



# Right to Information

## Training Module

for Upazilla Parishad and  
Government Line Agency  
Representatives at Upazilla Level

inter  
cooperation

Basis Foundation for Development and  
International Cooperation

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The use and sharing of information given in this document is encouraged, with due acknowledgement of the source.

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Intercooperation, Bangladesh under its Local Governance Programme (SHARIQUE) which is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in collaboration with the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

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## Foreword

With the endorsement of the 'Right to Information Act 2009' and its subsequent enforcement on April 6, 2009, Bangladesh entered into a new era in which information is allowed to flow freely and citizens have access to information. No doubt, this law will contribute significantly to the economic development of Bangladesh. If this law is applied properly, the degree of transparency and accountability in the government, in autonomous and statutory bodies and in non-government agencies will increase considerably and corruption will reduce. It will also contribute to a further acceleration of good governance and decentralization processes at both national and local levels. Lastly, it will result into a free flow of information with regard to our development projects and play a positive role in ensuring proper utilization of development finances.

The local governance program (Sharique) implemented by Intercooperation has developed a set of training manuals on Right to Information. The set consists of 3 manuals for different levels, namely (1) for citizens at village level, (2) for Union Parishads and Government Line Agencies and (3) for Upazilla Parishads. These training manuals will inspire both citizens and local government actors to work together to strengthen local governance in Bangladesh. I do thank Intercooperation for this timely and useful initiative.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mohammad Jamir'.

Mohammad Jamir  
Chief Information Commissioner  
In



## Preface

The local governance program Sharique started in 2006. The program is implemented by Intercooperation and financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and provides assistance to improve local governance in 130 Union Parishads and 21 Upazilla Parishads in Bangladesh. Union Parishads in the Sharique working regions are supported to proactively disclose information to the citizens while 'access to information' is a key component of the processes that Sharique follows. With the newly enacted law 'Right to Information Act 2009', the good practices followed by involved UPs have been legalized and are now mandatory. The law permits citizens the right to formal application for information and gives authorities the obligation to supply the requested information. This is recognized as a breakthrough initiative in Bangladesh. With these new developments in mind, Sharique initiated collaboration with the World Bank Institute (WBI) and undertook a one year project to prepare training manuals on Right to Information (RTI). These manuals will be used for conducting training at the level of villages, Union Parishads and Upazilla Parishads.

Under the initiative, Sharique had assistance of the Delhi based organization Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI). This organization provided different technical support including an orientation of Sharique staff, followed by an intensive consultation process to prepare the training manuals. Extensive peer review, two rounds of field tests and a national consultation workshop were conducted. In the process, opinions of the representatives of different government institutions and institutes, CBOs, NGOs, civil society, donor agencies and academics were sought. Different individuals and organizations played a very meaningful contribution to this achievement. Salua, Sardaha and Harogram UPs, Bargachhi and Silinda CBOs in Rajshahi district, Talbon CBO in Sunamganj district and Titas UP of Comilla extended wonderful cooperation to make field testing successful.

Whenever advices were sought, CHRI, and especially their representatives, Sohini Paul and Venkatesh Nayar were ready to provide it. Besides, Mohammad Jamir, the Chief Information Commissioner-Bangladesh and Mrs. Sadika Halim, the Information Commissioner, came forward with necessary advices at different times to enrich the work. Hard work and meaningful contribution was given by the Sharique staff. Intercooperation is grateful to all these individuals.

As a result of the use of these manuals, citizens will become aware of how to demand information from authorities and Union and Upazilla level officials will attain adequate skills in supplying this information. Apart from this, I do hope that these training manuals will contribute to better collaboration between citizens and their local governments and to an increase in transparency and accountability in government and non-government functioning in Bangladesh.

A T M Azmul Huda

Deputy Delegate, Intercooperation-Bangladesh and National Coordinator, Sharique, Intercooperation

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## Outline of the Module

### Objective:

Make Upazila Parishad representatives and Upazila based Government Line Agency functionaries aware of their legal obligation to disclose information and ensure citizens' right to information.

### Participants:

Upazila Parishad representatives, Upazila Nirbahi Officer and Upazila based staff of Government Line Agencies

**No. of participants** : up to 25

**Duration** : Half a day

**Venue** : E.g. Upazila Hall room

### TRAINING SCHEDULE

- ◆ Session 1: Introduction (25 min)
- ◆ Session 2: Introduction to the Right to Information Act 2009 (25 min)
- ◆ Session 3: Importance of access to information in relation to good governance (30 min)
- ◆ Session 4: Legal provisions for RTI at Upazila level (1 hour 30 min)
- ◆ Session 5: Concluding session (20 min)



# Session 1:

## Introduction

### Objective of session:

Participants will know the workshop's objectives and get introduced to each other and the trainers.

**Duration:** 25 minutes

### Methodology:

- ◆ Presentation
- ◆ Questions and answers

Training material:

- ◆ Workshop programme

### Training aids:

Poster paper/Multi media projector, Laptop, masking tape, marker pens, flip chart board with stand, clips

## Process:

### Step 1: (5 min)

The trainer welcomes the participants, introduces her-/himself and explains the objectives of the workshop as presented on a poster paper/power point presentation<sup>1</sup>.

### Step 2: (10 min)

The trainer asks the participants to introduce themselves briefly (e.g. name and organisation/department).

### Step 3: (5 min)

The trainer displays a poster paper/presents through multimedia the workshop programme<sup>2</sup> and explains the same to the participants.

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<sup>1</sup> Note 1A: Poster paper/ power point presentation 'Workshop Objectives'

<sup>2</sup> Note 1B: Poster paper 'Training schedule'



#### **Step 4: (5 min)**

The trainer asks the participants to set some essential norms for a good workshop environment, which will be noted down on a poster paper by the co-trainer. Norms that are expected to be mentioned are the following:

- Switch off mobile phones or put them on silent mode
- Listen to others when they speak
- Give each participants equal chance to speak and contribute
- Listen to others when they speak
- Give each participants equal chance to speak and contribute

## Notes for trainers - Session 1

### **Note 1A: Workshop Objectives**

"Make Upazila Parishad representatives and Upazila based Government Line Agency functionaries aware of their legal obligation to disclose information and ensure citizens' right to information."

### **Note 1B: Workshop programme**

- ◆ Session 1: Introductory session (25 min)
- ◆ Session 2: Introduction to the Right to Information Act 2009 (25 min)
- ◆ Session 3: Importance of access to information in relation to good governance (30 min)
- ◆ Session 4: Legal provisions for RTI at Upazila level (1 hour 30 min)
- ◆ Session 5: Concluding session (20 min)

## Session 2: Introduction to the Right to Information Act 2009

### Objective of session:

To make participants aware of the spirit of the Right to Information Act 2009

**Duration:** 25 minutes

### Methodology:

- ◆ Presentation
- ◆ Questions and answers

### Training material:

- ◆ Input on history and context of the RTI Act 2009
- ◆ Poster with preamble or RTI Act, 2009
- ◆ Input on what the RTI Act 2009 is about
- ◆ Diagram on Right to Information

### Training aids:

Poster papers, /Multi media projector, Laptop, permanent markers, flipchart board and stand

### Process:

#### Step 1: (5 min)

Ask the participants whether they are aware about the RTI Act 2009. On the basis of the participants ideas on the RTI Act, the facilitator will start with step 2.

#### Step 2: (5 min)

The trainer then explains that a law has come into force that secures the right of the citizens over information held by the government and non-government organisations running on government or foreign funding. The trainer using the trainer's note explains the history<sup>3</sup> that led to the enactment of this Act.

#### Step 3: (5 min)

Hang the poster/ present in Power Point with the pre-amble<sup>4</sup> of the RTI Act 2009 and ask one participant to volunteer and come up to the board and read the preamble to the participants. After the volunteer has read the preamble, the trainer can ask the participants to explain what they have understood. Some of the key words in the preamble have already been highlighted.

#### Step 4: (5 Min)

The trainer now explains what the right to information is using the trainer's note<sup>5</sup>.

#### Step 5: (5 min)

The trainer defines RTI using the concerned diagram<sup>6</sup> and explanatory note on poster and multimedia projector .

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<sup>3</sup> Note 2B: Input on history and context of the RTI Act 2009

<sup>4</sup> Note 2C: Poster with pre-ample of RTI Act 2009

<sup>5</sup> Note 2D: Input on what the RTI Act 2009 is about

<sup>6</sup> Note 2E: Diagram on Right to Information

## Notes for trainers - Session 2

### Note 2A: Input on history and context of the RTI Act 2009

People around the globe have advocated for the right to information for many years. This right was universally accepted by introducing it in the Universal Declaration of Human Right in 1948.

Since then, more than 70 countries have enacted a law to provide people with access to government-held information.

In Bangladesh the Bangladesh Press Council first demanded for the freedom to publish government information in 1983. Different organizations have been advocating for citizens' access to official information since then. In 2002 the Bangladesh Law Commission drafted a right to information act, which was however never enacted. In 2006 a movement started in Bangladesh to strongly demand for an act to give people the right to access government held information.

This finally resulted in the Caretaker Government to take up the popular demand and enacted a Right to Information Ordinance in 2008. The parliament finally passed the current Right to Information Act in 2009.

### Note 2B: Poster/Power Point Presentation with preamble or RTI Act, 2009

#### Preamble of the Bangladesh Right to Information Act, 2009

The Act makes provisions for ensuring free flow of information and people's right to information. The freedom of thought, conscience and speech is recognised in the Constitution as a fundamental right and the right to information is an alienable part of it. Since all powers of the Republic belong to the people, it is necessary to ensure right to information for their empowerment.

The right to information shall ensure that transparency and accountability in all public, autonomous and statutory organisations and in private organisations run on government or foreign funding shall increase, corruption shall decrease and good governance shall be established. It is expedient and necessary to make provisions for ensuring transparency and accountability.

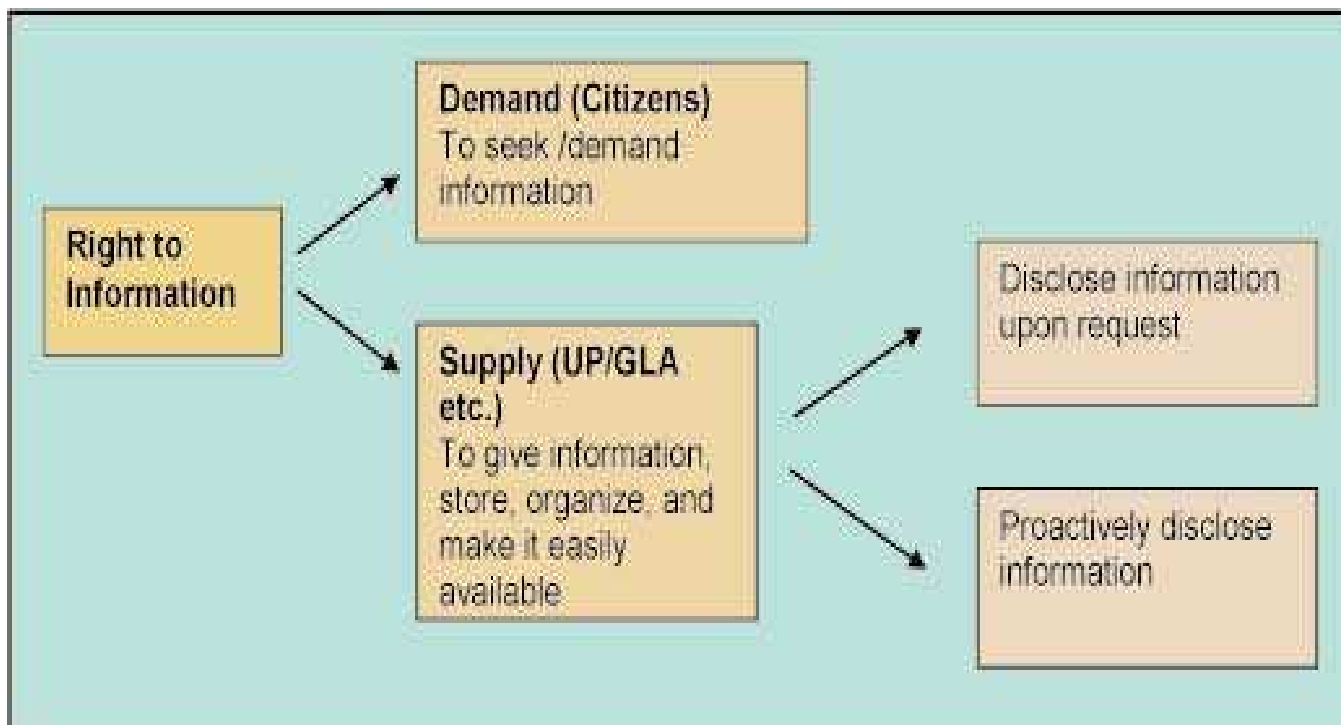
## Note 2C: Input on what the RTI Act 2009 is about

The right to information is a fundamental human right which is made up of different rights and responsibilities, namely:

- ◆ Every person's RIGHT to request information from the government - and even private bodies in some cases;
- ◆ The DUTY of the government to provide the requested information, unless defined exemptions apply; and
- ◆ The DUTY of the government to proactively disclose information that is of general public interest without the need for requests from citizens.

Through the RTI Act access to information has become a right like the right of getting health services or the right to free speech.

## Note 2D: Poster/multimedia presentation with a Diagram on Right to Information



## Session 3:

### Importance of access to information in relation to good governance

#### Objective of session:

To make the participants aware about the importance of access to information in relation to good governance

**Duration:** 30 minutes

#### Methodology:

- ◆ Questions / answers
- ◆ Lecture and discussion using either posters or slide show

#### Training material:

- ◆ Presentation on the principles of good governance in poster or Power-point
- ◆ Hand out 'What is good governance - link to RTI'

#### Training aids:

Poster papers, /Multi media projector, Laptop, flipchart board with stand or arrangement for hanging posters

### Process:

#### Step 1: (10 min)

Ask the participants about their ideas about the main principles/characteristics of good governance. Provide some clues to come up with the expected principles of good governance

#### Step 2: (10 min)

##### What is good governance?

Summarise the principles showing power point slides or poster paper<sup>7</sup>, and shortly explain each of them, giving examples provided in the trainer's note. The co-trainer will then distribute a hand out on the illustration of the principles of good governance<sup>8</sup>.

#### Step 3: (10 min)

Link between access to information and good governance

The trainer will discuss how a principle (e.g. transparency) of good governance is closely relevant with access to information.

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<sup>7</sup> Note 3A: Principles of good governance

<sup>8</sup> Note 3B: Link between good governance and RTI

## Notes for trainers - Session 3

### Note 3A: Principles of good governance

- ◆ Participation
- ◆ Transparency
- ◆ Accountability
- ◆ Non-discrimination
- ◆ Effectiveness
- ◆ Rule of law

### Note 3B (hand-out for participants) : Link between good governance and RTI

Good Governance follows 6 main principles, which RTI will contribute to:

#### **Participation:**

All men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their interests. Such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively. E.g. citizens are invited to participate in the budgeting process of the Upazila Parishad and need to approve the final UZP budget.

#### **Transparency:**

Access to and free flow of information is a prerequisite of a political system based on democratic participation. It means that political processes and institutions are directly accessible to the people concerned and interested, and that enough information is provided to understand and monitor them. Closed political and economic decision-making hinders political control, increases the risk of abusing power and corruption. E.g. the Upazila Parishad publicly displays its annual budget and annual accounts.

#### **Accountability:**

Accountability means holding decision-makers responsible for their actions. Political decision-makers are ultimately responsible to their population for actions of the government and its administration. E.g. citizens request from the Upazila Parishad to inform them about the money spent for a planned road project.



### **Non-discrimination:**

A society's well being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires that all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being. E.g. Adivashi or disabled women and men are given equal opportunity to access government services and participate in UP decision making processes.

### **Effectiveness:**

Processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources. E.g. the Upazila Parishad provides builds a good quality road in a place that is most frequented by people at the lowest possible cost.

### **Rule of law:**

One key element is the principle that the activities of the government and the administration are not ruled by the arbitrariness of the ruling elite, but based on legal rules: There is no space for State activity beyond the law. E. g. if a person applies for khas land/jalmahal the government cannot allot such based on the person's affiliation with a political party or family links to an important government official but needs to follow the due process laid out in the concerned law and related guidelines.

## Session 4:

Legal provisions for RTI at Upazila level

Objective of session:

- ◆ Participants will understand the different legal provisions regarding citizen's access to information.
- ◆ Participants will realize their responsibilities in regard to the legal provisions.

Duration:

1 hour 30 minutes

Methodology:

- ◆ Presentation
- ◆ Plenary discussion
- ◆ Question and answers

Training materials:

- ◆ Handouts on 'Salient Features of the Right to Information Act 2009'
- ◆ Presentation (by poster or multimedia) on 'Objective of Session 4' and 'Legal Provisions in regards to Citizens' Rights to Information at Upazilla level' and How to deal with Application Request
- ◆ Copies of RTI act-2009 with rules
- ◆ Copies of Upazila Parishad Act 1998, revived and revised in 2009

Training aids:

Laptop, multimedia, permanent markers, flipchart board and stand

### Process:

#### Step 1: (10 min)

The trainer shares what this session is about and he/she then asks the participants whether they know anything about the legal obligations of Upazila Parishads and GLAs regarding RTI.

#### Step 2: (25 min)

The trainer makes a presentation about RTI and other legal provision regarding citizens' rights to information either by the use of a Power-point or a poster.<sup>9</sup> The co-trainer will then circulate a copy of RTI Act 2010 and its rules.

The trainer will ask the participants for their comments and questions after completion of each of the parts of the presentation.

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<sup>9</sup> Note 4A: Presentation on "Legal Provisions in Regards to Citizens' Rights to Information at Upazila level"

### **Step 3: (50 min)**

The trainer asks participants what they would do if a person applied for information in writing. The co-trainer writes the participants' answers on a poster paper. The trainer then makes a presentation with the help of a written poster paper or a multi-media projector on "the salient features of RTI Act 2009<sup>10</sup> which has the following sections":

- ◆ Who has to ensure the access to information under RTI Act 2009?
- ◆ Who is covered under the RTI Act 2009?
- ◆ Which types and forms of information can be accessed by citizens under RTI Act 2009?
- ◆ Forms/ways to information
- ◆ In what form do requests have to be made for the UP/GLA to have to respond to them?
- ◆ How to respond to written information requests/applications?
- ◆ Appeal and complaints
- ◆ Forms under RTI rules

After the presentation s/he asks participants for their comments and questions.

The trainer will then tell the participants that RTI Act has given the right to the individual citizen to get information by means of applying and making appeal and complain. This workshop did not aim to discuss this demand side aspect. Its objective is limited to the supply side issues. S/he will also ask to take out the hand-outs on 'How to claim Information, Sample Application letter, Forms for Application, Appeal and complaints' and a copy of RTI Act 2009 with amendments rules for learning further on Citizen's Rights.

### **Step 4: (5 min)**

The trainer concludes the session by giving a brief summary.

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<sup>10</sup> Note 4B: Presentation: Salient features of Right To Information

## Notes for trainers - Session 4

### **Note 4A: Presentation in poster or Power Point on "Legal Provisions in Regards to Citizens' Rights to Information at Upazilla level"**

#### **Bangladesh Constitution**

- ◆ 'Every citizen of Bangladesh has freedom of thought, conscience, speech and expression' (article 39, Bangladesh Constitution)

#### **Right to Information Act 2009**

- ◆ RTI law was enacted because of our constitutional obligation( the preamble of RTI Act 2009)
- ◆ All local level government institutions (UZP/GLAs) have now an obligation to disclose/share information in both pro-active and responsive manner (Section 2, 4, 5 RTI Act 2009)
- ◆ RTI Act 2009 will override other existing laws which conflict with the provisions of RTI Act 2009 in regard to free disclosure of information ( Section 3 RTI Act 2009)
- ◆ Upazilla level office of any departments/ministries/constitutional bodies shall have information providing unit(s)[section 2D]

#### **Upazila Parishad Act, 2009**

##### **Proactive Disclosure:**

- ◆ UZP shall display a copy of its annual budget in the notice board for 15 days for getting public feedback on it[section 38(1)].
- ◆ UZP shall display a copy of its annual income-expenditure statement in such a public place so than citizens can put their feedback on it.

### **Note 4B: Presentation on "Salient Features of Right to Information Act 2009"**

"Who has to ensure the access to information under RTI Act 2009?"

The following institutions are assigned under the law to ensure citizen's access to information in Bangladesh:

- ◆ Authorities (Section 2kha)
- ◆ Information Providing Units (Section 2gha)
- ◆ Responsible/Designated officer (Section 10)
- ◆ Appellate Authority (Section 2ka)
- ◆ Information Commission (Section 11)

**Authorities:** All government and non-government agencies in Bangladesh are meant to be 'authorities', in general (e.g. ministry of agriculture, Union police fari, UZP, UP, BRAC, ASA etc.).  
**Information Providing Units:** The regional/local offices of these 'authorities' are meant to be 'IPU'. These offices have the responsibility to proactively and responsively disclose their information (e.g. UP, Office of the Upazila Education officer).

**Information Commission:** It is a central body constituted at national level with 3 commissioners. One of them is the Chief Information Commissioner. It is located in Dhaka. It is the highest office for ensuring RTI related dispute resolution and developing RTI policies.

**Responsible/designated officer :** A staff shall be designated in each IPU and the concerned officer of each authority who is responsible and accountable for providing information to the citizen.

**Appellate authority:** The head of the immediate upper office of an IPU is meant as the authority to deal with RTI appeals. The head of an IPU also can be deemed as an 'appellate authority in case of non-existence of any higher office.

## "Who is covered under the RTI Act 2009?"

The following agencies are the subjects to disclose and provide information (Section 2):

- ◆ Any agency constituted in as per the obligation of constitution of Bangladesh (e.g. UP, UZP etc.)
- ◆ Any ministry, divisions, of the government of Bangladesh (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Information etc.)
- ◆ Any government autonomous body (Rajshahi University, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, etc)
- ◆ Any non government agency/organization run on government funding or assistance of government funding (e.g. Bangladesh Disability Foundation).
- ◆ Any non- government agency/organization run on foreign aid/funding( e.g. BRAC)
- ◆ Any non-government agency/organization which is given the responsibility to undertake public functions as per its deed of agreement with the government (e.g. private agency who is collecting toll of a bridge, private contractors working on government contracts, contractors working on government contracts, mosques & temples which receive government funding etc.).
- ◆ Any other agency or organization to be created through new gazette notification by the government.

## "Which types and forms of information can be accessed by citizens under RTI Act 2009?"

### Types of information:

**Proactive disclosure is mandatory for the following information (Section 6):**

- ◆ **Structure of authority:** E.g. the organogram of a Upazila Parishad and each Standing Committee including the elected members as well as the government officials who work with the Upazila Parishad such as the Secretary and the Accounts Assistant cum Computer Operator.

- ◆ **Roles and responsibilities:** E.g. roles and responsibilities of the Upazila Parishad, each Standing Committee as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Chairman of the Upazila Parishad, the members, officers and employees of the UZP as well as the officers and employees of the various ministries and departments of the government who have been deployed at the Upazila Parishad.
- ◆ **Decision making process:** E.g. decisions are taken in the Upazila Parishad meetings based on the votes of the majority of the members attending the meeting. Each member can cast his or her vote once and if needed the Chairman can cast a second or decisive vote;
- ◆ **List of all available information:** I.e. laws, rules, guidelines, circulars, manuals, UZP meeting minutes, UZP planning records.
- ◆ Process and conditions of applications of license, permit, grants, allocations and other services/ benefits
- ◆ Contact details of Responsible Officer
- ◆ Other information: e.g. budget of the UZP, project design & specification

**On-demand disclosure is mandatory for the following information (Section 8):**

- ◆ Any other information except those which are listed in the list of exemptions in the RTI act: E.g. Salary of GLA officials, budget of Health Ministry, access to files and registers of the UP, etc.

**It is not mandatory to disclose/provide information on a few issues like (Section 7),**

- ◆ Personal life: E.g. the health records of the Chairperson or members of the Upazila Parishad are private information. Personal letters written to family members and friends which have no bearing on the public are also personal information.
- ◆ Information on pending criminal investigations
- ◆ Quotation documents before opening event
- ◆ Questions of examinations

**Forms of information (Section 8 (2)):**

- ◆ Printed (original) copy: E.g. reports and publications made by the Union Parishad or the Upazila Parishad or any other authority shall be made available to the public at a nominal price.
- ◆ Photocopy
- ◆ Soft copy: E.g. CD, e-mail.
- ◆ Inspection

**"In what form do requests have to be made for the UZP/GLA to have to respond to them?" (Section 8)**

- ◆ A request for information needs to be made in the form of a paper-written application or e-mail or other electronic medium to the responsible/designated officer of an IPU. If available the application needs to be made on the prescribed form/format. Names and address of the application form and types of the information etc. need to be mentioned in the application.
- ◆ A small amount of fees/costs shall be applicable for getting some information.

### **How to make an appeal (Section 24)**

- ◆ Any person is aggrieved by a decision of the responsible/designated officer may make an appeal to the appellate authority within the 30 days.

### **How to make a complaint (Section 25)**

A citizen can submit a complaint to the information in the following circumstances:

- ◆ If he/she was refused by the IPU, or did not get right information in right time
- ◆ If he/she is aggrieved by the appeal decision

## **"Different deadlines and penalties under the RTI Act 2009?"**

Deadlines (Section 9):

### **For Providing Information:**

- ◆ The designated officer shall provide information that is applied for within 20 working days.
- ◆ The information officer shall provide information that is applied for within 30 working days if the information requested concerns more than one Information Providing Unit or authority.
- ◆ The information officer shall provide information within 24 hours in relation to any death, arrest and release from the jail.
- ◆ If the Information Officer is not able to provide the information requested, he/she has to inform the applicant (in writing) within 10 days.
- ◆ If any requested information is available with the Designated Officer he/she has to inform the applicant about the fees applicable and ask the applicant to make the payment within 5 working days.

### **For Appeal (Section 24):**

- ◆ The aggrieved applicant shall have to make his/her appeal within 30 days of the decision to the concerned appellate authority.
- ◆ The appellate authority shall have to dispose the appeal within 15 days of the submission.

### **For Complaints (Section 25):**

- ◆ The aggrieved applicant shall have to submit his/her complaint to the information commission within 30 days.
- ◆ The information commission shall have to dispose the complaint within 45 to 75 days.

### **Penalty Provisions (Section 27):**

- ◆ The Information Commission can impose a penalty on a Designated Officer of 50 Taka per day for delaying to provide information up to a maximum of 5,000 Taka.
- ◆ In addition to this departmental actions can also be taken against the Designated Officer.



## How to respond to written information requests/applications

### Designated/Responsible Officer of Upazila office shall:

- ◆ Send/provide an acknowledgement receipt to the information applicant. This acknowledgement receipt needs to contain the following information:
  - o Reference number of the application
  - o Name of recipient of the application
  - o Designation of the recipient of the application
  - o Date when application was received
- ◆ In case of applications by email or in other electronic form, the date of sending will be treated as the date of receiving.
- ◆ Read the application carefully and understand what information is sought.
- ◆ See whether this information does not belong to exempted information
- ◆ Check records/registers/documents about the requested information
- ◆ Make sure that the information is ready to be collected or to be delivered by the Responsible Officer within 20 days of the application submitted.
- ◆ Inform the applicant either in person or in writing before the 20 days<sup>11</sup> are over how, where and when the applicant can collect/receive the information and at what cost (see form GHA)<sup>12</sup>.
- ◆ In case of informing the applicant in writing, make two copies of the response letter, one for the applicant and one for your file.
- ◆ Once you receive the applicable payment, record this in the relevant register and provide the information in the requested form.
- ◆ When providing the information, make sure that if you provide a document to the applicant, that on each page is written 'this information is provide under RTI Act 2009' and certified by the Responsible Officer with his/hers name, signature and official seal.

### How to deal with incomplete requests:

- ◆ If the Responsible Officer receives an incomplete request he/she has to inform the applicant immediately about the information that is missing in the application. The Responsible Officer should supply and explain the form KA<sup>13</sup> to the applicant and support him/her in filling it in. If the form is not available inform the applicant on how to write a complete application and support him/her in doing so. No fee can be claimed for this service.

### In case of not being able to provide information against the application

- ◆ According to section 9 (3) if for some reason the Responsible Officer is unable to provide the information, he/she will inform this to the applicant within 10 working days as per form KHA.

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<sup>11</sup> Note 4C: Sample reply letter to the applicant

<sup>12</sup> Note 4G: Form GHA

<sup>13</sup> Note 4E: Form KA

## In case you receive an appeal by mistake

- ◆ If the Responsible Officer receives by mistake an appeal he/she must inform the appellant immediately. He/she must inform the appellant about the authority (incl. address of the concerned person) to which the appeal should be sent.

## Application fee and fees for information

- ◆ In order to receive information, the applicant will have to pay the payable amount to the Responsible Officer in cash, through money order, postal order, crossed cheque or stamp.
- ◆ Once the information is available the Responsible Officer has to inform the applicant that he/she has to make the payment (cost will be determined as per form GHA<sup>14</sup>) within 5 working days.

**Note for the participants:** How to claim information from other authorities (will be given as a hand-out for use of participants as citizens)

Only individuals as citizens can apply for information. No organization or institution is allowed to apply for information. This means that for instance an Agriculture Extension Officer can only apply for information in his capacity as a citizen and not in his capacity as Agriculture Extension Officer.

## How to apply for information

1. Define the information that you seek.
2. Identify which institution could provide you with the concerned information.
3. Apply by using the official form KA<sup>15</sup>. In case the form is not available write a simple application on a blank sheet of paper. The application needs to include the following information:
  - (i) Mentioning at the top that the application is made under Section 8 of the RTI act 2009.
  - (ii) Date of application.
  - (iii) To whom you address the application (see point 4 below).
  - (iv) Your name, address and phone number. If available your fax number and/or email address;
  - (ii) Clear description of the information you seek
  - (iii) Mention information which could help in locating the information within the authority you apply to;
  - (iv) Description of how you want to receive the information. For instance by inspection (e.g. visit to an office and looking at the concerned documents <sup>16</sup>), getting a copy of the document or by inspection and taking notes.

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<sup>15</sup> Note 4E: Form KA

<sup>16</sup> Information can be available in the written form, film, map and audio-visual form

4. Send your application<sup>15</sup> preferably by registered post, hand delivery, fax or email to the Responsible Officer of the Information Providing Unit of the concerned authority. You may visit or call the authority to find out who the Responsible Officer is. If you cannot find out who the Responsible Officer is, send your application addressed to the Responsible Officer using the address of the head of that particular authority.
5. The application fees<sup>17</sup> needs to be sent with the application for which the applicant should receive a receipt.

## **Response to application**

The Responsible Officer of the concerned authority has to provide you with a response within 20 working days of receiving your application. If more than one Information Providing Unit is involved in providing the information the Responsible Officer has to provide you with a response within 30 working days.

If you seek information in regard any person's life or death, arrest and release from jail the Responsible Officer must provide you the information within 24 hours from receiving the application.

In case a person with a disability applied for information the Responsible Office if required has to assist that person to access the information applied for.

In case the Responsible Officer decides to reject your application, he needs to do so in writing within 10 days of receiving the application.

## **Appeal**

If you do not receive a response or are not happy with the response from the concerned Responsible Officer you can appeal to the appellate authority of the same authority. The appellate authority needs to be defined by each authority. You may visit or call the authority to find out who the appellate authority is. If you cannot find out who the appellate authority is, send your appeal addressed to the Appellate Authority using the address of the head of that particular authority.

You need to submit your appeal within 30 days from receiving the response from the RO or within 30 days after the date when you should have received a response from the RO.

Within 15 days the appellate authority either directs the RO to provide you the requested information within 20 days/30days/24 hours (see above) or has to inform you that they reject the application.

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<sup>17</sup> Note 4G: Form GHA

## Complaint

In case you still do not get any response from the concerned authority or are not happy with their response, you can complain to the Information Commission.

You need to submit your complaint within 30 days from receiving the response from the authority or within 30 days after the date when you should have received a response from the authority.

Write your complaint on a blank sheet of paper. The complaint needs include the following information:

- (i) Mentioning at the top that the complaint is made under Section 25 of the RTI act 2009.
- (ii) Date of complaint.
- (iii) Addressed to the 'Information Commission'.
- (iv) Your name, address and phone number. If available your fax number and/or email address;
- (ii) Clear description of the information you sought and from which authority. Clear argument why you are complaining and what you expect from the Information Commission.
- (iii) Copies of your original application and the your appeal
- (iii) If you received any response from the concerned authority, include copies.

The complaint needs to be addressed to: Information Commission, Information Commission of Bangladesh, Archaeology Building (3rd Floor), F 4/A Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka

#### **Note 4C: Sample reply letter to applicant**

#### **Note 4D: Form KA - Information Application Form**

Reference No of the Application:-----

To

Name and Address of the Applicant:

-----  
-----

Subject: Delivery of the Application

Dear Sir,

In reference to your application dated----- this is for your kind information that your desired information will be ready for your collection from the desk of----- Official in this office on -----/ sent through our personnel to you by -----(date).

Sincerely yours,

(-----)

Designated Officer

(Seal)

## Note 4E: Form KHA - Form regarding declining information provision

Form KHA  
(Rule 5)

### Notice about inability to provide Information

Reference number of application:

Date:

To:

Name of applicant:

Address:

Subject: Informing about the inability to provide information

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is not possible to provide the information that you wanted through your application dated----.  
due to following reasons :

1)

2)

3)

(-----)  
Name of Designated Officer  
Designation  
Office Seal

## Note 4F: Form GA - Form regarding making an appeal

### Form GA (Rule 6) Appeal

- 1) Name of appellant and address (best way of communication):
- 2) Date of appeal:
- 3) Copy of the "order" against which this appeal is made (if available)
- 4) Name of the person who issues the 'order' against which this appeal is made and description of the order (if available):
- 5) Brief description of the appeal:
- 6) Reason for grievance against the 'order' (brief description):
- 7) Justification/basis of the expected answer:
- 8) Certification by the appellant:
- 9) Any other information that the appellant is willing to submit to the appealing authority

Signature of the appellant



#### Note 4G: Form GHA - Form regarding fees for information requests

##### Form GHA

##### Rule 8

##### Fees for information request and pricing of information

In case of providing information, information request fee and price of information should be paid according to the mentioned information in column (2) and the rate and price mentioned in column (3) of the following table:

Serial number	Description of Information	Information request fee/price of information
(1)	(2)	(3)
1	For providing copy of any written documents ( map, design, photo, computer printer)	In case of A3 and A4 paper taka 2 (two) per page and actual cost for the over size paper.
2	Information providing in disk, CD etc.	(1) Free of cost in case of the applicant provides disk, CD etc. (2) Actual price in case of the Information provider supply disk, CD etc.
3	Information in regards to any act, government circular rules etc.	Free of cost
4	In case of providing publications for sale Price	mentioned in the publication
5		

By the order of the President

## Session 5:

### Concluding session

**Objective of session:**

Evaluation of training by participants and concluding of training

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Methodology:**

- ◆ Individual scoring
- ◆ Plenary discussion

**Training material:**

- ◆ Poster to evaluate training by participants

**Training aids:**

Poster papers, permanent markers, flipchart board and stand - if available otherwise rope and masking tape to hang poster paper.

### Process:

**Step 1:** (5 min)

The trainer shares that the training has come to an end and that the participants are invited to evaluate the usefulness of the training.

**Step 2:** (5 min)

The trainer asks participants to individually tick on a continuum from very satisfied to completely disappointed. Place the prepared poster paper<sup>18</sup> on a flipchart board and let the board face the opposite direction of the plenary (trainer and co-trainer should not see what the individuals score).

**Step 3:** (5 min)

The trainer turns the board around so that everybody can see the score. Ask two participants to say what they most liked about the training and what they did not like or missed in the training.

**Step 4:** (5 min)

The trainer then thanks all of the participants for their participation and wishes them success in ensuring implementation of the Right to Information Act 2009.

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<sup>18</sup> Note 5A: Poster on Training Evaluation

## Notes for trainers - Session 5

### Note 5A: Training evaluation poster

Very satisfied



Very disappointed





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC



Canadian International  
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de  
développement international



World Bank  
Institute

