



DEMOCRACYWATCH

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Democracywatch started as a trust registered in 1995, which later became an NGO on 24th July 1997. It has a strong reputation with strengths in networking, advocacy and awareness-building campaigns, training workshops, surveys, and opinion polls.

Its operating areas are:

Good Governance:

- Strengthening governance;
- Strengthening election process.

Human Rights:

- Upholding people's rights.

It should be recognized that the areas are not completely separate. Good governance will help to address human rights issues. With a pro-people, accountable, and transparent governance mechanism, election processes can be implemented more effectively and human rights and justice will be ensured.

Democracywatch's program ambitions have the following goals:

- Strong local government at all levels that is pro-people, accountable and responsive;
- Effective, participatory and accountable parliament;
- A free and fair electoral process through which people elect appropriate representatives at all levels;
- Pro-people and effective institutions (service delivery and media) at all levels;
- A society that respects people's rights and protects vulnerable groups.

Mission

Democracywatch aims to establish a society with pro-people governance at all levels where human rights are upheld.

This is achieved through strengthening democratic institutions and electoral process, sensitizing media, and promoting equal rights.

Vision

Work for a sustainable democracy in which people's rights are ensured, irrespective of sex, religion or ethnicity.

Motto

"Involving people, building democracy"

Objectives

1. To promote democratic culture and practices;
2. To strengthen local government at all levels that is pro-people, accountable, responsive and transparent;
3. To campaign for a free and fair electoral process through which people elect appropriate representatives;
4. To create a society that respects human rights and protects vulnerable groups especially women.

Geographical program area

Many of the activities of Democracywatch are operated from its central (Dhaka) office. In addition, the organization has project offices at Mymensingh, Nilphamari, Jessore, Gazipur and Dinajpur, Barisal, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Sylhet and Khulna. Apart from these offices the organization carries out voter education and election monitoring programs in partnership with district and upazila level organization in almost all districts in the country.

Special beneficiaries / target people

Government institutions, especially the local government (Union Parishad) chairs, members and female members elected to reserved seats; all of the members of the Bangladesh Union Parishad Forum, community members who participate in the Union Parishad activities, namely: Planning, budgeting and project implementation, and joint UP-community oversight of health, education and agriculture services, media professionals, poor, women and ethnic minorities.

Previous and existing programs

Current Major Activities:

- ▶ Ensuring effective community participation in Union Parishad affairs through Study Circle
- ▶ Enhancing UPs capacity in democratic and participatory decision making and effective advocacy incorporating stakeholders especially poor, women and ethnic minorities.
- ▶ Sensitizing media, development organizations, government and other stakeholders on Millennium Development Goals
- ▶ People's Reporting Centre for making people aware of local government services and make them participate in local activities
- ▶ Increase interaction between Local Government (LG) and community
- ▶ Build network of Union Parishad for strengthening LG
- ▶ Media monitoring on LG and Human Rights (HR) issues
- ▶ Journalists' training on human rights reporting at national and regional levels
- ▶ Networking of human rights reporters in divisional headquarters
- ▶ Opinion poll surveys on various socio-political issues
- ▶ Elections monitoring
- ▶ Increase the ability of local Government Association to be able to demand policy reforms that expands the roles and responsibilities of local government.
- ▶ Encourage voters to vote for appropriate contestant.
- ▶ Human Resource Development Training Program (Life skills & Life style)

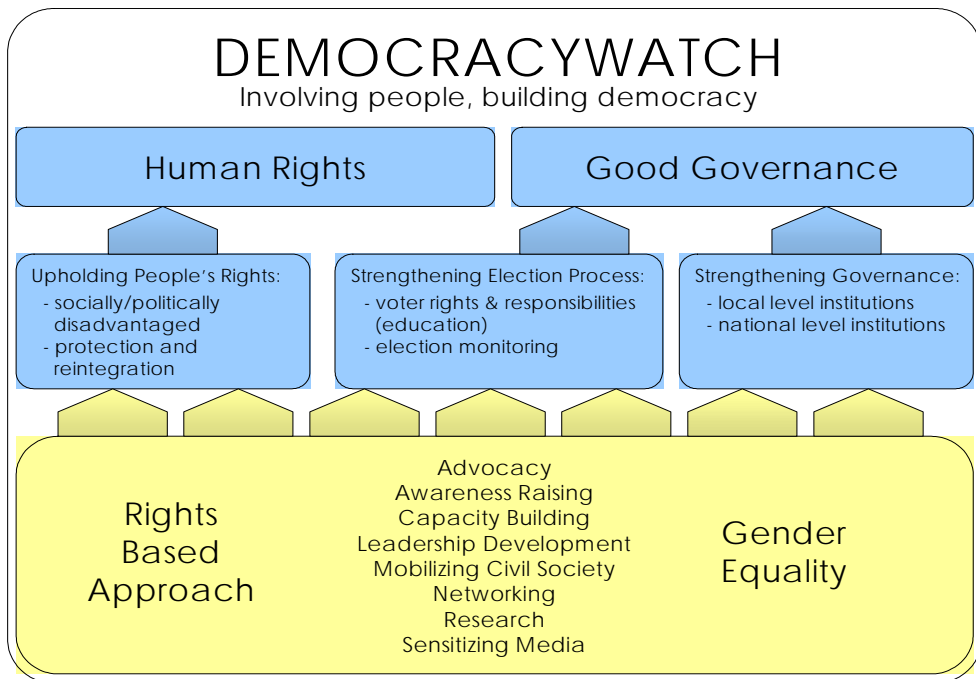
Past Major Activities:

- ▶ Promotion of democratic culture and values – nationwide coverage through Democracy Awareness Programme (DAP)
- ▶ Media monitoring on governance and human rights issues

- ▶ Initiating Study Circles in union parishad
- ▶ Elections monitoring and voter education
- ▶ Leadership and skills development training for youth
- ▶ Support parliamentarians in their constituencies through internship
- ▶ Gender and Governance Training Programme
- ▶ Capacity building for grassroots NGO activists

Organization’s infrastructure and strength

Democracywatch is a national level organization with a strong reputation with strengths in networking, advocacy and awareness building campaigns, training workshops, surveys, and opinion polls.



Program Management Coordination and Evaluation

The Governing Body (GB), comprising of ten members including the chairperson and the Founder Executive Director (ED) are the supreme authority and responsible for smooth operation of Democracywatch. With the consent of GB, the ED appoints Program Managers as key operational persons for the organization. Program Managers are overall responsible for the successful implementation of projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation

There is a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) unit who regularly monitor all the activities. M&E produces reports for the GB and ED with a copy to the Project Manager. However, to have more control, the Project Manager regularly monitors and assists the program team members.

Reporting system

Democracywatch produces quarterly and annual reports for different projects and submits them to donors. Moreover, the organization prepares a consolidated annual report and publishes it.

Experience in mobilizing people, resources, etc

Democracywatch organizes public hearing sessions, dialogues, meetings and workshops on different local and community issues at different levels. The main objectives of these activities are to develop interaction among MPs, local government officials, civil society representatives and individuals also initiating the practice to question the administration, elected representatives and policymakers for accountability and transparency.

Holding Democracy Festivals throughout the country, poster exhibitions, documentaries and arranging workshops on democracy and human rights issues are also important and effective ways of informing large groups of people. Democracywatch organizes Democracy Festivals each year in different parts of the country. At these festivals people from all sections of life, especially the younger generation participates spontaneously, giving an opportunity to know more about democracy and the history of democracy. Embassies of mature democratic countries, NGOs, development agencies also take part in this event to inform the public about their work towards developing a democratic system.

Democracywatch has a Mobile Theatre team. It is a group of twenty young men and women. The team developed a number of plays focusing on local government, women and child rights issues. Its primary objective is to spread the messages in remote areas through regular performances by the group. Generally, the mobile theatre shows are performed to create awareness among the target group about various social, democratic and individual rights and problems. Mobile theatre, through its participatory theatre workshops, easily reaches people and leads to greater understanding of various socio-political problems and allows them to confront these problems through the audience's participation. It is without doubt, a very modern method of communication and a very effective means in awareness building.

Resources such as technical expertise, equipments, premises, fund, time, media access etc.

The organization has technical expertise in the following areas:

- ▶ Have the potentiality to conduct training on democracy and good governance, human rights and capacity building for the local government institutions.
- ▶ Capacity to organize advocacy programmes through seminars, workshops, hard question sessions, campaigns, quiz, debate etc. in different social issues.
- ▶ Experience to perform mobile theatre and theatre workshop on woman and children issues in different area.
- ▶ Holding thematic film shows and documentaries in different areas of the country.
- ▶ Ability to conduct surveys and opinion polls on various socio-political issues.

Democracywatch is a forward-looking organization with a team of young, energetic, enthusiastic and motivated people. The organization has all the up-to-date equipments and IT facilities for program implementation and staff development. Democracywatch is appreciated by all its ex- and current staff, other NGOs and donor agencies for its working environment and premises.

Democracywatch is well known as a media focused organization. It has trained over 250 journalists on investigative reporting on both human rights and governance. It has developed a network of more than 150 working journalists in 6 division headquarters. The Executive Director has 30 years experience with the BBC world Service.

List of projects with different development partners:

Project Name	Name of Development Partners	Purpose of the Project	Contract Value (in Bangladeshi Taka)	Contract Period	Service Location
MDG: Training and awareness through media advocacy network	British High Commission	Increase awareness nationally of MDGs, performance of donors and govt. in achieving the goals	1,878,774	December 2004 to June 2005	Khulna, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Sylhet, Barisal and Dhaka divisional headquarters
Making local government standing committee responsible for health service delivery to women and children	Australian High Commission	Formation or reformation and activation of standing committee on health and UP-Community oversight of women and child health services	386,800	December 2004 to June 2005	Muktagacha Upazila, Mymensingh
Active citizenship and leadership training for youths	British Council	Create a pool of 150 young individuals as active citizens with leadership skills in the areas of good governance, human rights, HIV/AIDS, cultural diversity and environment, who will work as change agents in their community and institutions	2,153,000	November 2004 to March 2005	Dhaka and Mymensingh
People's Reporting Center (PRC)	HRGG-PSU / Danida	Create an enabling situation for UPs to develop their accountability and credibility	19,781,000	October 2003 to September 2005	Nilphamari, Jessore, Dinajpur and Gazipur
Regional Media Training on Human Rights Reporting	British High Commission	Improving Local Journalists' skills for objective Human Rights reporting	2,285,200	July 2003 to April 2004	Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal
Functioning local government through awareness, advocacy, & capacity building	ARD Inc. / USAID	Create awareness and demand amongst constituencies on the role and functions of local government and initiate policy debates/deliberations through MPs to accelerate the process of establishing a responsive and effective local government system in Bangladesh.	5,309,975	May 2003 to October 2005	Mymensingh, Tangail and Dhaka
<i>Study Circles for Effective Union Parishads</i>	<i>National Democratic Institute</i>	<i>Creating awareness among the people on the roles and responsibilities of UP officials towards the proper functioning</i>	<i>2,05,854</i>	<i>May 2003 to January</i>	<i>Mymensingh</i>

	(NDI)	of their Ups		2004	
Union Parishad Election Monitoring – 2003	Danida	Monitoring of Union Parishad Election-2003 in order to achieve free and fair election at local levels	3,070,000	January to March 2003	Country-wide
Assessing Union Parishad Women's Training	PSU / Canadian High Commission	Assessing the quality and effectiveness of the training courses conducted for the UP women representatives	546,000	July to November 2002	Country-wide
Media Training on Human Rights Reporting	British High Commission	Improving Local Journalists' skills for objective Human Rights reporting	1,763,130	June 2002 to March 2003	Dhaka
Women Representation in Bangladesh Parliament	British Council	An opinion poll on Women Representation in Bangladesh Parliament	160,000	July 2002 to February 2003	Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal
Democracy Awareness Programme	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Promotion of democracy and good governance	1,91,05,000	July 1999 to June 2002	Dhaka, Mymensingh, Chittagong and Comilla
Services delivered by the City Corporation (s)	ActionAid Bangladesh	Evaluating the standard of services and citizen's level of understanding and satisfaction	3,48,000	December 2000 to February 2001	Chittagong
Internship Project with the Parliamentarians (IPP)	ActionAid Bangladesh	Increase interaction among Members of Parliament, civil society and the local government bodies	3,26,225	July 2000 to February 2001	Dhaka and 15 constituencies of respective MPs
Popular Slogan	The Asia Foundation	Communicating the mass as a part of voter education for promoting free and fair election	2,93,600	January to May 2001	Nation-wide
Election Watch 2001	The Asia Foundation	To observe whether the electoral rules are being followed properly and voter's level of awareness.	38,46,400	August to October 2001	177 Constituencies
Voter Awareness Poster 1	The Asia Foundation	To encourage voters to participate for holding free and fair election	17,62,150	August to October 2001	Country-wide voter awareness programme
Voter Awareness Poster 2	The Asia Foundation	To aware voters about election violence and intimidation	22,67,500	August to October 2001	Country-wide voter awareness programme
Electronic Media Watch	The American Center	Distinguish the role of media for the promotion of democracy	5,70,000	July to October 2001	Dhaka
Good Governance and Gender	British Council / DFID	Local government and community development programme	40,00,000	November 1998 to November	Mymensingh

Participation Programme				r 1999	
Promotion of Good Governance in Schools and Communities	British Council / DFID	Educate school children on child rights, basic health and hygiene and mental development	9,57,000	September 2000 to February 2001	Muktagacha, Mymensingh
Studies on Democracy, Life-skills and Lifestyle	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights	87,00,000	October 1997 to January 1999	Dhaka
Studies on Democracy	Royal Norwegian Embassy and private funding by trustees of Democracy watch	Promotion of Democratic culture and values	41,00,000	October 1995 to April 1996	Dhaka

Network / collaboration

- ▶ Democracywatch is a member of the governance coalition. Other members of this coalition are: Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Khan Foundation, Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Action Aid Bangladesh and Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK)
- ▶ Apart from the governance coalition Democracywatch is a member of Election Monitoring Working Group (EMWG), which comprises 29 member organizations. During 2001 general elections Democracywatch deployed around 10,000 observers in 177 constituencies. EMWG observed all 300 constituencies through deploying about 135,000 domestic observers.
- ▶ During the last local government (UP) elections in 2003, the Democracywatch led the Election Monitoring Platform (EMP) where eight other national level organizations worked together. The organization trained and deployed 16,000 observers all around the country.
- ▶ Democracywatch has become a member of Department of Public Information (DPI) of the United Nations in 2004.