Ward Shava
Participatory Approach for Development Planning

Ward shava facilitates participatory decision making at grassroots level and assists local government institutions for participatory development planning. The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009 has included a chapter, 2nd Chapter, on the Ward where the ward shava, its process of organizing, scopes and functions are detailed out. Through the Ward Shava, opinion of the constituencies about mobilization and utilization of public resources has been formally recognized as an official procedure. It is the basis of the annual plan and 5-years development plan of the LGIs. Ward Shava is included in the Union Parishad Operational Manual published by Local Government Division. MJF and its local partners have been assisting Union Parishads under its working areas to enhance effectiveness of Ward shava through training and capacity development initiatives.

An effective Ward Shava: Important areas

- Union Parishad finalize the schedule of ward shava and inform Upazila parishad and all other relevant GoB agencies.
- Union Parishad form Union Planning Committee comprising elected representatives and local community leaders which get approval in monthly meeting of Union Parishad.
- Organizing FGD and Courtyard meeting prior to each Ward-shava is effective for mobilizing constituents and streamlining issues to be raised in the meeting.
- Despite issuing formal notice, other communication channels are also used to inform the meeting date, venue and agenda.
- Seating arrangement along with sound system are managed by the Union Parishad.
- Citizen can express their comments/opinion for qualitative improvement of ward shava.
- Elected representative of the concerned ward acts as chair of the meeting and women representative elected from reserved quota acts advisory role in the meeting.
- Audit Report of Union Parishad is also placed in ward shava for comments/feedback and recommendations.

Result areas

- Participation of grassroots community in development planning.
- A local platform to hear the voice of voiceless particularly from the underprivileged women and marginalized community.
- Identification of community need and required priority action.

Participatory planning, scheme identification and prioritization are taking place during Ward shava

- Preparing list of potential beneficiaries for social protection.

Meeting schedule

Two ward meeting is expected in a year. First meeting need to be held during February- April for planning and recommending budgetary allocation and the second meeting in November-December to review the implementation of planned work and utilization of resources.

Facilitation of ward meeting: Either Union Parishad Secretary or a UP Member moderate the ward shava and that is participated by 5% of local community who are included in voter list.

Issues to be considered in the 1st Ward Shava

a) Identification of community needs through several meetings in different parts of the ward and also identification of potential beneficiaries for social protection schemes.
b) Considering the community needs, a priority based activity list is being prepared and list of

potential social safety beneficiaries is also displayed in the venue of ward meeting.

c) Review implementation of last year's activity and analyze the cause of unfinished task.

d) Readout the proposed activities and getting support from the participants on priority list of work.

Issues to be considered in the 2nd Ward Shava

a) Explain the justification in favour of the plans which were finalized and also the arguments for not taking some other plans.

b) Review the progress of development plans.

c) Disclosure of financial statement and audit report.

d) Vote of thanks by the Chairman/representative from Upazila Parishad/by local distinguished person.

Budgetary Allocation for Ward Shava

Union Parishad needs to be encouraged to manage expenditure of ward meeting from its own fund. Alternatively the local NGOs can extend support to union parishad for organizing ward meeting.

Observation of ward shava

As Ward Meeting is public meeting, so presence of the respective GoB officials in ward shava is highly required. Proper observation contributes towards getting accuracy of public interaction on community need assessment, displaying the list of potential social protection beneficiaries and also contribute in getting the feedback from ultra-poor.

Reporting

Ward shava is followed by formal reporting where proceeding minutes/report are prepared and distributed to the participants with copy to respective officials.

MJF's Contribution to make Ward-shava effective

MJF has facilitated Local Government Institutions (LGI) to conduct a total of 2022 ward shava (Avg. 106 participants per event) in last three years where 214922 grassroots citizens including 41% female participated effectively. MJF experience shows that need identification at the community level and prioritizing these through Ward-Shava are the precondition to materialize the actual needs of the excluded people. For instance, over the tenure, out

of total proposed 3505 community led prioritized projects, 915 project have been implemented at 128 LGIs.

Challenges of an effective Ward-Shava

- Prior schedule of 9 Ward-Shava for 9 wards within February-April period every year.
- Letting the stakeholders, especially the Upazila Parishad and DD-LG, inform the schedule of Ward-Shava.
- Adequate publicity to encourage people of the ward to participate in the discussion and raise their opinion.
- Prorating proposals (making people understand giving priority to the common issues rather than those of the individuals).
- Making the discussion fruitful in the Ward-Shava (Convergence of discussion and reaching to decisions)
- Documenting Ward-Shava proceedings and decisions.
- Cost for Ward-Shava (huge topics in limited time) organizing schedule prior and circulate prior planning for 9 ward –shava.

Issues to be considered for making the Ward-shava effective

- To ensure effectiveness of Ward-Shava the following issues need to be considered ;
  i) Community needs are identified properly.
  ii) Voice of the poor and marginalized people is captured and the list of social security beneficiaries are displayed.
  iii) Number of the schemes proposed by ward-shava are included in the Union Parishad's annual development plan.
- Ensure budgetary provision for Union Parishad to organize the ward shava.