders and bureaucrats and also received some documents related to my work.

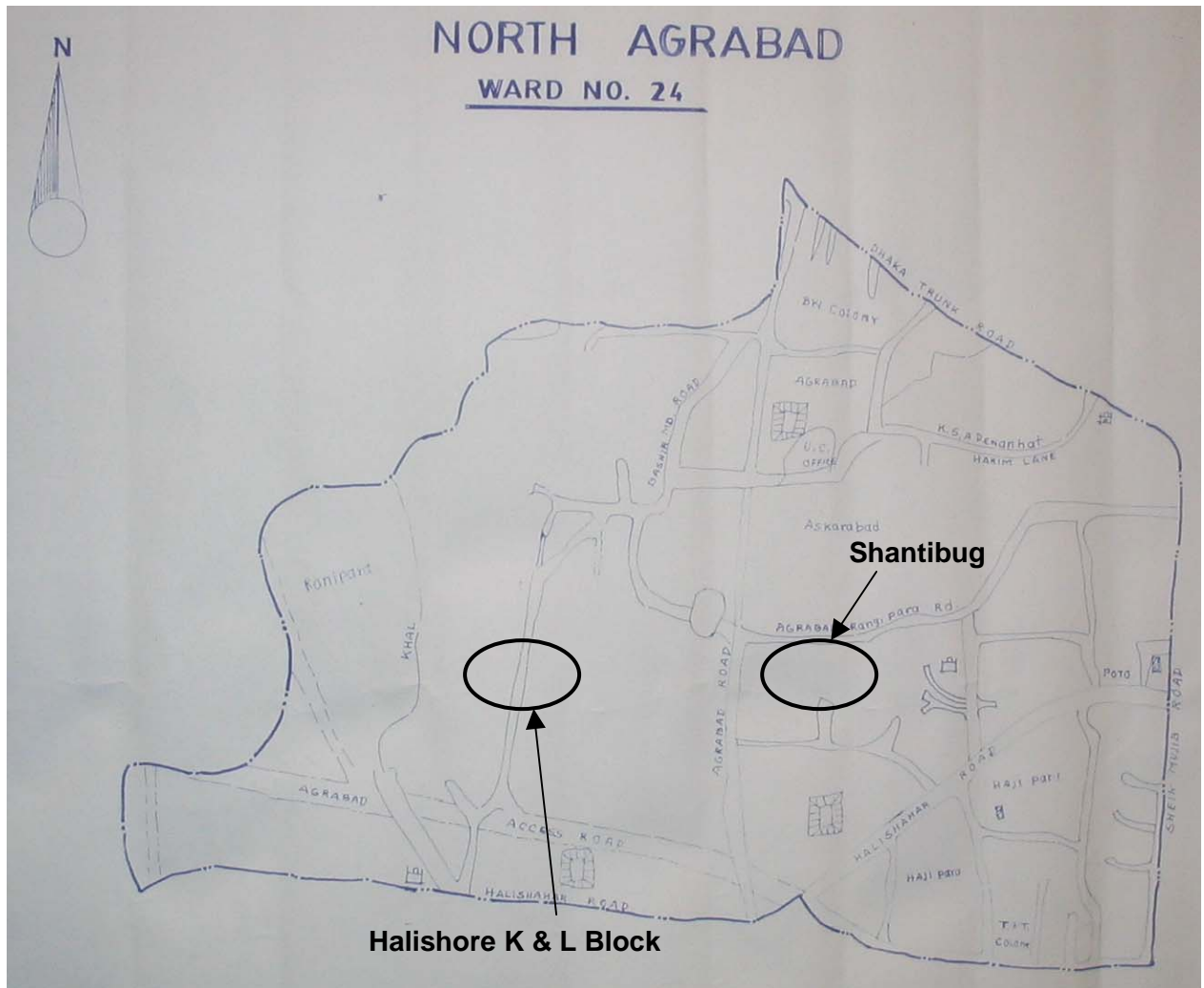


Annex 2. The research sites in Dhaka City Corporation (DCC).
Source: DCC.

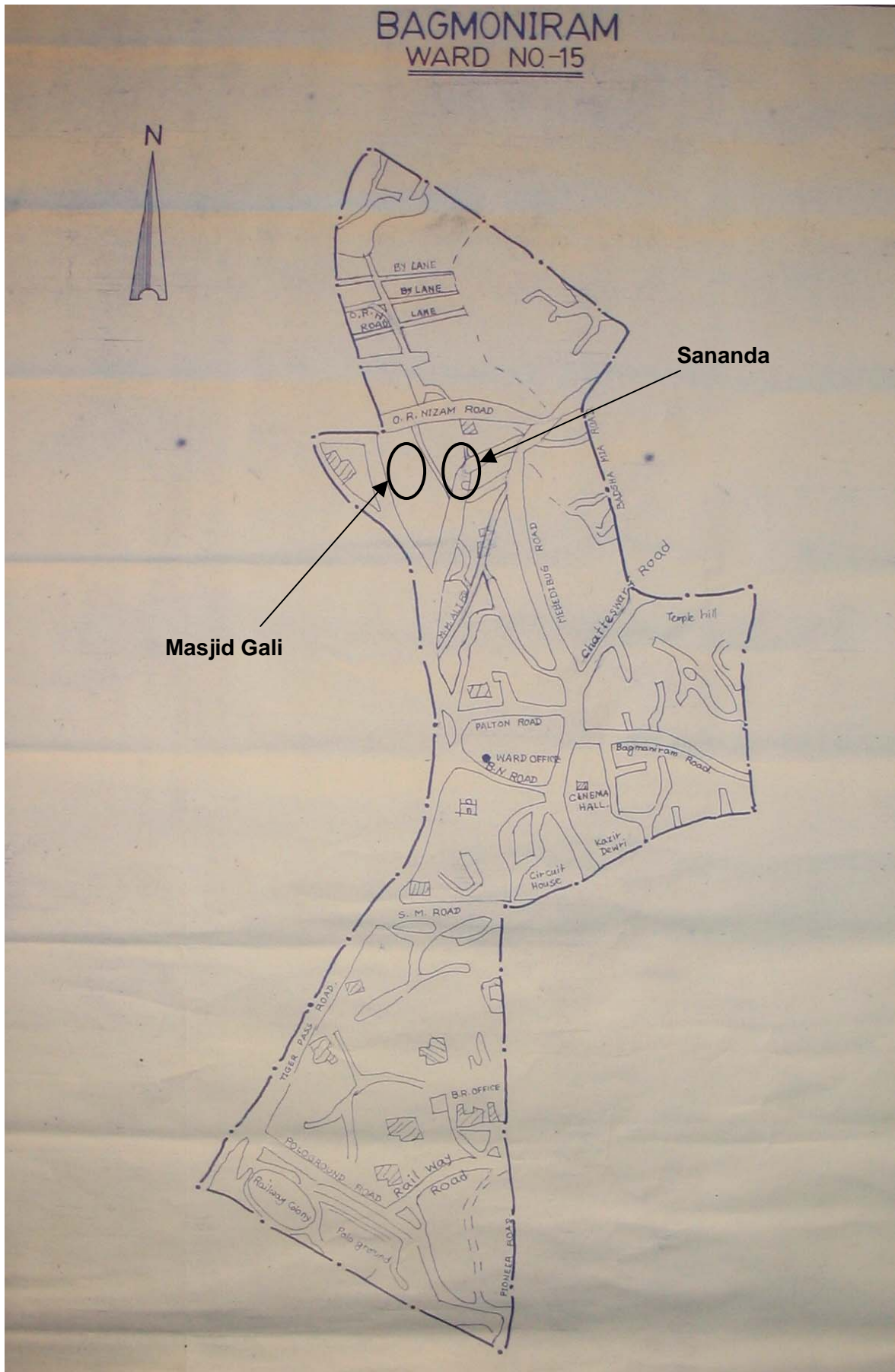
CHITTAGONG CITY CORPORATION AREA ROAD MAP



Annex 3. The research sites in Chittagong City Corporation (CCC)
Source: CCC



Annex 3A. The locations of study sites in *North Agrabad*
Source: CCC



Annex 3B. The locations of study sites in Bagmoniram. Source: CCC



Annex 4. The heaps of garbage at the *Halishore* tracing ground, Chittagong
Photo: Shahjahan H. Bhuiyan



Annex 5. Collection of solid waste for subsistence production
Photo: Shahjahan H. Bhuiyan



Annex 6. Community-based solid waste collection in *Baddanagar*, Dhaka.
Photo: Shahjahan H. Bhuiyan



Annex 7. Community-based solid waste collection in *Halishore*, Chittagong.
Photo: Shahjahan H. Bhuiyan

**Department of Political and Cultural Change
Centre for Development Research (ZEF)
University of Bonn**

**Interview Guide for Household Survey
2002 – 2003**

Note: This questionnaire is only for the academic purpose. The answer you give us will be kept confidential.

Introduction

1. Please complete one questionnaire for each household obtains the information from the head of the household or the spouse.
2. For open-ended questions write the answer at the provided blank spaces. And for questions with alternative answers write the number of the chosen answers in the appropriate place.

Section 1: Identification

Household identification:

Name of the respondent:

Address of the respondent:

200. Area: Dhaka/Chittagong. 202. Zone/Ward: 204. House no:

Interview visit:

Date	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3
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206. Result codes: Completed/not completed (state reasons)

Starting time:

Name of the Interviewer:

Signature

Date:

Name of the Supervisor:

Signature

Date:

Section 2: Information on household members

208. Sex: M/F

210. Age: ranges from 18-30 31-43 44-56 57-above

212. Level of education: Illiterate 1-10 grade Higher secondary Bachelor and above

214. Occupation: Service (Govt./private/NGO) Self employment Business others

216. Marital Status: Single/married/widow/divorced

218. No of children (if applicable):

Section 3: Idea about locality and environment

220. Please state three most important problems of your locality

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

222. Do you think management of solid waste is a problem in your locality?

Yes/no (give reasons for your answer)

224. Do you consider solid waste a threat to the healthy environment and human health?

Yes/no (if yes, plainly state how this could be combated. If not, why?)

226. Can you please name some (say three) common diseases caused due to solid waste?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

228. What is your general opinion about solid waste management (SWM)?

Section 4: Association and networks

I would like to start by asking you the groups or organisations, networks associations, both formal and informal. These could be groups such as religious groups, sports teams or just groups of people who get together regularly to do an activity or talk. As I read the following list of groups please tell me if you belong to this kind of group — and how many such groups do you belong to:

230. Religious, spiritual (such as mosque, church, temple, informal religious group, religious study group); social support group (e.g. various clubs); ethnic based groups (caste, tribe etc); community organizations, neighbourhood associations (community-based SWM initiatives for example), Finance, credit, saving groups (Grameen Bank group, for example); sports group; professional associations (teachers, doctors, engineers, and lawyers associations), political parties, or any other groups. Yes/no.

232. If yes, how many? _____

234. How many people from the household are member of this association? _____

236. If no, would you please state some reasons of not involving with such organisations?

238. Of these groups that you belong to, please prioritised them as the first, second, and third most important in your day-to-day life? [Put the numbers 1, 2, and 3 beside the group as and where applicable].

Religious or spiritual group
Social group
Sport group
Basic service group
Ethnic based group
Community organisation, neighbourhood committee
Finance, credit, savings group
Political parties
Professional associations
Other groups. Please specify _____
Not applicable.

240. How and to what extent these groups contribute to your life? Please state as elaborately as possible.

242. On average how much money (if any) do you contribute to this group in a month?

Please state separately if you are engaged in more than one group.

244. To what extent do you participate in this group's decision making?

246. How have you been included in this group?

1. Through friends
2. Relatives
3. Schoolmates
4. Colleagues
5. Other members of the family
6. Community leader
7. People living in the same locality
9. Others. Please specify _____

248. Who are the members of the associations you are currently involved in?

1. Businessmen
2. Service holders
3. Teachers
4. Retired people (senior citizens)
5. Self-employed people
6. Daily labourer
7. Unemployed persons
8. Students
9. Others

250. How is the group/association funded?

1. By the government
2. NGOs
3. International donors

4. Political parties
5. Contribution from members
6. Do not know
9. Others, please specify _____

252. How do you evaluate the role of these groups/associations in your area?

1. Active
2. Not active
3. Do not know

254. What do you think are the reasons for being active in your area?

1. Commitment of leaders
2. A strong sense for community
3. Facilitators/community organisers/
NGOs/government support/connections
4. Lack of government services
5. Economic gains
6. Exercise of power
9. Others (specify)

256. What do you think are the reason for being NOT active in your area?

1. Lack of leadership
2. No strong sense for community
3. There are no NGOs or people helping out the community
4. Lack of governmental support/lack or no connection with
the government
5. Satisfied with the government services
9. Others (specify)

Section 5: Sociability and everyday social interactions

In addition to participating in group activities or associations, people also do so many activities informally with others. How often do you do the following?

Questions	Frequency
258. Eating meals with people outside the home?	Yes No, why?
260. If yes, how often in a month?	
262. Who are these people?	Family members or relatives Friends Family and friends
264. Do people visit you at your home?	Yes No, why?
266. If yes, how often during the last month?	
268. Who are these people?	Family member or relative Friends

	Friends and families
270. Do you spend time with people outside your household in other ways, such as doing shopping, talking, drinking or just spending time together?	Yes No, please state reason (if possible)
272. If yes, how often during the last month?	
274. Who are these peoples?	Family members or relatives Friends Friends and families
276. In an emergency would you leave your children with your neighbours?	Yes/sometime No
278. How likely is it would you ask your neighbours for help if you were sick?	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither unlikely nor likely 4. Likely 5. Very likely
280. Would you hire someone based on your neighbours' recommendation?	Yes No
282. Did you help to arrange funerals for someone who dies in the neighbourhood?	1. Frequently 1. Occasionally 2. Never
284. Did you sent food to the neighbours' family after a death there?	1. Frequently 2. Occasionally 3. Never
286. Do you or your neighbour help each other in taking sick neighbours to doctors or hospitals?	Yes/sometime No
288. Do you or your neighbours send each other cooked food or drink during religious and social festival or on any happy occasion	1. Frequently 2. Occasionally 3. Never
290. Do you and your neighbours share household utensils?	Yes/sometime No

292. In your neighbourhood has the level of economy of individuals determinant factor to ask for his right?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Do not know

294. Some people live hand to mouth and other have extra resources to protect them. If there is a crisis, such as: loss of job, or ill health, some people quickly become destitute while others remain secure. How would you rate your household's ability to survive such crisis, on the following scale?

1. Very insecure
2. Somewhat insecure
3. Secure

296. How much do you support to your parents, children or other relatives those who are not living with you?

Section 6: Community activities

298. How would you see the behaviour of the inhabitants of the community in helping others?

1. Try to be helpful
2. Just looking out for themselves
3. Do not know

300. Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?

1. Most people can be trusted
2. You have to be too careful in every deal
3. Do not know

302. Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, would they try to be fair?

1. Would take advantage of you
2. Would try to be fair
3. Do not know

304. Overall, how much impact do you think people like you can have in making your neighbourhood/community a better place to live?

1. No impact at all
2. A minor impact
3. Moderate
4. A big impact

306. How well do people in your community get along these days?

1. Not getting along at all
2. Not getting along very well
3. Do not know
4. Getting along quite well
5. Getting along very well

308. Are there any NGOs focusing on environment and sanitation- currently working in your area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Do not know

310. How would you evaluate these NGOs impact on your neighbourhood development?

1. Negative
2. Positive
3. Do not know

312. Have you ever participated voluntarily in community development activities (cleaning of garbage, for example)?

1. Yes
2. No

314. On average, how often did you volunteer in any community activities during the last month?

316. If there is a community development programme are you willing to participate in the program.

1. Willing to participate
2. Not willing
3. Do not know

I am now going to read statements, tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one of them.

318. In your community/neighbourhood, it is generally expected that people will volunteer in community activities?

1. Agree
2. Disagree
3. Do not know

320. People who do not participate in community activities likely to be criticised or should impose social sanction.

1. Agree
2. Disagree
3. Do not know

322. Are there any community level activities in which you are not allowed to participate?

1. Yes
2. No

324. Why are not you allowed to participate?

1. Poverty
2. Gender
3. Ethnic minority
4. Religion
5. Education
6. Age
9. Others (specify) _____

Now I want to ask you how much you trust different groups of people. Check a box. How much do you feel you can trust the people in that group?

	1	2	3	4	5
	Do not trust	To some extent	Average	I trust	To a great extent
326. People in your family					
328. People in your neighbourhood					
330. People from other religion group					
332. Local government					
334. Courts/police					
336. Government services (education, health, electricity, water etc.)					
338. NGOs/community-based organisation					

340. To which association, do you think, majority of the inhabitants of this community are member?

1. Social group
2. Religious associations
3. Professional association
4. Basic service group
5. Neighbourhood development committee (particularly for SWM)
9. Others (specify)_____

342. If partnerships with NGOs and Government organisations are to be created for the development of your neighbourhood, which association will you recommend?

1. Social group
2. Religious associations
3. Neighbourhood development committee
4. I do not recommend any
9. Others (please specify)

I am going to ask you the following questions about the association you just recommended: interviewers please refer to the answer for question 340)

344. Who are the members of this [...] association?

Close relatives

1. People from the same locality
2. Friends/schoolmates
3. Anyone in the community but known

4. Do not know

346. Please state the economic level of the members of [...] association looks like.

348. Do the leaders of the association are elected democratically?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Do not know

350. What happen if a member does not pay the fee?

1. Asked to leave the association
2. Delay in payment accepted
3. Nothing happens
4. No fee

352. Are you willing to participate through your neighbourhood association in partnership for the improvement of the community (particularly garbage disposal)?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I am not sure

354. In what terms do you like to participate?

1. In terms of contributing money
 2. In terms of labour
 3. In terms of money and labour
 4. Through Advise
-

III. Organisation of community initiatives for SWM (applicable for those people who organises an SWM initiatives)

110. How long are you residing in this area? _____

112. Are you a permanent inhabitant of the locality?

114. Do you live in your own house or in a rented one? Own/rented

116. When (and how) you became interested to organise an SWM initiative in your locality?

118. Why did you involve organising an SWM initiative?

1. Belongingness to the locality;
2. Economic gains;
3. To exercise power over the others;
4. To realise social/political benefits (status)
9. Others

120. Whether or not the common inhabitants support (endorse) your initiative? If yes, how did you take their consent?

1. Through individual discussion
2. Group meeting/discussion
3. Contact through friends/relatives
9. Others (please specify).

122. Did you meet the people of your locality during the past 2-month? If yes, where?

1. In occasions like matrimonial, burial etc.
2. Local club, tea stall, and shops
3. Daily/weekly gathering at the time of offering prayers

124. How often do you meet the people of your locality? What are subject matters of your discussion?

Subject matters of the discussion are: 1. promotion of local development through community help; 2. individual and national economic issues; 3. local and national political issues; 4. private and informal discussions; and 5. amalgamation of all.

126. How the local people responses to this initiative (i.e. mode of participation)?

1. Participate in the meeting regularly;
2. Pay monthly contributions regularly
3. Passively participate and do not pay monthly contribution
4. Do not participate in the meeting but pays contribution
5. Neither joins the meeting nor pays the contribution.

128. According to you, what are the motivating factors to the local people to support your initiative?

1. Know each other as both service providers and users live in the same locality
2. Trust the organisers as they do common good for the locality

3. Economic benefits (e.g. getting higher price for renting houses)
4. Cleanliness
9. Others.

130. What are the major challenges to organise a community-based SWM initiative? Please state your experience:

132. What do you do with the collected solid waste?

1. Dumping to the municipality bins
2. Sell it to the garbage collectors for reuse
3. Motivate people to use as manure through composting
4. Give it to the *tokais* (street urchins).

134. Do you think community-based SWM initiatives contribute to the reduction of urban poverty? Please elaborate.

IV. For the community leaders who did not organise community-based SWM initiatives

136. How long are you residing in this locality? Years _____

138. Are you a permanent inhabitant of this locality? Yes/no

140. Do you live in your own house/rented one? Own/rented.

142. Do you consider the management of solid waste as a major problem of your locality? If yes, what are the major challenges to organise a community-based SWM initiative (will it be a challenge to the effectiveness of your leadership)? Please explain. If not, why?

144. Did you meet the people of your locality during the past 2-month? How (for answers see 122) and frequency of meeting (for answers see 124)?

146. Did you talk to the people of your locality about SWM problem? What is their general view?

1. Aware but do not want to spare time and money
2. Unaware because of lack of information and education
3. Unwilling to involve with the SWM initiatives
4. Satisfied with the municipality service
9. Others

148. Have you ever tried to gather them together to discuss the affects of solid waste on human and environment (and also to inform them how solid waste can contribute to their subsistence production)?

150. What are your general views about the people of your locality?

1. Friendly, cooperative, and loyal to local leadership

2. Unfriendly but loyal to local leadership
3. Unfriendly, non-cooperative, and not loyal to local leadership.

152. Do you think that you are trustworthy to your people? Please give reasons for your answer.
