

# 11TH NATIONAL ELECTION: PEOPLES ASPIRATION TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT



**BRAC Survey: September 2018**  
**Advocacy for Social Change, BRAC**

# 11TH NATIONAL ELECTION: PEOPLES ASPIRATION TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT

BRAC SURVEY

## INTRODUCTION

BRAC, the largest NGO in the world is working in Bangladesh for more than 4 decades and has expanded to 10 more countries in the world. Our mission is to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice. Our interventions aim to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programmes that enable men and women to realise their potential. In doing so we are always keen to know the needs and expectation of the most marginalized and poor people. BRAC has conducted a nationwide perception survey to explore the perceptions, views, needs, demands and priorities of the grass root people.

We would like to present the perspectives of the grassroots people to make their voices heard by key decision makers, policy makers and stakeholders. This report highlights the key findings of the survey conducted during September 2018. We expect that the priorities will be reflected in the election manifestos of the political parties competing in the upcoming national election.

We believe election manifesto is the most important document as through the election manifesto the voters come to know about the policies of the political parties they are going to vote for. It helps them to decide which party will do best for them. Hence, election manifesto is important for both political parties and voters. We believe the grassroots expectations should be reflected in the election manifesto so that the subsequent government can prioritize the most pressing issues for the development of the country.

## METHODOLOGY

The study is predominantly an opinion survey, it followed a mixed method approach where both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected and then quantified through using statistical techniques. As the study aimed at finding out the opinion of people of Bangladesh on the election priorities, the whole Bangladesh was the study area. A total of 5378 (detailed sampling calculation and technique is in the annex) respondents have been selected as the respondents of the study from different socio-economic groups with genders, professions and age variants (see table1 for detailed sample distribution).

The sampling technique incorporates 20 Upazila from each district division selected by systematic random sampling technique and from each selected Upazila, two wards from the municipality area and one union have been selected randomly (if it is city corporation area then 3 wards will be taken and if the Upazila doesn't have municipality, then two unions is taken instead of wards) to get representative sample from both urban and rural. 10 households are taken from each ward/union. The systematic random sampling method is used for the household selection process. Interviewers selected a household from one end of the union/ward and every 5<sup>th</sup> household is chosen to take the interview. One respondent is interviewed from each household. The ratio of male and female respondents is equal for every union/ward. The male and female respondent is taken from every alternative household.

**Table1: Sample distribution**

<i>Division</i>	<i>Total No. of Districts</i>	<i>No of Upazila per Division</i>	<i>Sample per Upazila</i>	<i>Total Sample per Division</i>	<i>Actual sample per Division</i>
<i>Dhaka</i>	13	20	30	600	600
<i>Chittagong (except Cox's Bazar) *</i>	10*	20	30	600	603
<i>Khulna</i>	10	20	30	600	601
<i>Rajshahi</i>	8	20	30	600	600
<i>Rangpur</i>	8	20	30	600	575
<i>Barisal</i>	6	20	30	600	600
<i>Sylhet</i>	4	20	30	600	600
<i>Mymensingh</i>	4	20	30	600	599
<i>Total</i>	63	160		4800	4778
<i>Cox's Bazar*</i>	1	8	75	600	600
<i>Grand Total</i>	64	168*	--	5400*	5378

\*for q3 of 2018

For Cox's Bazar district all Upazilas is selected. Same sampling technique is applied but the sample size is different i.e. twenty-five households has been taken instead of ten from each ward/union of Cox's Bazar to get a representative sample.

Data were collected through face-to-face interview using pre-coded interview schedule. The interview schedule has been developed and pretested to ensure uniformity of the data. The data is collected by District BRAC Representatives (DBRs) and other nominated data collectors after appropriate orientation on the objectives of the study and data collection tools; quality is assured by proper supervision during data collection and data entry by researchers. Prior to the interviews, the study objective is explained, and then proper informed consent was obtained from each individual. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents are strictly maintained.

All interviewed questionnaire is checked for completeness and further coded for open-ended questions. When data coding is completed, the data analyzed using the statistical package for social science software (SPSS) version 19. The researchers analyzed the final dataset following the different demographic indicators and answers from the respondents. Data is analyzed by frequency distribution, chi-square test and other appropriate statistical tests.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### DEMOGRAPHY

Respondents of the survey were from diverse socio-demographical strata which is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Demography of the respondents**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Frequency (N=5378)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Area Type</i>	Rural	2994	55.7
	City Corporation	345	6.4
	Municipality	2039	37.9
<i>Gender</i>	Male	2878	53.5
	Female	2500	46.5
<i>Age</i>	18 to 23	604	11.2
	24 to 35	2287	42.5
	36 to 60	2266	42.1
	Above 60	221	4.1
<i>Education Level</i>	No formal schooling	615	11.4
	Primary or less	1121	20.8
	Higher secondary or less	2943	54.7
	Graduate or above	699	13.0
<i>Occupation</i>	Farmer	528	9.8
	Employed	869	16.2
	Business	1118	20.8

<i>Monthly Household Income</i>	Labor	607	11.3
	Homemaker	1782	33.1
	Student	29	0.5
	Unemployed	436	8.1
	Others	9	0.2
	<10000	2380	44.3
	10000 to 50000	2907	54.1
>50000	91	1.7	

## ELECTION MANIFESTO

### I. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ELECTION MANIFESTO HAS A POSITIVE RELATION WITH EDUCATION LEVEL AND URBANIZATION

More than two third (68.6%) of the survey participants have ever heard about election manifesto (Figure 1). The knowledge is higher among the male participants compared with their female counterparts (73.6% vs. 62.9%). It varied from division to division, people from Barisal (81.8%) and Mymensingh (81.6%) knows more about election manifesto where people from Dhaka division knows the least (59.1%).

Not surprisingly, rural people (65.8%) heard less about election manifesto compared to people living in urban areas (CC: 74.5% and municipality: 71.8%) and knowledge increased linearly (from 60.0% to 86.4%) with increasing education level (Figure 2).

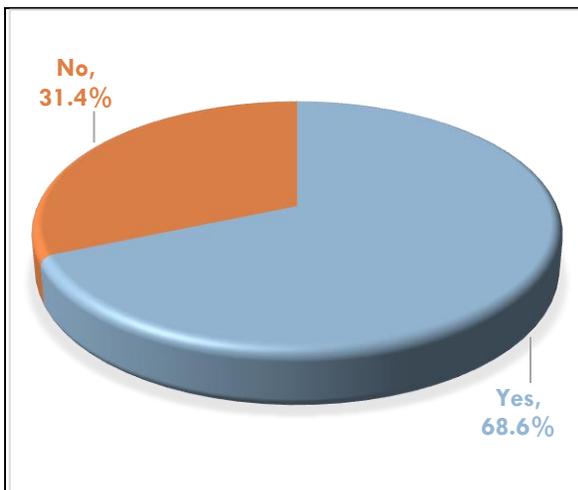


Figure 1: Ever heard of election manifesto

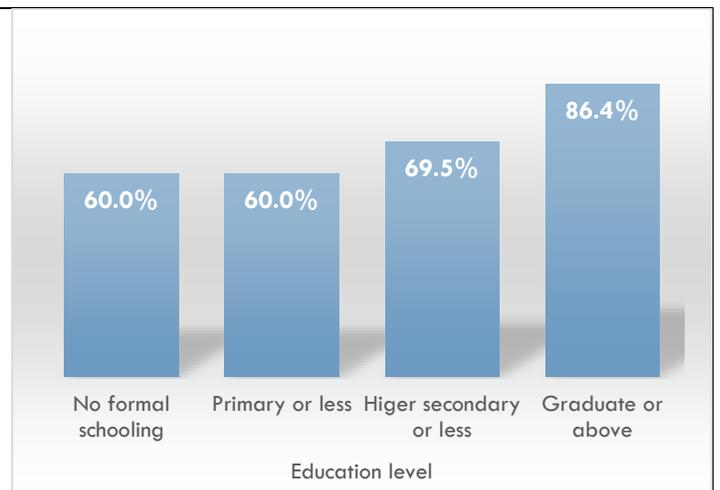


Figure 2: Ever heard of election manifesto by education

## II. MANIFESTOS ARE IMPORTANT, YET NOT READ

Although 82.8% respondents said they consider election manifestos are important documents, only one out of four respondents of the survey said they had ever read one. However, the percentage is significantly low (19.0%) among females than males (30.4%) which reflects less interest and participation in politics.

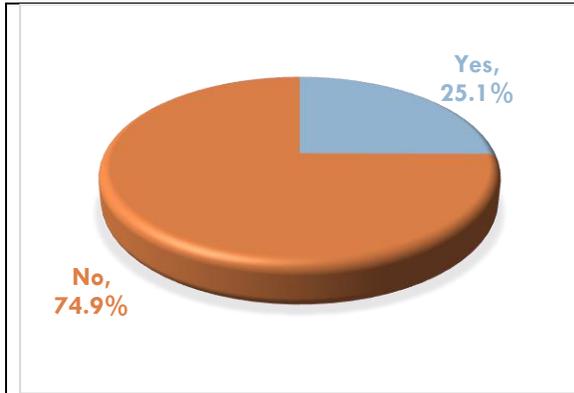


Figure 3: Ever read any election manifesto

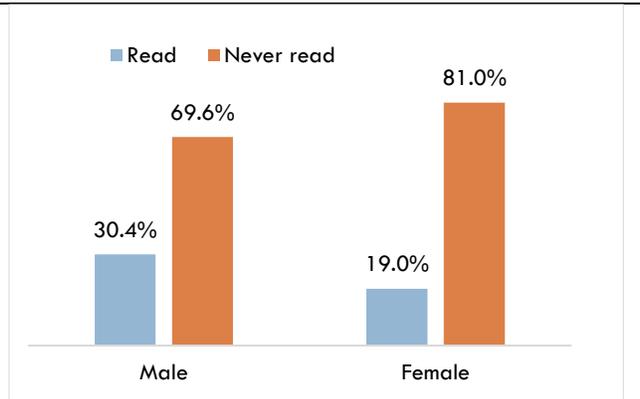
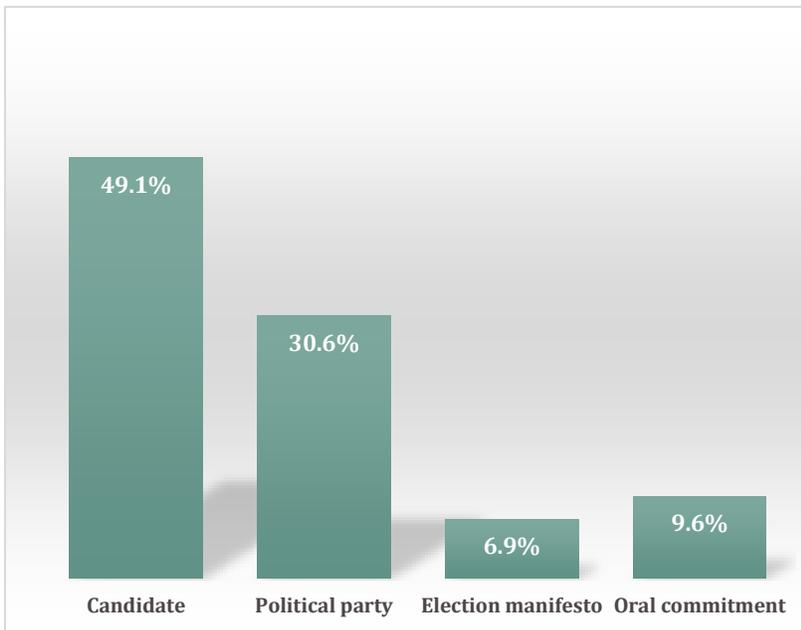


Figure 4: Ever read any election manifesto by gender

The percentage of reading an election manifesto is significantly higher among employed person (41.3%) and graduates (49.2%).

## III. CANDIDATE'S ACCEPTABILITY OR QUALIFICATION GOVERNS VOTING DECISION

Nearly half the respondents (49.1%) voted that the candidates' acceptability and



qualifications were key factors that govern voting decisions (figure 5). Meanwhile, for 30.6% respondents, electoral symbol of the parties influences their voting decisions. Only 6.9% respondents said they considered the manifestos before making a voting decision.

However, for females (52.7%) and middle age people i.e. age 36 to 60

(52.8%), qualification of the candidates are more important whereas political party is important for farmers (38.4%) and businessman (37.2%) compare to others.

Figure 5: Factors influence voting decision

IV. IN NATIONAL ELECTION PEOPLE ARE MORE INTERESTED ABOUT NATIONAL ISSUES

For a vast majority (69.1%) of respondents, commitment towards resolving pressing national issues govern their voting decisions, while one in every four or 25.1% said promises to deal with local or regional issues matter most to them.

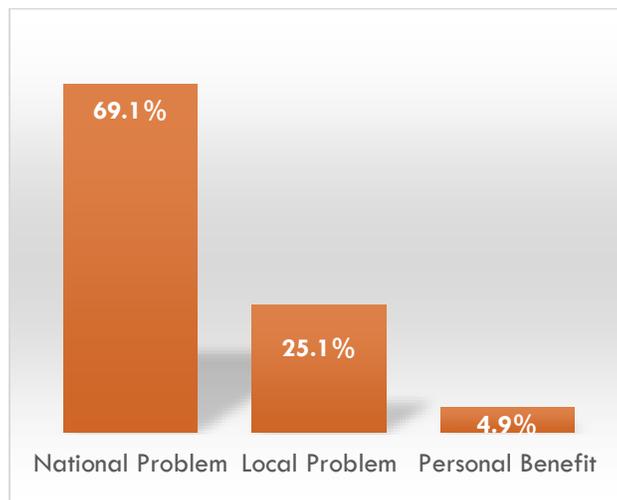


Figure 6: Issue important for people to cast vote

Interestingly people living in rural area (29.0%), labor (32.1%) and farmers (31.3%) are more concerned about the local problems than others.

V. SOLUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM IS PEOPLE’S TOP PRIORITY

According to the survey, the highest percentage of respondents, 27.7%, said they were looking for a solution to the countrywide unemployment problem, while 26.3% want to see development in the transport infrastructure, and nearly 23.8% prioritized development of the education sector.

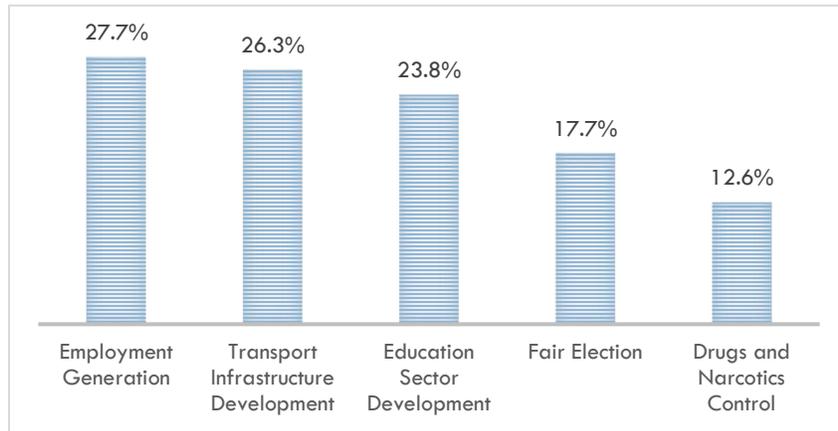


Figure 7: Top five priority issues in national election

Demand for a free and fair election came fourth on the list, as only 17.17% of the respondents said they expected to see a credible election. Surprisingly, the Rohingya crisis, which has affected Bangladesh to a great extent and remain an issue of high concern globally, was voted by 4.5% respondents as a severely pressing concern at present, while 4% prioritized agricultural development.

VI. FOR YOUNG PEOPLE EMPLOYMENT IS IMPORTANT, FOR AGED POPULATION TRANSPORT

For new voters (age 18-23) and young (age 24-35) or middle age (age 36-60) the preference/priority is more or less similar i.e. employment followed by transportation and education sector development but for old aged (age above 60) people, transport infrastructure development is the highest priority (25.8%).

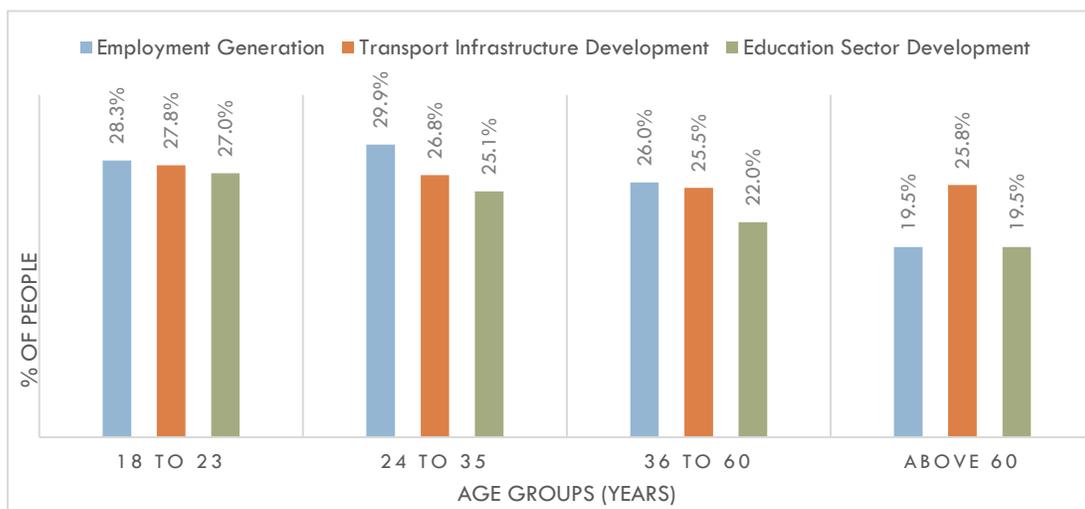


Figure 8: Priorities according to age

VII. EMPLOYMENT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT IRRESPECTIVE OF MALE OR FEMALE

The top three priority area are same for both male and female. However, number of male think that employment generation should be one of the priorities in the election manifesto is higher than the female (28.4% vs. 26.8%) whereas education is more important in the eyes of the female than male (24.6% vs. 23.1%).

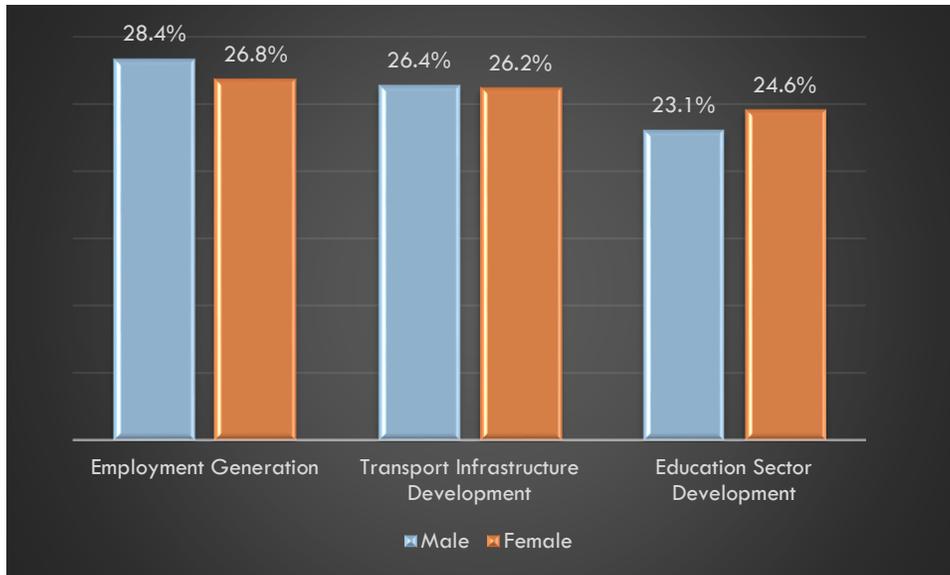


Figure 9: Priorities according to gender

VIII. HIGHEST PRIORITY OF YOUNG AGE (AGE 18-35) FEMALE IS TRANSPORT

Young female participants priority list is different than the usual priority list, for them number one priority is transport (27.7%) which is followed by employment (27.1%) and education (27.0%).

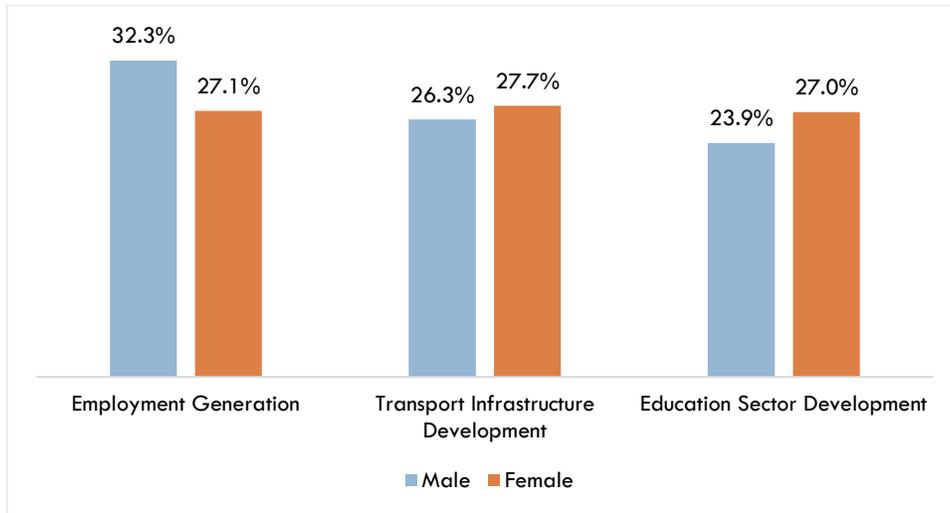


Figure 10: Priorities of young age population (age 18-35) according to gender

**IX. EMPLOYMENT IS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN CITY CORPORATIONS**

Where 38.8% people of City Corporation think employment should be one of the priority areas, less people of rural area (28.9%) opined in favor of employment. People who think transport should be one of the priorities are mostly from village area (28.3%).

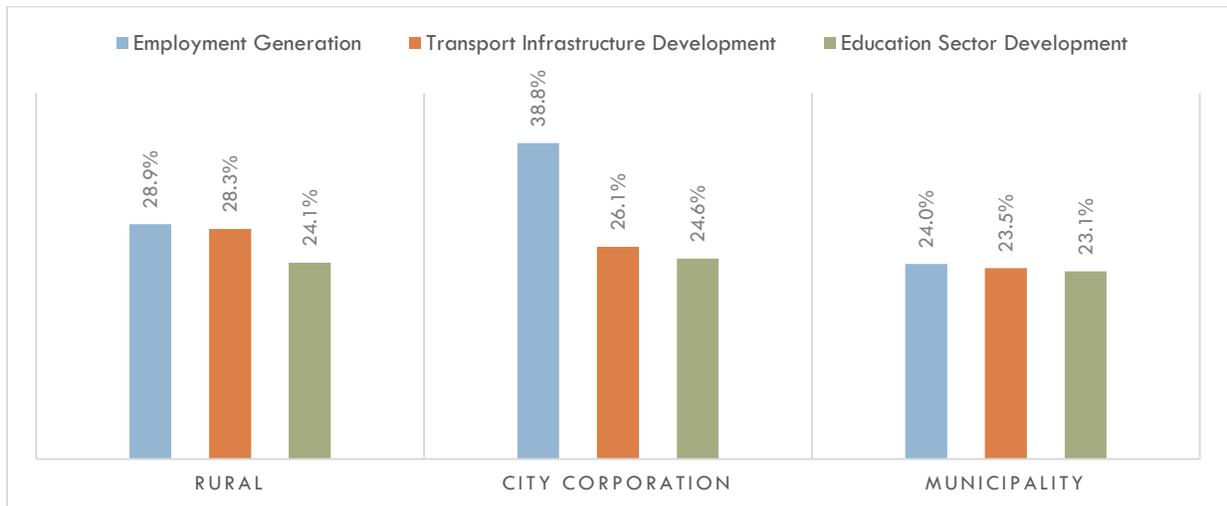


Figure 11: Priorities according area of residence

**X. FEMALE OF CITY CORPORATION WANTS EMPLOYMENT MORE**

Almost 42% of the female living in City Corporation prioritized employment where only 35.8% male wants employment.

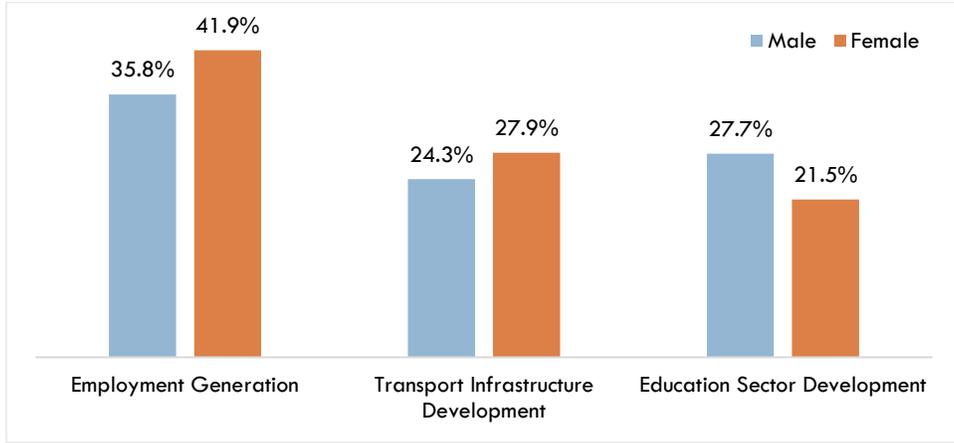


Figure 12: Priorities of City Corporation according to gender

**XI. EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION ARE IMPORTANT FOR EDUCATED PEOPLE**

With increased education, priority of employment and education increased and on the contrary, priority for transportation decreased with increased education level.

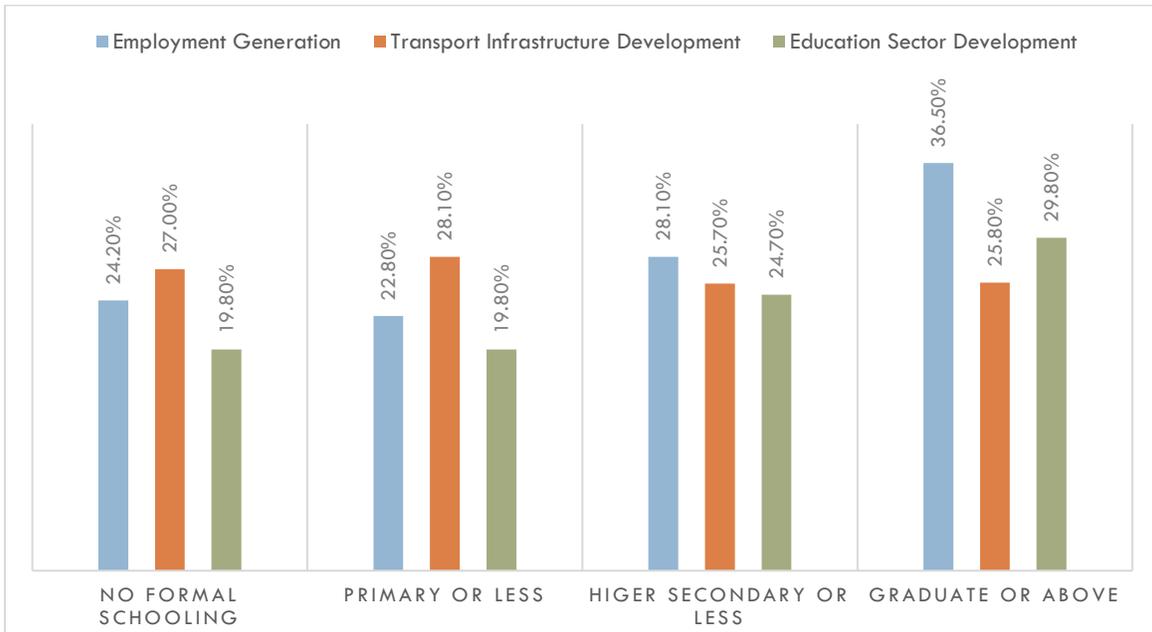


Figure 13: Priorities according to education

**XII. EMPLOYED, STUDENT AND UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE PRIORITIZED EMPLOYMENT**

For farmers (26.9%) and labors (28.3%) most important issue is transport but for the employed people (31.4%), students (34.5%) and unemployed people (36.0%) most

important issue that should be addressed is employment. Employment (28.9%) and transport (28.4%) are almost equally important for business man.

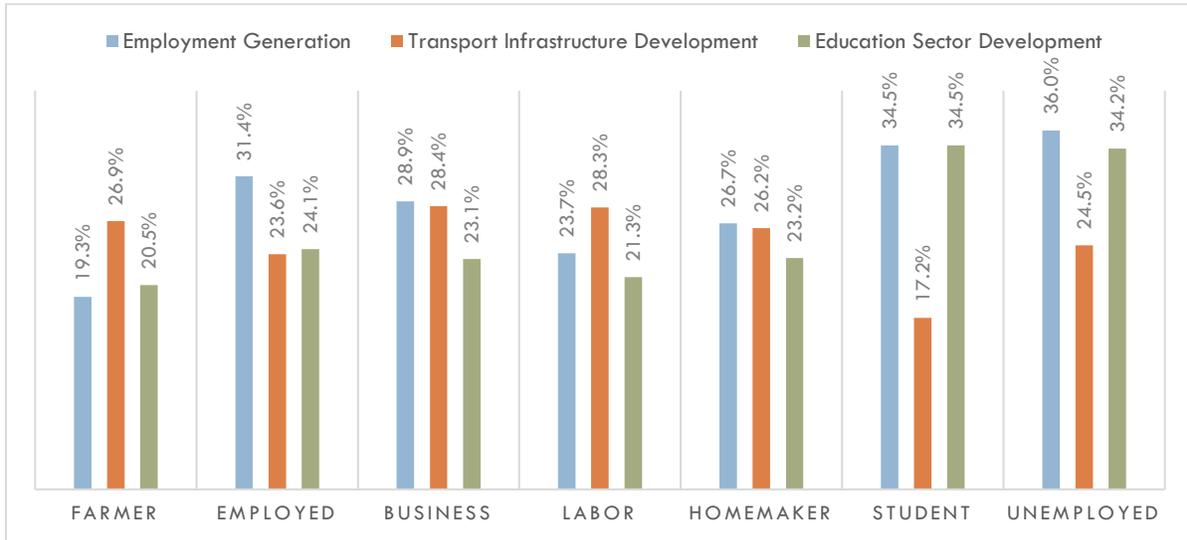


Figure14: Priorities according to occupation

XIII. FOR HIGHER INCOME GROUP, EMPLOYMENT IS MORE IMPORTANT

Employment gets more priority with increasing monthly household income as 31.9% people of higher income group think employment is important. On the other hand, transportation is more important for lower income group (27.7%).

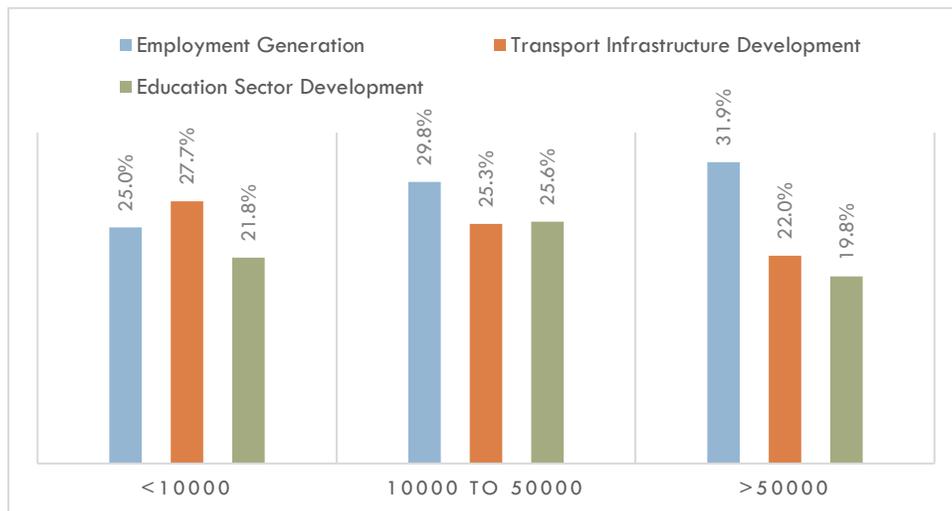


Figure 15: Priorities according to monthly household income

XIV. PRIORITY OF DIFFERENT DIVISIONS ARE DIFFERENT

Employment is the highest priority of people from Dhaka (37.9%), Khulna (37.2%) and Rangpur (34.0%), for Rajshahi it is transport (43.8%) and for Sylhet (57.1%) and Barisal (34.3%) it is education which is important.

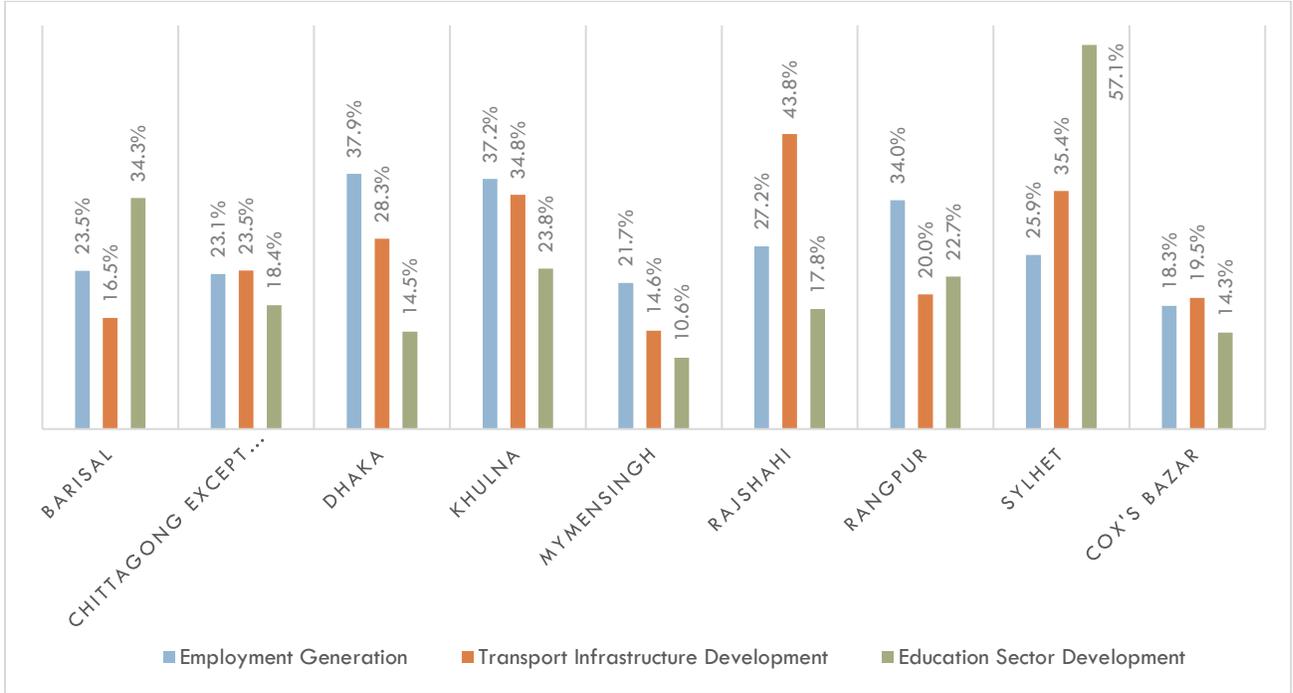


Figure 16: Priorities according to divisions

For Cox’s Bazar People the priority is not the same as others, for them fair election is the highest preference (38.5%). Solving Rohingya crisis (15.0%) is also one of the five criteria for them which was not prioritized by other areas.

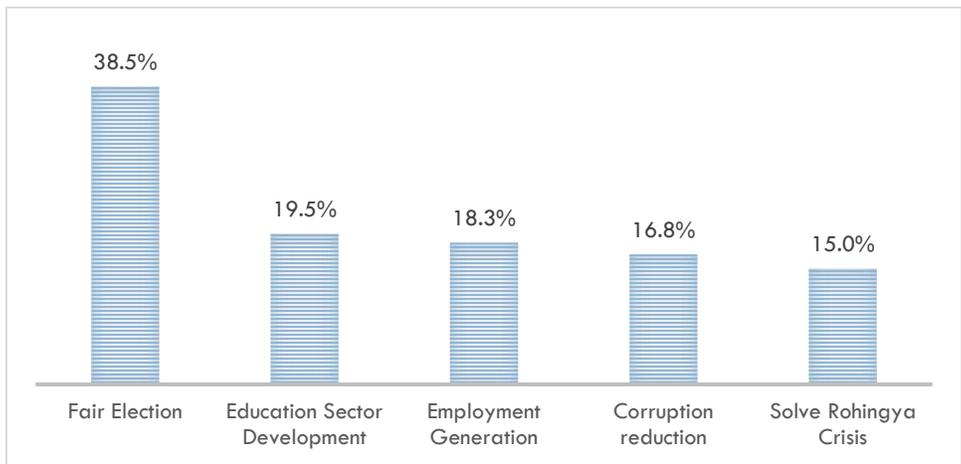


Figure 17: Top five priority of respondents from Cox’s Bazar

## CONCLUSION

Election manifesto is supposed to be the most important document for both political parties and voters but Bangladeshi voters rarely read them. So, still now people rely on the candidates they like or political parties they support, not on the written commitments. However, there are indication of changing the existing situation in future as the survey result showed clear positive difference between educated-less educated young-old aged people.

Unemployment, problems in transport infrastructure, and crisis in the education sector are the top three issues respectively that voters expect solutions from the political parties contesting the upcoming general polls, according to a survey. Issues like a free and fair election and the Rohingya crisis, although crucial and much discussed across the country, remain behind job, transport and education sectors in terms of voters' priority, the survey has found.

Although, the survey could not go to the detail expectations of the people, but it gives an overall idea about the sectors people are prioritizing which may help the political parties to act accordingly.

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- Title page Image courtesy: Dhaka Tribune

## ANNEX:

### **Detailed Methodology**

#### Study design

The present study is cross-sectional in nature. To fulfill the objectives, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were applied where appropriate.

#### Target population

Citizens of Bangladesh from different administrative areas, socio-economic classes, genders, professions and age groups are the target population of this study. Age  $\geq 18$  years is the primary eligibility criteria along with willingness to participate. .

#### Study areas and sample size

The survey covered all 64 districts of Bangladesh. Minimum sample size has been calculated using the formula  $n = z^2 pq / d^2$ , where,  $n$ = desired sample size,  $z$ = standard normal deviate, usually set at 1.96, which correspond to 95% confidence interval level,  $p$ = proportion in the target population estimated to have a particular characteristics (here  $p=50\%$  as there is no reasonable estimate),  $q= 1-p$  (proportion in the target population not having the particular characteristics) and  $d$ = degree of accuracy required, usually set at 0.05 level. Considering design effect=1.5 and all these, the minimum sample required is 576 ( $=384 \times 1.5$ ) which can be rounded up to 600 for each strata i.e. division. Thus the total number of sample is  $8 \times 600 = 4800$ .

For September 2018 survey, 600 additional samples was collected from Cox's Bazar district to compare perception about Rohingya with whole country.

#### Sampling technique

Multi-stage cluster sampling technique was followed for this survey. Twenty *Upazilas* from each division were selected by systematic random sampling technique and from each selected *Upazila*, two wards from the municipality area and one union were selected randomly (if it is city corporation area then 3 wards were taken and if the upazila doesn't have municipality, then two unions were taken instead of wards) to get representative sample from both urban and rural. Ten households were taken from each ward/union. Systematic random sampling method was used for household selection process. Interviewers started selecting household from one end of the union/ward and every fifth household was chosen to take interview. One respondent was interviewed from each household. The ratio of male and female respondents was equal for every union/ward. Male and female respondent was taken from every alternative household.

For Cox’s Bazar district all *Upazilas* were selected. Same sampling technique was applied but the sample size was different i.e. **twenty five** households were taken instead of ten from each ward/union of Cox’s Bazar to get representative sample.

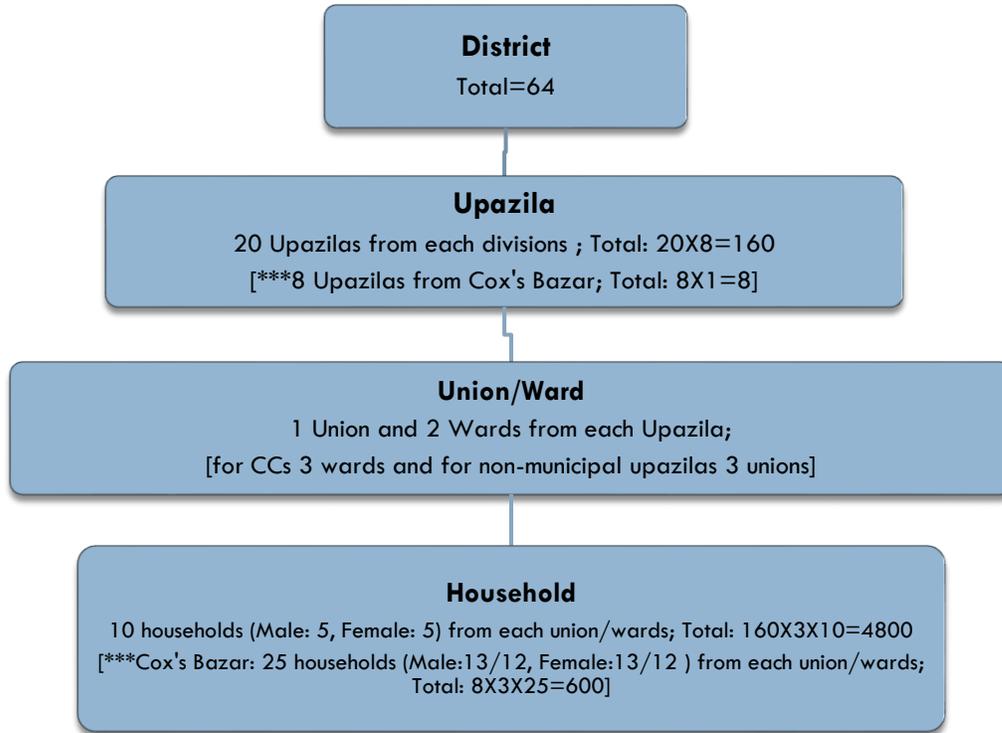


Figure 1: Sampling technique

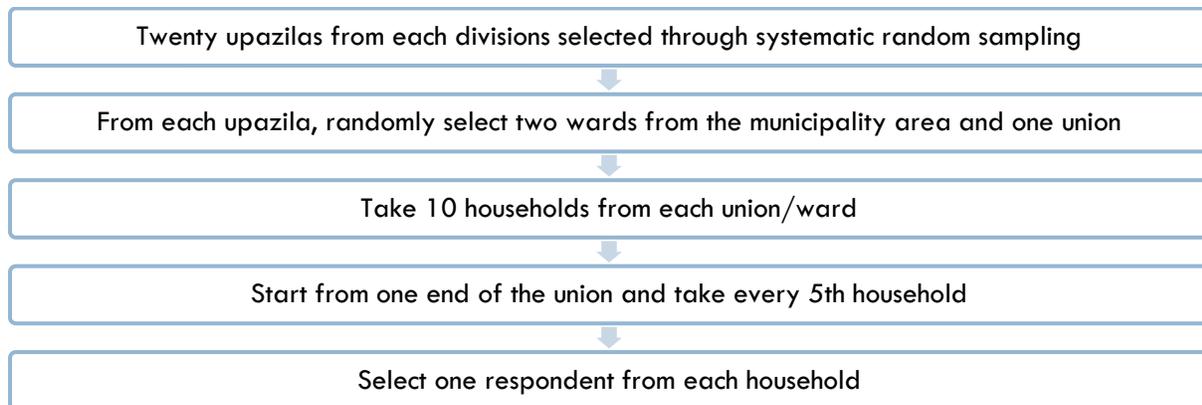


Figure 2: Step by step respondent selection process

Data collection tools

A semi-structured questionnaire was used as data collection tool which included open ended and close ended questions according to the study objectives.

Data management and analysis plan

All interviewed questionnaire was checked for completeness and further coded for open ended questions. When data coding is completed, the data entry was done in statistical package for social science software (SPSS) version 20 and data cleaning, consistency checking was performed before analysis of data. Then the researchers analyzed the final dataset following an analysis plan prepared earlier. Data was analyzed by frequency distribution, chi-square test and other appropriate statistical tests. For qualitative part, data was recorded, transcribed and manually analyzed by using qualitative thematic analysis followed by content analysis following the concept of Graneheim and Lundman model<sup>1</sup>.

Quality control & quality assurance

Data collection tool was pretested before field implementation and then appropriate changes will be made. The data was collected by District BRAC Representatives (DBRs) or other nominated data collectors after appropriate training on the objectives of the study and data collection tools; quality was assured by proper supervision during data collection and data entry by researchers.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to the interviews, study objective was explained, and then proper informed consent was obtained from each individual. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents have been strictly maintained

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<sup>1</sup> Graneheim, U. H., & Lundman, B. (2004). Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: concepts, procedures and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nurse education today*, 24(2), 105-112.