

**Provisional Community Profile of Aloknagar, Manikganj**  
**A basic sketch of economic, social and political characteristics of urban site**

**WeD-PROSHIKA, Bangladesh**  
**March 2006**

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Note: This team is grateful to Salim Ahmed Purvez, Sharmin Afroz, Mohammed Kumruzzaman, Asad Bin Rashid for their various supports.

## Section 1

### Introduction to Aloknagar

This is a provisional community profile, which describes a basic sketch of economic, social and political characteristics of an urban site, Aloknagar. With the intention of describing these characteristics, the profile provides mainly an overview of the site that includes a range of features such as infrastructure, people and place, household pattern and the changing pattern of the community life. It also encompasses the community resources, shocks and opportunities as well as well-being indicators of the community people. In order to explore these types of information some qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and techniques such as group discussion, observation, interview and census by WeD Bangladesh team have been used.

#### **Physical Overview of the Site**

##### **Location**

Aloknagar is the central town under Manikganj sadar thana in Manikganj district. This town is located under ward number 2 in the municipality area. The total area of ward number 2 is 1487 acres (BBS, 1991) covering different roads and lanes i.e. Reserved Tank *Purba Par*, Reserved Tank *Paschim Par*, Kalibari Lane, Mosque or High School Lane, Girls' School Road, and *Paschim* Aloknagar- near Zalkhola Mosque. The town, according to the participants, is divided into three broader areas: commercial, residential and administrative areas (DC office, court and other government offices).

##### **Infrastructure and its General Attributes**

It has been found that the overall facilities of the town are good. For examples, electricity is available across the town; sanitation system is good; and most residents use the water supplied by the local government. Few dwellers, however, use tube-wells for drinking water.

##### *Facilities at a Glance*

- *Pacca* road
- Electricity
- Three high schools
- Three mosques
- Two temples
- Four markets
- Sanitation
- Supply of water for drinking
- Piped gas
- NGOs
- One club
- One government girls' college

From the above facilities, it is seen that there is a government hospital, which provides all kinds of treatments. Additionally, there are a government-run maternity hospital, and different private clinics and health complexes. All roads are *pacca*. There are three high schools, two primary schools and many private kindergartens in the town. There are also two mosques, a big temple, a market (*Rafiq Sarak* is basically a commercial area) and five ponds. Very few people use water of these ponds in order to wash utensils and for bathing. There is a bridge at the entrance of the town and a culvert in the middle of the town.

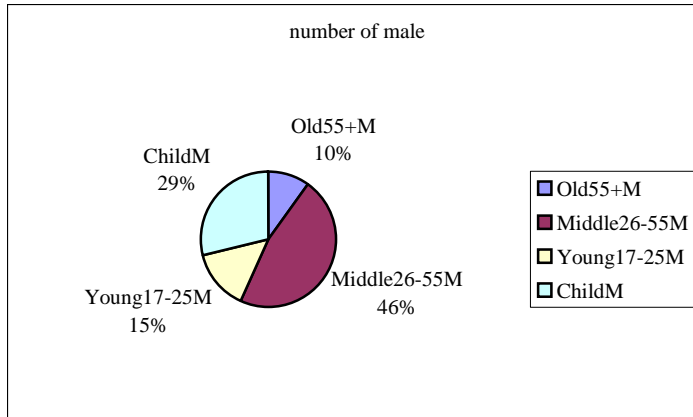
## **People and Place**

### **Population**

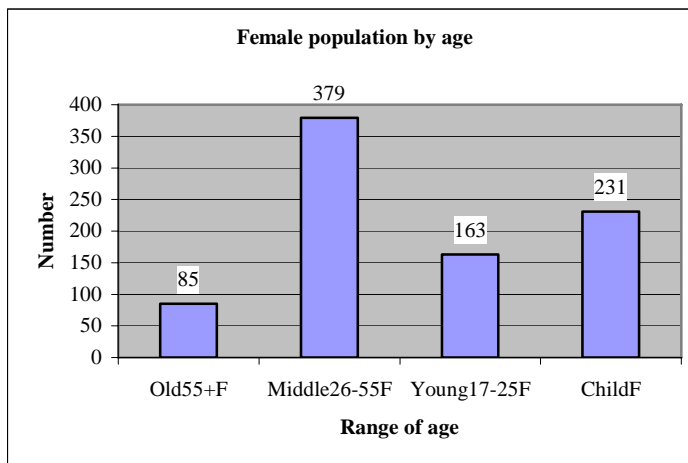
According to the BBS 1991, the total number of households in Alokknagar is 2505. Total population is 12094. Amongst them, the male and the female populations are 6417 and 5677 respectively. Data from the census reveal that the majority of the people are Muslims (65%) and a significant number of the Hindu households (35%) compose the population with different castes and sub-castes in Alokknagar. However, among the Muslims such castes and sects are not found. Regardless of a special type of division of people and place, power, status, wealth and resource control create a hierarchy among them. This type of division is, in fact, created by the society.

### **Sex Ratio, Age Composition and Other Categories**

The dwellers of the town have been clustered into four categories based on their ages. The census data reveals that the oldest people - both male and female aged over 55 years - show the same per cent (10%). Moreover, the middle class (26 - 55 years) of the males and the females is also shows the same figure being 46% of the total population. But there is a sharp difference between the ages of the young males and females (17 - 25), which account for 15% and 19% respectively. Lastly, the children's age group (0 - 16 years) of both males and females represents almost the double of the young males and females. Thus it is clear from the above picture that the middle age group of people is the dominant in Alokknagar.



Source: census by WeD team



Source: census by WeD Team

### Religion, caste and clan

Data suggest that only the *Bangalis* live in Alokknagar. Amongst the total households, the majority are Muslims and the minority are Hindus. Again, amongst the Hindu households the dominant caste is *Boishya*. Both the Muslim and the Hindu households are related to a variety of clans such as Chawdhury, Mollah, Khan, Shikder, Sheikh, Miah, Khondaker, Kazi, Roy, Haulader, Juaddar, Horijon, Islam, Sarker, Bonik, Das, Mitra, Shah, Sen, Bhadro, Mondal, Mir, Huda, Bepari, Kapali, Bhuyan, Karigor, Dewan, Datta, Poddar, Syed, Mirza, Talukdar, Prodhan, Matber, Kayostho, Pal, Munshi, Ghosh, Pramanik, Kapali, Gupta, Akanda, Jugolder and Morol. Also, there are titles like Doctor, Hazi Shaheb, Master, Babu, Sarker, Chawdhury, Neta, Da, Mollah, Shaheb, MP, Shah, Biswas, Bosu, Voumik, Muktijuddah, Master, Shil, Das, Pal, Kazi, Nayeb, Vaskor and Sen.

### The Pattern and Number of Households

It is learnt from the BBS data that there are 2505 households in Alokknagar with municipality, as mentioned before. Household structure and headship have

been thought about in order to find the patterns of the households. There are two major types of households have been found in Aloknagar:

- nuclear household; and
- non-nuclear household.

The most common form is nuclear household comprising a married couple with unmarried children. The information gathered from the lanes and the roads and from the discussions with the dwellers reveals that the form of most households is nuclear. The second most common form of family organisation consists of more than one married couple. There are many causes behind the genesis of the nuclear families in Aloknagar. The community people have mentioned some indicators such as family burden, conflict among family members, and disruption of norms and values from in the society. To manage a small family is easy because a less number of members create less tension. On the other hand, a large family incurs huge family burden. The census data suggest that 90 per cent households are male-headed while 10 per cent are female-headed.

### ***Residential status***

Class	Residential status				Total
	Permanent	Tenant	Quarter	Shelter	
Rich	80	19	3	0	102
Middle	71	140	5	3	219
Poor	8	33	0	11	52
<b>Total</b>	159	192	8	14	373

Source: census by WeD team

The census data presents that there are 373 households in the research area. Amongst them, the residential patterns are different among the rich, the middle and the poor. The data shows that out of 102 rich households, 80 are permanent, 19 tenants and three live in quarters. Although the middle class is almost double the rich class, the number of tenants is 140, which is seven times more than the number of the rich tenants. A negligible number of poor households are permanent while out of 52 poor households 33 live as tenants in this town. No rich man has been found living in shelter whereas three middle and 11 poor households live on others' land. In a broader sense, out of 373 households, 159 are permanent or live in their own houses, 192 in rented houses rent, eight in government quarters and 14 live on others' land.

### **Social Settlement and its Mapping**

In order to understand the social settlement and its mapping, it is necessary to locate the roads and the lanes at first. The main road named Shahid Rafiq Sarak runs from the east to the west. Based on the residence, market and office roads and lanes are such named as girls' high school road, and five lanes as mosque/high school, Chand Miah, Kalibari, Madrasha and Shornakarpotty

lanes. All these roads, *Sarak* and lanes bear particular characteristics to some extent. Again, it is observed that broadly, there are three types of social settlement in this town, which are as follows:

- residential area;
- market area; and
- office area.

### **Residential Area**

As mentioned above, there are many roads and lanes where different categories of people reside. The north side of Rafiq Sarak, for instance, features some visible factors such as the dominance of the nuclear families and the male-headed households. The main occupation of their wives is that they are housewives dealing with their household activities with the assistance of men-servants. Most of households' origin is within Manikganj district and around half of them have agricultural land in their origins. In terms of education, the level is high equally among both the males and the females. Roughly, more than half of the households live in *pucca* building and they are both the Muslims and the Hindus. It is notable that the business shops, especially for the Hindu people, are situated on the grand floors of their dwelling houses. On the other hand, there are some poor households on *khasland*, who collect potable water available from government service; and they do not have gas and sanitary latrine facilities. Most of the households possess luxurious household assets like fridge, colour TV with satellite connection, etc. In addition, for recreation young men go outside the house; young women stay inside their households; and old men spend time by chatting in the local libraries, clubs and pharmacies.

### ***East of Kalibari Lane***

Middle class families are dominant in the areas where both the tenants and the permanent residents have concentrated. A big pond centres round all these households. Amongst the households, nuclear families and male-headed households are prevalent there. Although the middle class families enjoy the government service facilities like gas, electricity and water, the poor do not use gas. As the population density is comparatively high, the living environment is not so clean as of Rafiq *Sarak*. Most of houses are made of bricks but their roofs are tin-made though few multi-storied buildings are visible. Nevertheless, television, one of the recreational means, is common to all classes of households.

### ***Madrasha Lane (east & west sides)***

There is a big pond in the west of *Madrasha* Lane where around seven Hindu households live with none in the east. Amongst them, three are settlers, and the rest live in their own houses which are multi-stored buildings. Different types of shops have been set up in both sides of this lane.

### ***South of Girls' High School Road***

The owner of Basundhara Group Limited, who is one of the richest and the most powerful families in Bangladesh, lives in the south of this road. Moreover, a rich and powerful family named Pak *Bagicha* is situated in this side. The middle class and nuclear families of which five are female-headed are dominant. The poor collect portable water from the pond. As fuel they use firewood, as they do not have gas. The rest of the people use gas. The poor use ring slab latrines. Television is one of the main means of recreation for the rich, the middle and the poor.

### ***Chand Miah Lane***

A unique feature is seen in this lane. Most households are rich and middle while few poor households are concentrated in a particular area. The population density is high in this lane because of the multi-stored buildings. All the households enjoy government-delivered service facilities like gas, water and electricity. Both the businessmen and the service holders live in this lane.

### ***Office Area***

It has been seen that the offices are not situated along all roads and lanes. Our observation indicates that most of the government offices are set up in the west of Mosque Lane. Some important institutes such as *Pourasava* building, government girls' college, club, banks, NGOs offices are set up on both sides of Rafiq *Sarak*. In addition, some government and non-government offices are lying scattered along some roads and lanes.

### ***Market Area***

There are some markets in the town each of which depicts distinctive characteristics. *Dudh* bazaar, for example, is situated in the east of the town where daily necessities are sold and bought. People from almost every section buy and sell daily necessities everyday. Additionally, there are some markets such as tin and rice *pottis* (sales corner), and some garments markets like Singapore Market where readymade dresses are bought and sold. These markets are set up in Rafiq *Sarak*. Of course, a number of people buy and sell their daily goods in Manikganj bus stand market. It has been seen that the male members usually go to markets to meet their daily needs, but for buying other goods than these, both the men and the women go to market.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SITE

### Changing Pattern of the Community Life

#### Economic Changes

From the economic point of view, different types of changes occurred over the last decade.

A significant change has occurred in the business sector, which plays a positive role in the economic life of the town.

#### Major economic changes

Change in business sector  
Diversity in employment opportunity  
Remittance (cash flow) through migration  
NGO intervention  
Infrastructure

The number of service-holders has increased in the town with the increase in the number of highly educated people. The poor have now taken to rickshaw/van pulling, tailoring, motor vehicle driving, small trading etc. A rickshaw/van puller's daily income varies between 100-and120 taka while a tailor's average daily income ranges between 150 and 200 taka. Along with occupational diversity, the town dwellers now have greater mobility both within the country and outside. A significant number of people migrate to other districts of the country to earn better income. Some people also migrate overseas for jobs and education and contribute to the town economy through remittance.

The NGOs play a role in bringing about a change in the poor people's lives. BRAC, ASA, *Grameen* Bank, PROSHIKA, IDB and some local NGOs have micro-financing programmes for income generation by the poor. Some organizations like BRAC and PROSHIKA provide other facilities as well. BRAC imparts training on livestock and poultry rearing and primary education, sanitation facilities, and PROSHIKA on primary education with the aim to enhance their efficiency. There are some commercial points where numerous shops cater for the daily need or essentials of the town dwellers. There are some markets such as ready-made garments, electronic market, tin *potti* and rice *potti* playing a decisive role in changing the economy of the town.

#### Physical Changes

With the changes in other aspects physical changes have remarkably occurred. Although many changes are visible the important four of them are given below:

- infrastructure;
- reserved tank;
- transportation system; and
- traffic jam.

### *Infrastructure*

The Indian subcontinent was divided in 1945. The major changes occurred during the regime of Ershad, the former President of Bangladesh. The Dhaka - Aricha highway was constructed in 1964. The major changes happened after the construction of this highway. Until 1964 there was no multi-storeyed building in this town. There were tin-roofed houses along both sides of Manikganj road. Prior to the independence of Bangladesh there was no bridge. People used to cross the river by boats.

Women started to go to college in 1972. Devendra government college was established in 1942. Before the establishment, the college was tin-made. There was a tin-made hospital in the town. The existing district commissioner office and the magistrate court were built after 1974 and 1956 respectively.

After the regime of Ershad, the structural changes have started. Before Ershad came to power there had been 19 districts in Bangladesh. Having come to power he divided 19 districts into 64 districts. After the 64 districts had been declared the major changes started. There was no MBBS doctor in the government hospital.

There was only one three-storeyed building in this town before independence. Different types of infrastructure, gradually, started developing according to the needs of the town dwellers. Various types of links were established with the government offices. Many houses were transformed into government offices. The present district judge office is completely new. The court building was built two years ago. The bridge in front of Devendra College was built three years ago. The high-rise buildings along both sides of Rafik Sarak were built after 1990. Material changes have occurred during and after the regime of Ershad.

### *Reserved Tank*

The reserved tank has a history. It was built in the British period. People used to collect water from this tank for domestic purposes such as drinking and washing. This time they were compelled to drink much iron water. As iron water was not potable, people started to cultivate fish in these ponds. Fish cultivation started after the independence of Bangladesh. Another reason for the contamination of pond water was mixing of wastes like urine, stool and rotten things. Afterwards people tried to purify the contaminated water by taking iron out of water. Now water is fully free from iron. The local *pourashava* later on started to supply water in the town. The overall condition of water is of higher quality now than before. People, however, claim that their hair is falling down which did not happen before.

It is important to remember that the water of the reserved tank might be used for the purpose of drinking. There was a filter in every household 15 years ago. People used filter before removing iron from water. Now the provision of using filter is very rare. Currently, people drink water by boiling it. Those who live outside the *pourashava* use tube-well water for drinking and serve other purposes by using the pond water.

### ***Transportation System***

Before the construction of the road, people used to move on foot and by boat. There is a canal beside the north side of Rafiq *Sarak*. By using the canal, people might move to different places for various purposes. There was no alternative transport except boat until 1965. That time almost each household had a boat. But the present picture has changed. After independence small vehicles started moving but after the regime of Ershad, some big transports were found. The LGED (Local Government Engineering Department) began constructing the road after 1984. In 1964, there were two rickshaws in the town. Although the Dhaka-Aricha Highway was built in 1964 but three bridges were not constructed then. For this, all kinds of transports did not appear on the road. There was a ferry *ghat* (station). Subsequently, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) started its monopoly business. Trucks and buses were first the transports, which started moving on the road.

A foreign company built the three bridges before 1970. After building these bridges big transports began moving on the highway. As the LGED constructed small roads, rickshaws started plying along and people now can move everywhere in Manikganj town by using rickshaws. The supply of electricity started in 1966. Ayub Khan (former president of Pakistan) took an initiative for supplying electricity. Then electricity came to this town by using only one pillar. Very few people then could access the supply of electricity.

The income of people was not as much it is at present. So, people might not do everything. The major changes in traditional life started after the construction of Dhaka-Aricha Highway. This highway is a revolution in this sense that it has connected the area to international market. For example, the producers started to send their products/vegetables to Dhaka. The foremost changes are seen in labour and agriculture sectors because people have begun to migrate to Dhaka seasonally. If tea could not come from the North Bengal, the agricultural system might have broken down. All these changes have taken place after the introduction of transport system.

### **Social Changes**

There is a range of factors that can be identified as responsible for a change in the social life of the town dwellers.

At present, the nuclear family is a dominant feature in the town. Most of the families are nuclear, while a few are non-nuclear, the majority of which exist in the Hindu community. Family safety net has been weakened as the young couples leave their old parents to live separately. This practice is predominant more in the Muslim community than in the Hindu community. The tendency of breaking ties with families and separating parents is prevalent among the less educated/ the uneducated and the poor people.

**Major Social Changes**  
Women's mobility  
Migration  
Household pattern  
Attitudes towards elderly people  
Notion of status and power  
Hindu-Muslim relationship

Not only the structure, but also the values and the relationships among members within the households also are growing through a change. The young children no longer felt the filial obligation, which they once did to their parents. Some of the respondents, however, gave a different opinion in making the claim that the relationships between the old parents and their separated sons improve when they live separately. A significant social change has taken place in the status and power in the town. The aged people who were shown respect no longer enjoy the esteem, and young political leaders are replacing them.

#### ***Interaction Between the Hindus and the Muslims***

At the time of the demolition of the Babri Mosque in India, the Muslims and the Hindus were involved in conflict. The Muslims broke and burnt statues and temples. Many shops of the Hindus were broken into and the valuables looted away. After razing the Babri Mosque, few incidents happened in Bangladesh too. The Muslims might seize property from the Hindus and marry the latter's daughters as well. The Hindus have since been facing insecurity. After that time a few Hindus have left their homes in silence left and settled in India. Some of them have sold their land property to those who are familiar with them.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party does not want to repeat the mistakes it committed in the previous period. It is going to rectify its mistakes. The opposition party Awami League, in fact, cannot start the movement. At this moment, the relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims is fine considering the relationship between the old and the new generations. It is difficult to survive independently because some problems have happened in the recent times.

## Cultural changes

An outstanding change had taken place in the cultural life of Alok Nagar over the last decade. The changing indicators include both the positive and the negative sides. The major changes and their impacts on society are:

- drug addiction;
- occupational diversification; and
- women's movement.

A noticeable cultural change had occurred over the last decade. The aged are dissatisfied with the activities of the young generation. They perceive that the *samaj* (culture and society in a broader sense) in which they live is getting different from that in the past. The main trends of changes are attitudes towards parents, guardians, and elderly people, and social customs and practices. The once-strong respect has now been weakened.

People had peace in the past; but nowadays they are experiencing violence with political overtones. Of course, the relation between generations is changing. Now social obligation is more within people. In fact the good and bad relation depends on the situation. The relation between the old and the young is changing. It is easy to smoke and use nasty language now. Student-teacher relationship is, to some extent, relaxed and friendly, which has positive as well as negative impacts on the individuals, the households and the society as a whole. Although wicked is a part of education, it is important to remember that the students who are disobedient are not good. We are taking bad culture from the foreigners instead of their good ones. A group of young people is getting addicted to drug for some reasons. One of the reasons may be the dark side of foreign culture. People cannot accept the bright side of foreign culture. But some of them can grasp a bit later on. As satellite culture is new, it could not create its complete impact on the society. The impacts may be assessed afterwards.

The way of living has changed over the years. People are becoming educated. There are more and diversified modes of employment, and people are more familiar with the urban manners of living. All these have created an impact on the modes of their living: designs of housing, clothing, fascination for movies, and music, introduction of modern home appliances, women's mobility in public places (e.g. study, shopping), and entertainment (e.g. cricket). There is an obvious change in the celebration of different ceremonies like marriage; and birthday (e.g. decoration, food, entertainment). Urban manners are imitated. It is told that due to wider mobility, now the rigidity has slackened among different castes. For example, though the upper castes of the Hindus do not interact with

the low castes within the town boundary, they find no problem working and living in the same places.

The road communication system introduced garment industry in Dhaka where women started to work. Women now can go to Savar EPZ (Export Processing Zone) even at night. They also started to go outside home and dug earth at the time of epidemic in 1974. The male members could not confine them at home. Additionally, during the regime of former President Ziaur Rahman a 'Kolkata Programme' began and women got an opportunity of working outside home. Now women are seen everywhere.

### **Political Changes**

Like the physical, social and cultural changes, political arena has been changed dramatically, and the changes are multidimensional in nature. The foremost changes have been grouped in the following ways:

- changes in political behaviour;
- disruption of political norms and values;
- generational and occupational changes; and
- self-interest.

A remarkable change has occurred in the political sector over the last two decades. From the views of the town dwellers, two major changes - generational and occupational - are visible. After the independence, the politicians might vie because they were honest and educated and, could do welfare activities for the people. They used to sacrifice their lives and time for the country, not for the individuals and the party. Their ideology was just like: "the party is more important than the individual, and the country is more important than the party". But now the ideology has changed for some visible and invisible factors. People of the town, especially the old, think that the social norms and values are disrupted and, as a result, people cannot fulfil their basic demands. The panorama now is different from that in the past because those who have money and arms are doing politics. It does not matter whether they have education and if they are honest or not. Most of them have no morality. Money is controlling the voting behaviour of the people.

Occupational change is also precise in Manikganj town. Twenty years ago, most of the people who were involved in politics could not engage in other occupations. Few politicians were lawyers and professors but now the businessmen have replaced the lawyers and the professors. Musclemen have also been involved in politics. Earlier, the politicians used to get vote for their popularity but now they buy vote with money. Money and arms are the two

determining factors for winning the election. There are other many factors that are also responsible for the changes in the political arena of Manikganj town.

### **Natural Changes**

A notable natural change has come about in Alok nagar due to various reasons. The negative impacts of these changes are scrutinized as follows:

- flood;
- deforestation;
- filling up the canal; and
- misuse of ponds.

Compared to the last decade it is obvious that flood is one of the natural disasters that take place almost every year. Owing to the catastrophic flood both brick-built and mud-made roads get damaged causing barriers to the mobility of the town dwellers. Additionally, the poor specially face tremendous sufferings in coping with the disaster. A canal lies in the north of the town, which is out of use because it is gradually being filled up for different misuses. By filling the canal up, the local people are constructing shops and houses. Moreover, people are cutting trees for constructing markets and houses, which makes the environment incompatible for the people. A striking change has happened in the town due to the filling of the ponds. Few years ago, people from different classes used the water of those ponds. Now the water of very few ponds is usable.

## Section 2 Introduction to Community Resources

A range of resources has been wrapped in Aloknagar. All the resources are visible to lesser and greater extents.

### MATERIAL RESOURCES

#### **Social Class, Occupation and Employment**

It has been learnt from different sources that the people of Aloknagar have different types of occupations. The census data suggests that among the rich, 48 households are involved in business whereas 30 are service. On the contrary, a reverse picture is seen in the middle class where 120 households hold services and 74 households do business. But in the case of the poor, 17 households are doing businesses and 15 holding services. Some occupations are visible in this town, but the numbers of these occupations are not significant.

#### **Major occupations**

- Household activities
- Business
- Study
- Service - government and non-government
- Lawyer
- Teacher
- Grocer
- Farm owner
- Shop worker

No one but two households is involved in agriculture-related activities in the town while the same number of households do artisan activities. Few people of Aloknagar maintain their livelihoods by doing non-agricultural activities of factory/mill workers who are skilled and unskilled, manual workers and transport workers. A significant number of people do jobs professionally as teachers, lawyers, doctors, and NGO and government workers. In case of home workers it is seen that a good number of people representing all classes are involved in caring, fetching water, cooking and sewing. Amongst these activities housewifery remains prominent.

In the town there have been different types of businesses where a large number of people have been involved. Data collected from the field reveal that a big number of people are engaged in business. The other groups of people are petty traders, self-employed farmers, shopkeepers and traders.

### **Location-wise Types of Occupation**

This is significant to bring out the findings from the informal discussion that different occupational groups have been involved in different parts of the town. , For an instance, most of the educated families who are involved in service or business live along the reserve tank *purba* and *paschim* par. Like reserve tank *para* most educated families are involve in service or business run along the Girls' School Road. The combination of well-off and lower middle class families live on both sides of Kalibari Lane. Most of them are the poorest in *Paschim* Aloknapar. Most of them are rickshaw pullers. Women do not work outside.

### **General Overview of Expected Incomes (monthly) From Specific Occupations**

As mentioned above, the people of Aloknapar are engaged in a variety of occupations and these determine their monthly income. Regardless of this it is very difficult to know the actual income because some people are doing the same activities but the salary or wage is different from each other. At the same time it is also obvious in the case of business people who are involved in these activities.

### **Savings and Credit**

#### **Lending Institutions and Opportunities**

Data reveal that there are different types of formal and informal institutes providing loans or credit to the city dwellers. The institutions are:

- banks;
- relatives;
- friends/neighbours;
- patrons; and
- NGOs.

There are many NGOs like PROSHIKA, BRAC, GB, ASA and IDB that disburse loans among the middle and poor classes of people. They disburse loans for various purposes at interest. Besides, there is a group of people who also take loan from shopkeepers, credit unions, traders and rich persons.

#### **Savings**

The people of Aloknapar save their money in the following different formal and informal institutions for multiple purposes.

- government bank;
- private bank;
- NGOs; and
- home.

Data suggest that most of the city dwellers save their money in different government and private banks. This type of deposition is sometimes regular and sometimes irregular. Then some poor classes of people deposit money in different NGOs on a regular basis. A group of people ranging from the rich class to the poor class put down a small amount of money for themselves. The purpose is mainly their future security.

The main reasons for taking loans from these sources are mostly to start business, buy consumption goods, and buy farm equipment, materials, etc. In an emergency, the city dwellers take loans mostly from friends and neighbours. Then they prefer to take loans from relatives, micro credit and banks. The rich people, in general, go to banks for taking loans.

### **Community Income and Expenditure**

The community people of Aloknagar have contributed to different festivals by accumulating money. Data reveal that there are some Hindu temples, Kalibari *Mandir* for example, where there is a committee which collects money from the Hindu city-dwellers for serving their religious festivals. Moreover, they help the poor Hindu people and make religious institutions in the town. Also, there are some mosques, which contribute to the cultural life of the town dwellers. Data also suggest that there are also some Banik *samities* and clubs, which serve welfare activities for them and other as well.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **Main Activities**

As discussed earlier, the people of Aloknagar are involved in different occupations or activities, which are as follows:

<b>Main activities/activists</b>
Government work
Lawyer
NGO worker
Teacher
Housewife
Businessman
Petty trader/grocer
Self-employed
Shop worker
Looking for work
Study

Data reveal that a sizable number of people are studying in different educational institutions such as school, kindergarten, government school, *quranic* (traditional religious) school, college, university, other institutions of higher education, semi-government institutions, private institution and English medium school. Then a majority of women are housewives, who represent a handsome number. All of them do household work inside their houses. Few men are involved in business and they run their businesses mostly inside the town. Some people teach in different educational institutions. In this way, people have been involved in many activities like government work, legal service, NGO work, petty trade/grocery, self-employment and shop keeping. It is noted that some people are looking for jobs and some are unable to work due to their old age complications.

## **Health**

Health problem is one of the most significant natural crises for the Aloknagar community people. A range of diseases has been identified in this town by the WeD team members. The major health problem the city dwellers face are:

### **Major diseases**

gastritis and ulceration  
diabetes  
different types of body ache  
paralysis and involuntary movements  
asthma and other respiratory condition  
blood pressure and other heart diseases  
fever, cough and cold

Information collected by the WeD team from different sources suggests that amongst the diseases blood pressure and other heart diseases are prominent. The most chronic disease is diabetes, which is more visible than others. Like diabetes, gastritis and ulceration have attacked many people both male and female. Few people have been suffering from other types of chronic diseases such as asthma for several years. People also suffer from other diseases like headache, reproductive health, kidney problem, different types of body ache and skin diseases.

## **Health Services**

### **Access to and use of the services**

People seek health services from different types of sources. Data say that broadly, people in general use the following three sources for treatment:

- modern source;
- traditional sources (religious); and
- other sources (homeopath and herbal).

To receive treatment of their diseases - chronic, acute and temporary, people visit different institutions depending on their time, money and beliefs. Data from informal group discussions shows that most members go to the nearest pharmacy in order to seek their treatment. After the nearest pharmacy, the hospitals, both government and non-government, play important roles in providing treatment for the town dwellers. The second important institutions providing treatment for the town dwellers are the nearest and the remotest hospitals for curing diseases. People choose the nearest health centre/clinic as the third option for their treatment. In this way, people look for treatment of different diseases from other persons, institutions or places such as clinic-based health worker, herbalist, homeopath, religious site, traditional healer, mobile health worker, etc.

### **Immunization/Vaccination**

Data suggests that both the male and the female town dwellers have received vaccination and other health care whereas a minority of people has not taken any health care services. A number of the people do not know if they have received vaccination or not.

### **Family Planning**

In order to limit the family size, few women have used contraceptives while some men have adopted relevant planning measures in Alokhnagar. On the other hand, most couples did not use family planning methods.

### **Education**

#### **Educational Institutions**

Data suggest that there are different types of educational institutions where people ranging from children to adults study. The government school enrolls the highest number of students while the second important institution is the college, which might be either government or private. The children of some rich and middle class families go to kindergarten school. Few students go to *quranic* or traditional religious institutions. Children and adults from rich and middle class families go to private and English medium schools.

#### **Education Status in Alokhnagar**

Data reveals that the highest number of city dwellers is studying in grades 6 -10 while the next levels of education are grades 1 - 5. Some people are studying in different government and private colleges. In the case of higher education, it is seen that a good number of people are studying honours or equivalent courses in different colleges and universities.

### **Location of Educational Institutions**

As mentioned above, the students who are attending different educational institutions are situated in different places, which refer to distance. Information suggests that most students who are attending schools, colleges and universities went to their educational institution, which is situated in this town. Very few students go to school outside the town and local municipality of this upazila. Few students are studying in Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. A negligible number of students are studying in non-neighbouring countries. Additionally, few students go to the urban area of this ward and the union.

### **Status of Language Proficiency**

One of the most important human resources is language and its proficiency. It has been seen that the male literacy rate is more than the female rate. It is interesting that the women who can read only are more than the men in number. The opposite picture is seen in the point of illiteracy.

## **SOCIAL RESOURCES**

### **Kin and Fictive Kin Connections**

The respondents have been asked how many times they have visited their relatives. Data reveal that the majority of the city dwellers have not visited their blood, affinal and fictive kin within one week before the interviews. However, the number of visits is more to the blood kin than to the affinal and fictive kin.

### **Connections to Local Community**

The city dwellers are involved in different types of organizations, which might be religious, economic, social and cultural. The organizations are temple, business/chamber, club, educational institutions, mosque, women development, welfare, law and order, transport, health and labor associations, and journalist. The organizations that exist in the town are town based and externally organized (government and non-government). Findings show that the involvement of inhabitants in the local community based in the town and externally organized by the government and non-government agencies is very significant. If their participation in these organizations is considered it is seen that most of them have participated as general members while some others as leaders of their respective organizations. Some people are taking part in these organizations just for decision-making. Few people are active members and money managers.

### **Connections to the Wider World**

Apart from the kin and local community, people from the city visit different types of places for various reasons and stay there for a period from less than a week to one month. It has been seen that a good number of people visit the neighboring and non-neighboring countries mostly to attend ordinary social meetings, although few of them visit for seeing sites and people, education,

trade, pilgrimage and new baby. At the same time some people visit this town mostly for health treatment although few people go for ordinary social gatherings and for seeing other places and people. Most of the people visit this urban area mostly for ordinary social meetings. They visit their relatives, health centres for treatment, business partnership, etc. A group of people visits the rural area of this ward and union, while some people visit community near this one mostly for ordinary social meetings. In order to do so, most of them usually stay there for less than a week.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Major Religious Events and Community Participation

In the town there is religious diversity and there are two main religious groups - the Muslims and the Hindus. The Hindus are divided into castes and sub-castes.

The Muslims perform a common set of religious ceremonies.

The Hindus perform different *pujas* according to *Bangla* as well as lunar calendar in some respects. *Durga puja* is the most important festival of the community. *Laxkhi puja* is also important to them. *Kirton*, a programme of devotional songs, is arranged by the Hindus. Money for *puja*, in most cases, comes from the community donation; and even the Muslims also donate.

Major events at a glance	
<b>Muslim</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Eid ul Fitre</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Eid ul Azha</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Ramadan</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Shab-e-barat</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Shab-e-kadar</i>,</li> <li>• <i>Maharram</i>, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Hindu</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Durga puja</i> (in Ashwin),</li> <li>• <i>Swarasati puja</i> (in Magh),</li> <li>• <i>Laxmi puja</i> (in Ashwin),</li> <li>• <i>Kali puja</i> (in Chaitra),</li> <li>• <i>Buri puja</i> (in Baishakh),</li> <li>• <i>Biswakarma puja</i> (in Bhadra),</li> <li>• <i>Dol puja</i> (in Falgun),</li> <li>• <i>Chaitra Sangkranti</i> (in Chaitra),</li> <li>• <i>Shib puja</i> (in Falgun),</li> <li>• <i>Kartyaon</i> (in Kartick), <i>Utshab</i> (in Agrahayn), etc</li> </ul>

### Major Non-religious Events and Community Participation

The inhabitants enjoy some social events such as *mela* (open fair), *natak* (people's drama), and *jatra* (folk drama). These have no religious connection, and people from all communities/groups have access to enjoy the events. The expenditures for the programme come from community donation as well as special contribution by the affluent persons like an industrialist or/and political leader of the town.

## **Major Religious Figures and Sacred Places**

### **'Majarsharif'**

Sayed Sha Mafiz Uddin was a pious man and he died 56 years ago. According to his name, the place is known as Sayed Sha Mafiz Uddin Majarsharif. His origin was at Kusuria union under Dhamrai thana of Manikgonj district. He was born in a famous Muslim family. He was a very meritorious student and read in the Dhaka College. He read all kinds of newspaper and during that time he became a follower of a pious man (*murid hoy*). That pious man had lot of *murids* and he sent those *murids* to different districts. Sayed Sha Mafiz Uddin was sent to the Manikgonj district and also informed about the deadline of his life. There was also a famous and powerful man called Haji Mamataz Uddin. Local people called him *Darji*. Many men worked under him but there was no place for saying prayer. There was a mosque in a bazaar far from his house. So for this he built a house on his own land in 1930 for prayer. Sayed Sha Mafiz Uddin also prayed in that room. On a Friday he went to the formal mosque for saying *Jumma* prayer, but that day was the last day of his deadline which his *guru* predicted. A local man named Lutfar Rahman invited him to his house. He did so and there he took a glass of juice. But his *guru* advised him not to eat anything in anybody's house. After that he became abnormal. He came to his own house and threw his bed, pillows, and other things away. He also caught the hair of his follower (*shishya*) and died the next day. He was buried on other's land and it was called the Sayed Sha Mafiz Uddin Majarsharif.

### **Kalibari Mandir**

This Kalibari *Mandir* was set up in 1223 (Bangla). According to the people, it is very difficult to articulate the actual history of this *Mandir* because it is more than 200 years old. With great efforts of two zamindars and some rich Hindu people of this locality, the *Mandir* was built. Mainly, Manikjong Zamindar 'Jatish Mahon Das took the initiatives to establish a Kali *Mandir* for Hindu people's worship and also for spreading the messages of peace and harmony of Hindu religion for the society. The total land of this organisation is 65 decimals donated by two zamindars. Different people gifted different valuable things to this organisation. For examples, one person donated *Kosthi Pathar Shiva Murti* (statue of Lord Shiva made of *kosthi pathar*), and another person collected a Radha-Krishna statue from Calcutta and donated it to the *Mandir*. Several times different violent attacks destroyed the *Mandir*. In 1971, the Pakistani army destroyed all the statues of gods and goddesses and other assets of this *Mandir*.

### **Different Honorific Titles**

Titles create the people's status and power in the society. It has been seen that the Alok Nagar dwellers carry some honorific titles some of which are ascribed and some are achieved. The specialization of these titles depends on the occupation, caste, religion and descent group. Titles position or label people but all these are

not always prestigious. The people of this town are titled by some terms such as doctor, hazi shaheb, master, babu, sarker, basu, chowdhury, apa, neta, sen, daktar babu, da, mollah, shaheb, MP, shah, biswas, boshu, voumik, muktijoddha, shil, amir, das, pal, nayeb and vaskor.

### Section 3

## Status of Women, Migration and Social Order

This section describes three different issues found dominant in the town. Although many issues need to be described in this section, status of women, migration and social order are considered here.

### **Household Relationship**

The major trend is nuclear family. One main reason for the nuclear households' living in the town is children's education. Most of the service holders who are resident in the town came from the nearest places/villages of Manikganj. They are living separately from their parents to ensure the better education of their children. There are different opinions regarding this issue. One opinion is that, the couples or the women of this generation prefer living separately from the other members of the family. The couples do prefer their different ways of life, and women specially think about their married lives free from their in-law's family. At the domestic level, conflict ensues mainly between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. But in public life, a young wife has to consider opinions of all other members in the household. The power of controlling financial resources in a household is an important determinant factor for either living in an extended family or being separate. In a family, the eldest member (i.e. father/mother) generally undertakes the main financial responsibility, and the sons usually stay with their parents. But in the families where the duties are divided among the sons, they choose to live separately. The women who live in nuclear families keep close contact either with their in-laws' families or with their natal families, and this depends on meeting their needs like support for childcare, financial support, etc. Some young couples prefer living separately from their parents, but they keep regular contact and provide economic support. They also celebrate the ceremonies jointly and get together on any occasions. They try to make a suitable combination.

In respect of making the household decisions, the husband is the household head. The wife's role depends on her natal family's social and financial status, her education and sometimes working status.

It is mentioned that for those who are living in an extended family, it is important to have respect for all members' opinions and sharing attitude. The father gives relative autonomy to his sons, and they also need to respect their father's decision. The mother-in-law has to compromise with her daughters-in-law, who must be respectful to their mother-in-law and other members of the family in a similar fashion.

In the case of a poorer household that includes only the mother and her son, the aged mother takes a new survival strategy. One mother, whose husband abandoned her when young and she did not get married for the second time by only considering her son's life (e.g. his future, risk of losing the affection of the mother, and insecurity posed by others), and passed a long time depending on her brothers. But now in her middle age, she feels that she needs security for the future, especially when her son will get married. Now her son is very close to her heart and takes much care of her. But seeing others in the community, she has been afraid that after his marriage her son might not take the responsibility of looking after her. By this time her brothers are also growing old. Therefore, at this age, she has started working outside for earning some money and keep savings for her old age. She expressed her feelings that as she was abandoned young, sometimes she felt attracted to some men. Once she got involved with a young man and planned to marry him. But that time her 10-year-old daughter died from appendicitis, and she thought it was because of changing her mind to get married again and leave her children. Therefore, she suppressed her desire and stopped that marriage. Once again she thought about getting married, her son told her that if she got married, he would kill himself because he had none but his mother in the world. So, she finally decided to stay single with her son and concentrated on making a better life of her son.

### **Dowry**

Dowry has existed for a long time. However, the form has been changed and is changing. Nowadays, direct contract-based dowry exists less in the well-off and poorer sections of people in the society. Despite the legal awareness programmes implemented at the government and NGO levels, dowry is the increasing due to population and poverty. If there is a number of children in a household and the daughter has grown young, it becomes a principal duty of the parents to arrange their daughter's marriage anyway. Due to poverty, they cannot find an economically solvent groom. Hence, to find a husband for their daughter, they think it is better to give some dowry through which the groom can do some work ultimately for the betterment of their daughter. The household cannot take the decision to invest in their daughter's welfare rather than giving dowry because the society does not permit keeping the daughter unmarried. It is not well accepted that women stay single in the society. Therefore, they are bound to give dowry though it is very difficult for them to manage the amount of money. Though poorer still, the women have become more aware of their rights and vocal on different social issues, they are still suffering the problem of dowry practice severely. But dowry exists in different forms in the middle and rich classes of people. The groom's family does not ask directly for dowry. But there is a concealed desire or an implicit expectation, which has a profound influence on the bride's family to give dowry in a gift form. One opinion is that this new form is more harmful because expectation now is higher as nothing is fixed by

any prior discussion. If any bride's family does not give any gift /dowry, that bride has to face some psychological pressure. Husband's family makes comment that they could have arranged their son's marriage for one lakh taka or they could have gained other benefits. It has a negative effect on that bride in her married life.

People are generally against dowry, but all classes of people take it as the destiny of having daughters in their families and it is obvious for all. Some people feel and try to protect, but when one potential groom comes between two potential brides' families, the groom's family will go for that bride whose family will agree to give dowry. Then the other responsive family faces the crisis of finding a proper groom and cannot take the risk of waiting for a long time, as there is a pressure from within the society on that family. But there are a few changes for highly educated girls as exceptional cases, which do not follow the general trend. But the common scenario is to give dowry for all classes.

### **Women's Mobility**

A great number of women work at public places. Women can be involved in different social organizations or different political parties. But there is a slow but notable change occurring in women's mobility for the last 12 years. Since the time when *Jamaat-e-Islami* as a political party started its activities, they have been working in different sectors. They arrange many religious meetings and establish social organizations in the community such as hospital and school. They are supporting the women by providing the latter with money for EIG activities as well. But at the same time they are pursuing their ideology among them. In consequence, there are some changes happening now. One important change happened in women's dress. A huge number of girls are using *borkah* (veil) with special cover on their face. There is a different aspect of using *pardah*. Some school going girls are using *borkah* as a good option for secured mobility. They are convincing their parents that they are safe from teasing or any violence due to wearing *borkah*, but on the other hand they are taking this cover as an opportunity of free mobility and making relationship with boys by hiding their identities to parents and those who know them.

Young women's participation in politics and social activities is not remarkable. Now college girls are not interested in participating in activities like a procession or a meeting on any social issue. Even though they try to avoid any issues of violence against women such as murder, rape and abuse. They feel fear and insecure in participating in this kind of activities and show the unwillingness of their families.

One opinion about women's participation in politics is that the participation in politics was better in the past but that the present situation is

different. In 1950 and 1960 when the leftist movement was strong, a number of educated young women were involved in politics. During that period, the relationship between the male and the female activists was based more on ideological than on personal relationship. But now more personal interaction-based relationships have developed and complicated the situation. This can be a reason for less participation of women in politics. Another reason is that young cadre-based leaders control politics, which has influenced women's pullout from politics. This does not encourage young women to get involved in politics. Regardless of this few cadres like Simki are coming into politics led by the BNP. She wants to do pollution-free politics. Another group of women whose families are involved in politics have now been involved in politics. They take the stick from fathers, husbands or brothers. For instance, Shaheen Ara is a sister of Patal, Chairman of Garpara Union Parishad; Nargis Akhter Baccha, Chairman of Atigram Union Parishad, is the daughter of a late UP chairman and the sister of a previous UP chairman. Their family is very influential in Manikganj town.

Less well-off and poorer women are considered more active in mobility in terms of politics and social movement than the well-off and upper class women. NGO role is the main reason for their increased mobility. They have become more aware of and vocal on social issues, and come to the forefront if necessary. The change has occurred over the last 12 years.

In education, women are in a better position now than before. They are getting involved in service as well. But in doing so, family role or household decision is very important. If it is a nuclear family, then the husband's opinion is very important but if it is a non-nuclear family, then other members' acceptance is very important.

## **Migration**

In this sub-section, three types of migration have been discussed such as migration by religion, education and labour at internal and international levels. A number of 66 people have migrated to different places within the country for different reasons. Most of them have moved to capital city, Dhaka. On the other hand, twenty-seven people have migrated overseas for education and labour.

### **Religion and Migration**

Once upon a time, the Hindu community dominated the Muslims. For example, the Muslims feared to live in this town. Even the influential Muslims could not live in town. They rather lived outside the town regardless of the same proportion of the Muslims and the Hindus. The main reason for this domination was that the Hindu community was politically and economically powerful. In order to enter into the town, the Muslims took the cover of a religious festival like *Moharram* during the British regime. They started entering into this town

under the leadership of one of the influential political persons. After 1947, the Muslim movement began with the intention of entering into the town.

During the rule of Pakistan, the economically influential Hindus migrated to India. Moreover, many Hindus went to India in 1947. It is noteworthy that it is difficult to trace the migration of the Hindus to India. During the regime of Awami League (1996-2001) they openly migrated to India. Most of them migrated to Kolkata, West Bengal, because the language of West Bengal is Bangla. Those who have migrated to India have two homes. One is in Bangladesh and the other in West Bengal. However, the situation now is different. Some of them sold their property, particularly the land. Furthermore, some of them exchanged their property. The government captured and controlled the property in some cases. Despite all the events, the Hindus are now occupying more land than the Muslims have done.

### **Religious Political Migration**

Historically, Manikgonj was a Hindu-dominated area in the British period. In 1947, during the India-Pakistan partition, a large number of Hindu families left for India. A notable number of Muslim families who are originally from Manikgonj, but had been resident in India for service or business, returned home that time. Both the Hindus and the Muslims exchanged their property for just leaving. In Manikgonj, some specific Hindu property was taken by the government as 'enemy property' which is now being used as offices like 'Bhumi (land) office', 'Red cross building', 'SB building', 'people's social organisation', etc. After that time, the Hindus gradually left for India in a long-term process. In 1971, again a huge number of Hindus left for India. The last great migration happened in 1990 after the demolition of Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, India. With 'shelter' provided by one political party, some miscreants made attempts to burn the local *mandirs*. Facing the constraints from other political parties, they were not able to do the Hindus any harm, but it created the feelings of insecurity among the Hindus. The migration of the Hindus has since been silent and slow process. There is a good relationship between the local Muslims and the Hindus. However, the Hindus lost their full trust on the Muslims and they do not share their plan of leaving for India even with their Muslim friends or good neighbours in fear of insecurity.

### **Social Order in the Community**

It is apparently seen that the community people are living in peace and harmony, but the common people say that the environment of this town is deteriorating day by day for some reasons. Also, they have articulated that some good signs are also seen in this town.

### **Main Threats and Strengths**

People have been living in a blending atmosphere over the last two decades. They think that both the nature and human beings are their main threats. People think that drug is one of the created human problems, which have contaminated the entire community. Their antisocial activities and violent behaviour have annoyed people. Young women are facing this type of problem in a severe degree, although all classes of people confront it. If one person is addicted in a society, the other individuals get addicted within a very short time. The basic reason is the lack of ideal persons who will govern them. Somebody is patronising them. Nowadays, blue film is screened everywhere. All should take stringent initiatives in order to curb this problem from the society. The young generation is frustrated. They have no expectation. So they can easily get addicted to drug. The young, educated people who cannot get work but who are able to work and earn are simply addicted to drug. This is a major problem for the middle class families rather than the rich and the poor. The political arena is polluted due to the erosion of norms and values from the community and instead of these, money, arms and musclemen are playing important roles, and corrupted political world, as mentioned before. Flood, one of natural disasters, is creating great hazards for all kinds of people for their respective sides as described above.

Amid the hostilities and disharmony, people are living in some sorts of congenial atmosphere with peace and happiness, which are considered the strengths of their community life. Different types of markets are developing around the town, where people are investing money. Over the last one-decade or two, people might go to Dhaka for buying some important belongings but now they can do their necessary shopping in their home town. Another important positive aspect is that people are becoming conscious about their daily lives, which help them to lead a good life. Moreover, as described before, communication system has changed their entire life styles.

## Section 4

### Perceptions of Well-being in the Community

#### Well-being of the community

The people of Alokhnagar community have articulated an assortment of indicators of well-being by blending its material, financial, political, social, cultural and psychological dimensions. After the collection of information, efforts have been made to group them according to the nature of data.

#### Material Sense of Well-being (material and financial asset-based)

Data manifest a range of indicators that determine the happiness/well-being of the town dwellers. From the respondents' articulation diversified factors of materials that affect the daily lives and livelihoods of people ranging from the rich to the poor have been identified.

##### Major Indicators

- Business
- Financial solvency
- Regular and better income sources
- Property - land, house, transport
- Balance between income and expenditure

Regarding the material resources they think that the households or individuals having business are well off in the community because they make profit with which they can keep their families better. Financial solvency is another indicator of business to some extent or something similar to this. The residents of Alokhnagar have expressed the happiness of their households by saying that the people who have regular and good income sources like good jobs can contribute to their families.

Additionally, few particular households think that property is an important indicator of the happiness and well-being of the household members. Property might be precious land, private house, personal transports like, motorcycle, private car, etc. Moreover, on the other hand, international migration plays a decisive role in making the households members happy and well because this brings foreign currency to a family.

Lastly, the respondents have said it well that to make a balance between income and expenditure is the central concern that could be the core indicator of the well-being of the community. On the other hand, many households are not

happy and well due to the absence of the indicators that make other households happy and well as mentioned above.

### **Political Sense of Well-being (based on 'khamataban' and 'khamataheen')**

The WeD team members have collected information on political well-being in Alok Nagar, and identified a range of indicators of what make people powerful (*khamataban*) and powerless (*khamataheen*).

#### **Major Indicators**

- Power: haves and have-nots
- Political affiliation
- Arms
- Musclemen
- Money
- Big business

Most town dwellers are powerless or *khamataheen* because they cannot exercise power. The people who are involved in political parties like Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), *Awami League* (AL), *Jatiyo Party* (JP), *Jamaat-e-Islami* Bangladesh and *Jatiyo Sramik Dal* (JSD) are holding and enjoying power. The indicators of the *khamataban* are having arms, relationship with ministers, huge money, 'cool brain', status and big business. The people who have these indicators are holding different types of designation such as president of local parties, general secretary, joint secretary, chairman, contractor, Member of Parliament (MP), commissioner and teacher.

Furthermore, there are some people who without the label of political party are enjoying power some people do not have any political label. Most of them are doing business of *Basundhara*, *Liver Brothers*, hardware, transport and oil company.

### **Socio-cultural Sense of Well-being**

There are some socio-cultural factors derived from their occupations that create the social status of some people. They have created certain unique identities because of their occupational diversity. The informal discussions with the town dwellers suggest that the retired teachers and the social workers naturally enjoy much social status in the town. It has been seen that the former professor, principal, social worker, advocate and freedom fighters are socially enjoying status, which denotes that they are *marjadaban*. A category of people representing both rich and middle classes are living in a deplorable condition because of their occupations, behaviour and dishonesty. The general people consider them *marjadaheen*.

### **Major Indicators**

- Proper education of their sons and daughters
- Relationships among the family members
- Small family
- Honesty and religious fondness

People consider themselves happy or satisfied with their lives by grounding some perceptible and imperceptible socio-cultural indexes that can be captured and analysed in two ways. The first way of analysis is to educate properly of their sons and daughters. Views are stated in a mixture of feelings, emotion and passion. The education of the present generation is very important for their future. People make out themselves and their satisfaction levels having thought about the near future of their sons and daughters'. Just like education, the relationships among the family members are so important that without relationships happiness remains far behind. It has been seen that good relation and common understanding among the same family members construct a good family life. A small family, one more significant and focal concept, is very necessary for good understanding among its members. To minimise the cost/expenditure is also important for an economically and socially sustainable family.

The town dwellers perceive more information on their socio-cultural well-being denoting some imperceptible words such as honesty and religious fondness. Both the Muslim and the Hindus live in the town and observe their respective religion in a congenial environment that makes the people happy. Another way of analysing the socio-cultural well-being is to take into account some invisible terms, for example, *sunam*, *khamata* and *marjada* and their opposite terms. As a part of the political and economic senses of well-being it has brought some indicators used to understand the rich and upper middle classes of people in the town. People respect those who are rich economically and powerful politically; no matter if they are honest or dishonest. Again, these two authoritative precursors achieve *sunam*, make *khamata* and entitle *marjada* for them.

### **Psychological Sense of Well-being**

Unlike the above-mentioned well-being indicators, there are four unique and important but fully separate indicators of happiness articulated by the community people.

### Major Indicators

- Good health
- Drug free of the family members
- Honesty
- Devoted religious attitude

Information compiled from the quality of life phase-2 suggests that both the temporarily and chronically ill members destroy the happiness and the opportunities of other members. On the contrary, healthy members in a family are free from medical cost and perform their respective works without tension for the ill people. A major social problem that is precisely visible in the town is drug addiction. It is now open and the whole of the society is polluted by some young people who are mostly dominated by the male. People from the town have emphasised this issue articulating that this group is taking drug and pushing other people into this group, which is the main concern of the people of Alok Nagar.

On the other hand, the households where there is no drug addict are leading a well and happy life because they do not have tension about where the family members are going and what they are doing. Drug addicted persons always create violence in the families by demanding regular cost of drugs. If they are not able to provide their drug cost, they engage in hijacking. Data suggest that people do not neglect and insult them as *neshakhor* (drug addict). They have much potential to do betterment for the society but those who are drug addicted generally become burden of the society. They are capable of improving their life by getting various support from family, community and also from the state but drug addicted people are not able to create such opportunities. Another important indicator is religious sentiment or harmony which shows the right way to the people. It indicates the family members' live in peace and happiness.



## Annex-2: Glossary

<i>Babri Mosque</i>	=A historical Mosque at Uttar Pradesh in India
<i>Bagicha</i>	=Garden
<i>Bangali</i>	=The people pursue Bengali language, usually the main ethnic group in the country
<i>Basundhara group</i>	=One of the well off persons' business group
<i>Bazaar</i>	=Market
<i>Bhumi</i>	=Land
<i>Biswakarma puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Boisha</i>	=One of the low castes in Hindu religion
<i>Borkah</i>	=Veil
<i>Buri puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Chaitra Sangkranti</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Darji</i>	=Tailor
<i>Dol puja</i>	=One kind of worship in Hindu religion
<i>Dudh</i>	=Milk
<i>Durga puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Eid ul Azha</i>	=Important Muslim religious festival
<i>Eid ul fitr</i>	= Important Muslim religious festival
<i>Fhary Ghat</i>	=Launch terminal
<i>Grameen</i>	=Rural
<i>Jamaat-e-Islami</i>	=National party in Bangladesh
<i>jatra</i>	=Folk drama
<i>Jumma</i>	=Special prayer held in Friday in Muslim religion
<i>Kali puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Kalibari</i>	=Temple of Hindu religion
<i>Kalibari lane</i>	=Lane after name of Temple of Hindu religion
<i>Kartyaon</i>	=Religious song of Hindu religion
<i>Khamata</i>	=Power
<i>Khamataban</i>	=Powerful
<i>Khamataheen</i>	=Powerless
<i>Kirton</i>	=A devotional songs is arranged by the Hindus.
<i>Koranic</i>	=Traditional religious education
<i>lakh taka</i>	=Ten million
<i>Laxmi puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Madrasha</i>	=Muslim religious institute
<i>Maharram</i>	=Muslim religious festival
<i>Majarsharif</i>	=A grave of pious person
<i>Mandir</i>	=Temple
<i>Marjada</i>	=Status
<i>Marjadaban</i>	=People with status
<i>Marjadaheen</i>	=Status less
<i>Mela</i>	=Fair

<i>Murid</i>	=Follower
<i>Murti</i>	=Statue of Sib made by <i>Kosthi pathar</i>
<i>natak</i>	=Drama
<i>neshakhor</i>	=Addicted
<i>Pacca</i>	=Brick-built
<i>Pardah</i>	=Veil system prescribes for woman
<i>Paschim</i>	=West
<i>paschim par</i>	=West side
<i>Pourasava</i>	=Municipality
<i>Purba par</i>	=East side
<i>Ramadan</i>	=Starvation period of Muslim
<i>Sadar thana</i>	=Headquarter of a territory
<i>Samaj</i>	=Society
<i>Sarak</i>	=Road
<i>Shab-e-barat</i>	=Muslim religious festival
<i>Shab-e-kadar</i>	=Muslim religious festival
<i>Shib puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Shishaw</i>	=Follower
<i>Shornakarpotty</i>	=Lane of goldsmith
<i>Sunam</i>	=Reputation
<i>Swarasati puja</i>	=Worship in Hindu religion
<i>Taka</i>	=Currency of Bangladesh
<i>Upazilla</i>	=Sub-district administrative unit
<i>Utshab</i>	=Festival

## Acronyms

AL	=Awami league, major political party
EPZ	=Export Processing Zone
JIB	= <i>Jamaat-e-Islami</i> Bangladesh, major political party
JP	= <i>Jatio</i> Party, major political party
JSD	= <i>Jatio Sramik Dal</i>
MP	=Member of Parliament
WeD	=Well-being in Developing Countries